
PhD thesis

http://theses.gla.ac.uk/3948/

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given
IBN BASSAM AS A LITERARY HISTORIAN,
A CRITIC AND A STYLIST:
A STUDY OF AL-DHAKHIRA.

BY
KHALID LAFTA BAKER

Thesis presented in the Faculty of Arts
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the University of Glasgow

February 1986
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>(iii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>(iv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>(v)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>(vii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART I:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM AND AL-DHAKHĪRA:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S LIFE</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S EDUCATION AND LITERARY CAREER</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE BACKGROUND TO AL-DHAKHĪRA:</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE DATING OF AL-DHAKHĪRA:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S PREDECESSORS AND SUCCESSORS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN AL-ANDALUS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S REGIONAL SYSTEM AND SOME OF HIS CRITICAL ATTITUDES</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL RANK AND LITERATURE IN AL-DHAKHĪRA</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S ATTITUDE TO LICENTIOUS LITERATURE</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S ATTITUDE TO TRUTH IN POETRY</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S ATTITUDE TO INFIDEL IDEAS AND PHILOSOPHICAL TERMINOLOGY</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSĀM'S PREFERENCE FOR TRADITIONAL STYLE IN FORMAL POETRY</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE EFFECT OF PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ON LITERATURE</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS (Contd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSAM'S LITERARY CRITICISM</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART II:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBN BASSAM AS A STYLIST:</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHYME AND RHYTHM IN THE PROSE OF IBN BASSAM: AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PASSAGES</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER ASPECTS OF IBN BASSAM'S STYLE: A STUDY OF SELECTED PASSAGES</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX: LITERARY FIGURES OF AL-DHAKHIRA</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I dedicate this thesis to my family, to whose devoted efforts and sacrifices I owe the fact that I have been able to extend the period of my education thus far.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my utmost appreciation to the University of Basrah for granting me this opportunity to pursue my studies and in particular, its financial support during the period of this research, without which it would not have been accomplished. For supervision, I would like to thank Dr. John Mattock for all that he has done starting with his approval of my enrolment for the Ph.D. degree and his deep interest in my field. He has dedicated quite a long time towards discussion, research, translation and revision. Without his contribution this work would not have been in its present form. I am also indebted to Dr. ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Zubaydi for his criticisms and his views regarding this work.

Dr. Muḥsin Jamāl al-Dīn, a specialist in Andalusian studies is credited for choosing Ibn Bassām as my subject of study and for insisting on this. My thanks go to Dr. Fādil ʿAbbās Jāsim and his wife Lubāb Ḥassūn for their help and encouragement and for their warm reception during my visits to their home in Edinburgh. Noble friends they have been indeed. I am also thankful to those who have helped me in different ways with this thesis, and in particular Dr. Jamāl Al-Ḥenāč.

Miss Brenda Robinson carried out the typing. I thank her for putting up with my illegible handwriting.

Finally, I should mention the kindness of all my family for their moral and financial support. To all I extend my sincere thanks and my deep appreciation.
ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to study the celebrated literary-historical and critical work, al-Dhakhıra of Ibn Bassam, from a number of aspects that have until now received either inadequate attention or no attention at all. It is divided into two parts, the first of which is concerned principally with the author and his work in their historical and critical context. There are six main sections in this part:

The cultural background of the fourth and fifth centuries;
Ibn Bassam's life;
Ibn Bassam's education and literary career;
The background to al-Dhakhıra;
Ibn Bassam's regional system and some of his critical attitudes;
Ibn Bassam's literary criticism.

The second part consists of an attempt to analyse, in different ways, a number of sample passages of Ibn Bassam's writing, in order to examine the techniques underlying his artistic composition. It is not claimed that the means by which his effects were obtained were necessarily self-conscious; it seems, however, worthwhile to investigate any characteristics that can be identified and analysed, if we are to be able fully to evaluate and appreciate the literary qualities of the best Arabic prose-writing. This part concludes with a summary of the characteristics of Ibn Bassam's style that emerge from the detailed analyses.
Finally, the names of all the literary figures dealt with in *al-Dhakhira* are listed in an appendix.
INTRODUCTION

Ibn Bassâm's *al-Dhakhîra* has always constituted one of the principal sources for knowledge of the literary scene in al-Andalus during the sixth century of the Hijra. As such, it has necessarily attracted a good deal of attention and been subjected to a certain amount of close study. Much of this attention and study, however, has been devoted to it in its capacity as a source-work, that is to say that scholars, of all periods, have studied it, and cited it, for the sake of the information that it contains. It has received far less attention than it deserves - if we except a mass of incidental, and somewhat general, acclaim - as a work of literature in its own right. One of the objects of this thesis is to attempt, in however limited a way, to rectify this omission.

*al-Dhakhîra* is, ostensibly, a work of literary history: at the same time a collection of almost two hundred biographies and a comprehensive anthology of the literature of the author's own country in his own time. It is a massive work, consisting of 4 volumes, each divided into 2 parts, and it admirably fulfils its ostensible function, while, inevitably, telling us a good deal about the author's own tastes and prejudices. It is, however, much more than a mere work of literary history. Ibn Bassâm has a claim to be one of the greatest stylists of any period in Arabic literature; it would be difficult to match the fluency and limpidity of his *saj* (the medium in which all the most important parts of his masterpiece are written), as a
sustained tour-de-force, anywhere else in Arabic. Of course, other authors sometimes rise to the same heights, and it must be admitted that he himself sometimes disappoints. Nonetheless, the overall effect of his prose-writing in *al-Dhakhīra* is such as to compel admiration, even in those who are least attracted to this artificial and often affected style of composition.

This thesis falls into two distinct parts. Part I attempts to deal with *al-Dhakhīra* as a work of literary history and criticism: to set it in its historical and critical context and, to some extent, to evaluate it. In doing so, it necessarily draws upon the work of others in this field; at the same time, however, it endeavours to break new ground, to settle certain disputed questions, such as the dating of the work, and to consider aspects of it that have hitherto been neglected. Part II attempts to examine, in some detail, the literary qualities of the work, with particular emphasis on Ibn Bassām's stylistic technique. It had been hoped to add a further section, in which comparisons might be made between Ibn Bassām and other writers of *sajī*; unfortunately, considerations of both space and time precluded this. It is intended, however, that a study of this nature should be undertaken at a later date; in the meantime, perhaps the methods of analysis tried out here will be of interest, and even use, to others who wish to look closely into the ways in which Arab authors set about composing their prose.
PART I

IBN BASSAM AND AL-DHAKHIRA
THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE
FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES
The cultural movement in al-Andalus blossomed during the period of the Caliphate of Córdoba. It included every sphere of scientific and literary activity, and one of its results was the creation of a distinct Andalusian scientific and literary character. There must have been a number of factors involved in the steady development and growth of this movement; it is these that I shall now attempt to examine. The role played by al-Nāṣir and his son was considerable; Córdoba, in his time, enjoyed stability and security, and this period may be considered the Golden Age of al-Andalus.

He provided the Andalusians with all their cultural requirements, in such matters as facilitating the purchase of books and encouraging teachers from the east to settle in the west. Subsequently he urged scholars to write books on all the various branches of knowledge, and particularly the linguistic sciences, which flourished under the tutelage of al-Qālí, who came to al-Andalus in 340 A.H. Prominent in this field were Abū Bakr al-Zubaydī and Ibn al-Qūṭiyya. Among the most eminent historians were Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Muṣā al-Rāzī, nicknamed al-Tārīkhī, and ʿArīb b. Saʿīd. Scholars who devoted themselves to biography included Abū ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿAbd al-Barr al-Qurtubī, Ibn al-Farāǧī, Muḥammad b. Hishām al-Marwānī and Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Khusnī. In ẓafṣīr and ḥadīth there were many celebrated scholars, such as Ibn Maḥāsin ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad and Ibn al-Ḥajjām Yaʿīsh b. Saʿīd, as there were also in fiqh, such as ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Dulaym, Yaḥyā b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Yaḥyā al-Laythī and Mundhir b. Saʿīd al-Ballūṭī.
The star of philosophy was not dimmed, either, in that period; many philosophers came to the fore: Ṭarīf al-Rūṭī, Muḥammad b. Mufarrij al-Muṣafīrī, Rashīd b. Muḥammad and ʿAbān b. ʿUthmān. The status of medicine was also notable. A whole host of skilled doctors appeared, such as Saʿīd b. ʿAbd Rabbih, ʿAbd b. Yūnus and his brother ʿUmar. ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad, known as al-Sirrī, and Abū Bakr b. Īsā were distinguished in mathematics and engineering.

A modern scholar has remarked on the phenomena of the cultural life in al-Andalus at the time of the Caliphate of Córdoba, enumerating them thus:

"1. This evident participation in most of the branches of knowledge, in fact, this palpable genius for most of the spheres of culture, so that we find Andalusians who were prominent in various different sciences and arts.

2. The manifest diffusion of free-thinking, and the encouragement and admiration of scholars, whatever views they might hold.

3. The attention paid by the majority of the Andalusians to the philosophical and natural sciences, such that this period may justly be counted among the very few in which it was possible for Andalusian culture to maintain a strong connection with philosophies and systems of natural science.

4. The strong connection with some Greek and Latin learning, by means of translations.

5. The appearance of an Andalusian national spirit in cultural life. This is fully evident in the concern shown with collecting the Andalusian (literary?) heritage, with writing the history of al-Andalus and the biographies of its famous men, in the various fields - poets, scholars, judges,
grammarians and other litterateurs and thinkers.¹

Other features that contributed to this flourishing were economic prosperity and political stability, and travelling within the country was easy. There were also many people rich enough to indulge their interest in learning and the rulers supported many who were not. Ḥāzim Khiḍr Abd-Allāh² explains this cultural flowering in the eleventh century as being the result of the interest of various caliphs, who encouraged and protected learning and scholars to the extent that they sent parties of the latter to the east to study, and also to purchase books and authoritative traditions. The Kitāb al-Aghānī appeared in al-Andalus earlier than in the east, thanks to al-Ḥakam's willingness to pay an extremely high price for a copy.

al-Nāṣir and al-Ḥakam* also encouraged the establishment of schools throughout al-Andalus and saw to it that they were supplied with books. The library of al-Ḥakam, which is supposed to have numbered 400,000 volumes³, was sold at the break-up of the caliphate and dispersed throughout al-Andalus. Other private libraries were dispersed at the same time, so that a sudden diffusion of resources of culture took place. Further factors were undoubtedly two concrete historical events, the destruction of al-Qayrawān and the Norman conquest of Sicily, which caused the immigration to al-Andalus of numerous literary and scholarly figures, such as Ibn Ḥamdīs and Abū al-ʿArab al-Siqillī.

"The break down of the caliphate, political division, military degeneration and internecine wars among the Mulūk al-Tawāf profoundly altered the cultural spectrum of al-Andalus.
The fragmentation that followed distributed the benefits of that civilization more evenly throughout the major cities of the land... Whereas before poets had flocked to Córdoba they were now welcomed in almost every petty capital of the former empire.  

The Mulûk al-Γawaif themselves played a vital role in this cultural diffusion through their constant support of writers, poets and scholars. In fact many of them were personally distinguished in one or more of these spheres, such as Muhammad b. Ismaïl b. ĞAbbâd al-Qâdî ĞAbû al-Qâsim and his son ĞAbbâd b. Muhammad al-Mu'afdîd bi-Allâh, called Abû ĞUmar, and al-Mu'âtamid b. al-Mutaăid. Furthermore the cultural development which al-Andalus underwent during this period was not restricted to one particular social class, but contributed to by various classes; women in particular played a prominent part. Although overshadowed by the caliphate of Córdoba, of which it was, in a sense, the fruition, the period was culturally one of the most distinguished in the history of al-Andalus:

فاحتمل هذا القطر الغربي لأول تلك المتّدة على بيتي حسب، وجماعـيوري أدب، مملكتان من لخم وجيب، مقرِّبتا بلاده، وأكثرتا رواده، فاتاه العلم من كـل فِقٌٍ عميق، وتبادره العلماء من بين سابق ومسبوق، وكلما نشأ من هذين البيتين أمير كان إلى العلم أطلب، وفي أهل أرفعة، والسلطان سوق يجلب إليه، مـا يفقّد لديه، حتّى اجتمع في الجانب الغربي على شقّ أكناكه، وتحيّف العـددِ قصمه الله لأطرافه، ما باه الأقلايم العراقية، وانس بلغاء الدولة الديلمية، فقلّما رأيت فيه ناشئاً غير ماهر، ولا شاعراً غير قاهر، دعوا حرّ الكلام فلبنى، وأرادوه فما تأبى، وطريقتهم في الشعر الطريقة المثلى التي هي طريقـة البحتري في السليمة والبنتانة، والعذوبة والرمانة.
The more prominent of these two courts was that of the Banū ḌAbbād in Seville, an aristocratic Arab family, descended from Lakhm, who greatly favoured literature, the son of the founder of the dynasty, al-Qāḍī Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. ḌAbbād, himself being a poet, as was his son al-Muṭṭalīd, whose ḍīwān was collected by his nephew. His grandson al-Muṭtamīd was also a poet king, and al-Marrākushī says of him: "He would not appoint any minister unless he was a literary man and a poet, and greatly talented, and thus he assembled a collection of poet-ministers such as no one else had ever assembled".

He was the most distinguished poet among the Mulūk al-Ṭawāif. "He was serious only when writing elegies and excellent only when writing love poems". His sons and his daughter, Buthayna, were poets as well. Ibn Bassām wrote a monograph on his poetry entitled al-Īṭimād al-Ṭālib manuscript.
Among the celebrated literary figures at the Abbadid court was Abū Ḥafṣ b. ʿUmar b. al-Ḥasan al-Hawzānī. "The possessor of (Seville's) soul, the light of her sun, the tooth that is revealed when she smiles, and the sole man in her by whose hand affairs are ravelled and unravelled". Abū Bakr b. ʿAmmār, the most prominent poet at the court, apart from al-Muṭṭamīd himself, "was a poet who could not be competed with, an eloquent man who could not be vied with; when he lauded, he brought down the goats (from the mountains), and when he satirised, he made the solid rocks listen; when he wantoned, particularly on the subject of adolescent boys, he produced eloquence that could not be expressed in words".

The Banū al-Aftās of Badajoz, like the Banū ʿAbbad, were a cultured dynasty, and numbered chiefly among their scholarly and literary members al-Muẓaffar and al-Muṭṭawakkil. al-Marākushī refers to al-Muẓaffar thus: "al-Muẓaffar was one of the most dedicated people in collecting together the various literary sciences, especially grammar, language, poetry, anecdotes and history. He compiled a book in the style of al-Ikhtiyārāt of al-Rūḥī and the ʿUyūn al-Akhbār of Ibn Qutayba. This book, called al-Muẓaffarī, consisted of ten parts." Ibn ʿAbdūn was the most celebrated of those who attached themselves to the Banū al-Aftās. Among the others whom we know of were:

1. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Ayman, described by Ibn Bassām as follows:
2. Ābd al-Raḥmān b. Maqānā al-Ishbūnī, who was famous for his eulogising Ibn Ḥammūd of Málaga.

The court of the Banū al-Aftas was notable for being frequented by a number of literary families, in which ability descended from one generation to the next. The Banū al-Qubṭūrrunna were an example; one of their more prominent members was al-Wāzīr Abū Bakr Ābd Al-Azīz b. Saʿīd al-Baṭalyūsī, who was secretary to al-Mutawakkil b. al-Aftas and then, after the fall of the dynasty, to Ibn Tāshfīn. In the section denoted to him, Ibn Bassām refers to the Banū al-Qubṭūrrunna as follows:

"They were among the cavaliers of wounds and speech, and the carriers of swords and pens, of noble family and distinguished origin. They received knowledge, one great man from another, and they transmitted it one to another."

Among the poets of lesser acclaim, we may mention Abū Ābd Allāh b. al-Bayn, who wrote in the style of Muḥammad Ibn Hānī, and Dhū al-Wīzāratayn Abū Muḥammad b. Hūd.

The Banū Ṣumādiḥ were also great patrons of poets and scholars. Their capital, Almerīa, was an active scholarly centre. al-Muʿtaṣim b. Ṣumādiḥ in particular was famous for his encouragement of literature. He himself was an adīb of great capabilities and used to hold his own Majālis for discussion every Friday. Among the poets closely linked with al-Muʿtaṣim were Abū Ābd Allāh b. Ḥaddād, Ibn ʿUbādah,
Ibn Malik al-As'ad b. Ballīṭa and Abū al-Qāsim Aḥmad b. Qāsim al-Muḥaddith.⁹

The Banū Ṣumādīḥ showed as great an interest in adab and poetry as the Banū ʿAbdād and the Banū al-Afṭās. The sons of al-Muṭṭasim were poets, in particular Abū Marwān ʿUbayd Allāh, called ʿIzz al-Dawla, who sent many of his poems to his father, while he was a prisoner of Yusuf b. Tāshfīn. A number of the distinguished ministers of the Banū Ṣumādīḥ were also considerable poets, among them al-Wazīr al-Kāṭib ʿUmar b. al-Shaḥīd al-Tujībī, called Abū Ḥafṣ, and Abū al-ʿAbbās b. al-ʿArīf (1088-1141) about whom al-Ḥumaydī says that he was a famous poet with great authority in literature, was fluent in speech and respected by the ʿUmarā of his country. ¹⁰

Of the other Mulūk al-Tawaif, we may mention the Banū Dḥī al-Nūn. Although there is no indication that they played a large role in encouraging adab, a number of famous writers were attracted to their court, among them b. Arfaʿ Rās, a writer of Muwashshahāt, Ibn Saʿīd, the author of the well-known Tabaqāt al-Umam, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Fattūḥ, the author of Kitāb al-Ighrāb fi Raqāq al-Ādab, and the botanist Ibn al-Baṣṣāl al-Tulayṭulī. ¹¹

In fact, it seems that the Banū Dḥī al-Nūn were more interested in encouraging the sciences than in encouraging poetry and literature, and that they were not very generous to practitioners of these latter. Indeed, al-Mamūn b. Dḥī al-Nūn is described by b. Ḥayyān as being a miser, who did not offer any prizes and from whom no-one obtained anything, so that his palace was filled with unskilled poets. ¹²
The lesser dynasties in the south, such as the Banū Munād and the Birzāliyyūn, were mainly concerned with warlike activities and gave very little attention or patronage to literature or learning. The only exceptional example was Mujāhid al-ʾĀmīrī, King of Denia and the Balearics, who was unlike the rest of al-Fityān al-ʾĀmīriyya and was described by Ibn Ḥayyān as unique among the kings of his age, since his court was attended by a great number of scholars and poets. Ibn Bassām mentioned him as a well-rounded scholar who was devoted to the study and criticism of poetry but was never generous to poets. Dhū al-Wizāratayn ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. Ṭāhir, to whom Mujāhid entrusted the governorate of Murcia, was also a prominent writer and scholar. His style was compared to that of al-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād. Ibn al-Abbaḍ says that he was superior to all other scholars and Udābāʾ of his time. 13

In Zaragoza, Mundhir b. Yaḥyā al-Tujībī was very generous to poets and was therefore praised by many of them, as for example, by Ibn Darrāj al-Qastallī, in his qasīdah:

يُفْرَكُ فِي طَوْلِ الْشَّرْكِ وَالْسُّرَى
صٌحٌ بِرُوحِ الشَّفَرِ لَاجِعٌ فَاغْرَا

The rule of Yaḥyā al-Tujībī was short-lived and was soon superseded by that of the Banū Ḥūd, who greatly encouraged all kinds of learning and made Zaragoza a centre of literary activity, similar to Seville under the Banū ʿAbbād. In fact, some of the Banū Ḥūd were themselves scholars, for example, Abū Jaʿfar al-Muqtadir and his son al-Mutamin, both of whom were prominent in philosophy, mathematics and astronomy. Among the most celebrated
scholars in Zaragoza in the 11th century was Ibn Bājja who wrote extensively, leaving about twenty-seven books on various subjects, and whose writing had a great impact on the philosophical ideas of Abū al-Walīd b. Rushd. Another philosopher and writer in Zaragoza was Abū Bakr al-Ṭūṣṭuṣī, the author of Sirāj al-Mulūk, who lived during the reign of al-Mustaʿīn b. al-Mutamin. 17

Besides the philosophical activity in Zaragoza, there was a lively literary movement, headed by such poets as Abū al-Faḍl b. Ḥisdāy about whom Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ṭāhir wrote:

Poetic ability appears not to have been confined to court circles.

The 5th century was undoubtedly the most prolific in literature in the whole history of al-Andalus. Ibn Bassām is not the only source we have for this period; we have many others, such as Qalāʾīd al-Iqvan and Maṭmāḥ al-Anfūs of Ibn Khāqān, Bughyat al-Multāmis of al-Dabbī, Naḥḥ al-Tīb of al-Maqqārī, Aḥmāl al-ʿĀlām, and al-Thātā ʿī Akhābār, Gharāṭa, al-Hulla al-Sirāj of Ibn al-Abbār, Jadhwat al Muṭtabās of al-Ḥumaydī, al-Sīla of Ibn Bashkawāl, al-Dhayal wa al-Takmilā lil-Sīla of ʿAbd al-Malik al-Marrākushī.

Although the general pattern during the period of the Mulūk al-ṭawāif was one of great interest in, and encouragement of, scholars, litterateurs and philosophers, nevertheless, as has been indicated, there were some kings who did not conform to it. Of these, the best example is al-Mustakfī of Córdoba, who was described by Ibn Bassām as being illiterate,
idle, and notorious for his addiction to alcohol. During his reign, Córdoba was transformed from a thriving centre of culture into a stagnant city. Some of the Berber Kings were more interested in efficiency in warfare than in encouraging literature and knowledge. There was in addition, a number of poets and scholars who preferred to keep aloof from involvement in political life and tended to express their ideas simply in letters to one another. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of these people, the most prominent of whom were Ibrāhīm b. Khařājah and Ibn Sharaf al-Qayrawānī. al-Mu'tadid found great difficulty in persuading Ibn Sharaf to join his court and the latter expressed his attitude in the bayt:

Unusually, women also participated in the literary flowering of al-Andalus. It should be mentioned that women, in al-Andalus, contrary to those in the East, enjoyed a large degree of freedom, and this played a large part in their contribution. Some of them were private tutors to the daughters of Kings, some even had their own majālis. Among the prominent women of the 5th century were Ḥafṣa bint al-Ḥājj, Umm al-Karam bint al-Mu'tāsim b. Šumādiḥ and Zaynab al-Mariyya.15 al-Maqqarī also mentions al-Ghassāniyya al-Bajjāniyya, whom he considers an adībah of the 4th century, but who, according to Muṣṭafā al-Shakūh, lived during the fifth century.16 In Granada, a number of prominent women poets appeared, the most famous of whom was Ḥamda bint Ziyāḍ al-Muaddib, known as
Khansa al-Andalus.

In Granada also, we hear of Nazhūn al-Gharāṭīyya who was famous for her elegant style in poetry. In Seville, there was also a number of renowned women poets, among them Maryam bint Yaʿqūb al-Anṣārī and Buthayna bint al-Muṭtamid b. ʿAbbād. However, the most famous of the poetesses of al-Andalus in the 5th century was Wallāda bint al-Muṭtamid bi-Allāh, who is always associated with Ibn Zaydūn. She lived for most of her life in Córdoba, where her career flourished.

Of lesser fame were Muhja al-Qurṭubīyya al-ʿAbbādiyya, who was a concubine given as a gift to al-Muṭtamid b. ʿAbbād by Mujāhid al-ʿAmīrī of Denia, and ʿItimād, the concubine of al-Muṭtamid b. ʿAbbād, known as al-Rūmāykiyyah. As an indication of the high degree of brilliance attained by women in poetry, we are told that al-Muṭtamid b. ʿAbbād went on a river journey accompanied by his Wazīr, Ibn ʿAmmār. It was a windy day, and Ibn ʿAmmār asked Ibn ʿAmmār to complete the hemistich:

صُنْع الريح من الماء زِرَد

The latter could not answer instantly, but a woman washing clothes on the bank broke in with:

أي درع لقَلْفَال لَو جَمَّد

Besides the comparatively few famous women poets and scholars, there were many royal concubines, too, who were greatly interested in poetry, literature and learning. This was partly due to the fact that they lived in the palaces which were the centres of literary activity. Most of
them made the most of the easy economic circumstances in which they lived and of the abundance of books that was available to them and became experts in literature. In some cases, the prices of concubines were greatly enhanced by their wide knowledge. It is said that Hudhayl b. Khalaf b. Razīn, one of the Mulūk al-Ṭawaif, paid three thousand dinars for a slave girl belonging to al-Ṭayyib Abū ṣ-Abd Allāh al-Kinānī. She is described by Ibn Ḣayyān as: "the most elegant girl of her age, with unmatched qualities in singing, adab, literature, poetry, nahw and playing with swords and daggers". There were also at that time many other Rūmiyyat slave-girls who were "stars in the heaven of understanding and cavaliers in the arena of learning". Ibn Bassām cites part of a treatise by Ibn al-Kittānī concerning his educating and supervising four slave girls whom he raised from a state of complete ignorance to such a level of erudition that they were able not only to copy a large number of books on various aspects of learning, but were even able to indicate the correct inflexions of the words that they copied. This level of education was also attained by male slaves; Ibn Abī ṣ-Amīr had a slave boy who was unequalled in learning. He disputed with Ṣāqid and silenced him. Ibn Bassām also refers, on this subject, to the book by Ḥabīb, Kitāb al-Istīzhār wa-al-Mughālaba ṣalā man Ankara Fadā'il al-Saqāliba which contained many other similar stories.18 Ṣ-Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Paṭīs, for example, kept six female scribes at work copying books that he could not buy; and very high prices were paid for prized works copied by them.19
About one century after Ibn Bassām, al-Shaqundī wrote another work exalting the merits of al-Andalus over those of al-Maghrib. A good part of this work deals with the major cities of al-Andalus, and their superiority to those of al-Maghrib; the larger part, however, consists of a comparison of the scholars and literatures of both countries. This, while dealing with all fields of knowledge, concentrates on the outstanding poets of al-Andalus, and quotes generously from their poems. This procedure had already been adopted by Ibn Bassām (d. 542) in al-Dhakhīra and Ibn Khaqān (d. 529/533) in Qalā'id al-İrqi'ān. Both men dealt mainly with contemporaries and immediate predecessors. Among those whom al-Shaundī mentioned in his treatise were the Fugahā' Abū al-Walīd al-Bāji, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb, Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī, Abū al-Walīd b. Rushd al-Akbar, Abu al-Walīd b. Rushd al-Asghar, Abū ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Barr, author of Kitāb al-Istizhar and Kitāb al-Tamhīd, and Abū Bakr b. al-Jadd, the linguistician Ibn Sīḍah, author of Kitāb al-Muḥkam and Kitāb al-Samā' wa al-ʿAlam and al-Mukhassas, scholars of Nahw such as Ibn al-Sayyid al-Baṭalyūsī, historians such as Ibn Ḥayyān and ʿIdāba such as al-Fatḥ b. Khāqān, Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl, Ibn Darraj al-Qaṣṭallī, Ibn Wahbūn, Ibn Shuhayd, and Ibn Bassām himself. In short, it can be said that al-Shaundī's treatise was more concerned with the literary than the scientific merits of the scholars of al-Andalus. It also gives us a detailed account of the motives and reasons behind the flowering of the last two centuries.
It is interesting to note that this treatise was the result of a controversy between him and a Berber who claimed the superiority of North Africa over Al-Andalus. In an apologetic vein, al-Shaqqundi states that to place al-Maghrib above al-Andalus is like giving precedence to the left hand over the right hand or like claiming that night is brighter than day. He then enquires whether there is a man like so-and-so who excels in this or that discipline, and he proceeds to enumerate a large number of talented individuals who, in his estimation, would do honour to any court anywhere in the Muslim world. 20

He makes it quite clear, with a wealth of detail, that the Banū ʿAbdād were pre-eminent in the literary flowering of the 5th century, and he praises their efforts in the patronage of philosophers and scholars. He also describes the literary decline under the Almoravids. As an instance of the lack of understanding of literature shown by Yusuf Ibn Tāshfīn, he relates the story of al-Muʾtamid b. ʿAbbād's asking him if he knew what had been said by certain poets who had just recited eulogies of him. "I don't know", replied Ibn Tāshfīn, "but they wanted bread". Furthermore, when al-Muʾtamid wrote a letter to him, in which he quoted the two bayts of Ibn Zaydūn:

Ibn Tāshfīn asked the person reading the letter to him if al-Muʾtamid was requesting him to send him black and white slave girls. The reader explained the point of the lines,
and Ibn Tāshfīn then replied to al-Muṭamīd "our tears flow for you and our heads ache after your departure." ²¹

This is somewhat unfair of al-Shaqundī, since there is, in the first place, no real justification for generalising about the Almoravids' comprehension of literature from that of Ibn Tāshfīn; and in the second place, there was no particular reason why Ibn Tāshfīn should have taken any interest in poetry, and many reasons, given his religious outlook and his political and military preoccupations, why he should not. al-Shaqundī is concerned to elevate the people of al-Andalus, at the expense of the Moroccans, and he should not be altogether trusted as an authority in this respect. In fact, according to Ḥāmid al-Marrakushi, Ibn Tāshfīn used to invite literary men in large numbers to his court, such as Abū al-Qāsim b. al-Jadd, called al-Aḥdab, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad, known as Ibn al-Qabṭūnūk, Abū Ḥāmid Allah Muḥammad b. Abī al-Khiṣāl and his brother Abū Marwān, Abū Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid. ²² Also, when Abū Bakr b. Ibrāhīm, the Almoravid, succeeded to the rule of Zaragoza, he respected Ibn Bājja and gave him an unequaled position, despite his heretical tendencies. ²³ Thus scientific and literary activities continued much as before, and many of the poets who appeared during the period of the Mulūk al-Tawāif continued to flourish under the Almoravids. Palencia says: "Andalusian poetry did not die during the period of the Almoravids but in fact adapted itself to the new political and social circumstances. The culture of al-Andalus remained distinctive and the successors of Yūsuf Ibn Tāshfīn were so greatly influenced by it that they appeared to be more Andalusian than African." ²⁴
2. Ḥāzm Khiḍr ġAbd Allāh, 40-63.
6. ġAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marākūshī, 74. Muḥammad labīb 68.
8. Ibn Bassām 2, 2, 753-754.
10. al-Ḥumaydī, 302.
11. Muḥammad ġAbd Allāh ġInān, 104. Ibn Bassām, 1, 2, 770.
13. Ibn al-Abbār 2, 118.
14. Muḥammad ġAbd Allāh ġInān, 284.
16. Muṣṭafā al-Shakī, 144.
19. Ibn Bashkawāl, 1, 303-305.
20. al-Maqqarī 3, 186-224.
22. ġAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marākūshī, 122-124.
23. Muḥammad ġAbd Allāh ġInān, 283.
At the beginning of the second half of the fifth century A.H. (eleventh century A.D.), al-Andalus witnessed the birth of one who would become a very distinguished literary historian, one of the most famous of the men of his time; that man was Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī Ibn Bassām ʿAlī al-Taghlibī al-Shantarī al-Andalusī⁴.

Despite the abundance of references to Ibn Bassām which are made in the subsequent literature, where Ibn Bassām is frequently quoted and his work clearly relied upon, nevertheless it is virtually impossible to form a complete biography of the man from these.

He was a wealthy Lusitanian, born at Santarem during the rule of the Banū al-Afūs, but, forced to leave in quest of a livelihood when the rule came to an end, he earned his living with his pen. He is said to have been of the tribe of Taghlib. In fact, this is what Ibn Bassām himself asserts in his book al-Dhakhīra, where he reports writing to Abū al-Ḥakam ʿAmr Ibn Mudhlij al-Ishbīlī⁷.
In the second of these verses about his descent from Taghlib he also indicates that his family was an honoured one.

Abū al-Ḥakam, in his turn, confirming that Abū al-Ḥasan belonged to Taghlib, replies:

The foregoing verses make it evident that Ibn Bassām was of noble descent and wealthy family.

As we have mentioned before, despite the fact that al-Dhakhīra is regarded as a source for many literary scholars, none of these sheds enough light on Ibn Bassām's life to provide adequate information for a biography. This silence is open to two-fold interpretation:

1. According to al-Maqṣarī, his fame was of such magnitude that a biography was considered unnecessary.

2. Ahmad Makkī asks why the sources avoided writing in depth about Ibn Bassām, seeing that he had played an important role in defending his country, by setting down his thoughts (and wearing out his pen) to the glory of his nation. He believes that a large number of works were written about Ibn Bassām, but that the tragic catastrophes in al-Andalus caused the majority of these either to be burnt or buried.
Ibn Bassām was born at Shantarīn during the rule of the Banū al-Aftas. Shantarīn, which is nowadays called Santarem, is a town in Portugal located on the top of a very high mountain, the other side of which is a cliff face. It is situated about fifty kilometres from Lisbon on the right bank of the river Tagus, which floods its banks, providing fertile land for the peasants to grow grain and other crops.

The town is famous for its strategic position, and control of it changed hands a number of times. After being under the control of the Muslim king of Badajoz, al-Mutawakkil, it was taken by Alfonso VI, king of Leon in 486 A.H./1093 A.D. and given as a gift to Alfonso's relative, the king of Játiva. In turn, it was taken in 504 A.H./1111 A.D. by the Almoravids, under the leadership of Sīr Ibn Abī Bakr Ibn Tāshfīn, and then by Alfonso Henriques, king of Portugal, in 543 A.H./1148 A.D. Though the Almohades, under the leadership of Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf Ibn 'Abd al-Muʾmin, tried to recapture it in 580 A.H./1184 A.D., they failed. The date assigned to this attempt by Ahmad Makki, 679 A.H./1280 A.D., must be wrong, because Abū Yaʿqūb Yūsuf died on 28 Rabiʿ al-Awwal, 580 A.H. It seems to me that Makki is confusing Yūsuf Ibn ʿAbd al-Muʾmin Ibn 'Abd al-Qaḍa, 706 A.H., and Yūsuf Ibn Yaʿqūb Ibn ʿAbd al-Haqq, who died on 1 Dhū al-Qaʿda, 706 A.H.

Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī and other scholars called Ibn Bassām. There are in fact many literary scholars called Ibn Bassām, which leads sources astray and causes them to attribute al-Dhakhīra to the wrong one. Among those who commit this error is Hajji Khalīfah, who attributes al-Dhakhīra to the Baghdadī poet, Abū
al-Hasan Ibn Bassam al-Bassam. I think that Hajji Khalifah confuses the two scholars because of the similarity of the kunyas and the isms, in spite of the great differences between them in respect of period and homeland. Whilst Isma'il Bashá al-Baghdádi draws our attention to the mistake of Hajji Khalifah, he nevertheless makes a similar mistake in considering that Ibn Bassam was from Santa Maria.

Ibn Bassam himself points out in al-Dhakhíra that the similarity between his name and that of the Baghdadí poet causes some confusion. He narrates an instance in this regard which also shows his sense of humour and his quick wit. He says: "When for the first time I went to see Ibn 'Abdun, the minister, who was surrounded by his companions, after having heard my name from certain of my friends, he asked me: "Are you really 'Alí Ibn Bassam?" 'Yes', I replied. 'Do you still satirise your father, Abú Ja'far, and your brother, Ja'far in your verses?' he asked. I asked him: 'Are you 'Abd al-Majíd?' 'Yes', he replied. I asked again: 'Does Ibn Munádhír still write love-poetry to you?' All who were present laughed at this riposte. I have said that 'Alí Ibn Bassam was one of the most intelligent men of his time, and that no-one, whether Amir, Wazír, or even a member of the poet's own family, young or old, was safe from his satire."

'Abd al-Majíd was one of the most handsome people of his time, and Ibn Munádhír loved him and composed love-poetry to him, such as the ode which contains this verse:

فلو ان الأيام أخذدن حيا
لعلك أخذدن عبد المجيد
'Abd al-Majīd died in the prime of his youth at the age of twenty.

This anecdote seems to indicate that Ibn 'Abdūn was on good terms with Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī, probably on account of his education and literary reputation.

al-Bustānī mentions a third Ibn Bassām. He said: "We do not know anything about Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Bassām, except that he was skilful in his job as muhtasib, probably in Egypt in the thirteenth or fourteenth century". 16

A modern scholar Muhammad Ṭāhir Ibn 'Ashūr, who edited Sarīqat al-Mutanabbi wa-Maṣhkīl Ma'ānīhī, ascribed this book to Ibn Bassām; he says in his introduction: "As far as the identity of the author of this book is concerned, I am of the same opinion as other scholars, i.e. that he is the Ibn Bassām who also wrote al-Dhakhīra fī Maḥāsin Ahl al-Jazīra, and I am inclined to rely on the statement on the last page of the manuscript: "written by Ibn Bassām al-Nahwī, the author of al-Dhakhīra".

It seems to me that Ibn 'Ashūr’s attribution of this book to our Ibn Bassām is mistaken, because Ibn Bassām does not mention it in the list of books written by him. The editor of al-Dhakhīra, Ihsān Abbās, rejects the attribution of it to Ibn Bassām, even though he gives no reason for doing so. No other source mentions it as by Ibn Bassām. Moreover, Ibn 'Ashūr mentions three other persons called Ibn Bassām. As has already been said, Ibn Bassām was born in Shantarīn, and we know from his own statement in the introduction to al-Dhakhīra that he spent his youth there. There
is disagreement, in the scanty sources, as to the date of his birth. One account gives this as 477 A.H.\textsuperscript{17}, without mentioning any authority, while another source says that this was the year in which Ibn Bassām left Shantarīn for Lisbon\textsuperscript{18}. Since Ibn Bassām himself says that he was in Lisbon in that year, it can hardly have been the year of his birth\textsuperscript{19}. Ibn Bassām's statement also appears to refute Muhammad Ābdallāh Īnān's attribution of his departure for Lisbon to the year 480 A.H.\textsuperscript{20}.

This mistake may be ascribed to his negligent reading of al-Dhakhirā; he puts forward no evidence for his assertion. Furthermore Nykl's hypothesis that Ibn Bassām was born in 462 A.H./1069 A.D.\textsuperscript{21}, in which Chejne follows him\textsuperscript{22}, does not hold water, because it would entail his having been no more than fifteen years old when (as he reports) he attended the literary majālis in the palace of the Banū al-Aftas; this would demand an unlikely degree of maturity. The exact year of his birth is not known but it was probably about 450 A.H. This means that he would have been about 27 years old when he began attending the literary majālis. Ibn Bassām frequently travelled between Shantarīn and Lisbon during the seven or eight years that he remained in Portugal. He left reluctantly, shortly before the capture of Shantarīn by Alfonso VI, king of Castile, in 485 A.H./1092 A.D.\textsuperscript{23}

In al-Dhakhirā he vividly depicts his hardships and bewilderment, and the prevailing political disorder, comparing it with the ease and comfort, and the political stability, that he had previously known:
"God (who is exalted) knows that this book issues only from a breast the ribs of which are injured, and from thought the sagacity of which is fading, amid an age whose colour changes like that of the chameleon. I retired from Santarem, in the far West, with notched edge and frightened breast, after my resources, old and new, were spent, and both external and internal things had suffered depletion, by reason of the continuous incursions of the peoples of the West upon us in the middle of that land. We were secure there, through nobility of descent, against lack of income, and the resources that we had stored away insured us against disturbance in the land until the Westerners destroyed that order for us. If a sandgrouse is left alone at night it will sleep. When fear increased there, I hastened out with my family onto the highway, towards a desert in which the eye disbelieves the ear and in which sufferings are donned as a garment".

When Ibn Bassam came to Seville he was very dejected and the prey of many worries, as aptly expressed by the verse of al-Mutanabbi:

"The greater part of my soul was gone upon my arrival; I hoped that I could live on what was left of it".

From the above quotation it can be inferred that Ibn Bassam criticised the society of Seville, bitterly bemoaning its people's complete preoccupation with material things, and their lack of interest in culture. As he says: "I had no society but my solitude, no sustenance but the remains of my travelling provisions;
culture was to be found there even less than loyalty. The
cultivated man was rarer than the winter moon, and the value of
everyone was merely what he possessed. The leaders of the society
of every city were its ignoramuses and the sole aim of every
individual was to keep his possessions secure, even if this caused
his dignity to be dented, and to increase his gold and silver at
the expense of his religion and honour”. 27

However, his hardships did not last for long. A new prince appeared
with an interest in literature, to whom Ibn Bassām dedicated
al-Dhakhīra. That Ibn Bassām did not specify the name of this
prince has baffled scholars. Nykl claims that the name was not
legible in the manuscript used by Dozy, but that it is likely that
the Dhakhīra was dedicated to Abū Bakr Ibn Ibrāhīm, governor of
Granada, the husband of ʿAlī Ibn Yusuf’s sister. 28 Ihsān ʿAbbās
thinks that the dedicatee may have been Sīr Ibn Abī Bakr, who
recaptured Seville while Ibn Bassām was writing his book. 29 We
prefer Ihsān ʿAbbās’s theory to that of Nykl: first, because it is
more plausible that he should have dedicated his book to Sīr Ibn
Abī Bakr, with whom he was living in Seville, than to Abū Bakr Ibn
Ibrāhīm, who was living in Granada, as Nykl mentions elsewhere;
secondly, there is no evidence that Ibn Bassām ever went to Granada.
If he did go to Granada and dedicate his book to its ruler, why
should he not have mentioned this in his book, as he mentioned his
first meeting with Ibn Abūn? Thirdly, Ibn Bassām, in his
introduction, describes the unpleasant time that he at first spent
in Seville until the emergence of a new prince, whom he speaks of as
embodying the hopes of the poor, as revivifying knowledge, and as
representing a refuge for scholars. It seems more probable, since
Ibn Bassām says a great deal about this new king, that he may have made him the dedicatee of his book.

Ibn Bassām lived through the end of the period of the Mulūk al-Tamā'īf, the whole of the Almoravid period, and the beginning of the Almohad period. Although during the first of these periods al-Andalus showed clear signs of military degeneration, economic instability, social disintegration and political conflict, as far as poetry was concerned, it entered upon the most brilliant period in its history. This era was very fertile and prosperous for literature, the kings were very generous to men of letters and were also often themselves literary men and critics. This may explain why many more distinguished poets, literary men and philosophers appear in this period than at any other time during the history of al-Andalus, with the exception of the final period of the Caliphate.

Ibn Bassām was born in this literary environment; he spent some time in Badajoz with the Banū al-Aftas, and in al-Dhakhīra he speaks of their success in tempting poets and literary scholars to come and dwell there. Praising al-Muzaffar, he says that he was "the unique literary king of his time, who compiled and composed a sublime and distinguished work, in 50 volumes, entitled al-Muzaffarī, containing arts, sciences, biographies, and everything else that is related to literature; this made him immortal, and unique among poets and literary men. I will devote a chapter to him in this book. If it were about the ranks of the 'ulama', I should regard him as the furthest pole and purpose of it. He was a severe critic of poetry and would say that anyone whose poetry was not like that of
al-Mutanabbi or Abū al-‘Alā’ would do better not to recite it". While Ibn Bassām was in Lisbon he met Abū ʿAmīr Ibn al-ʿAṣīlī, whom he described thus: "Abū ʿAmīr was a traveller and universally regarded as a poet and writer. He was said to have a noble origin. He visited Lisbon while I was there, bringing letters of introduction from al-Mansūr to its ruler, in whose court he was welcomed and well-treated. I visited him for the first time in his house, where he had a company of literary men with him.32

Ibn Bassām frequented men of letters, and in their company he established a good relationship with the minister and jurisprudent, Abū Abd Allāh Muḥammad Ibn Ibrāhīm. Ibn Bassām praised him as "the core of the heart of that clime" and said that his assembly in Lisbon was "the target of the pith of poetry and prose".

"He was killed unjustly there - may God elevate his rank and kill his killers - and when that bright and shining moon was eclipsed, and all of a sudden the horizon became dark, on that day in the West the hands of calamity were unfastened, for men had lost the one who used to enlighten them with his views, which they would accept as the stars accept the rays of a sun".33

Later, in 480 A.H., Ibn Bassām left Lisbon for Seville, where he met the king al-Muʿtamīd Ibn ʿAbbād, during whose reign it was famous for its literature, and literary men prospered there. One of the scholars whom he met there was Abū al-Ḥasan al-Baghdādī, known as al-Fikīk. Ibn Bassām describes him thus: "al-Fikīk was a short, ugly man; once I saw him wearing a red and white striped tāq, with a green turtūr on his head and a blue turban
wrapped round it. He was reciting a poem before al-Mu'tamid, containing the line

وانت سليمان في ملكه وبين يديك أنا الهدوء

and he made those who were present laugh. I also heard him recite, in the course of an ode on al-Mu'tamid:

 أبي القاسم الملك المعظم قدره

 لقد أصحت حمس بعلبك جننة

 أرخيف أعلام الشهاء وأرقام

 وشفت ما أعطثت ناقة بضأ

 لنشر صياها دائما أتسنم

Furthermore, while in Seville, Ibn Bassam made frequent visits to the house of Abū Bakr al-Khūlānī, which was a meeting-place for literary men. He said: "I was at the house of Abū Bakr al-Khūlānī, the astronomer, in Seville, one day with a group of literary men, and we started talking about witty quotations in panegyric and satire, and one of them recited the quotation that came to his mind from what al-Hamdawī said about al-Taylasān and Sa'id's ewe:

 وسائلتي من الحسن بن وهب وعما فيه من كرم وكثير

Then one of them cited the work of another poet, who had quoted al-Nābigha's verse:

 يا سائلتي عن خالد عدي به

 كالأخلاقي غذاة غيمائمه

 جفت أعيني وأملع ساعد

While we were engaged in this rarefied conversation, al-Fikkīk came in and said that better than anything we had recited were some verses that he claimed to have composed, satirising al-Badī'.
The company did not reply to him, apparently because he was so foolish and so brash, and al-Fikkîk became extremely self-satisfied, because the members of the assembly had said nothing to contradict him. This made me angry, and I said: You have said nothing, and those who are present have not been silenced by you. You have tried only to imitate the scribe of Bakr, who quoted some of Imru' al-Qays' verses, but you have failed to equal him. He said:

The foregoing provides us with vivid examples of Ibn Bassâm's interest in attending literary gatherings, and playing an important part as a literary critic in them.

In Seville he was in constant touch with literary men, among them Abu Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Jabbar al-Siqilli, of whom he said: "I was also one of those who came to al-Mutamid, and he was of the number of those whom I met and talked to and whose poetry I listened to."35

In Badajoz, Ibn Bassâm met Abu Bakr Ibn al-Attâr al-Yabisî and heard him recite the following poem:
Later still, Ibn Bassām left Badajoz for Córdoba, to try to earn his living by his writing. Here again he encountered numerous literary figures: "While I was in Córdoba at the beginning of my visit there in 494 A.H., Hīlāl Ibn al-Adīb entered and caused me to listen to some wonderful poetry by this Abū Bakr". He also says elsewhere that he was in Córdoba in 493. He also met Ahmad Ibn Qāsim al-Muhaddith, about whom he said: "He was the eyeball of the age and the cheek of the time in his prominence in prose and poetry". He had a considerable literary correspondence with him. He also met Abū Bakr Ibn Ābd al-ʿAzīz, whom he described as "the blowing of the East and South winds of excellence, and the furthest and the closest point of this craft".

He remained in Córdoba for a long time, attempting to read all the books available and maintaining his literary contacts. In 503 A.H., Ibn Bassām returned to Seville, as he mentions in his chapter on Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muhammad Ibn Abī al-Khīṣāl: "I had isolated myself, in order to write this part of this compilation, throughout the year 503 A.H. When I came to transmit the writings that I had found of the scribes of this eastern part of al-Andalus, I did not find
anything by this man either in prose or in verse. One of my
friends wrote to him about this and also urged me to correspond
with him there. He received our two letters while he was on
his way to Seville with a company of soldiers". 41

Here again he was concerned to earn his living by writing. The
amount of money that he received from the rich elite was, in
Dozy's view, merely the equivalent of the fees that contemporary
authors received from their publishers.

He became one of the most prominent men of letters. He died at
an advanced age, in 542 A.H./1147-1148 A.D. 42 Al-Baghdādī's
statement in ʾIdāh al-Maknūn, that he died in 58643, can hardly be
accepted.

There is no record of Ibn Bassām's having travelled outside
al-Andalus; his movements seem to have been restricted to a
(fairly extensive) circuit of its principal cities, Lisbon,
Seville, Córdoba. He states clearly, in his account of Abū Ja'far
Ahmad Ibn al-Dawdīn al-Balansī, that he was in Lisbon in 477 A.H.: 44

هُوَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ لُقَيْتِهِ وَشَافِيْهِ، وَأَمْلِى عَلَى نَسْمَهْ وَنَثرَهُ بَالْعِشْوَةٍ، سَنَةٌ
سِعَ وَسِعَةٌ، وَمَا أَنْشَدْنِي مِنْ شَعْرِهِ فِي الْغُرْمِ قُوْلُهُ:
كَيْفَ الْثَّصَابِيْ عَلَى وَقَارِي
أَطْلُعُ لِي مِنْ دُجَّاهِ بِدْرَا
لَمْ يُدْرِكَ مَا لِبَلِةَ السَّرَار
فَحَادَ بَيْ عَنْ طَرِيقِ نَسْكَيْ

علمِيُّ فِي الْهَوَى عَلِيْ
فُجَادِ بَيْ عَنْ طَرِيقِ نَسْكَيْ
It is evident from what he says that this journey was for the express purpose of talking to literary men, attending their Majālis, collecting their poetry and prose and discussing literary matters with them.

He was a frequent visitor to the majlis of the wazīr al-Faqīh Abū Ābd Allāḥ Muḥammad Ibn Iḥrām al-Fihrī, in Lisbon:

"..."
He also heard the poetry of al-Shaykh Abū al-Hasan 'Alī Ibn Ismā'īl al-Qurashi al-Ishbūnī through the good offices of Abū Čabd Allāh Ibn Ibrāhīm. Of this man he says:

In Lisbon, too, he had friendly relations with Abū 'Amir Ibn al-Asli, whose house he frequented, together with a group of literary men:
Sometimes, however, Ibn Bassām does not name his source for his material or indicate where or when he acquired it, for example: "more than one of the literary men of our age has told me" and again, "one whose information I do not reject told me, on the authority of al-Faqīh Abū al-Muṭarrif al-Shābī on the authority of al-Faqīh Abū ʿUmar Ibn Īsā."48

**Ibn Bassam in Seville for the first time**

Ibn Bassām went to Seville (for the first time) during the reign of al-Mutamid Ibn ʿAbbaḍ. Seville was then a great centre for the learned and the literary men, and Ibn Bassām was able to meet a large (if unspecified) number of them, evidently at a number of different majālis, one of these figures being Abū al-Ḥasan al-Baghdādī, known as al-Fikkīk:49

من جملة هذه الطائفة الطازرة المذكورة، على الجزيرة، ومع بديهة كانت له قويّة، توفي على الروية، استشهد عدّة قصائد، لغير واحد، من أهالي الشام والعراق، وغيرها من تلك الأفكار، وكان مع ذلك حدث الحوار، مليح الشندر، يَلْبِي وَيَضْحِكُ مِن حضْر، وَلا يُضْحِكُ هُوِ إِذَا نَذَرُ، وَفِيهِ يقُولُ النحْلِيَّ:

لَوْ بِعِيْدُ يُومًا فَكِيدَكَ
وَبَيْنَ فِكْمِهِ دَرْهَ
فَرِيتُ مِن يَشْتَريّهُ
بَخْرِيَةَ أَلْفِ مَرْحَة
Another was Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Jabbar Ibn Hamdis al-Siqilli, to whom he devoted a short account:

He met Abu Bakr again, in 486 A.H., at Badajoz:

Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Attar al-YabisI al-Dar: 51

and was impressed by his poetry, which he found to be both elegant and captivating. He met him again in 486 A.H. at Badajoz.
He met Abū Bakr al-Khūlānī, whom he mentions in his account of Abū al-Jalīl al-Mursī.\footnote{53}

Ibn Bassām in Córdoba

One of those whom he met in Córdoba was Abū al-ʿAbbas Ahmad Ibn Qasim al-Muhaddith. This meeting took place in 493 A.H.:\footnote{54}

He also met, at this time, Abū Ḥātim al-Ḥijārī.\footnote{55}

He also met, in 494 A.H. (still on his first visit) Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, with whom he subsequently maintained a correspondence:
He also met Abū Bakr al-Dānī at Córdoba:

He conversed with the wāzīr Abū Marwān ʿAbd al-Malik Ibn Muhammad Ibn Shammākh, with whom he had discussions and exchanged verses.

Ibn Bassām’s return to Seville and his settling there

Here he frequently visited the Qādī Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī, from whom he received a generous amount of material. In his account of Abū al-Mughīra Ibn Hazm, Ibn Bassām says:
Other notable figures with whom he mixed included Abū Ishāq Ibn Khafāja: 59

The wazīr and secretary Ibn al-Qasim 61
ولكن النواذب زاهيت ضمايري، وضريت خواطري، فما دفع الي عفوا علقيته ووعيته، وما كانت فيه آدنى كلمة رجوعه وأرجيته، ولا بأس من الزيادة أن انتجه سبيل، والله نظر جميل، وفيه مطلع وشامل.

\[\text{and Ibn Quzman: 62}\]

ومن شعر أبي بكر بن قزمان مما أنشدنه لنفسه، قوله:

ركزوا السيل من الخيول وركزوا فوق العوالي السمر زرق لنطاف بيض الروعس من الحباب السطافي وتجلوا الغدران من مذاهيم وانشقني أيضا لنفسه:

قلت للعين حين أذرت على القد دموعا لا تستفيق انهمالا جزعا من محدود أحوركم حير بالا وكم جنى بليلالا لا عرومي مثال ما لن عناني والمحيه كما رأيت البيلالا فأجابك لقد أهلت مشالا هو أخاء من الهلال منبالا ان بدر السماء يطلع للأيام ممس ومصحا وزوالا وإذا ما استمر آي وقد دام اكتشافا من أن يغيب وصلالا وهو البدر قد أخذ صالالا واجتنابا كما اخذ كمالالا يتوارى من العيون نهارا ومع الليل لا يزور خيالاً

وأنشقني له أيضا:

لا تطمئن إلى أحد واحذر وشر وأستعد فالكل كقلب مؤسد الا إذا وجدوا اسد

ومن شعر أبي الحسن علي بن عبد العزيز بن زيادة الله الطبيبي، مما أخذته عنه، قوله:

كم بالوزادج يوم بين من رشـا يبهو عليه وشاح جالل قلق وكرم برامة من ريم يفافتنسـا لفان يشنيه عن توقيعنا الفرى وترجس كفرن السيف ساهرـٌ معـلا بنسيم عرفه عيبـٌ
والنجم كتبت كبيرنا بها الأفق
في أوجه الحادة الـزمن تأثبـل
يكاد ينجب من أمواجها الغـصـق
ما النعم عليه الثور والبـورق
خادمته وشباـب الأنـدلـس
ففي فحية كنوجوم السـعد أوجـهم
نيلن بـرقـاقة صـفـراء صافيـة
يسعى بها مرهـف كالفـص نـمـه

2. Ibn Sa'Id, 1, 417.


6. Anwar Chejne, 277.


10. al-Himyar, 113-114.


12. Hajji Khalifa, 1, 825.
Ibn al-Abbār, R. 188. al-Khattāb al-Baghdaďī, 12, 63.
15. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 144. Ibid, 3, 1, 498.
17. ‘Umar Riḍā, 3, 43.
18. A. González Palencia, 288.
20. Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh ʿInān, 418.
22. Chejne, 277.
24. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 19.
27. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 20.
29. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 25.
32. Ibid, 3, 2, 857-862.
33. Ibid, 3, 2, 862-866.
34. Ibid, 4, 1, 368-370.
35. Ibid, 4, 1, 320.
36. Ibid, 4, 1, 376.
37. Ibid, 2, 2, 536.
38. Ibid, 1, 2, 905.
39. Ibid, 2, 2, 535.
41.  âm Makkî, 220.
42.  Maqqarî, 3, 458.
43.  Ismā'îl Bāshā, 3, 541.
44.  Ibn Bassām, 3, 2, 703.
45.  Ibid, 3, 2, 865-866.
46.  Ibid, 2, 2, 786-787.
47.  Ibid, 2, 2, 797.
48.  Ibid, 3, 2, 862-863.
49.  Ibid, 2, 2, 806.
50.  Ibid, 1, 2, 848.
51.  Ibid, 4, 1, 368-369.
52.  Ibid, 4, 1, 320.
53.  Ibid, 4, 1, 376.
54.  Ibid, 2, 1, 464.
55.  Ibid, 2, 1, 515.
56.  Ibid, 1, 1, 905.
57.  Ibid, 3, 2, 654.
58.  Ibid, 3, 2, 673.
59.  Ibid, 1, 2, 840.
60.  Ibid, 1, 1, 172.
62.  Ibid, 2, 2, 711.
63.  Ibid, 2, 1, 322.
64.  Ibid, 2, 2, 785.
IBN BASSĀM'S EDUCATION AND LITERARY CAREER
The second half of the eleventh century and the first half of the twelfth century witnessed great cultural activities, represented by a large number of talented men of letters and poets. This movement was not confined to an elite, but was the common possession of many of the people of al-Andalus, as we have already seen in the previous chapter. The Mulūk al-Tawā'if and their ministers had an important role in sustaining the cultural movement of this hundred years; in addition, a very large number of the people of al-Andalus participated in composing poetry and writing prose.

Each of them cultivated more of the sciences and arts of their time than their Eastern contemporaries, reading every important book which was available in those fields. Almost all classes were acquainted with their heritage and possessed a good understanding of the culture of that century; thus a great number of literary men and poets emerged, surpassing the contemporary Udamū of the East. Among those on whose superiority their contemporaries and successors agreed was Abū al-Hasan ʿAlī Ibn Bassām al-Shantarīnī, the author of al-Dhakhīra fī Mahāsin Ahl al-Jazīra. Although this is the only book that remains to us from his large and varied output, it is one of the greatest importance, because it contains a wealth of literary information that is indispensable for the study of the poetry and prose of the period. No-one can read it without recognising that Ibn Bassām was a man of tremendous erudition. No doubt, he received as wide an education in the arts
and sciences as any other men of his time and place, but recognising where his true aptitude lay, he restricted himself in his writing to literature and the history associated with this literature. One cannot really say that Ibn Bassām is a good source for historical data about the wars and events of his time which appear in his book; for these he depended principally on Ibn Hayyān, one of the most famous and reliable authorities of the period. He was the first to write a specialist work on a particular period, concentrating upon both its history and its literature and the close connection between them. He had no wish to write on the whole literature of the Andalusian people from the conquest to his own time; he confined himself to the fifth century A.H. He kept strictly to these limits except in Part Four, which he devoted to the Ḍahīra of the East and of Qayrawān who travelled to al-Andalus, studied there, and became integrated into its population.

Ibn Bassām's writing on subjects other than literature in al-Dhakhīra, both in prose and verse, his linguistic, grammatical and prosodical observations, and his concern with Arab genealogies, are of secondary importance. He displayed a patriotic defence of the excellence of the people of al-Andalus in literature - in fact this was his avowed purpose in writing al-Dhakhīra - but he did not neglect the heritage of the East. One finds him quoting al-Mutanabbī, Imru' al-Qays, Abū Tammām, al-Buhtūrī, al-Maʿarrī, Ibn al-Ri'mī, Ibn al-Muṣṭazz, al-Parāzdaq, Jarīr, al-Khansā', among others, in elucidation, or illustration of his criticism, and for the sake of comparing the poetry of the East with the poetry of the West. The examples that he presents are very numerous, but, except
on rare occasions, he gives no reasons for his approval or disapproval of the poetry or prose that he quotes; he merely gives what may be considered as his general view of literature, expressed invariably in intricate sajj. Another factor which gives Ibn Bassām and his book great historical and literary value is that he includes in it large portions of Ibn Hayyān's Kitāb al-Matīn, which is lost; al-Dhakhīra represents the most important repository of its contents. Ibn Bassām relied heavily upon it; especially for his historical material, being himself no great historian; where, however, he found that Ibn Hayyān's account was incomplete, he added information of his own.

Let us, however, return to Ibn Bassām's cultural background. Ibn Khaldūn illustrates this in a chapter entitled "The various methods of education in the Islamic countries": "The Spanish method is instruction in reading and writing as such. That is what they pay attention to in the instruction (of children). However, since the Qur'ān is the basis and foundation of (all) that and the source of Islam and (all) the sciences, they make it the basis of instruction, but they do not restrict their instruction of children exclusively to (the Qur'ān). They also bring in (other subjects) mainly poetry and composition, and they give the children an expert knowledge of Arabic and teach them a good handwriting. They do not stress teaching of the Qur'ān more than the other subjects. In fact, they are more concerned with teaching handwriting than any other subject until the child reaches manhood. He then has some experience and knowledge of the Arabic language and poetry. He has an excellent knowledge of handwriting, and he would have a thorough acquaintance with scholarship in general, if the tradition of scholarly instruction (still) existed in (Spain), but he does not, because
the tradition no longer exists there. Thus, (present day Spanish children) obtain no further (knowledge) than what their primary instruction provides. It is enough for those whom God guides. It prepares (them for further studies), in the event that a teacher (of them) can be found.¹

¹In his Rihlah judge Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabi made a remarkable statement about instruction, which retains (the best of) the old, and presents (some good) new features. He placed instruction in Arabic and poetry ahead of all the other sciences, as in the Spanish method, since, he said, poetry is the archive of the Arabs. Poetry and Arabic philology should be taught first because of the (existing) corruption of the language. From there, the (student) should go on to arithmetic and study it assiduously, until he knows its basic norms. He should then go on to study the Qurʾān, because with his previous preparation, it will be easy for him." (Ibn al-'Arabi) continued: "How thoughtless are our compatriots in that they teach children the Qurʾan when they are first starting out. They read things they do not understand and work hard at something that is not as important for them as other matters". He concluded: "The student should study successively the principles of Islam, the principles of jurisprudence, disputation, and then the Prophetic traditions and sciences connected with them". He also forbade teaching two disciplines at the same time, save to the student with a good mind and sufficient energy.

"This is judge Abū Bakr's advice. It is a good method indeed.
However, accepted custom is not favourable to it, and custom has
greater power over condition (than anything else). Accepted custom
gives preference to the teaching of the Qur'an. The reason is the
desire for the blessing and reward (in the other world resulting
from knowledge of the Qur'an) and a fear of the things that might
affect children in the folly of youth and harm them and keep
them from acquiring knowledge. They might miss the chance to learn
the Qur'an. As long as they remain at home they are amenable to
authority. When they have grown up and shaken off the yoke of
authority, the tempests of young manhood often cast them upon the
shores of wrongdoing. Therefore, while the children are still at
home and under the yoke of authority, one seizes the opportunity
to teach them the Qur'an, so that they will not remain without
knowledge of it. If one could be certain that a child would
continue to study and accept instruction (when he has grown up),
the method mentioned by the judge would be the most suitable one
ever devised in East or West.²

Children often received much of their instruction at
home. Ibn al-Fariqī says:

وكان زاهدا فاضلاً

Ibn Ḥayyān also mentions an example:

وكان ل محمد بن عبد الله بن مسيرة أخ من ذوي الفضل يسمى إبراهيم ويكتب أبا

اسحق، سمع من أبيه ومن الخشني وابن وشاح، ورحل مع أبيه عبد الله فسمع

من جماعة.⁴
The mosque: the mosque played an influential role in Islamic learning. In fact, it constitutes the most ancient centre of learning in the Islamic world. The mosques of al-Andalus were no exception; in them were taught Qur'ānic exegesis, the science of the recensions of the Qur'ān, jurisprudence, Tradition, logic, philosophy, linguistics, and the natural sciences: medicine, pharmacy, botany. 5

Ibn Khaldūn has described the primary stage of a child's education, and it is likely that Ibn Bassām received this kind of education as a boy. We have, however, no information about his early teachers. As he grew up, he seems to have read any book which was available to him; we know that he was from a wealthy family and so had the opportunity of buying books, and it is possible that there was a private library in his parents' house. He travelled to other cities in search of education, which he acquired both from books and from meetings with literary men, ministers, and poets, in Santarem, Lisbon, Seville and Córdoba. Such educational travel was general, and encouraged, under the Mulūk al-Tawa'if. Ibn Bassām devoted a good deal of time and effort to acquiring his education in this way. He had valuable contacts with many learned men, but unfortunately he does not always specify the sources from which he derived his information, often contenting himself with such vague statements as: "More than one of the poets or ministers of Seville told me ...".

There is no trace in Ibn Bassām's writing of any teacher under whom he may have studied, except for one possible reference, where
he quotes something on the authority of Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabî. It is a distinct possibility that Ibn al-'Arabî may have been a teacher of his, but it is also possible, as I have said before, that he studied entirely by himself. At all events, this is the single clue we have as to the sources of his education. He himself tells us of the efforts that he made, and the pains that he took, in producing his book in the form in which he wished it to be:

Ibn Bassām left behind him at least seven works, some of which were poetry and some prose. Unfortunately, all but the first of those listed below are lost; however, it is probably the most valuable book for the literary history of al-Andalus.

1. Kitâb al-Dhakhîra fî Mahasin Ahl al-Jazîra, in four volumes. This, the only book of his that has come down to us, is his best-known work.

2. Kitâb al-‘titamîd Alâ mā Sahha min Shi‘r al-Mu’tamid Ibn ‘Abbâd. He collected in this book the poetry authentically attributed to al-Mu’tamid. It is mentioned in his chapter on al-Mu’tamid in
al-Dhakhīra; he probably found that he could not include all of Ibn ‘Abbād’s poetry and the information about him in al-Dhakhīra and so devoted a separate book to him.

3. Kitāb Nukhat al-Ikhtiyār min Ash’ar Dhi al-Wizarataynu Abī Bakr b. ‘Ammār. In this book he presented a selection of Ibn ‘Ammār’s poetry. It may be the same work as that referred to by Ibn al-Abbār as Akhbār Ibn ‘Ammār.9


6. Kitāb Dhakhīrat al-Dhakhīra. He mentions this book in his chapter of al-Dhakhīra on Ibn Sārā al-Shantarīnī: “I have seen many pieces of his satire which surpassed in number the stones of the desert ... and I put some of this in my book Dhakhīrat al-Dhakhīra.”

"ولقد رأيت النسخ العامة مقطوعات في السجاء، تربى على حض الدهناء، وهو في صف مأذ الرس، نافذ الحكم، طويت عليه كتحا، وأضربت عن ذكره..."
Ibn Bassam commented on these verses:

There is a citation in the Bada'i al-Bada'ih of Ibn Zafir that causes Nazha Ja'far al-Musawi to conclude that Ibn Bassam had a teaching circle in which the Dhakhira was studied: "The Shaykh Abu al-Khattab 'Umar Ibn al-Hasan b. Dihya al-Kalbi informed me, by licence of al-Ustadh al-Mufid Abu Bakr Muhammad b. al-Qasim Khalaf Yusuf al-Shantarini, known as Ibn al-Abrash, on the authority of Abu al-Hasan b. Bassam in the Kitab al-Dhakhira."
This may indeed indicate something of the sort, but it is unlikely that Ibn Bassām had many students, if he was able to devote himself to his writing. In any case, it is not clear why the Dhakhīra, which was presumably available freely, required subsequent authority for its statements. It would seem that the point of the citation might be to establish that Ibn al-Abrash was a student of Ibn Bassām.

"Although I have not cared for poetry as a vehicle, adopted it as a source of income, or become accustomed to it as a lodging or a resort, I have nevertheless visited it at times and glanced at it with interest but not obsession, anxious to preserve my soul's nobility from its humble status and raising the tread of the sole of my foot above its (lowly) position; when its wine was mixed and its cups went round, I have not tasted it but only smelt it, and I have been a boon companion only in conversation".11

In his introduction he expresses certain opinions about poetry, objecting to it in several cases on moral grounds; thus, it was not necessarily merely his lack of talent and inspiration in this field that caused him to value poetry less highly than prose.

Ibn Sa'īd, in his Kitāb al-Mughrib, quotes three bayts of a poem of Ibn Bassām, which he says represent the higher level of his poetry.

إلا يكن محمد فلألن غم على مسما
تغشى به الحديقة والمدام
ولا تكل بروته ضابتا
He goes on to say, rather oddly: "this is of a high class. His prose, in the Kitāb al-Dhakhīra, also indicates his class, but the poetry of his own that he cites in it is inferior".14

These verses, in which Ibn Bassām refers to a pleasant, carefree, comfortable existence, come, according to Nazha Ja'far al-Misawi, from that early stage of his life, before he left Santarem for the miseries of travel and eventual residence in Seville.15

These two apparently contradictory statements must mean that, although Ibn Bassām was capable of producing poetry of a commendable level of artistry, in Ibn Sa'id's opinion, he did not, for whatever reason, include any of his better poetry in al-Dhakhīra. There are parts of three poems of Ibn Bassām quoted in the Dhakhīra. One of these is a poetic epistle that he sent to Ābu Bakr b. Ābd al-'Azīz, requesting him to send him some of his rasā'il, in order that he might use them in his book:

```
أبا بكر المجتبي للادب
أبلغ فيك الزمان الخلوون
وجعل في الفهم بالحاضرين
آرك بعين آراهم سبيها
لقد كان جيل الوري أدهما
الي آن تيتم عنك الزمان
فجئت كما شت ذا مقول
فوا حزنا لزناد كنبا
وأما كان جيلك هذا الآنام
```
This poem, being as it is simply a versified letter, is of no very high quality. It is extravagant in its praise of the addressee, speaking in the highest terms of his ancestry, and his distinction in literature – which was in all probability unknown personally to Ibn Bassam, since although he had heard a great deal about Ibn \textit{Abd al-\textit{Aziz}, he had experienced great difficulty in contacting him. It takes the form of a conventional \textit{mad\textit{\textit{ih}} poem, as might be expected, and its generous use of \textit{badi} is typical of its time.

The second poem of his that he includes is one on the return of one Abu al-Hakam \textit{Amr Ibn Muhdij} from a journey. Again, this is an unremarkable work, full of the usual hyperbole, and significant only in so far as it helps to illustrate Ibn Bassam's wide circle of acquaintance, and the customary correspondence that was maintained among this acquaintance.
Ibn Bassām includes in the Dhakhīra a number of references by the authors with whom he deals to his own poetry. For example, he quotes a poem by Abū al-’Abbās, rhyming with his own name, in which Abū al-’Abbās extravagantly praises some verses that Ibn Bassām had addressed to him. The verses in question are not known to survive, since Ibn Bassām did not record them in the Dhakhīra:

There is another poem by Abū al-’Abbās in which he describes Ibn Bassām’s poetry:
There is further praise of Ibn Bassām's poetry in a gāṣida by Abū Bakr b. 'Ubāda al-Qazzāz, one of the best known of the Washshahun of al-Andalus.

Ibn Bassam introduces it immediately after quoting Abu al-ʿAbbas' poem:

 già منيفًا على السماكين سام
قد خبرت الوري فلم أفهـم الا
وتأملت منك نكتة فيغـندا
شئ ذهني في أن يرى بصرًا مـت
ان تتحك محدة فائت زهـنـر
أو حيـكر صيد المها فابن حجر
أو حايـى الدمار فابن خدام
فأبى الطيب البعيد المرامـي

Having been told of Ibn Bassām's high opinion of his work, Abū al-ʿAbbās replied with some fulsome praise of his own, in which he commends Ibn Bassām's general literary distinction, and compares him favourably with several eminent literary figures of the past.

لكا بلغه جمعي لهذا التصنيف خاطئي برقة استفتها بهذى الأبيات:
با من تكلّف جمع المجد في ورق
أنا أناديك جهراً غير تعريض
ذهبت عصرك يا من شعره ذهـب
بالمدختات فأتبعنا بتفضـيـض
فشبه شيرك مثلي بفـنـشنا
يا سيدي ومـمـادي ، تاب بقـاـرك
ودام علاوـك ، تكلفت من العناية بتنويبي ما
دل على محتده الكرِيم ، ونصاب السليم ، على إفتمائكم من المجد إلى درجة

أو رمت مداحا لم تكن متطلبا
وحرصًا في أفق كل المرام

ما ليس في المدعو من أحكام
 حدقا بما تأتي ومعرفة بـه...
ساتها قومٍ، وطاعها هضيم، ولولا شقتى يتمبيزك، وظهورك في هذه الصناعة
وتبريزك، ما اجترأت على أن أجري بما كتب الله به كما، وإن أختُنك
متباهين بها حرفًا، ففي تجري منك على يدي نفاد، وإننا إذ عليك آخر بزي
أفع الشوب في يدي بزاز.
وكتب الله أيضاً في مثله أوّل ورودي بقرطة، وقد بلغه شنائي عليه بمجلسي

بعض الأعيان فيها:

وياء دوجة المجدع الكريم
والفرة الخراة فقية
قد كان شام زمانًا
جفنيه تنبيه النجيم.
فردتته يقظان يمحو الـ
ان الصباح إذا انجلس
جلّى المنام عن الشؤوم
من الواضح كان - أعزك الله - على وعلى من ينسب إلى أدب، ويتعلق منه
باديئ سبب. إن يشتي عليك ظهور العيس المهرية، وصواعق الجباد الأوعجية،
حينما استقرّ مكانك، وثبت أيوانك، فكيف إذا جلّى مصباح بلادنا بغيانه.
وترك ليل غراماً بظلمائه، فانتظمتك معنا هذه الجدران التي جلست عليها
قدراً، وسومت رفعة وخطرًا، ولكن المذهب لا يسر عليه، ولا ننقل قدم التقدم
بذاهة النه، بل يرقب منه المتوسط لفظة في عرش ناحية، أو حظة تقع على
ساحته، تجل الأولى سبلًا، والأخرى هادياً وديلًا.
ولقيت فلاناً فأنهى كلامك في، وأنت ممن لا يجازي خطاباً، ولا يبارى كتابا
وجوابًا، براءة في لفظ يبتكر في مراء الوشي الصعاعاني، ويبتكر في أردية
العيس البيمار، ونظم ود الربيع لو توقع به تفصيلاً، ونثر كثرة العقود،
وتفويض البرود، والخرير البيض في الطرش الشود. إن نظمت فرص صحري، والبدع
غير بدربح، وإن نثرت فالصاحب صاحب، قابلوس ذو يوس، وهذا بابه لو استقصيته
في كي غاية الاستقراء، واستنقيته نهاية الاستقراء، لتخلغ بنا الكلام، الذي
دفاد الأمد، والأفلام.

وفي فصل منها: ومنا كتبت منا انحرفت إلى الشعر، أو انصرفت إلى الشعر.
أجريت فيما بعدك بالخطر، ورضيت منيما عليك بذي الغفار،رأيت أن أتبع
بعضي بعضًا، حتى أجلو عليك وردهما جنباً فضًا، فهو النثر بجول، والنظم بحلو.
Abū Šahr b. Mudhij wrote a qaṣīda praising Ibn Bassām, in which no single line is without some reference to Ibn Bassām's virtues, talent or genealogy; in this he departed completely from the ancient tradition of mādīh, with its conventional commonplaces, that was still frequently employed. In speaking of the firmness, sweetness and delicacy of Ibn Bassām's poetry, Abū Šahr overstates his case, and the burden of his poem is principally an indication of Ibn Bassām's standing with his contemporaries. Nevertheless, with its clear statements and its simple vocabulary, it is well-constructed as an organic unity, and is not devoid of artistic merit. Abū Šahr was a well-known and capable poet, and this encomium of Ibn Bassām is not unworthy of him.
We may perhaps again see the high opinion in which Ibn Bassām was held by another contemporary, Abū ʿAmīr b. al-ʿAsīlī, in the following exchange. At the same time, it seems also to afford us a rare glimpse of a friendly and indeed jocular relationship between Ibn Bassām and another person.

وهي أيضا إلى الأشياء أيام كنت بها وقد أعجبت المنصور إلى قادها كتب في معناه، فحسن بها مثواع، وأجزل بها قراه، وزرته وتولقت عليه في منزله أولى الثقالي به في لمة من أهل الأدب، فلما انسنفنا عنه خاطب كل واحد منا بأبيات شعر يشكر على ما نهبتا له هناك من البشير واعتمد بمخاطبته أيضا فلما، وفي الوجه وسما، وكان زاره معنا، يسمى عسي، وخرج في وجه للاستقبال، فمن شعره مما خاطئته به أبيات أولها:

- من فدى فارسا في حلبة الطلب
سأنتها منك بين الجد واللعب
أجل من بكذا العلم والأدب
أم قبوة الريق تخزي قبوة العنبر
لكن نزعت إلى شيء من الطرب

فراجمني بأبيات منها:

- طوقت كل أدبي طوق لولوًة
لكن أجدت روي السين من شفف

فراجعت بأبيات قال فيها:

- ما ان أجدنا روي السين من شفف
ما أكابده من شدة الكفف
عمها قريب ولم أح سوي الدنف
ولو سكت لكان العذر غير خفف

أيه أبا حسن باراقاً الصحاف
لكن طريت لما ألقاه من حرق
ما اتفامي بمحوب أفراضه
هذا الذي في اليوه قسرا يزهرني
We have already discussed Ibn Bassām’s poetry and his position as a poet among his contemporaries. Here we should mention another aspect of his writing, namely the epistles which he addressed to the udāba’ of his time, requesting some of their poetry and prose for inclusion in al-Dhakhīra. Here, for instance, is his epistle to Abu Bakr Ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz:

Abū Bakr’s reply is a suitably self-depreciating one, in which he too indulges in a somewhat extravagant eulogy of Ibn Bassām.
فراجعني أبو بكر سرعة قال فيها: وفقت - أعزك الله - من كتاب الكريم، المضمون من البرعم، ما أبصره ينير الظهر، يستنفد الشكر، ويعيد الحر، وربك - رأيت أملك - تخطب من مودت ما ليس بكرؤ لخطابك ولا بزاوية جلالتك، لكنك فعلت زمامها، وأعطت مقدمة وخطامها، ولا شك أن من دقيقنا أبو الحسن - أعزكjava اللهم - أنطقه هواء، ونامت عن الخبره عين رضا، فسماع بالمعيدي لا أن تراه، وله عمري لقد أكرت الجواب فرقى من كشف السر، وارادة التمادي في تدليل الأمر، ثم علمت أن فتلا وضع في يديك، وقصر عليك، يوسعني في النقد ولا، كما شرحتني في البعد قولنا، ومن اللقاء أنهي عذري، وأооружك رقيقة قدرى، ان شاء الله.

امتحن معاهد رسم الأدب
من نظم الفضل نظم الخصان
بدأت قلبي من خاطبة
احتفل يا بدر في أفقتها
وبهتار نملك في غمدهم
فمن تلك كلمات الواليون
ثناء علينا مماي العلا
لك الفضل حزكتي لنهوض
وحدك عني وهذا الحديث
فعذرة أن بعض المقال
برثت البك من الزائفين
وعمد تأكر بكجواب
تفرغت شوق يوم الجزلاء
واقدمني العذر والاعتراف
ولولا الحياة لقد كنت قبل
أبقى ذكري بما فضيده
قواف تععل في ورثنا
وان تك أحمد هذا الزمان.
In another epistle, which he wrote while in Córdoba, in 493 A.H., when he began to write al-Dhakhīra, he demands from Abu Ḥātim al-
Hijārī some of his poetry, and choice stories connected with it. The immediate occasion of this letter was the fact that al-Hijārī, having already been asked a number of times for this material, was temporizing: Ibn Bassām tries, successfully, to shame him into complying:

وقد تواتر عليك النبأ أني جمعت من الرسائل الأندلسية والأشعار العصرية، جملة موفورة، لتوافد كثيرة، من تحقيق عندي أن خليته التي تحلى بها من موع طبعه، وخلله التي نشرها من نح فكره وأضريت، عن من ارثبت، إذ باعة الشعر أكثر من عدد الشعر، ولما كنت أبا حاتم خاتمة أئمة هذا الشان، أحببت أن أجعل كلاميك وإسطلة هذا الديوان، إلا أتي رأيت لك من إرثت عام، ذلك الرقعة ما حدست عليك أنك قلت: هذا ابن بسما كما أنهجته الروم من بلاده، ومقررت بهد من طارفه وحلاده، وقدم قرطبة بقدم الضرورة على تلك الصورة، يريد أن يهجم المدينة، في أبواب الكدية، فاختصَّ تأليف هذه الشذور القلايد، سببا أن يسي عذاري القصائد، في حجر أربيها، وسلبها عن أصحابها، حتى إذا قيد لفظها ومعناها، ولقيت عنه أثناها، وقد أبعدت مركما، إن كنت جننت يذالوكلا أبا حاتم، فانك لعين الظلم، إن نستنني لهذا العجز، وأنتي أحق أن أطيب لسيف غيري الإلزى، وقد شهدت الأشهاز، بطلت البلاد، أن لي بديهة قوية، صوفي على الروية، إلا أتي أبا حاتم لا أجري في ميدانك، ولا أعد من أفرانك، فسقى الله بلادا أنجبتك وان كانت حاربة، فان معانيك عراقية، ولفاظك جنجرية، والله مدينة الفرج، فلقد تحدثت مثلك عن انعوذج بيان، مخلق الطريق للجريان، فلما وردته الرقعة، زمَّ عن الجواب قلته، وكلف الإجاب قدمه، وورد من حينه علي، ونشر مبيّضاته بين بدي، يقيمه الخجل ويعد، وقد صنعه كما صنع اللجين العمس.
One of the most distinguished men of letters and prose writers of this time was Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad Ibn Abī al-Khīsāl. He conducted a correspondence with Ibn Bassām, which the latter includes under the title Fusūl min Nathrihi. He says: "I isolated myself to write this third part of al-Dhakhīra, in 503 A.H., when I had finished copying what I had of the correspondence of the writers of the Eastern side of al-Andalus.

I could not find any prose or poetry by this man, so one of my friends wrote to him in this matter and also encouraged me to correspond with him there (in Seville); so both epistles reached him, while he was passing by the vicinity of Seville with a group of his people". It seems that Ibn Bassām's letter to Abū ʿAbd Allāh did not survive; Abū Abd Allāh's reply is quoted:
The florid, self-conscious and virtually impenetrable language of the first section is to a great extent redeemed by the rather charming, if overdone, conceits of the second; the picture of the dog is particularly felicitous. It would be interesting to know just how much effort went into the composition of such a piece, how seriously it was intended to be taken, and what Ibn Bassām’s reaction was on receiving it. Presumably, since he saw fit to include it, he regarded it as meritorious; however, it falls considerably below the standard of his own work, at its best.
A writer subsequent to Ibn Sa'īd, al-Shaṣqūnī, in his epistle on the superiority of the people of al-Andalus to those of Morocco, says about Ibn Bassām:

 وهل لكم في الاعتناء بتخليد مآثر فضلاء اقيمه والاجتهاد في حشد مخاصمهم مثل ابن بشام صاحب الذكرى

Many of the later literary historians of al-Andalus and the East also admired Ibn Bassām and praised him in their books. Ibn Sa'īd said of him in the chapter about Abū Naṣr al-Fāṭḥ Ibn Khāqān:

الدهر من رواة قلائده، وحملة رسائله، وابن بشام أكثر تقليدا، وعلما مفيدا، والجذع أقدر على البلاقة، وكلمه أكثر تعليقا بالنفس.

In spite of saying, however, that Ibn Khāqān was a better writer than Ibn Bassām, Ibn Sa'īd expressed his surprise that an author as talented as Ibn Bassām should have appeared from the West of al-Andalus:

العجب أنه لم يكن في حساب الآداب الأندلسية، سببته من شترين قاسيّة الغرب، ومحل الطعن والضرب، من ينظمها قلائد في جيد الدهر، ويطلعهما ضراز لألجيم الزهر، ولم ينشأ بحضرة قرطبة ولا بحضرة أشبيلية ولا غيرهما من الحوافر العظام من يشتمل اعتصامه لإعلام عصره، ويجد في جمع حسنات نظمه ونشره، وسل الذكرى، فإنها تعني عن محاشه الغزيرة.
Modern authors have also been able to point out mistakes in Ibn Bassām, for example, Aḥmad Haykal remarked on his assumption that the addressee of Ibn Shuhayd’s *al-Tawābiʿ wa-al-awābiʿ*, named simply as Abū Bakr, was Abū Bakr Ibn Ḥazm, in which assumption he was followed by others such as Ibn Saʿīd: "This is impossible, since Abū Bakr Ibn Ḥazm died some time before Ibn Shuhayd wrote his epistle, as stated by his brother Abū Muḥammad Ibn Ḥazm in *Tawq al-Ḥamāma*". Haykal suggests that Ibn Bassām, knowing that Ibn Shuhayd had a relationship with the Banū Ḥazm, and that there had been an Abū Bakr in the family, jumped to an unwarranted conclusion without checking his dates. He thinks it likely that Ibn Shuhayd's Abū Bakr was one known as Ishkimiyyat, who had accused him of plagiarism and whom he rebukes in his epistle. 31

Dozy prefers Ibn Khāqān to Ibn Bassām. This I feel to be an idiosyncratic and mistaken view. In the first place, the sheer size and comprehensiveness of the *Dhakhfrah*, with *al-Qalāʾid* and *al-Majmah*, must assure him a position that the other cannot attain. In the second place, as far as style and language are concerned, we have only to read Ibn Bassām's contemporaries to learn what their opinion of him was.
In fact, Ibn Khāqān's style is full of obscurities, and his judgements are often extremely subjective, depending on whether or not he agrees with the writer he is criticising. Of modern Arab writers on the subject, it will suffice to quote what Āfdi al-Rahmān al-Barquqī says, comparing the two: "Ibn Bassām is distinguished from al-Fath Ibn Khāqān by several things, the most important of which is that one does not find in his style the loud bombast that one does in the style of al-Fath. One finds Ibn Bassām to be a skilful critic, often commenting on what he has selected in such a way as to demonstrate his firm grasp of literature. In addition, he provides more comprehensive and valuable information than al-Fath. One finds him chaster in language, more impartial in what he says; and one does not find in him the vilification that one finds in al-Fath."

In spite of the general praise that Ibn Bassām's work received in his own time and subsequently, it was not without critics. The principal charge made against him was that of plagiarism, particularly from Ibn Hayyān. Since Ibn Bassām specifically refers to this in Part Four, and, in fact, always acknowledges his sources, this charge can hardly be sustained. He was not a historian, as we have said; when he considered it necessary to introduce some historical background, he had to rely on others. Ibn al-Abbār, in al-Hullā as-Sīra', refers to Ibn Bassām's historical shortcomings, comparing him with Ibn Qāsim al-Shībī:
As a specific example, let us take the following passage of al-Dhakhira:

وأول تعلقه بالمعتمد كان حين وجبه لحرب لشب أبوه، فنزع ابن عمّار اليم، وبلغ من المنزلة لديه أن غلب عليه، وبعد استيائه شلب وفراغه من تلك الحرب، صحبة بحضرة أبي السليمة، وأخرج منه مجلس أنسه إلى أن أوجّه خيفه في نفسه من ابنه المعتمد، ففرق عن البلد، ولحق بشرق الأندلس، وتمكن بها من المؤمن يوسف بن أحمد بن هود، فخطب المعتمد بهذا القصيد الفريد:

وفي واف ما نبئ الحمائم ...

about which Ibn al-Abbas has these critical comments to make:

وفي أخبار ابن عمار من تأليفه - ولا أدرى كيف غاب عنه - أن ما ادعىه لموح - كان قبل الستين أو الخمسين، وأربعمائة، وولادة المؤمن في جمادي الأولى سنة أربع وسبعين - وقيل على لعل ابن عمّار صحبه في حيّاة أبيه المقترد، وهو إذ ذاك مرّح لمكانه، فقلبه أن يأتي على مقاله بما يقضّه من إبطاله، والمتعارف أن ابن عمّار لم يصح المؤمن بسرقسطة، لأن فرائه من مرسية، فخلط ابن يسّام لا خفاء به ولا امتلاء فيه.
1. Ibn Khaldūn, 3, 301-302.
3. Ibn al-Farādī, 1, 33.
4. Ibn Ḥayyān, 5, 34.
6. Ibn Bassām, 2, 2, 806.
7. Ibid, 1, 1, 172.
8. Ibid, 1, 1, 16.
10. Ibn Bassām, 2, 2, 835.
12. Ibid, 1, 1, 18.
17. Ibid, 2, 2, 597.
18. Ibid, 1, 2, 906-907.
19. Ibid, 1, 2, 908.
20. Ibid, 2, 2, 597-598.
21. Ibid, 1, 2, 905-907.
22. Ibid, 3, 2, 863.
23. Ibid, 2, 2, 539-541.
26. Ibid, 3, 2, 790-792.
30. al-Maqqarî, 3, 193.
THE BACKGROUND TO AL-DHAKHĪRA
The disagreement that has prevailed until now among scholars concerning the time and place of the composition of al-Dhakīra appears to be totally unnecessary*. We are given a definite date and place for its beginning by Ibn Bassām himself:

*Muṣṭafā al-Shakṣa believes that Ibn Bassām wrote it in Seville. Muṣṭafā al-Shakṣa, Manāḥij al-Tālīf ʿinda al-ʿArab p.636. Naz ha Jaʿfar al-Mūsawi is uncertain as to the year in which he began to write, but suggests that it was not before 494 when she supposes that Ibn Bassām went to Córdoba for the first time. N. J. al-Mūsawi, Ibn Bassām: Dirāsā Adabīyya Tārīkhīyya p.67 (she is probably relying on al-Dhakhīra for this suggestion). See Ibn Bassām 2, 2, 536.

Muḥammad Abd Allāh ʿInān believes that the work was composed after the downfall of the Muluk al-Ṭawāif, i.e. in 502 or 503 A.H. Muḥammad Abd Allāh ʿInān, Duwal al-Ṭawāif p.417-418. It seems likely that none of these three had access to the passage quoted above, the edition that was available to them being incomplete.

The years 502 and 503 are certainly mentioned by Ibn Bassām but apparently in the context of the completion of Vols. 2 and 3:
As far as the date of its completion is concerned, we have no clear information. There are, however, two pieces of internal evidence that indicate dates by which it had not been completed. The first is his reference to the death of al-Amā al-Ṭūlayṭulī:

We learn from Ibn al-Khatîb that this took place in 525 A.H. The second is somewhat less conclusive, but is nevertheless suggestive. He cites a Urjuza of Abū Ṭalīb b. Ābd al-Jabbar in which Ālī b. Yūsuf, the second Almoravid Amir, is mentioned:

In the chapter on Abū Ābd Allāh Ibn Abī al-Khiṣāl, Ibn Bassām says:
Ali ruled from 500 to 537 A.H., so that this reference does not, at first sight, necessarily give us a later date than 525. However, in al-Hulla al-Mushiya of Ibn al-Khaṭīb a further two lines of this same Urjūza are given, in which Tāshfīn b. Alī is also mentioned.

As he reigned from 537 to 539, we may perhaps be justified in concluding that al-Dhakhīra was not completed before, at any rate, 537.
It has been suggested that Ibn Bassām may have dictated the Dhakhīra to his students rather than actually writing it himself, and also that he may have left it in the form of notes that were afterwards collected and published by others. These suggestions are based on two points: first, that Ibn Bassām refers to his work variously as Kitāb, a Majmūʿ and a Diwan; and second, that he refers to himself interchangeably as Ibn Bassām and Abū al-Ḥasan. It has been pointed out that the only other example that we have among Andalusī writers of the second phenomenon is that of Ibn al-Qūṭīyyah, in his Tārīkh Iftitāh al-Andalus, which is unanimously agreed to be the work of his students, on the basis of his notes. Makki thinks that the same may well be true of Ibn Bassām Dhakhīra. There seems to be some confusion in his argument here, however, since he also maintains that Ibn Bassām had no opportunity of teaching.

Makki cites two passages that in his view indicate that Ibn Bassām was not the author. On the first he says: "We cannot understand the following passage concerning Ibn Zaydūn:

وَلَهُ—أَيْ إِبْنِ زَيْدُونَ—مِن رَسَالَةِ حَذَفُ أَبَوِ الحِنَّ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ أَكْثَرُهَا، وَلَمْ يَذْكُرْ مِنْهَا الْأَقْطَرُ مِنْ وَازِلَ، أَوْ نَفَتَةٌ مِنْ سَحْرٍ بَابِل، وَهَذَا أَنَا مِثْبَتَهَا عَلَى تَوَالِيْهَا إِشَادةً بِبَحْشٍ مَعَايِنِهَا، واسْتِغْفَادَةً مِنْ سِنِّ أَدَاهُ فِيهَا.7
"It is impossible that Ibn Bassām should have been the author of this, even though its sajī is very similar to his, and its content strongly resembles the kind of thing that he says. It is all the more interesting, because it occurs in all the manuscripts of the book that we have. We can only suppose that this Abū al-Ḥasan is someone other than Ibn Bassām himself, who shared his Kunya, and is one of the sources that Ibn Bassām cites. This, however, is a conjecture for which there is no evidence."

On the second, which also occurs in the section dealing with Ibn Zaydūn:

he says: "This text provides clear evidence that its author was someone other than Ibn Bassām, who wrote the name Ibn Bassām by mistake".9

The conjecture that it was someone other than Abū al-Ḥasan who gave the book its final form is more plausible than the suggestion that some interpolator added these passages. This latter passage, like the former, occurs in all the manuscripts that we have; the single one in which it is missing has a blank at this point, starting with this passage and extending for some pages.

There are two other passages, not noticed by Makkī, in which Ibn Bassām is referred to, clearly by someone else:

ومن بدائع العقم المستنملة للعصم ، وما أرى أبا الحسن تجاكي عنها غامًا منها .
The suggestion that the interpolator had seen both a first and second version of al-Dhakhira, or at least of part of it, is of considerable relevance for the history of the work. We cannot, however, tell from these passages what the status of the interpolator, or interpolators, was.

The section on Abū Ǧāmir b. al-Faraj is clearly an addition. It is not listed in Ibn Bassam's general index, in the introduction, and it does not occur in all the manuscripts. It appears to derive from Matmah al-Anfus by al-Fatḥ Ibn Khāqān, although falsely ascribed by Ibn Saʿīd to the same author's al-Qalāʾid. Probably, too, the section on Abū ʿIsā b. Lubūn is taken from al-Fatḥ b. Khāqān, since it shows similarities to his account, in al-qalāʾid, and again is neither mentioned in Ibn Bassam's index nor found in all the manuscripts. There is a strange phenomenon that occurs twice in ʿaḥāda, namely the inclusion of two biographies of the same person. We find both Abū Ǧafar b. Aḥmad and Dhu al-Wizaratayn Abū Ǧabd Allāh b. Abī al-Khiṣāl distinguished in this way, although in
both cases the two headings differ slightly. The biographies, however, are totally at variance, and it has been remarked that the first of each pair coincides with the account given in al-Qala‘i, which may be assumed to be the source. Thus, in all these cases, there is clear evidence for later interpolation, by a not very observant student or scribe. The fact that none of these additional biographies occurs in all the manuscripts of al-Dhakhira probably suggests that they were added by a scribe.

Nazzara Ja‘far al-Musawi believes that there are a number of indications that suggest that Ibn Bassam did, in fact, complete the Dhakhira himself. First, he mentions a dedicatee, although he does not name him:

He would hardly have dedicated the work before completing it, but it is strange that the dedicatee should be referred to as fulan. There are three possibilities here: one is that he had not decided who the dedicatee was to be when he drafted his introduction, and that he wrote in general eulogistic terms that could be applied to any dedicatee he chose; the second is that, at the time of drafting, he could not remember precisely the full name of the dedicatee, and so
left a blank, to be filled in later. Both of these possibilities suggest that he left the work unfinished and that it was put together after his death. A third possibility is that he did in fact give the name of the dedicatee, but that this was at some later stage removed, either deliberately for whatever reason, or accidentally, perhaps because the name was illegibly written in a copy, or because it was an unfamiliar one. This, of course, would imply that he did complete the Dhakhira in his own lifetime.

The likelihood that Ibn Bassām finished and published the Dhakhira himself is increased by his remarking that he was asked by people to make further copies of it, and that he found them enthusiastic to obtain it.

Since this remark occurs in the introduction, it would seem likely that this introduction or at least part of it, was written after the appearance, in sections, of the complete work and that it was intended as an introduction to a kind of second edition, or at least an edition published as a whole. His reference, in p. 4, I, to the accusations of plagiarism that had been made against him, is inconclusive, since these may have been directed against his earlier works. It is, however, equally and perhaps more probable, that it is criticism of the previously issued sections of the Dhakhira.
that is in question, since the way in which the remark is phrased, and also Ibn Bassam’s denial of the accusation, seems to suggest that it applies to something that may be considered as a major work.

والذكّر بفعلة ابن العربيف في صاعد بعض ما متيت أنا به في ذكر هذا التصنيف مع غير واحد من أجل وقتي، اذ سرت في بعض قصمه كلام ابن حياني، وكان على ما تقدّم موضوع محكمه أوانهم، فلم أؤثرني لغظه في بعض ما سكت، ولم أجد في كل حديث سكت، رجعت إلى نهجي، واستمطرت غريزيتي، وما أهله جامد، ورماها هامد، كما قال سابق: أختقت جدتي ويان شابي، واسترحت عواذلي من عشبي، وانا يومئذ باشيلية، أصرف مفترًا في بعض الأعمال السلفية، والكلام اذا لم يحكه قلب فارغ، ولم يسكر له من ظلما اهل الفارغ، لس يصرّ تطريزه، وعلى ذلك لما اندرجت لي فيه كلمات رائقات، في أوصاف مختلفات، وبلغت فيه أم عرّاد، بالفظ آمن ومعان أفراد، انشاء على فيهم الكلام، انشياء الفم، قالوا: نعم ما صفت ابن بسام وأتقن، لس يصرّ يستعين، وما أحسن ما قضى، لو لم يتعلّص، والله درّهم فالدآم، لا يزيد من القرى وذكة لا تغاب من الذري، بل دعوّد أبي الغلي من شاعر نطق، بالبدي، وجرى على عتق جده الكندي، واستولى على الأمد يقوله اذ مدق: أنتى بمنطقة العرب الأصيل، فعارة كلام كان منددًا، بمنزلة النهاء من البعول، وليس بحُّ في الأوهام شيء، وكان بقدر ما أحسب قيلبي.
That Ibn Bassām was, at any rate, contemplating the appearance of his work as an actual book can not be doubted. In his introduction, again, he acknowledges his debt to al-Tha'ālibī and says that he is following his method of compilation, as seen in the Yatīmat al-Dahr. The title itself of the Dhakhīra imitates that of al-Tha'ālibī's work. There is no way of knowing whether or not Ibn Bassām is responsible for the form in which the Dhakhīra appeared. However, there is more evidence for his having completed it himself than there is for its having been assembled by someone else after his death. The question is not perhaps of the greatest importance, but there appears to be no real reason why we should believe the Dhakhīra to be anything other than what it claims to be.

There are a number of other passages that may be adduced as evidence for Ibn Bassām's own authorship:

1. "I have not touched on any of the poems of the Marwānīd dynasty or of the encomia of the Āmirīd dynasty, since Ibn Faraj al-Jayyānī was of the same opinion as myself concerning justice and shared my view of pride, and he wrote the Kitāb al-Hada'iq about the literary beauties of the people of his time, in imitation of the Kitāb al-Zahra of al-İsfahānī. I have avoided what he wrote about and have not touched on anything that he compiled."

2. "I have confided myself to this compilation, which I have called Kitāb al-Dhakhīra fi Mahāsin Ahl al-Jazīra, of the wonders of their learning and the marvels of their prose and verse that which is sweeter than the whispering of lovers ..... "
3. "As for most of those whom I have mentioned in this treatise, I was unable to find written information concerning them, or collections of poetry by them, from which I could easily make a selection. I have been able to criticize only what I could find. I was not in any way remiss in this matter; I devoted to it lengthy study and the time that I could afford, until I had filled this book of mine with so much information concerning the people of this region that it may perhaps have exceeded the measure for the people of the East". 15

It is possible that the work was based on lectures, which were dictated to his students. When these were written out, he would correct them and arrange them, perhaps adding or altering passages here and there. It is highly likely, at any rate, as has been suggested, that passages were interpolated, either by students or by scribes.

IBN BASSAM'S PREDECESSORS AND SUCCESSORS.

The first stage in the tradition of compilation into which Ibn Bassām fits is that of the early books of Ṭabaqāt which gave accounts of a number of poets, presented a quantity of their poetry, and attempted some kind of classification. The poets were selected according to various criteria: period, region, tribe or name. Among the best-known of these early works are: Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'ara' of Ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī (d. 232 A.H.); al-Shi'r wa-al-Shu'ara' of Ibn Qutayba (d. 276 A.H.); and Muṣjam al-Shu'ara' of Muḥammad b. ʿImrān b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Marzubānī (d.c. 380 A.H.).
Among the other Eastern predecessors of Ibn Bassām were:

1. ʿAlī b. Yāḥyā b. Mansūr al-Munajjim Al-Baghdādī (d.388 A.H.), the author of al-Bāri, which is devoted to accounts of Muwalladūn poets. This book is regarded as the first to specialize in one particular period. In it, he collected the best poetry of 161 poets, beginning with Bashshār b. Burd and ending with Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Malik b.Šāliḥ.

2. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Muṭazz (d.296 A.H.). In his Ṭabaqāt al-Shuʿara, composed at the same time as al-Bāri, he collected the work of poets who praised the Abbasids. This book is regarded as the third most important, after that of Ibn Sallām and Ibn Qutayba.

3. Muḥammad b. Dāwūd al-Jarrāḥ (d.296 A.H.). He composed two books: in the first, Akhbar al-Shuʿara, he deals with poets all having the same name, regardless of their time or place. The second, al-Waraqa (edited by ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿAzzām and ʿAbd al-Sattār Farrāj) deals with 23 poets and poetesses who enjoyed a good relationship with the Abbasids.

4. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Thaʿalibī (d.429 A.H.) the author of Yatīmat al-Dahr. He also wrote many books on linguistics, adab, and history, his total production being almost 90 works. The Yatīma is a Ṭabaqāt book of poets of the 4th century that proceeds on a geographical basis, beginning with the farthest East and ending with al-Andalus.

5. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan al-Bakharzī (d.464 A.H.), famous for his Dumyat al-Qaṣr wa-Zahrat Ahl al-Qaṣr. He himself was a poet, philologist, literary man and prose writer. He was
a good friend of Abū al-Ḥasan b. Zayd al-Bayhaqī. Ibn Khallikān reports that his poetry filled a large volume, and also that he compiled a supplement to Dumyat al-Qāsr, called Wishār al-Dumya.


7. ʿImād al-Dīn b. Muḥammad Saff al-Dīn, known as al-ʿImād al-Isbāḥānī (d. 597 A.H.). He is famous for his Khairdat al-Qāsr wa-Jarīdat al-Qāsr. This book includes poets from the 5th century up to 572. It was divided into four parts: Syria, Egypt and Sicily; the Maghrib and al-Andalus; Iraq; and Persia. He wrote several other books such as al-Barq al-Shāmī fī Akhbar Salāḥ al-Dīn wa-futūḥātihi, a Diwan and some epistles. He also compiled a supplement to al-Khairda called al-Sayl ala al-Dhayl.

Among the Andalusī predecessors of Ibn Bassām were:

1. ʿUthmān b. Rabīʿa al-Andalusī (d. 310 A.H.), who compiled Tabaqāt al-Shuʿarā’ bi-al-Andalus. It is suggested that he was influenced in this by al-Bari of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥarūn b. Yaḥyā.

2. Abū al-Fāṭḥ b. Naṣīr b. Raqqās b. ʿAyshūn al-Shadhūnī (d. 338 A.H.) who was a philologist, Qur’ān reciter, grammarian, linguist and poet. He compiled al-Shuʿaraʿ
min al-Fuqahāʾ bi-al-Andalus. Most of his poetry deals with asceticism and aphorisms.


4. ʿAbd Allāh b. Mughīth al-Anṣārī (d. 352 A.H.), from Córdoba. It is said that al-Ḥakam al-Mustanṣir excused him from taking part in a raid on the Christians in 352 A.H., only on condition that he compiled a book on the poetry of the Umayyad caliphs, in imitation of al-Awrāq of al-Ṣūfī on that of the Abbāsids. This, it seems, he managed to do before his death in the same year.


6. Another luminary of al-Mustanṣir’s reign was Abū ʿUmar Aḥmad b. Faraj al-Jayyānī (d. 359 A.H.). He dedicated his al-Hadaiq to al-Mustanṣir. According to al-Ḥijārī, he was unrivalled in the 4th century as a compiler of Andalusian poetry. Ibn Bassām himself, in his introduction, acknowledges his debt to him. al-Hadaiq is unfortunately lost, but we know something of it from al-Ḥumaydī, who tells us that al-Jayyānī imitated it, at the request of al-Mustanṣir, al-Zahrah of Abū Bakr b. Dāvūd al-Isbahānī. Whereas, however, al-Isbahānī had one hundred chapters each containing one hundred verses, al-Jayyānī had two hundred chapters, each containing two hundred verses, exclusively by Andalusī poets.
7. cAli b. cAbd al-Muḥsin al-Fattūḥ (d. 384 A.H.), of Seville, compiled al-Mustajād min Fī ʿlāt al-Ajwād.

8. Abū Bakr ʿUbāda b. Maʿ al-Samāʾ (d. 419 A.H.) was a student of Abū Bakr al-Zubaydī, and a renowned poet. He is particularly famous as a pioneer in the composition of Muwashshāhats. Ibn Bassām refers to him in the Dhakhīra, describing him as a master of poetic construction and a great innovator, but he does not mention Muwashshāhats. More strangely, perhaps Ibn Bassām does not mention, either, his book, Akhbar Shuʿara al-Andalus.


10. al-Fath Ibn Khāqān, Abu Naṣr al-Fath b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qaysī, killed 22 Muḥarram 529 A.H. He compiled two books:
   1) Matmah al-Anfus; 2) al-Qalāʾid, divided into four parts:
   a) Maḥāsin al-Ruʿasā wa-ʿAbnāʿīhim wa-Darj Umūdḥajāt min Mustaḍhab Anbāʿīhim.
   c) Fī Lumaʿ ʿAṣyan al-Quḍāt wa-Lumāḥ ʿAṣār al-ʿUlamaʾ wa-al-Surāt.
   d) Fī Bādāʾī Nubahaʾ al-Udābaʾ wa-Rawaiʿ Ṣuḥul al-Shuʿaraʾ.

   Followers of Ibn Bassām in al-Andalus in this genre of compilation include the following:


3. Ibn al-Abbar, Abu Abd Allah Muhammad b. Abd Allah b. Abi Bakr al-Qudaci (d. 735 A.H.). He was from Valencia and was a secretary to several of the Almohades, including Abu Zayd b. al-Sayyid Abi Abd Allah b. al-Sayyid Abi Hafsh b. Abd al-Mumin b. Ali. He compiled many books, among them al-Hulla al-Sira, which is a collection of the biographies of the umara of al-Andalus who wrote poetry. He compiled other books as well: Mu'ammar fi Aqhab al-Qad al-Imam Abi Ali al-Sadafi b. Sukkara; al-Takmila li-Kitab al-Sila (Ibn Bashkawal); Itab al-Kuttab wa-Tubfat al-Qadim, which he intended as a supplement to the Zad al-Musafir of Safwan b. Idris.

4. The Banu Sa'id. They were extremely interested in literature and took part in compiling al-Mushrib; this is a supplement to al-Hijar'i al-Mushib. Among them was Abd al-Malik b. Sa'id (d. 560 A.H.), his son Muhammad (d. 589 A.H.), Abu Ja'far Ahmad (d. 559 A.H.), Musa b. Sa'id (d. 673 A.H.), Ali b. Sa'id al-Maghribi was born between 605 and 610 A.H., at Qalat Ya'qub; he was a student of Abu Ali al-Shihabini, Abu al-Hasan al-Riyahi and Ibn Usfuri. He compiled al-Mughrib, the full title of which is Kitab Falak al-Arab.

Another book by Ibn Saʿīd, which follows a similar pattern, is Ṣayāt al-Mubarrāzīn wa-ghāyāt al-Mumayyazīn. It contains 314 poems by 140 poets of al-Andalus and al-Maghrib, arranged according both to their place of origin and their social position. ʿAlī b. Mūsā b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Saʿīd compiled al-Qidh al-Muʿalla fi al-Taʾrīkh al-Muḥallā, about Arabic literature in general, which includes a section entitled Nashawat al-Taʾrīf fi Taʾrīkh Jahiliyyat al-ʿArab, and another entitled Maṣābīh al-Zalām fi Taʾrīkh al-Islām. This book is no longer existent, but we possess the summary by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Khalīl.

5. Ibn Dīṭya Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmār b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī (d. 633 A.H.). He compiled a most important collection of poems by poets from al-Andalus, Africa, Sicily and the Balearic Islands, called al-Muṭṭīb ʿAṣḥār Ahl al-Maghrib. It covers the period from the second century to the beginning of the seventh. It also contains important historical information.

6. Līsān al-Dīn b. al-Khaṭīb (Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd al-Salmānī) (d. 776 A.H.) compiled al-Kaṭība al-Kamina fi man laqīnāhu bi- al-Andalus min Shuʿārāʾ al-Miʿā al-Thāmina. This contains accounts of one hundred and three poets, divided into four classes, according to their occupations:

a) Orators/preachers and Sufis: 19 poets.
b) Qurān reciters and teachers: 11 poets.
c) Virtuous ādāb: 24 poets.
d) Amirs' chamberlains: 49 poets.

After three centuries the literary compilation movements started again.

He is one of the Egyptian quḍāt who travelled between the cities of al-Andalus. He compiled several useful books, such as Rayhānat al-Allībā‘a wa-Zahrāt al-Ḥayāt al-Dunyā, Shifā’al-Allīl fīmā fī Kalam al-Allāb fī Dakhīl, Sharḥ Durrat al-Khawāṣṣ fī Awhām al-Khawāṣṣ, Nasīm al-Riyāḍ fī Sharḥ Shifā’al-Qādī Īyād and Ināyat al-Qādī wa-Kifāyat al-Raṣīl. These books are published; some others are not published, such as Khabāyā al-Zawāya fīmā fī al-Riṣāl min al-Baqāyā, Rayhānat al-Nudmān, Dīwān al-Adab fī Dīkr Shu‘ārā’al-Allāb and al-Sawāniḥ. The most important for us is Rayhānat al-Allībā‘a wa-Zahrāt al-Ḥayāt al-Dunyā. He collected copious examples of poetry and wrote short accounts of the contemporary poets of Syria, Egypt, al-Maghrib and the Arabian Peninsula.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN AL-ANDALUS.

The interaction of people and ideas continued unhindered among the Muslim countries, despite the political animosity dividing them. Freedom of movement between the East and al-Andalus remained almost unbroken. Several authors - Ibn Khayr (d. 1180), al-Dabbi (d. 1203), Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 1324), al-Maqqari (d. 1632) among others - give an impressive list of talented men who came from the East and settled in al-Andalus and of Andalusians who went to the East in search of education and other pursuits. These men no doubt left an indelible mark upon the religious, social, political and intellectual life of al-Andalus.
Consequently, Eastern influence on al-Andalus can hardly be underestimated. From the beginning of the conquest until the middle of the eleventh century, al-Andalus looked to the East for inspiration and guidance in practically all pursuits. In fact, Andalusian scholars were satisfied to emulate and imitate Eastern authors in grammar and lexicography, Quranic studies, the study of the Prophetic Traditions, Poetry, belles lettres, mathematics, geography, botany and philosophy. Favourable comparison with Eastern standards was generally considered the mark of excellence. Henceforth, the Hispano-Arabic scholar was satisfied only with exceeding the status of his Eastern counterpart.

Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064), one of the most brilliant minds of Islamic culture, called attention to Andalusian creativity in a famous treatise. He lamented that Andalusian talent was not given the recognition it deserved; he mentioned some of the native scholars who were equal or even superior to any talent the East had ever produced. In the following verses, Ibn Ḥazm displays self-praise, but also the bitterness of not being appreciated or noticed, let alone honoured in his homeland:

I am the sun shining in the sky of knowledge,
my only fault is that I rose in the West:
Had I risen in the firmament of the East,
nothing would have been lost then of my fame!
I have a deep love for the Iraq regions, and
no wonder that a lover finds himself lonesome here. 17

A contemporary of Ibn Ḥazm, Abū al-Walīd Is. maṣūl b. Muḥammad al-Ḥimyarī, called Ḥabīb, (411-440) compiled an anthology of Andalusian nature poetry, entitled al-Badā'ī fi Faṣl al-Rabī', in the introduction to which he also complains about the concentration of attention on the literature of the East, at the expense of that of the West.
فلمَّا رآيت ذلك جمعت هذا الكتاب مضمّنا ذلك الباب ولست أودعه إلا ما ذكر لأهل الأندلس خاطئاً في هذا المعنى إذ أوصافهم لم تكفر على الأسألا ولا كثر امترابها بالطبع، فتردها شبيّة وتوردها شبيّة، وانتما ذلك لتفعیم أهل بلدتهما الأخرى، واغلبهم من جلّها اكتارا لفظها مدة بقاء أهلها، فإذا انقرفوا تأسفوا بقدر ما كانوا تتسفوا، وحينذاك لا يجدون الأقل فضفاض فشهرها، وثمدا يفغض عند بحورها، ولعمرى انّ هذه العلة مما صحّحت استغراضها وأفجع استعانهبا واستعاذا باً، وأمام اشعار المشرق فقد كثر الوقوف عليها والنثر إليها حتى ما تميل نحوها النفس، ولا يروقها منها العقل الشفيع مع أنّي استغنى عنها ولا أوجر اليها، بما انكره الأندلسي من النثر المبدع والنظم المختصر، وأكثر ذلك لأهل عرعي إذ لم تغل نوازدهم عن ذكري، وأمام من بعد عمره، وكيفهم من جليل قدره، فقلّما أوردت لهم شيئا للعّلة التي تعدّ ذكري لها من إعمالها وتفعیمها، وأهل المشرق في تأليف أشعار شعرائهم، وتدوير أخبار علمائهم، الغفل علينا، والمسي لنا حتى لقد يجمعون خشينها مع حسنها، ويضيفون لهنّا إلى لهنّا للاقلة ميز بها، بل شرحها عن تركها، ولو جرى أهل الأندلس على تلك الطريقة لأوردت على الحقيقة، أمثال ما أوردت، وأضافوا ما اجتلت، لكن أهل المشرق لا يألفهم لأشعارهم، وتشغيفهم لأخارهم، من التشبيهات في هذه الموصفات، ما وجدته لأهل بلدتي على كثرة ما سقط منها من يدي، بالغلفة التي ذكرتها عنها وقتة التهيم بها وعلى قرب عهد الأندلسي بمنظمي الإسلام فكيف يمنظمي الكلام، ولو نغرنا عن ادراج المشرقين في كلّ نحو وعرض، وتقفروا عن لاقائهم في كل جوء وعرض، لكانوا أحقّا بالتأثير، وأحرياء بالتقدير، وفكيَّر م홈 فضلك وتقصّوا في أحسن المعاني مجمل، وأطيبيها ممجني، وهو الباب الذي تفسّى هذا الكتاب فيله في الاعتراف الفاصل، والابتسام الرائع، وحسن التمييز والتشييده ما لا يقوم أولئك مقامهم فيه، والفضيل الجميل لدلى الوزاريين القاضي الجليل المنتجّع والمكرّ وابنها الحاج الشهيب شهاب القدّب، نهراً غياب، ورحمة الله على العباد، مولى وسيدٍ، أبقاهما اللّه، سترا عليّ، فيما اللذان أقامت مقعد الهمم، بدَّ اهتاليهما، ومظفر أرض الفطن، سماء أفضاليهما فدرت الدرر، من تلك الفكر التي يسيّران لتحسين مرادهما، وتحسين مرادهما.
This complaint was voiced to some degree by a number of Andalusian authors, principal among whom are Ibn Khāqān (d. 529/535 A.H.). In his book *Matmaḥ al-Anfūs*, he says:

"فحلت من الوزير أبي العباس حكم بن الوليد عند من رحب وأهله، بكافر واهله، بندبي إلى أن أجمعوا في كتاب وأدركتن من التنسيق إلى أقبال ما ندب البيئة، وكتابته ما حث عليه، فأجابوا عليه، وحيث بالاعتقاد فيهما، وذهبت إلى أباداؤها، وتثقيف عليها، وألمت منها في بعض الآيات، الثلاث أقسام: (القسم الأول) يشمل على سرد غرر الوزراة، وتحقيق درر الكتب والبلاغاء. (القسم الثاني) يشمل على مقالات أعلام العلماء، وأعيان الفضاء والقديمة. (القسم الثالث) يشمل على سرد محسن الأدباء، النواجف في رجاء، و%MATH% مصطلح الأنفس، وصريح النأس، في ملح أهل الأندلس، وأبيتها، لذوي الآداب ذراك، لأهل الأحسان فخراء، يسالون به أهل العراق، ويحاسون بمحسانها الشمس عند الأشراق."

وتأمل آباه الناظر في كتابي شامل الآذان المنتقد، والمعيه المنتقد، شر أغلب التشهيبات، وأعجاب الصفات، وأربع الكلمات، لمن كان حواليهم من
مضن اليهما، معاول عليهما وصمد بين أبيديهما، وصمد على أبادهما، وثامن ذلك لتتبني احساسهما، وتعابٌ اتصالهما، وقدما قبل الله تفتتح
اللهما، ويقدر ذلك أعملوا الفكر وأنعموا النظر فنظموا في عودهم درا من
الكلام، لا تسلك على سلكها غير الأيام، وكما جمل فعليهما جملا من الجمال
تبقى بقاء الليل، فله درهما من ملكين نقصاً محكم الأدب الكاسدة، وأملنا
حال العلم الغايدة، فكفر المنتحلون لها، والتحنون بها وولايهم - أطلال
الله باقاهما وأدام اعتلاءهما - ما انفردت لهذا التأليف، ولا فشلت فكره
بذا التصنيف، ولا منبت نفسه به ولا وقفت بها في ترتيبه، لكن بعضهم
الجدير، وفعليما الجميل، لاح السبيل وعملت كيف أقول فجراها الله علتما
بوليان من الآياد الحسان التي تداركتنا.............جزاء يجوز رضاهما، بل
يجوز مناهما."
MOTIVES BEHIND THE WRITING OF AL-DHAKIRA

Ṭāhā Ḥusayn states in his introduction to al-Dhakīra, that there were two motives which induced Ibn Bassām to compile his book. One was his love for his homeland, al-Andalus, and his desire to prove its superiority in literature and knowledge, and to impress upon his contemporaries the wonders of Andalusian culture, particularly as he saw that while his own people were passionately fond of Eastern literature they were neglecting their own. The second factor was his desire to imitate al-Tha'labī in his book al-Yatīma in which he described the literature of his contemporaries.

Makki, on the other hand, does not acknowledge the second factor, saying that "in spite of Ibn Bassām's approval of al-Tha'labī, and his admiration for his method in al-Yatīma, and also despite the fact that he describes him as:

رأس المؤلفين في زمانه، وآماد المصطفين بحكم قراءة

his motive in writing al-Dhakīra was not either to imitate al-Tha'labī or to compete with his contemporary al-Fāṭḥ Ibn Khaqān". 19 Nevertheless, Makki emphasises the first factor which induced Ibn Bassām to write al-Dhakīra, stating that the incentives were to defend his homeland and reveal the glories of his nation.

Ṭāhā Ḥusayn appears to be vindicated by what Ibn Bassām himself declares in his own introduction:

فان شراء هذا الأدب، العالى الرتب، رسالة شعر وترسل، وإيابات نظم وتفضل
عنادل ذلك أنثيال القطار، على مفاصل الأزهر، وتحمل هذه اتصال القلائد، على
نحو الخرائط، وما زال في أفتقنا هذا الأندلسي النقي إلى وقتنا هذا من فرسان
الخليج، وأئمة التنوعين، قوم هم ما هم طيب مكار، وضاء جواهر، وعذوبة موارد
ومصادر، لعبوا بأطراف الكلام المشتق، لعب الدي جفون المؤرّق.
"al-Dhakhīra was no more than an Andalusian attempt to imitate al-Thā'ālibī. The Andalusians had a passion for imitating the people of the East in the various scientific and literary spheres, in addition to their interest in actual Eastern works. For instance, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbihi in his ʿIqd followed the pattern of Ibn Qutayba’s ʿUyun al-Akhbār. As al-Thā'ālibī divided his book into four parts in accordance with the four parts of the Islamic world, Ibn Bassām also divided his book into four parts, devoting three of them to the literature of the three Andalusian regions, the central, the Western and the Eastern and the fourth to the literary immigrants who came to al-Andalus from North Africa and the East". 21
1. Ibn Bassām, 3,1,654.
3. Ibn Bassām, 1,2,994.
5. Ibn Bassām, 1,1,14.
6. al-Ṭahir Āḥmad Makki, Dirāsat Andalusiyya, 45.
7. Ibn Bassām, 1,1,408.
8. Ibid, 1,1,424.
10. Ibn Bassām, 1,1,523.
11. Ibid, 1,2,635.
12. Ibid, 1,1,20.
13. Ibid, 1,1,21-22.
15. Ibid, 1,1,12-16.
17. Anwar Chejne, 149.
18. Ibn Ḫaqān, 8, 2.
19. Makki, 224.
20. Ibn Bassām, 1,1,11-12.
IBN BASSAM'S REGIONAL SYSTEM AND SOME
OF HIS CRITICAL ATTITUDES
In spite of the fact that al-Andalus is more or less a homogeneous unit, Ibn Bassām, imitating al-Thaālibi, divided it in his book into four main regions. al-Thaālibi's approach is appropriate to the East, since that is a large and varied region. The fact that al-Andalus, as we have already said, is more or less homogeneous, led Ibn Bassām, instead of demonstrating the effect of regional environment upon his writers, to make a comparison between those of al-Andalus and those of the East. The main stimulus behind his compilation of Al-Dhakhīra was clearly to show that his country's writers were equal in merit to those of the East. A glance at Ibn Bassām's divisions shows that, for example, Seville's writers considerably outnumbered those of Córdoba. Ibn Bassām did not, however, investigate the reasons for this superiority, unlike al-Thaālibi, who gave environmental reasons for the tendency of the poets of certain regions to produce better work than those of others. For instance, he believed that Syria was more fertile for literature than other regions because it was close to the original home of the Arabs, particularly al-Ḥijāż; the language of its people was thus purer than that of the people of Iraq because the latter was tainted by their proximity to the Persians and Nabateans. The people of Syria, then, combined the pure language of the Bedouin and the refined language of civilisation:
To support his case, instead of giving such reasons for the superiority of the literary talent of certain regions to that of others as did al-Tha‘alibi, Ibn Bassam quoted the prominent Eastern scholar Abū ‘Alī al-Qāfī, who expressed immense admiration for Andalusian literature in general.

Even in this respect Ibn Bassam imitated al-Tha‘alibi, who supported his case by citing Ibn Abbād:

"... Whatever is published by the peoples of the old countries in the west is also published by the peoples of the east. And in this respect, Ibn Bassam imitated al-Tha‘alibi, who supported his case by citing Ibn Abbād:"

"... And another group of Ahmad ibn al-Qamīs told that having listened to them.

المختصرة التي هي طريق الباحث في الجزلة والغذوة والفضاحة والسلاسة، ويحرص على تحصيل الجديد من أشعارهم، ويستعي الطارئين عليه من تلك البلاد مهما بحثوا من تلك البذائع واللطفات حتى كتب دفنترا ضخم الحجم عليها، وكان لا يفارق مجلسه ولا يغفل أحد منه عينه غيره، وصار ما جمعه فيه على طرف لسانه وفني من قلمه، فنظر بهتاف في مخاطراته ومحاوراته، وتأثر بذلك وعده كما هو في رسائله."

"... And another group of Ahmad ibn al-Qamīs told that having listened to them."

"... And another group of Ahmad ibn al-Qamīs told that having listened to them."

"... And another group of Ahmad ibn al-Qamīs told that having listened to them.
Ibn Bassām also adopted al-Thāalibī’s own words when speaking about the region of Seville:

"حتى إجمع في الجانب الغربي على ضيق ، اكتفاه ، وتحيّف العدّر قصه الله تعالى لأطرافه ، ودأب الأقاليم العراقية، وأتى بلغة الدولة الدبلوماسية، فكما رأيت فيه شاعرا غير ماهر ، ولا شاعرا غير قاهر ، دعوا خر الكلام فلي ، وأرادة فما تأتي ، وطريقتهم في الشعر الطريقة المثلى التي هي طريقه البختري في السلام والمتانة، والعدوية والرصانة."

The main reasons that stimulated Ibn Bassām to compile his book was his national consciousness, which we have already discussed. He was prejudiced in favour of this country and his people and seized every opportunity to praise them. Much of his critical evaluation reflects this, for example:

I have confided to this compilation, which I have called “Kitāb al-Dhakhīr fī Mahāsīn Ahl al-Jazīrā”, of the wonders of their learning and the marvels of their prose and verse that which is sweeter than the whispering of lovers, part restraint and part caution, and more delectable than the service of wine to the melody of the third and highest string of the lute.... I should introduce in this chapter some of the wonderful things that have occurred to the people of al-Andalus, and some of the extraordinary things that have been heard from them.

These hostile neighbours made the Andalusians insecure about their own identity. They were, therefore, very conscious of their own individual language and culture. He realised that the writers of the West in general and of Andalus in particular were neglected by literary critics and scholars, compared with those of the East, so
he compiled *al Dhakhīra* to draw attention to their merits.  

al-Thaālibī, as is well-known, limited himself to the comparison of the writers of Iraq with those of Syria, to the exclusion of those of the rest of the Islamic world. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn Abd al-Ḥamīd criticizes al-Thaālibī for his neglect of these other writers. Muḥammad Abd Allah al-Jādir disagrees with this criticism. "Had this critic had a second thought he would have realised that al-Thaālibī's preference for the poets of Syria and Iraq was due to the grace of poetry that God bestowed upon these two regions. This can be attributed to their immediate contacts with the roots of genuine and original Arabic poetry, and because these regions had been the centres of the Islamic Empire for four successive centuries for Arabic poetry while no other region could compete with them".  

Ibn Bassām picked up this self-restriction of al-Thaālibī in his introduction:

Ibn Bassām tried to show that the poetic merits of the Andalusians outweighed those of the people of Iraq, Syria and the rest of the Islamic East. Ibn Bassām divided *al-Dhakhīra* into four parts:
1. The first was devoted to the writers of Córdoba and its surroundings.
2. The second was devoted to the writers of Seville, its surroundings and the Western part of the Andalusian peninsula. He adopted a chronological classification of writers only in the section of this part that deals with Badajoz and the Atlantic region.
3. The third was devoted to the writers of the Eastern side of the Andalusian peninsula.
4. The fourth was devoted to writers who came to al-Andalus from elsewhere; he said in the introduction to this part:

قد قدمت في مدر هذا القسم أن الجانب الغربي من الجزيرة، لأول تلبـك
الفترة المبكرة، الواقعة بقرطبة في آخر دولة بني عامر، اشتمل على
بيتي حسب، وجمهوري أدب: ملكتان من لحم ونجيب، فوفد عليه بذلك كـ
أدب، واستوطن كـ أكر نجيب، وقد جعل بجملة مؤثرة، لطوارئ كثيرة،
وجماعة أعداد، كانوا بدولة بني عيـاد، من أرباب هذا الشأن، فلدنكر
الآن من نشا من أرباب المنثور والمنظوم، بعقر هذا الإقليم، وتنقد منهم
من تقدم في فنهم ".

قد استوفيت في ثلاثة الأقسام، جملة مما انتهى إلى من محاكاة البصر والنظم،
لمن نشأ بالجزيرة من الأعيان الأعلام، من أول تاريخ هذا المجموع العـ
وقتنا، ولنعق ذلك بحول الله وتأويله بذكر من هاجر إليها من تلك الآفاق
وطرأ عليها من شعراء الشام والعراق، مكن تيجيح ذراها، وترمل نعمها،
ونجم في أفلاكها، وخيم في نظار أعلامها، ولم آت بهذه الغرفة من أرباب
هذا الفت الذي أنا في إقامة أوده، متعززا من ذاته، ولا مستكرا من قلة;
ولا لأنني لم أجد منهم أعيان وزرائنا وكتابنا من هو أبعد غاية، ولا أبهر آية،
ولكنهم استدروا إلى أعلامها، وترددنا بين جمـهم وجماهم، فصاروا منـ
أهلها بالوفادة عليها وخلع أرطاحهم إليها، مع أن هذه الطائفة لم يسم

...
Ibn Bassam was the first to adapt this method of division by region to the literary history of al-Andalus. He was imitated in his turn by others such as Ibn Sa'Id in al-Mughrib Fī Ḥulā Ahl al-Maghrib.

al-Tha'labī was the first literary critic actually to reject classical in favour of contemporary poetry. This is exemplified in his introduction to al-Yatīma:

"The first preoccupation of authors has been to arrange in order, to classify, to grade and to collect the works of the ancient poets, and to anthologise their
gasidas. How many brilliant books have they produced, and how many magnificent 'necklaces' have they strung, which the present time depreciates only by the eye's sinking beneath the outwornness of their newness and the shabbiness of their robes, the ear's rejection of their repetitiveness and the heart's weariness of their reiteration; while the beautiful things produced by the people of this age, which possess the sheen of youth, the delight of newness, the sweetness of modernity and great merits, in spite of the quantity of criticism that they have received, are not included in any book that brings together their scattered members or strings their disconnected beads". 12

Ibn Sharaf al-Qayrawānī, the famous literary critic of the fifth century, tried to make a balance in his literary criticism between ancient and contemporary poetry:

"Beware of two things: first, do not allow your veneration for an ancient renowned poet to impel you to approve too quickly of what you hear of his poetry; and second, do not allow your lack of regard for a popular contemporary poet to make you scorn what is recited to you of his poetry. To do so constitutes an offence against the rules, and injustice on the part of the judges. Only when you have carefully considered the utterances of both should you cast your judgement for or against them". 13

Ibn Bassām once again followed al-Thaālibī in this respect and expressly limited himself in al-Dhakhīra to consideration of his own age:
"I have compiled this book from the selected masterpieces of the most distinguished literary men of this time and place .... I have not gone beyond the people of my age, and specifically those whom I have seen myself or those whom my contemporaries have met. Every repetition is heavy and every reiteration is tedious. I have limited myself to the fifth century A.H." His reasons for confining himself to the 5th century may be summarised thus:

1. Classical poetry had been overstudied; further consideration of it was a waste of time and effort.

He preferred, therefore, to pay attention to contemporary literature as being of more general concern and interest. Al-Jurjānī had expressed this view before him, as well as al-Thaālibī and Ibn Sharaf.
2. Andalusian literary critics had neglected the masterpieces of their age, and there was thus a gap to be filled. He believed that poetry should be elegant and easy; poets should avoid obscure and unusual language and should be precise in their expression. He makes this clear in his biography of Muḥammad Ibn Masud.

And in his biography of Abū Bakr Muḥammad b'Isā al-Ḍānī:

His dislike of obscurity and strange language is implied in his biography of Abū al-Ḥasan b. Ḥārūn al-Shantamrī:

and in his biography of Abū al-Ḥasan b. Ḥuṣn al-Isbī‘ī:

His preference for natural poetry to artificial and affected poetry appears in his biography of Abū al-Ḥasan Sāliḥ Ibn Sāliḥ Al-Shantamrī:

"And in his biography of Abū al-Ḥasan b. Ḥuṣn al-Isbī‘ī:"

"And in his biography of Abū al-Ḥasan b. Ḥārūn al-Shantamrī:
SOCIAL RANK AND LITERATURE IN AL-DHAKHIRA

During Ibn Bassām's time, Andalusian society was undergoing social and political disorder, similar to that in the East at the same time. He appreciated that the education and interests of the rulers determined the literary trends in a society. The Banū Abbād and Banū al-Afītas exemplified this:

In this respect again, Ibn Bassām was not far removed from al-Tha'alībī:

The Banū Abbād contributed largely to the flourishing of contemporary literature. Some of them were themselves poets and encouraged others by their example; for instance, Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abbād competed with others in composing poetry and practising rhetoric.

Poetry flourishes when it finds encouragement and support from the rulers and declines when they neglect it.
The Mulūk al-Ṭawāif, as has already been shown, gave support and encouragement to writers. They competed with one another as to the number of poets they had at their court. Writers poured into the court of the Banū ʿAbbād, who were extremely generous to them. Ibn Bassām devoted a section of Part two of al-Dhakhīra to the literary activity of this court.


Some of these writers came to the court of the Banū ʿAbbād from other parts of al-Andalus and some from the East. Ibn Bassām devoted the fourth part of al-Dhakhīra to these immigrants.

Unlike the Banū ʿAbbād, Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn al-Afṭāṣ did not encourage the production of mere quantity of poetry but was greatly concerned with quality.

The same is true of Abū Yahyā Muḥammad b. Mān b. Ṣumādiḥ al-Tajibī of Almería.

Ibn Bassām adopted a hierarchical principle in including writers in al-Dhakhīra, giving preference to
Kings, then to courtiers, and so on:

"وبدأت بذكر الكتاب، إذ هم صدور في أهل الآداب، إلا أن يكون من له خط محسن الرياسة، أو يدعو إلى تقديمه بعض السياسة، فأوّل من ذكرت من قروطية من كان بيه من ملوك قريش في المدة المؤرخة من أهل هذا الشأن ثم من تعلق بسلطانهم، أو دخل في شيء من شائبه، وтовهم بالكتاب والوزراء، ثم بأعيان الشعراء، ثم بطراغ من المقللين منهم، وكذلك فعلت في كل قسم: بدأت بالملوك ثم استمر على ما وصفه من التشريع، وأتمنت على ما شرحت من الضيوب."

Nazha Jafar al-Musawī is critical of this principle as having obvious defects. She quotes, as an example, this passage on Abu al-Ala' b. Zuhr:

"ومع أنه أعلى قدراً، وأبك ذكراً، من أن يقرب الدهر عن علاه، أو يذم الشعر لأنه من خلافة ............. ولا ترشب اقتضاه التأليف، واقتضى به التصنيف، بل ذكره من هذا الديوان محل زحل من الفلك، واللذ من مفرق الملك."

This principle was also a reason for his neglecting much good literature of that period, by obscure writers, and by other people, who had no opportunity of being connected with any of the Kings, or who were not inclined to put their literary output at the service of the upper classes, and who thus missed the path of fame and obtained neglect as their portion. Ābd al-Āzīz al-Dānī is a prominent example of this.

"وكانت لأبي بكر وأخي عبد العزيز همة تعرّضهما للصدور، وترامى بهما إلى معالي الأمير، إلا أن أبا بكر كان أوسعهما في الأدب مجالاً، وأكثرهما على صعة الشعر إقبالاً، ومال عبد العزيز إلى التجارة فحسنت طريقته، وحده علمه، وكان له مع ذلك أدب دل على شبهه، وشعر يحسن من مشهه، إلا أنه لم يرضه مكسباً، ولا اتخذه إلى أحد من الملوك سيفاً، فذهب عن أكثر الناس ذكره، وما قبل موته شعره."

21

22
Ibn Bassām's predilection for this principle forced him sometimes to mention works of little artistic value:

"وأتمد الشعر النازل لإب يتعلّق به، أو لخبر أذكروه بسببه، وقد أذكرو الرجل ونباهة ذكره، لا لجودة شعره." 23

"وقد أذكرو الشعر ليس له شعر كثير، ولا احسان مشبور، آمّا لنشهار دكره،\nFurther, he gives as a reason for doing this the fact that he is following al-Sūlī:\n
"مع أنه قد رويت أشعار إبّ أوّل النباهة والأعيان على تقديم الزمن، لشرف قائلها مع قلّة طائفها، وقد رآيت أبا بكر الصولي أثبت لملوك بنى أمية وخلفاء بنّي العباس، ما لو صدر مثله لصفار الناس لاستحسن، أو طرأ لفضعاء السوق لاستصرف، فلنا في الصاليّ أسوة في أشياء هذا النوع من الشعر يقع في كتابنا هـذا: 25

Perhaps he is also, consciously or unconsciously, imitating al-Tha'ālībī:\n
"والشرط في هذه الأخرى إبراد لئلّة وحّية القلب، وناظر العين، وكتبة الكلمة، وواسطة العقد، ونقش النغم، مع كلام في الإشادة إلى النظاّر والأحاس والسرقات، فانّ وقع في خلال ما أكتب إليه البيت والبيان مما ليس من أبابي الكبائد، فلان الكلام معقود به، والمعنى لا يتمّ بدوته، أو أنّ ما يقتضّه أو بليبه متقتر الّه، أو لأنّه شعر ملك أو وزير أو رحبٌ خثار أو إمام من أهل الأدب والعلم كبيّر، وآمّا يتفق مثله ذلك بالانسما إلى قائله لا بكثرة طائله." 26
Though he took rank as a criterion for consideration in his work, at the same time he was far too sensitive a critic to neglect artistic criteria:

Again, in his introduction to the second volume:

Similarly, in the third:

He sometimes deviates from his principle but he gives clear and reasonable evidence to justify this, as in the section devoted to Yusuf Ibn Harun al-Ramadi:

Religion and morality were important factors in his literary criticism; in this he resembled Ibn Hazm and others. This is, in fact, a deep-rooted issue in the history of Arabic literature. al-Ashma'i, for instance, refused to paraphrase either satirical poetry or any poetry that in any way appeared to resemble, or be based on, the Qur'an. The same is true of al-Baqillani, who disapproved of the Ma'llaqa of Imru' al-Qays for moral reasons. Ibn Sharaf was rather extreme when he said that morality was an essential factor in the literary criticism of a poem.
Ibn Bassām greatly disliked poetry that alluded to heresy or unbelief, or used philosophical terminology. He was reluctant to include in his book satire or defamatory, profligate poetry. He bitterly criticised poets who circulated satirical poetry, as in the chapter on Abū Marwān ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ziyādat Allāh al-Ṭubnī:

"لَوْلَا كَتَبَ لِهَذَا عَنْ شِينِ الْهِجَاءِ، وأَكَرِهِ الْيَادَانَ لِلْسَفِيَّةِ، فأَجْرِهِ هَذَا هُنا قَطْرًا مِّنْ مَلْيِ التَّعْرِيفِ وَفِي اِبِنِ الزَّعَامِ، مَمَّا لَا أَدُبُّ عَلَى قَابِلِهِ، وَلاً رَوْمَةِ أَعْمَلُ عَلَى مِنْ قِيلٍ فِيهِ، وَالْهِجَاءِ يَنْصُمُ قَمْسِينَ: قَمْ يَسْوِّنهُ هُجُورُ الأَشْرَافِ، وَهُوَ مَا لَمْ يَبْلُغَ أَنْ يَكُونَ سَبَى مَقْذَعًا وَلا هِجَاءاً مُّسْبِيْعَا، وَهُوَ طَافَا قَدِيْمًا مِنْ الأَوَّالِ، وَحَلَّ عَرْشِ الْقَبْلَاءِ، وَلَمْ تَوَيِّهِ وَجَيْبِرْ، وَتَقْدِيمِ وَتَأْخِيرَ، كَقْوَلِ النَّجِاحِيِّ فِي بَنِي الْعَلْجَانِ، وَشَهْرَةٌ شُعْرِهِ تُغْفُنُّ عَنْ ذَكْرِهِ، وَاشْتَاعَدوهُ عَلَى عَمْرٍ بِنْ النَّجَاحِ، وَأُنْتَفَذَوْهُ قَوْلُ النَّجِاحِيِّ فِي مَدْرَاشِ الْحَدِيثِ، وَفَعَلَّ مُتَّلَكَ.

بَالْزِرَقْانِ هِنَّ كَخَطَّيْتِهَا، وَسَأْلَهُ أَنْ يَنْشِدَ مَا قَالُ فِيهِ، فَأَنْشَدَ قَوْلُهُ:

"دُعِّيَ المَكَارِمِ لَا تَرْجِلِ لِبَغْيِهَا، وَاقْعَدْ فَانْكَ أَنتُ الطَّاعِمُ الكَاسِ".

فَسَأَلَهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ كَعْبَ بْنَ زَهْيَرَ نَفَالَ: وَاللَّهُ مَا أُوْدَىُ بَمَا قَالَ لَهُ حَمَارِ النَّوْمِ، وَقَالَ حَسْنَ بْنَ شَابِهَ: لَمْ يَسْمَعْ وَاللَّهُ مَعْلُوْبَهُ بِعَدْ طَيْرٍ بَعْقَابَهُ، ثُمَّ اسْتَعْطَفَهُ بِصُعُرَةِ الْمُشْهُرِ.

وَقَدْ قَالَ عِبَادُ الْمَلِكِ بْنُ مَروانِ يَوْمًا: احْتَضَرُوا أَحْسآَبَكُمُ يَابْنِيَ أَمِيَّةَ، فَمَا أُوْدَىُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ مَا طَلَّبَ عَلَى الْحَمَّارِ وَأَنْ الأَعْشَى قَالَ فِيّ:

"شَيْئَانُ مِنْ الْحَمَّارِ مَلَأهُ بَسْطَةُ مُسْلَمًا، وَجَارِئُكُمُ غَرِيْبُ بِيْنَ خَمْائِسِ:"

وَلِمَا سَمَّى عَلَمَةُ مِنْ عَلَلَاةِ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ بِيْكَ وَقَالَ: أَنْحَنَ نَفْعُلُ هَذَا بَجَارَةَتَا؟ وَدُعَا عَلِيِّهِ، فَما ذَلَّكَ بْيَسِيَ عَلَمَةُ مِنْ عَلَلَاةِ: وَقَدْ كَانَ عَنْهُمْ لَوْ ضَرَبَ بِالسِّفَرِ مَا قَالَ حَيْثُ ۖ وَقَدْ كَانَ الْرَّاعِي يَقُولُ: هُجُوتُ جَماعَةُ مِنْ الْشُّعْرَا، وَمَا قَلَتْ فِيهِ مَا تَسْتَنَيْحُ العَذْرَاءُ مِنْ إِنْشَادهُ فِي خَدْرَةِ، وَلِمَا قَالَ جَرِيرُ:

"فَغَفُّتِ الْعِلْفَ الْأَدْمُكُ مِنْ نَمِيرِ.

فَلا كَمْ بَلَغَتْ وَلَا كَلَابَا"
He rejected poetry that consisted largely of abuse, such as much of that of Jarīr, al-Farazdaq and al-Akhtal. In doing so, of course, he deprived us of access to an important genre of poetry, which would have given us a deeper insight into the political, social, economic and educational circumstances of the period.

It must be said that his strict adherence to religion and morality did not prevent him altogether from quoting pieces of satirical poetry, as in his biography of Abū Amir Ibn Shuhayd:

On Wallāda bint al-Mustakfi:

"وَكَانَتْ زَعْمَا، تَتْقَرَّبُ أَيْبَاتُهَا مِنَ السُّحْرِ، وَقَدْ قَرَأَتْ أَشْيَاءَ مِنْهَا فِي بَعْضِ التَّلَقِيقِ، أَمَرَتْ مَنْ ذَكَرَهُ، وَطَوِّيْتَهُ بَيْنَ هَذَيْنِ، لَنْ أَكْثِرَ هَجَاةً وَلَسْ مِنْهَا، ٣٠٠ إِعَادَةُ وَلَا وَلْدَاءٌ، وَلَا مِنْ كِتَابِي فِي أَرْضٍ وَلَا سَمَاءٍ"
On Abū al-Qāsim Khalaf b. Faraj al-Ilbīrī, called al-Sumaysir:

"وله مذهب استثر في مجهود شعره، من القدح في أهل عصره، من الكتاب عن ذكره".

and on Abū Muḥammad Abī Allāh b. Sāra al-Shantarīnī:

"ولقد رأيت له عدة مقطوعات في الهجاء، تربى على حسب الدنهاء، وهو في صميم النظم، نافذ الحكم، طويت عليه كشجا، وأضربت عن ذكره سفخًا، وربما ألصمت منه بالأنغل، ترى فشلدن، لو استجزت أن أثبت في هذا الكتاب، بعض ما له في هذا الباب، لتحقت أن يملأجمة بالجملة بالنقاط، وسلمة، وقد كتب من ذلك في كتابه المترجم بـ "ذقنة". الذكورة "جلبة موفورة، لـ..."، ولتواءم كثيرا، ونبيم أوردت مع ذلك هنا من شعره، لما أجريت من ذكراه. حجة فعل، وشاهد عدل"

Unfortunately, however, this book, Dhakhīrat al-Dhakhīra, which would have shed further light on his approach to literary criticism, is no longer extant.

He criticised Abū Marwān b. Hayyān for his satirical tendency:

"وعم ذلك فقد كان سهما لا يضمني رميته، وبحرا لا ينكس أشيئه، لو غلب الماء ما نقع، أو تعرض لابن ذكاء ما سطع، يتناول الأحباب قد رسخت في الخوام، وأنافنت على النجوم، فتبعت ممارتها، ودمعت أنوارها، يلفظ أحسن من لقاء الحبيب غبب الوعود، وأمكن من صدر الطبيب عند الوؤود."

He quoted many examples from Ibn Hayyān's book, but he refrained from mentioning the names of those who were satirized, lest he should disgrace his book:

"وهذه فصول مشتقة من طويل كلامه في تاريخه، وكنبت عن أكثر من به سرع، رغبة بكتابي عين الشين، ونفي عن كون أحد الهاجين، إلا في بعض أخبار ملوك الطوائف، لما تعلق بذكرهم من فتون المعارف."

And again:

"وكان منزهم بقرطبة خاتمة المتكلمين وجميع المحسنين،على ما تراء ركب من

اثمن، واحتبب من ظلم، وتناول من عرض، وأطبق من سماء على أرض، عجيبا.."
The following are extracts from Ibn Hayyān, which Ibn Bassām quoted in this way:

Ibn Bassām was not as extreme as Ibn Ḥazm vis-à-vis his religious criteria of literary criticism. In this respect he was very close to al-Ṣūlī, who once said: "I have never thought that infidelity reduces the value of poetry or that pure faith increases its merits." 36

Ibn Bassām expressed exactly this sentiment:

"..."

Al-Jurjānī adopted the same view:

"..."

Ibn Bassām was not as extreme as Ibn Ḥazm vis-à-vis his religious criteria of literary criticism. In this respect he was very close to al-Ṣūlī, who once said: "I have never thought that infidelity reduces the value of poetry or that pure faith increases its merits." 36

Ibn Bassām expressed exactly this sentiment:

"..."

Al-Jurjānī adopted the same view:

"..."
IBN BASSAM'S ATTITUDE TO LICENTIOUS LITERATURE

Ibn Bassām was not so strict about citing licentious poetry in al-Dhakhīra as he was about citing satirical poetry, for example, he quoted the following poem in his biography of Abū al-Mughīra:

"وأَمَّا مَعَاهَا مَعَائِتَ الْفِلَسَمَانِ فَقَدْ جَرَتْ خَيْرُ فَرْسَانِ هَذَا الشَّانُ ، بِهذَا المِيدَانُ وَتَفَتَّنَوْا فِي ذَلِكَ نَشَا وَنَظَا مُ، وَتَطَارَدُوا فِيهِ مَدْحًا وَذِمَّا ، وَمَمَّنْ ذَمّهِمْ مِنْ أهْلٍ عَصِرِّنَا عَبْدِ الجِلِيلِ ، حِيْثَ يَقُولُ :

وَأَمَرَّد يَسْتَهْيِمُ بِكُلٍّ وَادٍ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ مَسْتَمِعاً مَجِيِبًا
وَعَلَقَ عِنْدَ عَادَرِيْهِ الذُّنُوبِ

وَأَخْذِهُ أَبُو بَكْرِ الدَّانِي فَقَالَ :

فِي مِثْلِهِ يَعْدُرُ الكَلِبَ
لَكَتُّمَا سَرَّهُ مُحِييييي

بَدْتُ عَلَيْهِ الْذَّنُوبِ

وَلِعِبْدِ الجِلِيلِ فِي هَذِهِ الْمَفَاتِ عَدَّةٌ مَقْطَعَاتٍ ، فَفَتَحَ بِهَا جَرَابِ السَّفِحِ ، وَلَمْ يُسْتَشْرِي

He comments on another poet:

وَلَمْ أَسْمِعُ فِي ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْ عِنْدَ عَلَا حَسُنَّ ، أَحْسَنَ مِنْ قُولِ بَعْضِ أَهَلِ عَصِرِّنَا وَهُوَ أَبُو

الجَسَنِ الْبَرَقِيّ فِي أَيَّاتِ تَسْتَنَدُّ يَجْمُلُهَا وَهِيَ :

شُكْكَا وَأَضْحَتْ سَلَوَةُ الْعَشَاقِ
أَنْوَارٌ وَجْبَكَ وَاهِيَ الآخِلَاقِ
خَلَقَ الْكِتَبَ وَشِيْمَةُ المِدْخَالِ
وَازَهُ الْمَحِيّا رُوْضَةُ الأَخِدَاقِ
كَمْ قَدْ أَلْبَّ الْنَّبِيّ بِالْأَشْواَقِ
حَتَّى فَضَتْ لِلْيَلِّ بِمَحَايَالِ
عِنْدَ ابْنِ دِيْاءٍ مُؤْدِنٌ بِفَرَاقِ
الْعَذَارِ فَقَلَتْ : وَجَهَ نَازِحُ
Again, he cites verses by Ibn al-Ḥaddād satirising al-Sumaysir:

يا أهل غرناطة نيكوا سميركم
ففي رميلنا عنه لنا شغل

and verses of praise and satire composed by al-Ḥasan Ibn Wahb:

وعفا فيه من كرم وخير
أراه كثير ارخاء الأستور
حسن حين يخلو بالسرور
طليل البيض تفرع بالذكور

"فلولا الريح أسمع من بحجر
وأنشد بعضهم قول الآخر، ومضن بيت الساقي فقال:

رطب العجان وكفه كالجلملد
جفت أعينه وأتقلته نذ

فدخل الفكك ونحن من هذا الحديث المستور على طرف، فقال: أحمن من جميع ما

أشهد أمبات رسم الله قالها في البديع يهوج وهي:

وقد عابته عيون البشر
كما الفحول رماح السمـر
لا يدعي القوم أن يأـر

"ألا وابناب عليمة العامري

Ibn Bassām often criticized the poets whose biographies he wrote; for example, he was rather unhappy about the arrogance shown by al-Fikikī:

"فكان الجماعة لم تجب للكثرة حمته، ونجابة خلقه، ثمّ حركت الفكك أرجـحة
العجب لسكوت أهل المجتمع عنه هناكك، فكانه قاضي ذلك، وقلت: لم تجب أن
بتشي، ومن حضر لم يهمه ذلك، وإذنا أردت أن تحدو رحم كاتب بكفر، حيث يغـل
مضن أمبات إماري، ليس، فقصرت عنه وهو قوله

حديث أبي الفضل شيء نكر
مررت به وعليه الفنـالام

اذا ما ذكرته أقنعـي
ومن خلفه ذنب مستـر
Ibn Bassām said that when he had spoken of al-Fikkīk in these terms, the latter remained silent. Yet again, he cited this verse of Ibn al-Abbār:

زاري خيفة الرقيبا مريبا

on which he commented:

"ولقد ظرف ابن الآثار واستيخر ما شاء وندر، وأظله لو قدر على البيض الندي عولى له نظم هذا الملك، وأوطا له خيّه هذا الملك، لدبّ إليه، ووجب أيضاً عليه، وأبو شواسب سبل هذا السبيل للناس يهله يقول:

والرأي فيمن فعلنا
فكان خيّراً بملح

Ibn Bassām referred to these verses as "jokes". If he had had a rigid religious attitude, he would have refrained from mentioning them at all.

He said that al-Amīn commanded Abū Nūwās to stop writing verse such as the following, which he did not scruple to quote:

وتمعتنا ما كفاني زمانا
أقرب الخدراني والغلمانا
ودعتني نغشي اليم عيانا
أفعفت منه مقولة ورسانا
قلت: لا أخد أن ترى سكرانا

قد هجرت المدام والندمانا
ونهاني خليفة اللّه أن لا
وخشيбли البلاش ان لم أطيعه
وغرض س께ه الراح حتٰب
قال لا تكرشي بيحياني
Ibn Qutayba had cited this kind of language before Ibn Bassām and refers to this in the introduction to 'Uyūn al-akhbār':

Ibn Bassām's religious principles do not seem to interfere with his citing of a considerable quantity of obscene verse, even those containing very basic terms for parts of the body and the activities associated with them. The following are some examples of the total quantity; it is noticeable that he makes little or no comment on most of them.
وكتب إليه بعض الغنائين شعرًا يعرض فيه نفسه، فوقع الخفاجي على ظهر رقعته:
وقال:

٤٣

واشد على شيطانه شيطانٍ

وظّن أن يستفتيك الإشارة
وقوع السوط من كفٍّ أمّارة
الي شعر الغمارة والفارارة
بجرب من براعة إزاره
كما تدري إلى القاترة والنضاره
وحاضرنا وان أبدى حصاره
فذلك الوقت لا شوّاره
فدع سمج الفكاهة والشقطاره
وعثر كيف شاءه الزبيارة؟
فحّص ما استطعت من الحصاره
بناك ولد حملت بها الأمارة
وقال أيضاً بعض أهل العصر يناقشون، وعوضت فيه إلى هجوه استطراداً طبيعيًا:

لا تنقل بمعجزة
على الحقيقة تعجز
دائم بدين السمسور
ومن أناشيد الشعالي:

لي آيَر أراحي الله منه
نام ذا زاري الحبيب عنادا
حسبت زورة لفترة جنّيـلي
فتليلها، ولا يتيك، ولا تتيك

فرات في بعض الملح خيراً له بهذا الموضع، بعض مواقع، قال بعضهم: مشيت
فاذًا أنا يصدق من أهل البصور خارجاً من دار سبّ فقلت له: أيكون عندك
أربع خلاصٍ، وأكثر من ستين سريةً، وتأتي مثل هذه الدنيا؟ فقلت:
اسكت، مثل أبي من كلب ينابيع من طراً عليه ولا يشعرّ لم يختصّ بـ ٤٤.٥
قال أبو جعفر ابن أحمد:

جُلَّتُنَا دُخُلًا على يوم زهرة الصائم من دائرة في ابن زهرة هذا، اذ طلقت عليه أمراته:

لا تلوما نجل هند
فهو في الناس رحيم
طالب الفرج كلا كا

يا خليلي وملكنا
أبى الغم فكفتنا
وابحح بالرب ألفنا
Ibn Bassām's attitude to truth in poetry

Ibn Bassām resembled Ibn Tabājah in his attitude to truth and falsehood in literature, considering that a writer should avoid falsehood. He rejected hyperbolical and untruthful description, requiring that a writer should refrain, for example, from attributing cowardice to the courageous, or avarice to the generous.

His attitude was that of a conservative man, intent on truth and disliking literature that strayed from it.

On Abu Muhammad Ibn 'Abdun's verses:

آفي كل عام في العلا فتحة بكـ
وأن ابن خلدون لمفرقوها صـ
وولوا المصاعب الرذر لانقطع الذكر
فلم يك منبه لا غدير ولا زـ
وقد ملكته من معشتها فـ
ضرابي وان كانت لها الأعين الخزر

He comments:

فيا أبي محمد ابن عـدون في الحرب الزيون، مـتًا ليس بحـين، ليـه كلما شـد
وقيحة كان كمني ابن أبي ربيعة، حـبـه الكتب من الكتـابـ، وكفاءة اعتنـاق القـضـب
من خـرط الخوـاـب، وأـرى فهـرا لو مـلكـه بومـئذ اعـنتـها، وجعلت إليه سوشـها
واستـها، لمـت ميـتة ضحاـكـية، أو حـيـ حياة فــرـيـة قـطنـية، ولـخـر البيت وعمـوده،
وضاع الرعيل ومن يـقودـه 48
Ibn Abdūn was not truthful concerning himself in his poem; he exaggerated in his description of his participation in warfare. For this Ibn Bassām criticized him and laughed at him. He required writers to be truthful in relating historical events. When he heard the poem of Abū Bakr al-Dānī, in praise of al-Mutamid b. Abbad:

Ibn Bassām criticized Abu Bakr al-Dānī for writing lying propaganda; he felt that he could not remain silent when he saw the truth being violated.

On a poem of Ibn Dārrāj al-Qastallī in praise of Mubārak and Muṣaffar:
A counter example is provided by his reaction to a poem of Abu Bakr b. al-Malik in praise of al-Mu‘tamid:

He admired the concepts in these verses and regarded the poet's slight exaggeration as imaginativeness. He insisted that a writer should be true to himself and to reality.
IBN BASSAM'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS INFIDEL IDEAS AND PHILOSOPHICAL TERMINOLOGY:

He was averse to the mention of infidel ideas and philosophical terminology. He also had a distaste for poets who tried to imitate the images of the Quran. For example, on Ibn Darrāj al-Qaṣṭallān’s praise of Abū al-Asbagh ʿĪsā Ibn Sāid al-Qaṭṭān:

He commented:

He said: "A contemporary of mine, Ḥassān Ibn al-Maṣṣīṣī, borrowed this ma‘nā in his praise of al-Mutamid b. Abbad:

And again:

ومن آخر من ركب هذا الأسلوب في مكابرة الحقائق، وأغلب من ذهب هذا الحدث الغريب:

وقد كان موسى خالقا مترقباً، فقرأ واهمت المخافة والفقر.
Because of his religious scruples, he criticized al-Munfatil for his poem in which he praised Ibn al-Nighrilah al-Israili:

أحاجيكم هل يعموا الفلال والسدر
بثور ولكن لا شري دونها
كيف أذا جاء بما أرضه كيبرا
فلا ندهم علم النظم والنشاز

and commented:

وهذه القصيد اخرج له من الفلل فيه ما لا أثبته ولا أرويه وأبعد الله المنفلت فيما نظم فيه وقفل وقَّبَحُه وقُبَّح ما أُمِّل ولم في هذه القصيد من الفلل في القول ما شأ منه إلى ذي القوة والحول

وهو قوله:

فَمَن يَكُون موسى مِنْهُ فَمَنْ صَنَّوْهُ
فَكِم لَّهُمْ فِي الأَرْض مِنْ آيَةٍ تُبْرَى
وَفَطَّرَ عِبَادُهَا وَوَفَتَهَا
فَكَفَّرَ وَأَنْتَ عِبَادُهَا مُتَفَعِّلُونَ
وَلَوْ فَرَقَّا بَيْنَ الْقَلَّةِ وَالْهَادِي
رَثَّلْنا كَمْ كَالْرَّكِزَ زَلْفَة
وَلَا سَلَبْنَا كَمْ كَالْرَّكِزَ زَلْفَة
وَقَدْ فَرَقْتُ بِالْدِّينِ وَتَلَتَّبُكَ التَّمِين
أَنْبِينِ بَيْنِ السَّبْتِ جَهَرًا لَّكُم
وَقَدْ كَانَ مَوْسَى خَافِفًا مُتَرَقِبًا

He inveighed against him for the weakness of his religion:

فَقِحِ اللَّهُ هَذَا مَكَّاً وَأَبَدِّ عَنِى مَذْهِبٍ مَذْهِبٍ...
He also criticized al-Sumaysir for his poem:

لِمْ يَلْتَخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّزْءِ الْمُصِرِّ
لِمْ يَفْلُحَ فِي الْأَلْحَرَّ?
تَحَتُّ الذِّي حَدَّ لَهُ يُجِرِّي
رَكِّ لَا يُنْظَرُ عَلَى الْمُحْمَرِ
وَلِلنَّفْسِ فِي عَالِمَا تَمْرُ
وَعَنْهَا يَعْلَمُ الْأَمْسِر
قُبْلَ مَقَالَتِهِمَا ؛ لَا أَدْرُي
لَقِدْ نَشَبَتَا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الَّتِي
بَالِيْتِنا لَمْ نَكُنَّ آدَمْ
فَمَا لَنَا نَشْرُ فِي الْأَمْرِ ١٩

and commented:

وَالسَّمِيَّرُ فِي هَذَا الْكَلَامِ مَنْ أَخَذَ الْفُلْقَ بِالْتَقْلِيَّدِ ، وَنَانِدُ الْحُكَّامَ مِنْ مَكَانٍ بَعْدُ ،
وَقَوِّعَ عَنْ عَمِّي بِصَبْرِهِ ، وَنَشَرَ مَطْوِيَّ سَرْبِهِ فِي غَيْرِ مَعْنَى بِدِيْعٍ ، وَلَا فَظُّ مَطْبَعٍ ،
وَلَعَلَّهُ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَشْيَبَ أَبَا الْعَلَّاءِ ، فِي مَا كَانَ يَنْظُمُهُ مِنْ سَخَيْفِ الآزْرَاءِ ، وَبَا بَعْدَ مَا
بَيْنَ النَّجْوِيِّ وَالْحَصَابِيِّ ، وَهِيَ سَاَوَهُ فِي قُصْرِ بَعْهُ ، وَفَقِيْرٌ دِراَعِهِ ، أَيْنَ هُوَ مِنْ حَسْنِ
اِبِداَعِهِ ؛ وَلَطِيفِ أَخْتِرَاعِهِ ؛ ٥٤

He felt that al-Sumaysir wished to emulate the achievement of al-Maarrī, but fell well short of doing so:

فَأَنَا كَانَ زَعْمَاً — مَمَّنْ وَسَعَ هَذِهِ الْخَلَالِ ، وَجَمَعَ هَذَا الْأَخْوَالِ ، حَاشاَ الَّتِي فِي السَّرَّةَ
فَأَنَا اسْتَنْتَبِى عَنْ هَذَا ، وَبَرَيْهِ إِلَى أَحْمَاهُ الْمَخْرَاجَةِ مِنْهَا ، وَمَا بَنَقِيَّ الْجَعْلَ مِنْهُ
السَّمِيَّرُ ، فَأَنَا لَمْ تَجِ حُكَّمُ السَّمِيَّرُ بِكَوْلِ
أَبْوَاهُ آدَمَ مِنْ الْمَعاصِي وَفَلَمْ يَنْظُمُ مَعْرِاقَةَ الْجَنَّةِ
حَسْهُ عَلَى غَلِبِّهِ فَقَالَ بِيْحَةُ الْمَحْقُومُ الْبَكْرُ :
فَمَا لَنَا نَشْرُ فِي الْأَمْرِ ؟ ٥٥

وَالسَّمِيَّرُ فِي هَذَا كَمَا يُحِيَّ عَنْ بَعْضِ الْرَّوَاةِ فَقَالَ : كَانَ أَحَدُ الْمَخْتَشِيِّنَ قَدْ تَسْرَبَ الْمَجُونِ
وعبد البطال والجنون، حتى صعبه، وأقصر أطرابه، ولم يدع عاراً إلا ركيه ولا اشدا إلا ارتکبه، فظلفه طائفة اعتلال، بعد طول املاء من الله وأمبال، فكان يقل: أي رَبُ، يا أمل ذنب أخذت، وعلى أيّ جريمة عوقبت؟ هذا كان استغفاره، حتى محا الموت أخفاره.

ولعبد الجليل بن وهب قصيدة في رثاء الأستاذ أبي الحجاج يوسف بن عيسى المعروف بالعلم، وأولها:

فسني وحشي ان ومغتة معا
لو تعلم الأجىاء كيف مالها
اما لنعلم ما يراد بنا فلم
طيف المناباي في أساليب المنى
بتواضع الأقداد مما قد شرّى
ماذا على ابن الموت من إبنه
أيمرني أن يستقل بِي المدى.

لم يذكر الإنسان ما هو شابت وظاهر الموت المر، بعد حياته
دفن بيعي للصحيح واصحبا
ووُسِع ما أن تجلٌ الحَلاة من القُدُس
ما النفس الأعلَة سقطت إلى
كَنَّ ما إذا خلصت تعود كما بدت.

He made fun of him in his comments:

لم يكُن عبد الجليل اكتسب في هذا البيت والذي قيله من العمل بحقيقة النفس ما جله في وفته، فالله قبل أنّه "آل يذوب" وما أعجب أيضاً قوله في جمه بهائه صخرة، خلقاءً، الهم يذوق أن كان عني بذلك رآه لأنه كان يلقي بالدمجة. وذهب هنا من نفث النفس إلى مذهب كلامي، كقول بعض أهل بلدنا، وهو أبو عامر ابن سوار الشتریني من جملة أبيات:

يا لقومي دمنوني ومضنوا
وبكنيني أي جزيأ بكَّسنوا
وأشعى جسمي فقد صار النسي
He did not believe in the use of such things in poetry and considered them to be meaningless verbiage. He thought that the Muhdathūn employed them because they lacked the ability to use elegant Classical Arabic.

He admired the poetry of al-Mutanabbī and Abū al-ʿAlā al-Marrī in spite of their using philosophical concepts and terms; on these verses by Abū Ghassān al-Mutaṭabbīb:
It is clear from all this that there were two contradictory forces at work in Ibn Bassām, his religious and moral sentiment, which inclined him to reject all that was damaging to the faith, and his artistic judgement, which inclined him to separate literature from religion in the criteria that he applied to it. 57

**IBN BASSA&M'S PREFERENCE FOR TRADITIONAL STYLE IN FORMAL POETRY**

He preferred the use of classical and plain modes of expression, because he was a conservative literary critic, and recommended that poets should employ the language and style of Pre-Islamic and early islamic poetry. In the chapter devoted to Abū-Marwān Ibn Ǧarrāj, he included several elegies:

أكثر من أيّه في ذلك اليوم أطل في مدح ابنه، وليس بمادة أجمل الشعراء، المعتدى بهم الأكثر من مدح المعرّف في تأبين حميده المتوفر، وأما يلمون بهم، الحاما بعد التوفر على ندية ميّته، والاقة في ذكر وما فقد من حمله، ثمّ الكرّ على تسكين جائه، وحقّه على التعرّع أتى له، هذه طريقة فحول الشعراء. 58
لا يوجد نص يمكن قراءته بشكل طبيعي من الصورة المقدمة.
He commented on this poem:

وهذه القصيدة طويلة سلك فيها أبو محمد طريقته في الزكاء إلى الإشارة والإيماء
بين أباده الحدثان من ملوك الرعاه، وقد سبق ذكرهم على توني آرمانهم في قصيدة
اندرج له كثير من البديع فيها ، والتفشي أبو محمد أكثر فحولنداء
من ضمهم الأمثال في التأبين والرضا، بالملوك الأعرة، وبالوعول المتنعة في
قلل الجبال، والأصور الخادرة في الغياض، والنسور والعقبان والحيتان في طول
الأعصار، وغير ذلك مما هو في أشعارهم موجود، فاعلم المحدثون فهم الى غير ذلك
أميل، وربما جروا أيضا على السنين الأول

He was in complete agreement with the conventional views on Madīn and Rītha:

وأجمع أئمة الأدباء، أنه لا فرق بين المدح والرضا، إلا أن يقال: أودي وعدم
به كيت وكيت وشبى، مما يعلم أن المدح ميت، هذا إذا كان المؤتين ملكا أو
ذا صيت وقطر، قول النابغة في حسن بن حذيفة بن بدر:

فكيف بحسن والجبال جوح

فقولون حسن ثم تأبى نغوصهم
واللغظ النساء، أغني في الرشاد، من كثير من الشعراء، لما ركب في طبقين من الخير والبلع، واللغظ الناس مبتنية على كثرة التفجع كما قال حبيب:

لولا التفجع لدعتي هضب الحمي، وصا المشكر أنّه مهجون.
ولذلك عرّوا المرائي من اللغظ النسيب، وجرت بذلك ستة البعيد والقريب، على قديم الزمان، لاأيبين مقبل فأنه قال في رشاده لعثمان بن عثمان رفي الله عنه:

ولم تنستى قلبي قريش ظامتنا، تحمل حتى كادت الشمس تغزو.

ودريد في تأبين أخيه، تعرّغ أيضًا فيه، والشاذ لا يلتخت إليه، ولا يعوز عليه.

ومن أشد الرشاد محوباً على الشعراء، تأبين الأطفال والنساء، لاأي برأي آبا الطيب.

وهو الذي قال، فأصبحت الأيام والليل، قد عابوا قوله في رشاده أم سيف الدولة:

سلام الله خالقنا حنوت على وجوه المككن بالجمال.

وقالوا: ما له ولله هذه العجز يصف جمالها؟ وتعصّبها بعضهم وقال: ابنا استعارة,

فقيل: ابنا استعارة حداد في عرس، وكذلك قوله في آخته:

ولا ذكرت جميلة من فاعلتها أو يكي ولا رَدّ بلا سبب

ولولا الإطالة، وأتَبها تغفي إلى الطلالة، لزدنا، فلنرجع إلى ما ودنا.
THE EFFECT OF PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ON LITERATURE

Ibn Bassam was unique in appreciating the personal factors such as friendship and social life that influence the works of a writer, even the most high-ranking, to whom he gave priority.

He juxtaposed the works of writers with common literary characteristics which were the result of their common personal environment. In al-Dhakira he devoted a chapter to three men who displayed similar literary characteristics because they were under the same influential factors of time and place:

Faqîlîn fi dhikr shahâdât min rahl al-andalus fîshâm waqt wa-zamâna, wa-istikabal bi-sha-hi, wa-kal-kalâm va-an kahîr al-nafar az-ghâlî, wa-jâhîd bâlatâ-sa wa-asâhihâ
dâlîalâ, wa-istâfrih bi-yâhâ, â'yan ahl zâma-nâ, hâlî tâhââma-nâ, wa-anharfâ-an

al-tdlîdî wa-l-qayîsî, fâla min al-ahsân makan la bijdîlî, wa-mn al-ta'âdâm fî û-sâmî
dhum la yamîdîlî, wa-l-mâz'îlÂ' min al-âfîq, wa-wâfâ yâhîl bi-nâs, wa-ilâhî, lam-hi-nâ,
don qârîhâ wa-lûhî, wa-sânshîl wa-nâmî, wa-wâqîl min Â'âmîlî, wa-âzârîl râjîlâ-lâ,
wasârd min açsâmîl tâfâmîl wa-jîlî, wa-âkhtîn min âmîrâhî, wa-taâlîr âmâhî, bînây hâfûz

al-âhsânî, wa-yâqîlîn min ashbâyîhî, wa-âqîrîhî.
He realised that the physical circumstances of writers had an influence on their productions, as he demonstrated in his biography of Abū al-Ḥasan Sāliḥ b. Sāliḥ al-Shantamrī:

He also realised that another influence on a writer was the family from which he came. He devoted several chapters to those who came from distinguished literary families, such as that on Abū Marwān  Ābd al-Malik b. Ziyādat Allāh al-Ṭubnī and Abū al-Ḥasan  Ālīf Ibn  Ābd al- Ăzīz b. Ziyādat Allāh al-Ṭubnī, and that on Abū al- Ălā' Zuhr b.  Ābd al-Malik b. Zuhr al- Ăyādī, Abū Marwān Ibn Muḥammad and his son Muḥammad b. Marwān, Abū Bakr  Ābd al- Ăzīz b. Saʿīd al- Baṭalyūsī, Abū al- Ḥasan Yūṣuf b. Muḥammad b. al-Jadd, Abū Bahr Yūṣuf b.  Ābd al-Šamad, and Abū Umar b. al-Bājī:
1 - أبو بكر عبد العزيز بن عبد البطليموسي: أحد فرسان الكلوم والكلام، وحملة السيف والقلام، من أسرة أماللة، وبيت جلاله، أخذوا العلم آوياً عن آخر، ورواه كابراً من كابر، ولله دره فاتته، وأطروه أبا ظهيرة وأبا الحسن محمد، مهتمين قول القائل، وأعجوبة الأواخر والأوائل، ثلاثة كتبة الجزء، وان أربوا على الشير في السنا والساساء، امروا أخلاق الفطر فاضطروه شرعان وريباً، وهرمو بجذوع النظم والنثر فاستقامت عليهم رطبًا جنباً، ولم يعنوا من أشعارهم ومستوفو أخبارهم حين اخراجي هذه النسخة من هذا المجمووع الآما أثبتت لهي بكر منهم خاصه، وهو علم برده، وواستة عقدهم.

5 - قد قدمت ذكر بني الجذد، وذكرت أنهم كانوا صدور رطب وبحور أدب، حواردو نجيب عن نجيب، كالرمح أنيوب على آنيوبا، مع اعتبارهم صحبة السلطان، وعرفهم على وجه الزمان، وأبو الحسن هذا كان من أشياء نجوم سعدهم، وأسأى هضاب مجهدهم، ولولا ما خلبه من معاقرة الغقار، وتمسك بأسبابه من قضاء الأوطاب، لقل ذكره البلاد، وطبيب نظم ونشره البصاب والوهاب. وقد استكتب ذر الوزاريين أبو بكر ابن عمrsa آيام حريمه بمرسية، وله معه أخبار مذكورة، وعنده رسائل مشهورة.

3 - وهو يوسف بن أبي القاسم خليف بن أحمد بن عبد المهدم، جدهم الأول كان السح بن مالك بن خولان، أحد أمراء الأندلس في ذلك الأوان، قبل دخول بني مروان، مسن تقدم عمر بن عبد العزيز، وهؤلاء الصديقون من ذوي الهمتاء، متمددون في الكتابة وأدوات أهل النباحات، وأطمو فيما أخبرتهم من أقليهم الشبان من كورة جيام وخدم أبو القاسم والد أبي بكر الخزنة في المرتبة زمان زهير وخيران، وفي دولة المنصور بعدهما، ومات في دولة ابن عمده سنة ثمان وأربعين، وينه وقرآته أكثر خدمة المربيه.
He referred to the general educational level of writers and its influence on their works. Critics discussed this subject before, such as Ibn Qutayba, who remarked on the defects to be found in the poetry of scholars and the low standard of achievement that they tended to display. Ibn Bassam referred to the same phenomenon:

على أن أعجب العلماء على قدم الزهر وحديثه بيئة التكلف، وشعرهم الذي روي لهم ضعيف، حاشا طائفة منهم خلق الأجار، فان له ما يستندر، وقطرر له أيضا ما يستغرب، كقوله وقد رويت لغيره:

أنا كنت لست معي فالأذك منك معي
برعاق قليل وان غيّبت عن بصرى
فالعين شعر من ثور وتفهده
وناظر القلب لا يخلو من التسر
والخليل بن أحمد، له أيضا بعضما يحمد، ومؤّث السدوى، وابن دريد من الشعراء العلماء، وكذلك من علماء البصرة أبو محمد البزيدي وبنوه وليه:

القائل في حَمْوِهِ ابْن أَخَتِ الْحُسَنِ الحَاجِب:

أُبْتِهِم بِالْعَجْبِ الْعَاجِبُ
قلت وأدغمت أبا خامطلا
ومن هذا أخذ دعاب قوله:

سَأَلَهُ مِن أَبِي حَدَّوَهُ
قال دينار خالص
قال واضي الجبالي
وَابْنَ مَصَّدِرْ أَبِي عَالِمٌ شَاعِرٌ، وأبو مُحَلَّم السعدي، وهو الذي يقول:

تَصَيَّحُ لَكَ الْقَرْيَةُ حِينَ تَمْسِع شِهَابا
وتأت من أعلامهم بشرف

ومن العلماء الشعراء أحمد بن أبي كامل وهو القائل:

لا أرى فيها آري شيا
في الله الدُّهور الى الْثَقَّام
لك فير البدر في الظلم
لحظة دعو الى التِّقّام

لا أدري فيها آري شيا
في الله الدُّهور الى الْثَقَّام
لك فير البدر في الظلم
لحظة دعو الى التِّقّام
ومن الرواة الأخباريين محمد العمري وهو القائل:

رأين الغوانين الشيب لاح مغرفي فأعرض عن بالخدام التواضر
هوؤلاء أعيان العلماء الشعراء بالمشرق، ومن علا شعرهم ديباجة ورونق، فاما
من سواهم كيونس والأخشوبأي عمرو بن الولاع وسبهبي والقراء وسائر أصحابهم
فأذكر الرواة لم يسمع لهم بشعر، والكمايل الذي يقول: "انما التحوياس
يدفع "له شعر ضعيف، ي بين التكلف. فاماء أبو عبية فله شعر يملأه، لا يسما
قوله في ابن آخي يونس التحوي، وكان يسما خرَك، لم ان أكون من رواته
اذ هو محدد في هناه.

والاميامي قصيدة في بني يرموك أكثر فيها من الغريب، وما أثيو بغيريب، وكذلك
من علماء الكوفة جماعة مثل خالد بن كلهوم، وأبي عمرو الشيباني، وأبي
الأعرابي وأصحابهم، رحم ابن المنجم أنه لم يسمع لهم بشعر.
وأمّا العلماء الشعراء بفقتنا هذا الأندلس من حين استفحت الجزيرة النبى
آخر دولة بني عامر، فقد تقدم المدفون قبل أن يدودن تشرهم ونظمهم،
فاغتني عن ذكرهم، وأنا شرط ذكر أهل عبري من شاهدتهم بعمري، أو لحقه
بعض أهل دهري
63
1. al-Tha'labī al-Yatīma, 1, 6-7.
2. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 14-15.
4. Ibn Bassām, 2, 1, 12.
5. Ibid, 1, 1, 14.
8. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 33-34.
10. Ibid, 4, 1, 7-8.
15. Ibid, 1, 1, 12-13.
17. Ibid, 2, 1, 12.
18. al-Tha'labī, al-Yatīma, 1, 7.
20. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 32.
22. Ibn Bassām, 3, 2, 667.
23. Ibid, 1, 1, 32.
24. Ibid, 2, 2, 887.
25. Ibid, 2, 1, 42.
27. al-Mubarrad, 3, 36.
28. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 544-546.
30. Ibid, 1, 1, 432.
31. Ibid, 1, 2, 574.
32. Ibid, 1, 2, 586.
33. Ibid, 1, 2, 601.
34. Ibid, 1, 2, 590.
35. Ibid, 1, 2, 595.
36. al-Ṣūlī, Akhbār Abī Tammām, 172.
37. Ibn Bassām, 1, 2, 883.
38. al-Jurjānī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, 64.
39. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 144-145.
40. Ibid, 4, 1, 369-370.
41. Ibid, 2, 1, 152-153.
42. Ibn Qutayba, ʿUyun al-Akhbār, 1, 12.
43. Ibn Bassām, 3, 2, 604.
44. Ibid, 1, 2, 900-901.
45. Ibid, 2, 1, 152.
46. Ibid, 3, 2, 758.
47. Ibid, 3, 2, 900-901.
48. Ibid, 2, 2, 720.
49. Ibid, 2, 1, 249-250.
51. Ibid, 2, 1, 454-455.
52. Ibid, 1, 1, 78.
53. Ibid, 1, 2, 764-765.
54. Ibid, 1, 2, 889-890.
55. Ibid, 2, 1, 479-480.
56. Ibid, 2, 1, 481-482.
57. Nazha, 236.
58. Ibn Bassām, 1, 2, 821.
59. Ibid, 1, 2, 816-821.
60. Ibid, 2, 1, 489-490.
61. Ibid, 3, 2, 757.
62. Ibn Qutayba, 10.
63. Ibn Bassām, 1, 2, 825-826.
To a large extent, classical Arabic literary criticism depended on the personal attitude and taste of the critic who naturally derived his knowledge and appreciation from his wide reading and the works of previous critics, linguists and grammarians.

al-Jurjānī believes that literary criticism should depend mainly on the personal taste and views of the critic:

والتقسيم لا يحتوي على النظر والتحذير، ولا يحتوي في الصدور بالجدال والمغالاة، وإنما يعتمد عليها القبول والطلاقة، ويقررها منها الروتقة والطلاقة، وقد يكون الشيء متقناً محكوماً، ولا يكون حلواً مقبولاً، يكون جيداً وشيقاً، وان لم يكن لطيفاً رشيقاً.

وقد يجد الدور الحسن والخلقات الكاثدة مقلية ممكنة، وأخرى دونها مستحيلة مومقة، وركل صعوبة أهل يرجع الفهم في خصائصها، ويستثمر يصرفهم عند اشتياخ أعمالها.

al-Thaʿalibī, again, in his al-Yatīma has the same approach to the appreciation of a literary work. In evaluating the poetry of al-Mutanabbī, for example, he says:

وأنا مورد في هذا الباب ذكر محاسنه ومقايده وما يرتقي وما يستباح من مذاهبه في الشعر وترغقه وتفصيل الكلام في نقده شعره والتبنيه على عيونه وعيوبه، والإشارة إلى غرته وزروه، وترتيب المختار من قلائده وبدائعه، بعد الأخذ بطراف من طرف آخباره، ومتصرفات أحواله، وما يكثر فواهده وحلو شعره، ويتميّز هذا الباب به عن سائر أبواب الكتاب كتبيّره من أصحابها، بعلو الشان في شعـر الزمان والقبول العام عند أكثر الناس والعام.

al-Thaʿalibī was the first to imply that Andalusian writers were worthy of critical consideration by comparing them with Eastern writers. In his account of Abū ʿUmar b. Darraŷ al-Qaṣṭallī, he compares the latter with al-Mutanabbī:
Ibn Bassām considers that a literary critic, when passing judgement on poetry, should have regard to his personal literary taste, and the environment that stimulated the poet to compose his poem. This approach is apparent in his comparative literary studies of the fifth century A.H. In formulating views on any poet or prose-writer, Ibn Bassām depends, therefore, on his own personal taste, which derives from his wide aural and written experience, and, in particular, from his continuous attendance at the literary majālis that were held at the court of the Banū ʿAbbād. His biographies of literary men of the fifth century indicate that he followed al-Thaʿālibī's approach in comparing Andalusian writers with Eastern ones; for instance, he writes, comparing Abū al-Qāsim with al-Jāḥiẓ and Badīʿ al-Zamān in prose and with ʿAmr b. Kulthūm in poetry:

He actually quotes al-Thaʿālibī's comparison that we have just mentioned. He also makes a comparison between Abū ʿIshāq Ibrāhīm b. Khafāja and al-Aʿshā and Ḥassān b. Thābit because they were famous for a single type of poetry:
He is biased in favour of Andalusian writers, wishing to demonstrate that they are better than those in the East, as he implies in his introduction:

شَرُّ لَوْ رَأَهُ البَيْدِعُ لَنَشُرِّي أسمَهُ، أو اجتِهَالهُ هَلَى لُوَاهُ حَكْمِهِ، وَنَظَرَ لُو سَمَعُهُ كَثِير،
ما صَبَبَ لَوْ مَدْحُ، أو شَتِعَهُ جَرَّوَهُ ما عَزُو لَوْ نَبْحُ.

He reiterates this in another context:

فَلا يِكَادُ بَلْدُ منْهَا يَخْلُو مِنْ كَاتِبٍ مَهْرٍ، وَشَاعِرٍ قَاهِرٍ، أَنْ مَدْحُ مَا كِثْرَ عَنْهُ
يِكْثِيرُ، وَأَنْ هُجَا أَجْرُ لَسَانٍ جَرَّرُ، وَعَدَا عَدْيَاً عَنْ مَدْحِ ذُوِهِ، وَأَوْنِي جَرَوْلا
الْحَوَاءِ فِي أَشْرَ قِوَافِهِ، وَأَنْ تَفْرَّرَ أَبْيَ عِلَ السَّحْرَاتِ فَتُونَا، وَأَوْزِرَ بِالْفَانِيَاتِ
مُجَوَا.

In another example of this type of comparison, he comments on Ibn Zaydūn's verse:

وَمَنَا فَقِيلَ لَنَا الْمَشْرُقُ مِنْكُ فَيَدْ، يُبِينَ الْمَالِ الْجِسْمِ وَيُخَلِفُ
الْبَيْتِ مَعْنِي مِلْيِحٍ، وَلَفْظُ صَحِيحٍ، أَلَا أَنْهُ كَمَا تَرَاهُ، لَفْظُ بَيْتِ الْبَحْتَري وَمَعَانِهِ
وَيَقْلُ بَعْظُ أَدْبَائُهُ أَنَّ بِنَ زَيْدُونَ بَحْتَرِي رَمَانَةَا وَمَدْفُوا، أَلَّا أَنْهُ حَدْوُ الْوَلِيدِ
أَلَّا أَنْ أَبَا الْوَلِيدِ فِي بَعْظُ قَصَاكِهِ كَابِنْ حَسِيدٍ عَمِيدٍ.

Here Ibn Bassām again employs the comparative method, in this case comparing Ibn Zaydūn with al-Buḥtūrī.

Again, commenting on this verse:

تَهُ أَحْمِلُ وَأَسْتَنَبُّ أَصْرَ عُرْ أَهْنَ وَوَرْ أَقِلُ وَقَلِ أَسْمَعُ وَرَأْ أَطْلُعُ

He compares Ibn Zaydūn with Ibn Washmagir, al-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād and Bādī al-Zaydūn al-Hamadhānī:

بِيْتِهِ المَعْرُوفِ، وَأَحْسَنُ لَعْمِرِي بِنْ زَيْدُونِ فِي هَذَا التَّقْسِيمِ، وَدْقِعُ بِالْحَدِيثِ فِي
صَرِ الْقَدِيمِ، وَلَوْ قَرَعْ سُمِعَ أَبِي مِنْصُورِ، بَما بِتَضَافِعِ هَذَا التَّقْسِيمِ مَسْنَ
الشُّورِ، لَمْ كَانَ عَنْهُ بِنْ وَكِمْرُ بِمَذْكُورِ، وَلَا أَغْرَبُ بِغَرَابِ الْقَلِحِ، وَلَا
بِيْدِعُ الْبَيْدِعِ.
In some instances, instead of generalising, he takes a specific work of the writer under discussion as the basis for one side of his comparison, without comparing works directly. As an example we may take the following passage, on a poem by Abū Qūmar b. Darraj al-Qastallī:

An example of his directly comparing individual works, in which he sees influence from one to another, is the following, in which he compares a poem by Ibn Burd:
In spite of the direction of the influence, he decides in favour of the imitator, on the grounds that his language is almost colloquial.

This would seem to display a certain amount of pro-Andalusian bias.

In spite of his professed objective, he is prepared to acknowledge the inferiority of an Andalusian writer to an Eastern one, particularly when he regards the former as having been influenced by the latter. For example, in his biography of Abu 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd, he concedes the latter's subordination to the Iraqi Ibn Ḥajjāj:

Ibn Bassām sometimes does not specify the differences between the Andalusian and Eastern writers and their productions, but confines himself to generalisations. He nevertheless contrives to imply that the Andalusian representative has great, and perhaps greater, merits.
An example of this is provided by the following passage:

Ibn Bassām does not only compare Andalusian writers with those of the East; he also makes comparisons between one Andalusian writer and another. For instance, in the biography of Abū Tammām Ghālib, known as al-Ḥajjām, he asserts that the latter has unsuccessfully followed the method of al-Ramādī:

He makes his comparison not only in general terms but specifically by comparing actual works. Thus, in writing about Ibn Darrāj al-Qaṣṭallī’s verse:

he says that it resembles the following by Ḥabīb Allāh b. Sharaf al-Qayrawānī:

بَاتِ كَرَسِيَّةَ الجُلَةَ فَأَحَيَتُ
فِي شِيْبِ الْجُلَةِ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيِّ
He then comments upon Ibn Sharaf:

وانتهى ابن شرف، فيما وصف من فتنة قريوئه، منتهى القصصي في شكوى
زمانه، والحديث عن الفتنة، فكما أن البحر بوحل مشفوع، وجري الرياح بكـودن
لا فضله فيه.

Sometimes Ibn Bassām quotes comparisons made by "the writer's contemporaries" without naming them:

فذكر الشيخ أبي علي بن اسماعيل القرشي الأشبعون:

وجاءت عادتنا بالطبل، مثني نظم الدَر المفصل، لا سيما في الزهد، فإن
أهل أوانه، كانوا يشبهون بآبي العتاهية في زمانه.

He specifically relies, however, on the comparison and
criticism of Ibn Ḥayyān; as can be seen in the following
passage:

وقد ذكره أبو مروان بن حيا ضع في غير ما موضوع من كتابه فقال:

كان أبو عامر يبلغ المعنى ولا يتباطئ سفر الكلام، وإذا شاء مطأنته، ونسناته
وكيف يجر في البلاطة رسته، قلت عبد الحميد في أوانه، والباحث في زمنه
والعجب منه أن كان يدعو قريبته إلى ما عاء من نشره ونظمه في بديعته،
وررواه، فيقول الكلام كما يريد من غير اقتضاء للكتب، ولا اعتناء بالطبل،
ولا رسخ في الأدب، فإنا لم يوجد له، رحمه الله، فيما بلغني، بعد موجه
كتاب يسمى به على صناعته، ويستد عن طبعه إلا ما لا قدر له، فراد ذلك
في مجاهده، واعجاب بدمه، وكان في تلميذ الزلزال والشاردة الحارة أقدر
منه على سائر المطبوعين، فلم يقترب عن غايةهم.

وبل رسائل كثيرة في فنون الفكاهة وأنواع التشريض والأزجال، قصار وطوال،
سرَّر فيما شاره، وبقًا في الناس خالدة بعده، وكان في سورة البديهية،
وجوزج الجواب وحدته، مع رقة حولي كلمته، وبسيلة ألفاظه، وبراعة أوصافي،
وضراعة شماله وخلاقه، آية من آيات الله خالقه، من رجل غلبت عليه البطالة
Ibn Bassām, as has already been indicated, depends on his own personal taste in making his literary critical judgements; he has a predilection for rhetorical poetry as long as he considers the poet to be matbuʿ (non-artificial). He considers that writers should strike a balance between a totally modern and a totally classical style.

He compares the same writers’ poetry and prose:

(...) and often states that a writer is, in his view, generally undervalued. For example, he comments on Abū Īmar Ibn Darrāj al-Qaṣṭallī:

(...) and I say: this is not his absolute number, and his work is in the ration of 19.

He greatly admires Ibn Zaydūn:

(...) as he is in his path, and the greatest of his poetry, and the richness of his language, for the truth of that which he did not know.
but he is prepared to criticize his work when necessary:

...He praises specific points in Ibn Shuhayd's poetry, without ever, in fact, indicating why he finds them admirable; it is most likely that Ibn Bassām praises these specific points or images and finds them admirable because he considers them both original and appropriate in their contexts. In his view, they are examples of powerful imagination:

Wanting to have two poets discuss the meaning of their own work, Ibn Bassām brings up the following case:

He can show a certain dry irony in his criticism; for example, on these lines of Ibn Sharaf al-Qayrawānī:
Ibn Bassām pays much attention to original and creative poetic expression and concepts. He does his best, with modest success, to collect all the original and innovative poetic expression of the Andalusian poets. In this he again follows al-Thaḥlibī, who much appreciates innovative poetry dealing with the unavoidable vicissitudes of life. Among examples of this type of poetry he mentions the following three lines by Abū al-Qāsim al-Shayzāmī:

He does not, however, define what he means by Ikhtira (innovation). In commenting, for example, on the verses by al-Faqqīh Ibn Qāluṣ:

He is content to say:

"This is a novel invention and a natural and spontaneous simile". Ibn Bassām does not mean that this is a type of simile which belongs to the rhetorical branch of Badi. He is using the term Badi as equivalent of "novelty" or "novel".
On Abū ʿUmar b. Darrāj al-Qaṣṭallī’s poem:

He comments:

In all this, as we have said, the influence of al-Thaʿalībī is evident. He comments on al-Sharīf al-Radī’s verse:

"How well he has linked the lance and the arrow. I do not think that anyone has anticipated him in this".

Ibn Bassām does not attempt to depreciate the poetic imagination of Eastern writers; on a verse by Abū Fīrās:

He comments:

He distinguishes between Maṭbuʿ and Muwallad poetry, adopting the position of al-Qaṣṭāwī:

 وما زالت الشعراء تحتخرنا هذا وحولده، غير أن ذلك قليل في الوقت والتوليد: أن يستخرج الشاعر معنى من معنى تقدمه، أو يزيد فيه زيادذة، فلذلك يسمى التوليد، وليس باختراع، لما فيه من الاقتداء بغيره، ولا يقال له أيضا "سورة" إذا كان ليس آخذا على وجه
He gives a number of examples of Tawlid without defining it, as Ibn Rashīq does. He comments on these lines:

وَيْمُ تَفْتَنُّ يِن طِيْبٌ
قُدْ اسْتَقَى وَيْزِرَ قُدْ شَرِبِ
بِوَنَارِ بَوَارِقَةِ مُتْلِٰيْبِ
وَقَدْ قَرَعَتْ سَبِيْلَ الْبَيْسِ

وَقَدْ قَالَ بَشَرْ أَهْلٍ عَصْرَةٍ وَهُوَ أَبِي يَكْرَبِ أَبِي يَقِي فَذَهَبَ بِمَذْهَبٍ عَجِيبًا ، وَوَلَدَ
مَعْنَى غَرِيِّبًا :
يَا لَكَ مِنْ بَرْقِ وَمِنْ دِيْمَةٍ
كَفُّ النِّجاشِيّ إِلَى حَائْتِمٍ
29

Commenting on the following verses by Abu al-Walid Isma‘īl, called Ḥabīb:

مَدَامْ تَعْتَقُ بِالنَّافِرِيّينَ
وَلَكَ تَعْتَقُ بِالأَرْجُّالَ

He says:

وَهَذَا الْبِيْتِ مَمَأَ أَغْرَبُ مَعَ الْأَلَّابِ ، وَأَغْرَبُهُ مَعَ مَوْضُوعِهِ مَعَ الْصُّوَابِ ، وَبِينَهُ
وَبِينَ قَوْلٍ أَبِي الْفَطْيَبِ شَهِيدٍ ، وَلَكِنَّ أَبِي الْوَلِيدَ فَلَى الذِّلِيدِ ، وَحَسَّنَ مِنْ
الْنَّقِلِ لِيَسْلِعُهُ مَزِيدًا

إِنْظَرْ أَنْ أَخَافَ السَّيْفَانَ فِي رَهْجٍ
إِلَى اِخْتِلاَفِهِمَا فِي الخَلَقِ وَالْعَمْلِ
20

وَعَدَّ ذَلِكَ لِرَأْيِ الخَارِجِيِّ الْبَطِل

He is greatly concerned with the form in which an utterance is couched and with the rhetorical embellishments which were abundant in the literature of the sixth century. He separates concept and expression in poetry. In his view, a beautiful concept can be expressed in simple language. The poetic expression need not be difficult or complicated. As an example of this
he cites the following line of Ibn ṢAmmār:

أخفف للحق الذي لك في دمسي وأرجوك للحق الذي لك في قلبي

He comments on it as follows:

وهذا البيت على سهولة ميئاه من أحسن ما قيل في معناه، وبمثله فلتستخدمو الألباب، وتستعن الأعداء للأخياء، لا أن المصرف الأول كأنه شيء تكهنه مسنان، وظيلة ألقاها الله تعالى على لسانه، وصدق كان له في عينه ريق، وفي دمه حق، احتال له فناله، والمرء يعجز لا المحالة.

Although he appreciates this kind of poetry, he does not hesitate to suggest sometimes certain changes that might be made in specimens that he does not favour. As an example we may quote his comment on the following two lines of Abū Bakr:

١٨١٨

عسليك أيها عبدلله خظمتها لها البدر طوق والنجوم دلاك...

وما هي إلا الدهر في طول عمره...

فيا لهذا البيت ما أحسن مذهبته، وأبعث منتحوه ومنقلبه، إلا أنه اني بالدهر مسلوب الضحي والأصائل، فلم يرده على أن جلؤ في زار عاطل، لا بل أبرزه فشيء مسوق شوهاء شاكل، ولبي شعرزي أي شيء أبقى للدهر المظلم، بعد ضحاء الناصعة الاديم، وآصاله المعتملة النسيم هل بلقي إلا ليله الأسود الجلباب وهيجده...

السئل اللعاب؟ ولو قال لممدوجه: "وكل العلا فيها الضحي والأصائل" لأبرز قصيدته رقابة البرود، شفاعة العقود، ولؤد ممدوجه بهذه الكلمة مديحا لا يمسه المقال، ولا يحييه القصائد الطوال.

Here Ibn Bassām employs his poetic ability in criticizing Abū Bakr's line:

وما هي إلا الدهر في طول عمرها وان لم يكن فيها الضحي والأصائل
He therefore revises the second hemistich of the line and changes it into:

"وَتَلَكَ الْعَلَائِفِ فِيّهَا الْفَحْيُ وَالْأَمَامَلٌ"

and thinks that had the poet done so he would have expressed in this single hemistich more than can be expressed in a complete poem.

He also criticizes poets who deliberately use uncouth or strange, far-fetched expressions, which appear to him inharmonious.

He does not only disapprove of plagiarism, but he also disapproves of certain kinds of novel poetic styles, individual methods of expression and new concepts or images that he finds in the works of certain poets.

For example he writes of Ibn Razīn's following lines:

أخس بِمَجْلِسٍ مَعْشُوْرٍ
جِلَّاءُ قَوْمٍ شَقَّقٍ
أَوْ غَيْبٍ أَوْ مَضْرٍ
مِّ فِيْمُ الْأَدْنَىٰ
أَهْدَ عَلِىْ كَلَبٍ الْكْرَا
هَذَا يَغْوُتُ بِلِّ أَضْرٍ
لَّٰ هَذَا يَغْوُتُ وَذَاكَ نِصْرٍ
فَلَيْسَ يَلْقَىْ فِيْهِ حَرْرٍ

..."And this is how they express their views. What about the rest of the world? Has anyone ever expressed their views in such a way?"

..."and this is how they express their views. What about the rest of the world? Has anyone ever expressed their views in such a way?"
In his critical language, he is almost invariably oblique. He expresses his approval or disapproval in rhetorical imagery, as is appropriate to his style of 

For example, on the following three verses, also by Ibn Razīn:

His comment runs as follows:

is an ambiguous expression. It could mean either "a morning without drink" or "a morning without light or brightness"; "a cloudy or dull morning". He implies that the poem is a lifeless or soulless piece of work, a dead poem that lacks movement and feeling.

He is clearly a widely-read critic, and sometimes corrects what he believes to be false attributions of poems, on the grounds that they display a particular style or diction that he can identify. For example, he comments on a poem attributed to Abū Ja'far Ahmad Ibn al-Abbār:


Sometimes he praises a poem or a prose work on the grounds that it has been followed and imitated by many other poets or writers. Such a work he seems to rank very highly. Its having been imitated constitutes for him a measure of its greatness. As an example of this, he cites Ibn cAmmār's poem:

He comments as follows:

He criticizes Ibn Baqr's verses:

ورنا نرجس الرب بعينٍ وسَبَبٍ
فقوه الريح أسوطر من وسَبَبٍ
أخذت من أوراواها والحَسَبٍ
فهي تعدد به عقد الظبيم
لكرْمٍ فسيَّت بالكَرْمٍ وَأَمَّهُ
وبدأ معم الخليج فخطت
سوف تدري الهومم آيةً راح
بنت دن رعت ببيدة تفخض
كرم في حدائق غروها...
Here, he seems to have misunderstood Ibn Baqī's reference to Ma'bad, whose fame as a singer was based on his mastery of the "heavy rhythms" which were called the "first heavy" and the "second heavy", according to Ishāq al-Mawṣili's musical theory on which the Kitāb al-Aghānī was based. His comments continue as follows:

The comparison that he makes between Ibn Baqī's and al-Ma'arrī's lines is very interesting and significant. This type of comparison is one of his favourite critical methods and examples of it can be found throughout al-Dhakhṭra. The whole comment reveals Ibn Bassam's wide knowledge of Arabic singing, singers and musical theory during the Umayyad period.
He does not confine his critical remarks to the literary works with which he deals. He often establishes a link between the personality of the poet and his poem, and tries to understand the poem in the light of the poet's personality. Here is an example of this approach:

He formulates no general theory of rhetoric, but he says quite a lot about individual aspects of it. The simile engages his attention a great deal. He expresses his admiration, though not without some reservations, for al-Sumaysir's simile in the following two lines:

Here again Ibn Bassām tries to establish a link between the poet's work and his personality. He criticizes al-Sumaysir on the grounds that his simile does not bear much relationship with his personality, since he was more inclined towards young pretty boys than towards female singers (qīyān).

He criticizes Ibn cAmmār for his dissolute personal life, partly, but not entirely, because it colours his poetry:
يجري ابن عمَّار في أكثر ما لم من الأشعار جري الجموع، ولا يقنع بالكتابة عن مذهبته الأصلية بالتصريح، لأنه كان - سمح الله له - مع ما مكن في دهوره من تدبير الأقليم، أو انبطس بالكتاب في التأليف والتشريع، واجترا على الأيقان، واقتصاد من الجماهير العظام، زين قباني وغلامه، ومربع راج وريحان، ألمه زعموا - كان بين شرب كأس، وشم آمم، وجدلته في نصف حيلة، لفزان أو غزالة، ترى ذلك كثيراً في اشعاره، وتسعمه أثناءه ثيابه، حتى تل ذلك عرشه، وأوهن شبهه، وظافراً من سموه، وساقه صاغوا إلى يد عدوه، إلا عرته، كنتا نظم أو نثر، تختلى بالناء والوتر، وتحلى بالحسن والحور، وعاش على أهل سرقطة، وأذكر من هيثم الشعر ما عرف، ووصفه بما وصفه، كتبه للمن

هيئة راج بادية ترانا

و لا قول أبي العلاء:

لكم خذ ولا تقيل ذي أثير

لكن يقبل نه مسمع فرس

في غبر ذلك مما هو أوضح، من أن يشجع، في أكثر الأشعار، وما ينقضي جبي من ابن عمَّار أن يذكر تلك الهيئة، على أهل شغف، أبناء كتلى، وبقايا أسر، 40.

He sometimes follows earlier critics in his interpretations of certain verses. He writes, for example, of Abū al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Sarraj's lines:

عطفت عليك ملامة الأخوان
والليل مقتبل الشبه داني
وتفتت مسكتها على القضية
وتحتفتها بكواكب الندام
فيما قرنت واف람 قرارة
يليماهنا عمن احتفال زمن
وجدنا خضر ورفق قيام
معتلقان بالعذر من حسن

عمري أي حسن ل قد جلبت المني
لم رأيت اليوم ولي عمجر
والضحى تنتج زمرنا في الفكر
أطلعتها شمس وأتت عطارة
فانتش بدعنا في الأوان مخلداً
ولهي من خم صفاء لم يكن
غتيا بذكرك عن رقيق سلسل
ورضيت في دفع الملامه أن شرى

و هذا رواية الدبياج الخسرواني، ورونتق العصب اليمني، ولمثله فلتنشر الصدور
This seems to suggest that he regards metaphor as a higher type of image than simile (the مِتْن of the التشبيه signifies the particle) is taken from al-Āṣmaʿī's judgement on two lines of ghazal:

[[هل الى نظرة اليد سبيل
فيروي الصدأ ويدت العلي
ان ما قل منك يكثر عندي
وكثير مثمن ثحب الغلیل]]

al-Āṣmaʿī asked Ishāq from whom he was reciting and Ishāq replied that the poet was a bedouin. al-Āṣmaʿī declared that the poetry was surely "Khusruwanian brocade".

In fact he borrows a good deal of his criticism from his predecessors, usually just single sentences, or even phrases. Another example of a possible borrowing from al-Āṣmaʿī is the following:

أبو الربع سليمان بن أحمد القدح
من قدماء الأدباء – كان – بذلك الشغر، ومن كتاب العصر المتصرّفين في النظم والنشر، وكلامه بجمع بين الخلاوة والجزالة، ويعتبر في لفائف الضغة وكأن
يعتمد إلى خصیص المعنی فيقيم له أوداء، بسلامة لسانه، وقوة مادته وحسن بيانه.

al-Āṣmaʿī had been asked by al-Tawzī who was the best poet. He said:

[[من يأتي بالمعنى الخصیص فيجعله بلغة كبيرة، أو الكبير فيجعله خصیص،
أو ينفض كلامه قبل قافيته، فإذا احتاج إليها أفاض بها معنى.]]
There is nothing new either in his remarks regarding the following lines of Ibn al-Rūmī; similar remarks regarding them had been made by a number of earlier Arab critics and rhetoricians:

This may be taken as an example of his concern with simile, poetic language and structure. He again uses the comparative method of criticism.

He also admires the simile regarding flies used by Ibn ʿAbdūn, Abū Bakr al-Baṭalyūsī, Ibn al-Rūmī and ṢAntara:
Other Andalusian literary critics also paid a great deal of attention to the subject of simile and wrote many books on it, such as Kitāb al-Tashbihāt min Ashghar al-Andalus by Ibn al-Kittānī al-Mutatābbib and Kitāb al-Tashbihāt by Ibn Abī Āwn.

Another example of his concern with simile is his remark on this verse:

شَيْبٌ أَفْقُهُمَّ أَن يُشْيِبهَا بَادِرَة سَعْيَا هِل رَآيَتُ الْذِيْبَا؟

He comments:

وهَذَا التِّشْبِيَّةُ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ النَّقْدُ نَوعٌ مِنْ أنواعِ الْإِشَارَةِ، لَكِنَّ آشْرَى إِلَى تِشْبِيَّةِ لُوْنِهِ بَالْمَاءِ الَّذِي غَلِبَ عَلَى اللَّبَنْ فَصَارَ كُلُونُ الْذِئْبِ.

Like other Arab critics and rhetoricians before him, he regards a certain type of simile, of which we have an example here, as Ishāra (allusion). Here, he is in fact quoting Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī, on whom he generally relies heavily.

Ibn Bassām's concern with metaphor was equal to, if not greater than, his concern with simile. Sometimes he comments on the skill of a poet in adapting or remoulding
a simile or image already used by another poet. As a good example of this he gives al-Ramādī's line:

وَلَمْ أَرَى أَحَدًا مِنْ شَيْمَ اعْمِينَ \ غَدَاءَ الْنَّوْى عِنْ لَوْلَوَّ كانَ كَامِنًا

the image in which, he says, is derived from Ibn cAbd Rabbih's line:

وَكَانَّا غَاصَّ اَلْآَسِ بِهِمْنَا \ حِتَّى آنَاكُ بَلْوَّمُ منْهُرُ

His comment on the two lines runs as follows:

فاَحْتَالُ الرَّمَادِي حِتَّى آُنَى بِاللْوَلْوَّ وَعُوسَ منَ الْخَائِصِ التَّبَسْم ، وَوَقَعَتْ لَهُ اسْتَعَارَة

الْتَّبَسْم لِلْعَيْنِ مُوْقَعًا لَطِيفًا ، وَأَنَا هُوَ لِلْخَفْرِ ، سِيِّبُ ثُوْسَ اللَّوْلَوَّ الَّذِي هُوَ لِلْعَيْنِ وَالْخَفْرِ فَنَسِخُ الْمَعْنَى نَسْخًا ، وَقَلْبُهُ قَلْبًا.

He pays a great deal of attention to the vocabulary of the poet. He criticizes Ibn Shammākh's use of the word "كيسي" in his line:

فَلَوَّلا عَلَهُ عَشْتٌ دُهْرِي كَلَّهُ \ وَكيَّسٌ كَلاَمِ يَا أَحْلَ لَهُ عَقْدًا

He finds the use of this word ludicrous, that is to say it is out of context and totally inappropriate. He then compares it with Ābū Tammām's use of which had often been criticized by Arab critics before him.

وَاسْتَعَارَة كَيْسَا لِلَّكَلَّامِ مِنْ مَضْحَكَاتِ الأَتَّامِ ، وَقَرَأَتْ فِي أَهْيَارِ الصَّابِحِ ابن عَبَّاد قَالَ: كَنْنا نَحْجُبَنَّ مِنْ قُوَّلِ أَبِي شَمَامُ " لَاسْقِنِي مَاءُ الْعَلَام" ، وَنَسْتَبِعُ اسْتَعَارَتُهُ لِمَا مَاءُ حِتَّى عَدَبَتْ عِنْدَنَا بِ" حَلْوَاءٍ اللَّبَنِين" فِي قُوَّلِ أَبِي الطَّيِبِ :

وَقَدْ ذَقَتْ حَلْوَاءُ اللَّبَنِينَ عَلَى الْمَيَّةُ فَلا تَحْسَبِي قَلْتُ مَا قَلْتُ عَنْ جَهْل

He then compares both of these expressions with al-Mutanabbī's expression حَلْوَاءُ اللَّبَنِينَ, which he praises very highly. He
also criticizes any far-fetched images or similes on the grounds that they bear no relationship to reality. He gives the following lines of al-Mutanabbi's as an example:

"الليل لة في قلوب البيض مفرقين
وفي قوله:
ألا يشب فلقد شابت له كيـد
وفي قوله:
لم يحـك نائلا السحاب وانـشا
حـتـا به قصبيها الرـحـضاء.

It is obvious that he does not find Abū Tammām's metaphor any worse than many other metaphors that are found in his works, and in those of other well-known poets such as Ibn al-Tūlū' al-Mahdawi and Abū Hās Ibn Burd:

افظت بك الأقطار من برس اليو
ولأبي حفص بن برد من أهل أفقتنا شيء مضحك على رشاقته وهو قوله:
يا شاعر الحسن بي شرق
لا تقتلتي كذا بديعـا
وأعجب من الصاحب بن عبـاد حين لم يجد من استعارات أبي حـفـام شيئا ينفعه الا
قوله " ماء الملام " وليس هذا بأعجب من قوله : " هو كوكب الإسلام آية ظلمة "

Ibn Bassām finds it very surprising that Ibn ʿAbdād should have singled out Abū Tammām's metaphor as a bad example. He could have also mentioned in this respect Dhū al-Rummah's metaphor, which seems to have influenced Abū Tammām.

Dhū al-Rummah's well-known line reads as follows:

أعن ترمـت من خرقاء منزلة
ماء الشـباء من عينيك مصغور
In contrast with the foregoing metaphors, Ibn Bassām gives the following as an excellent example:

جاري آباه فائقلا وهما يتعاروان ملاءة الحضر

He comments on this line:

"يتعاروان ملاءة الحضر " أبدع استعارة ، وأنصح عبارة .

He also admires Muḥammad b. Yahyā b. Ḥazm's verse:

فأبحث سرح اللهو مرتاح اليه وان يترتما

ولمعت طير الوجد ان يترتما

من لطيف الاستعارة ، ولمهج الاستعارة ، أوما به الى الكتمنان ، اما بآخذ بجامع

In dealing with plagiarism, Ibn Bassām adopts the terminology of previous critics and rhetoricians: Iḥtīdām, Ightīsāb, Ikhtīlās, Ikhfā al-Sarīq, Qubh al-Akh dh, Afdāh Sarīgātan, Iṭīlāb, Intīḥāl, Irhāb, Nazār, Naskh, Mūlāḥa, Ilmām, Taṣṣūr al-Ākhīdhar an al-Ma Khudh minhu and so on.

The following examples may be cited:

1 - وابن فتوح هذا كثير الاهتمام والاغتصاب والاختطاف والاستلاب لأشعار سواء ، قبض

الأخذ في كل ما انتجا

2 - لا أظلم الليل ولا آدمي أن نجوم الليل ليست تنور ليلي كما شاء فإن لم تجد طال وان جادت فليلي قصير

ومن بلغ النية في الانصاف لما ألم له من الاستلاب والاختطاف قول ابن بسام

البغدادي ۔ وهذا بجملته منقول من قول علي بن الخليل ، وحيف يقول :

لا أظلم الليل ولا آدمي أن نجوم الليل ليست تنور

ليلي كما شاءت قصير ، اذاء جادت وان فت فليلي طويل

3 - وأبو الوليد بن زيدون على كثير احصانه كثير الاهتمام ، في النشال والنظم
In using this terminology he does not define, or distinguish between Ḥtīdha, Akhdh and Sariqa. It is clear that he was influenced by such earlier critics as Abū Hilāl al-Askārī, Ṣād al-Qāhir al-Jarjānī, Ṣād al-Karīm al-Nahshalī and Ibn Rashīq. 53

When he deals with plagiarism, he often takes pains to point out the subtle differences between the old and the new image or simile. As an example of this we may take Abū Nuwas's lines:

He says: It is said that Abū Nuwas derived this concept from Imru’ al-Qays’s line:

He then traces a possible descent of this concept through the works of al-_NS̲h̲ī, Ibn al-Muqtazz, al-Mutalammis and Abū Tammām b. Rabbāh.

He takes much the same attitude to plagiarism as a number of his predecessors, who differentiated between good
and bad examples of this practice. For example, Yahyā b.

Alī al-Munajjim says:

وَحَقَّ مِن أَخْذِ مَعْنِي وَقَدْ سِقَ الْيَهِينَ أَن يَصْنَعَ أَجْرُودَ مِن صَنْعَةِ الْسَابِقِ الْيَهِينَ، أَوْ يَزِيدُ فِيهِ عَلَى حَتَّى يَسْتَحْتَقَّ، فَأَمَّا إِذَا قَضَّ عَنْهُ فَانْسَى مَعِيبَ السَّرْقَة مُدْمُومٌ فِي النَّقْصِ.

Abū Hilāl al-Askarī says:

لا يَلْفَدُ أَحَدَ مِن أَصَافِ القَافِلِينَ غَنِيًّا عَنْ تَحَاَوْلِ المعانِي مَنْ تَقْدِيمِهِ وَالْحَمْلِ عَلَى قُوَّالِبِ مِنْ سِقِيمِهِ، وَلَكِنْ عَلَيْهِمْ - إِذَا أَخْذَهُمْ - أَن يَكْسُوا الْفَاتَا مِنْ عَنْدِهِمْ، وَيَبْزُعُهُمْ فِي مَعَارِضِ مِنْ تَأَلِيقِهِ، وَيَبْرُدُهَا فِي غَيْرِ حَبْلِهَا الْأَوَّلَةُ، وَيَبْزِدُهَا فِي حَسَنَتِهَا، وَجُوْدَةَ تَرْكِيبِهَا، وَكَمَالِ حُلِيْتِهَا وَمَعْرُفَهَا، فَإِذَا فَطَلَّوَا ذلِكَ فِي مُقْبَلٍ بِهَا مَنْ سِقَ الْيَهِينَ.

Ibn Bassam, in his turn, considers that plagiarism is only justified by the addition to the borrowed concept of something individual on the part of the plagiarist:

وَمَثَلَّ هَذِهِ المعانِي الَّتِي ذُكِرَتْ مَمَا انفِرَدَ بِهِ كَلْ وَاحِدٌ مِنِ الشَّرَاءِ، لَا يَكَادُ يَتَشَاَوِلَا حَادِقَ الأُقْسِرِ، أَلَا إِنْ يَزِيدُ زِيَادَةً تَشْهُرُ، وَلَوْلَا مَا شَحَمِي النَّسَبِ أَشْيَاءٌ كَثِيرَةٌ مِنْ المعانِي الَّتِي أَخَذَتْ حَقَقًا مِنَ الْلِّفْظِ، وَلَمْ يَبْقَ فِيْهَا فَظْلَةً عَلَمَسيَّةٌ وَالقُرَارِيَّاتُ تَحْفَاَزُ.  

He is influenced by the views of earlier Andalusian critics, such as Ibn Shuhayd, in accepting plagiarism, provided that a poet uses it skillfully, as, for example, when he conceals the link between his image and the original by using a different metre and rhyme and by elaborating the image or adding new elements to it. This type of plagiarism he finds acceptable:

وَقَدْ تَقَدَّمَ الْقُولُ مِنْ تَحْيَلِ حَدَاقِ الصَّنَاعةِ فِي أَخَذِ المعانِي أَنْ تَتَرْكِ القَافِيَةُ والْوَزْنِ، وَلَكِنْ يَجِبْ أَنْ يَقَضَى إِلَى التَّطْوِيلِ إِذَا قَضَّ الْمَتَّقَدُّمُ.
We can perhaps see here the influence of Ibn Shuhayd:

 اذا اعتمدت معيى قد سبق اليه غيرك فاحسنا تراكيبه ، وأرق حاشيته ، فأغرب عنه جملة ، وإن لم يكن بد ففي غير العروض التي تقدم اليها ذلك المحسس ، 60 لتنشط طبيعتك ، وتقوى متنك .

in whom again we may, in turn, see the influence of al-Jurjānī (d. 366 A.H.):

 فإن الشاعر الحاذق اذا علق المعنى المختلف عدل به عن نوعه وصفه ، وعن ورشه ونجمه ، وعن رويته وقافيته ، فإذا مر بالفظي الغفل وجدوا أجنبين مشعدين ، 61 وإذا تأمليهما الفظ الذي عرف قراءة ما بينهما ، والوظة التي تجمعهما .

He also reminds his readers that not every concept or image that resembles an old one is necessarily derived from the old one. Similar concepts and images may occur to poets independently of one another:

 وإذا ظفرت بمعنى حسن ، أو لفظ مستحسن ، ذكرت من سبق اليه ، وأثرت الى من نقص عنه ، أو زاد عليه ، ولست أقول : أخذ هذا من هذا قولًا مطلقًا ، فقد است تتوارد الخواطر ، ويجع الحافر على الحافر ، إذ الشعر ميدان ، والشعراء 62 فرسان .

The last part of this passage seems to derive from al-Mutanabbi. It is possible, too, that Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ, as quoted in the same passage of al-ʿUmda may also have been in Ibn Bassām's mind at the time:

 سئل أبو الطيب عن مثل ذلك فقال : الشعر جادة ، ورثما وضع الحافر على موضوع الحافر ، وسئل أبو عمر بن العلاء : أرأيت الشاعرين يتفقان في المعنى ، ويتواردان في اللفظ ، لم يلق واحد منهما صاحب ، لم يسمع شعره ؟ قال: تلك عقول رجال توافت على السنتها 63 .
What he regarded as bad plagiarism he criticises severely:

He criticises Ibn Malik on the grounds that he takes everything that he says from others. If he were to trace back all that Ibn Malik has borrowed, he would leave him with nothing at all. Some of his comments on literary thefts are perhaps designed to display his own wide knowledge of Arabic poetry. For instance:

Ibn Bassam sometimes exaggerates and makes extravagant claims regarding plagiarism. As one of many examples of this, we may cite his comment on the verse of Abū Muhammad ābd al-Majīd Ibn ābdūn:
There is only a very slight connection between these lines. He also recognises plagiarism of style, as opposed to that of concept. He considers, for example, that al-Mu'tamid, on one occasion, at least, has inappropriately composed in a feminine manner, in fact imitating the style of al-Khansâ:

"If you come back from the house, when you happen to turn to boys in myHI, in fact I criticised him also, for he is a poet:

He draws attention to the plagiarism of poetry from prose and vice versa, such as his comment on this sentence:

In dealing with plagiarism, he makes stylistic comparisons between writers. He discusses the subject of internal plagiarism, i.e. the repetition of concepts, images, and expression in a writer's own work. He comments on a verse of Ibn Darrāj:
Ibn Bassām displays great interest in extemporaneous poetry. Under the influence of Ibn Rashīq's chapter on poetic improvisation in al-ʿUmdah, he has a long chapter on this subject, which begins:

وقد فرق حذاق النظر بين البديعة والارتجال، فجعل الارتجال ما كان على طريق الالتمار والتدفق لا يوقف فيه قاله، كندي وقع للفرزدق إذ أمره سليمان بن عبد الملك بضرب عرق أمير رومي ودش إليه بعض بني عيسى سيفا كحاما كنما قريب به وضحك سليمان، فقال الفرزدق:

لتأخير نفس حينها غير شاهد
فسيف بني عيسى ودربوا يسه
كذا سوء الهند تشترو بقاتهم
ولو شت قط السيف ما بين أنغام

ومن الشعراء من شعره فيهما، وعند الأمان والخوف سواء، بهقدار قدرة كل أحده، وسكون جاهزه، وقوة غزيرته، كهدية بين الخشمة، وطرفة بين العبد، ومزة بين محكم السعدي، إذ يقول وقد أمر مصعب بن الزبير يقتله:

بَنِي أَمْدَادَ اِنْ تَقَلُّونَ تَحَارَبُوا
تَمِيّزاً اِذَا الْحَرْبُ اِلْعِوْانَ اَشْمَعَت
وَلَسْتُ وَانَّ كَانَ الْيَدَّ الْحَمِيْبَة
بِيَاكِ عَلَى الْانْثَيَا اِذَا مَا ثَوَّبَت

In a chapter devoted to Ibn ʿAmmār in the second part of al-Dhakhīra, Ibn Bassām praises him for his skill in improvisation:

فصدرت هذه الأشعار، يومند عن ابن عمار، وهو في قبيحة الحديد، وقالها على البديعة والارتجال، في تلك الحالة، من شدة الاعتقال، ونال يشجيه البلى، قد نحن أنه لا يقتلك، ولا ينظر إلا إلى عدو يجهش، والموت يلقوه من حيث لا ينتفل، إذ كان المعتمد قد أخبره في تلك الحالة غير ما مرّة بين يديه، وبعدد ذنبيه عليه، ولو قال كل قصيد ورثاه حولا كامل، في آمن وودعة، وفرط غيظة أو شدة حميّة وعصبة، لما زاد على ما أجاد، فكانت هذه القصائد القلائد، مع ما تشتمل من البدائع والروائع، رقي لم شفع، ووسائل لم تنجز، وإذا سبق القدر، فلا ورد ولا مدر.
As examples of improvised poetry by other Andalusian poets he cites a number of poems by Ibn Shuhayd and Mumin b. Sa'īd. He concludes:

There is nothing new in Ibn Bassām's critical method and terminology. He follows those used by previous critics and rhetoricians, such as Ibn Rashīq, Ibn Sharaf, ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Nahshalī. The two Jurjānīs, al-Jāḥīṣ and al-Āmidī. al-Dhakīra contains citations from works which do not survive anywhere else, such as letters written by the Banū al-Bājī. Thus it is not merely a critical work, but also a literary source. He does his best to preserve a scholarly accuracy, and he sometimes apologises to his readers for being unable to resolve some confusion concerning his subject's works. For instance, in the chapter devoted to Abū ʿUmar al-Bājī, he says:
SUMMARY

1. In discussing a verse, or verses, of poetry, Ibn Bassām generally refers to similar lines, or lines which may have served as models, in the works of earlier poets, both from Andalus and from the east. An example of this is his discussion of Ibn ʿAbdūn's description of the flies (p. 167, above). He gives the impression of wishing to display his prodigious memory for literary instances.

2. His critical judgements cannot be called precise; he has a predilection for "beautifying" his style in a variety of different ways, and for expressing himself in metaphors of a distinctly poetic nature. His writing is "artistic" and often fantastic; it is certainly not "critical" or "scholarly" in the way that that of many earlier writers on literary history is, such as that of al-Thaʿalibī, Ibn Shuhayd, Ibn Ḥazm and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih. Ibn Bassām is, in fact, a "litterateur" rather than a critic, so far as his style and expression are concerned; the description of someone as nādiratu al-falaki al-dawwār, wa-uṣūbatu al-layli wa-al-nahār (the rarity of the revolving firmament, and the wonder of the night and the day), while picturesque, cannot be said to be detailed and informative criticism.

3. He is only rarely original in his critical views and his analyses. In his discussions of the content of lines or of poetic tropes, he often relies on the views of previous critics, like Ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī, Abū Hilāl al-
CAskari and cAbd al-Karim al-Nahashli, on these very points, without, however, necessarily reproducing their actual words. For example, in referring to two lines of *Antarah*, which we have already mentioned, he says: "This unequalled simile ... (wa-hadha al-tashbih al-ladhi ma lahu shabih)"; other critics say that it is "unique" (*yatim* = literally "orphaned", or *caqim* = literally "barren", or something similar).

4. He does not use a great deal of precise scholarly, critical or rhetorical terminology in his discussions of such things as plagiarism or figures of speech, and he is by no means innovative in such as he does use; it all belongs to his linguistic, critical and rhetorical predecessors, from the east, the Maghrib and al-Andalus. In this, as in his specific criticism, he particularly depends upon such writers as Ibn Rashiq, al-Nahashli, al-Jurjani and Abu Hilal al-CAskari.

5. He alludes to a number of rhetorical, linguistic and grammatical points, in connection with style and expression; he also makes a number of observations concerned with correct and incorrect prosody.

6. He makes frequent comparisons between eastern and Andalusian poets and prose-writers, chiefly in order to present his fellow-countrymen in a superior light. He also, however, sometimes compares one Andalusian author with another.
7. He does not offer any analysis of his critical judgements or any clarification of the obscurities that are often present in them. Nor, in spite of his great erudition and familiarity with the methods of previous critics, does he produce any coherent, clear-cut critical theory that attempts either to reconcile their contradictory views or to establish new principles of its own. It is quite clear that, in the main, he is concerned solely with the poetry of his contemporaries in al-Andalus, even if he does pay a certain amount of attention to that of the east, in his wish to be fair in giving credit for the introduction of new themes and means of expression.

8. He sometimes provides information concerning the occasion to which a poem refers, or other data essential to the elucidation of an allusion, as for example, in the line of Abū Ja'far b. al-Abbar:

لا تؤهم قرعة كشرفة
لذ ميدرش نوح إذ خاف الغرق

where he explains that the second hemistich is an allusion to the hadīth alleging that the tree from which Adam ate in the Garden of Eden was a grape-vine.

9. He is not greatly concerned to give references to the sources from which he takes his texts. In this he resembles Qudāmah b. Ja'far, and it is perhaps possible that he is deliberately following him in this practice.
However, the principal reason is probably that, since the majority of those whom he quotes are his contemporaries, there is no point in his doing so; in many cases the works are not yet widely disseminated, and the text that he has received from the author himself is as good as one could possibly have.
1. CAbd al-CAzīz al-Jurjānī, 100.
2. al-ThaCĀlibī, 1, 79.
3. Ibid, 1, 439.
5. Ibid, 3, 1, 541.
6. Ibid, 1, 1, 11-12.
7. Ibid, 1, 1, 33-34.
8. Ibid, 1, 1, 377-379.
10. Ibid, 1, 1, 88.
11. Ibid, 1, 1, 510-511.
12. Ibid, 1, 1, 549.
13. Ibid, 1, 2, 451.
15. Ibid, 1, 1, 91-92.
16. Ibid, 2, 2, 797.
17. Ibid, 1, 1, 192-193.
18. Ibid, 1, 1, 66.
20. Ibid, 1, 1, 339.
22. Ibid, 1, 1, 219.
23. Ibid, 4, 1, 221-222.
24. Muḥammad CAbd Allāh al-Jādir, 323.
25. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 83.
26. al-ThaCĀlibī, 2, 299.
27. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 315.
28. Ibn Rashāq, a, 1, 263.
29. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 516-517.
30. Ibid, 2, 1, 134-135.
31. Ibid, 2, 1, 407-408.
32. Ibid, 2, 2, 634-635.
33. Ibid, 3, 1, 116-117.
34. Ibid, 3, 1, 114-115.
35. Ibid, 2, 1, 135-136.
37. Ibid, 2, 2, 630-631.
38. Ibid, 3, 2, 692.
39. Ibid, 1, 2, 888.
40. Ibid, 2, 1, 373-374.
41. Ibid, 1, 2, 823-824.
42. Mansur Ajami, 10.
43. Abu Hilal, 395.
44. Ibn Bassam, 1, 1, 150.
45. Ibid, 2, 2, 689-702, Ibn Rashid, Q, 69.
47. Ibn Bassam, 1, 1, 322.
48. Ibid, 1, 2, 841-844.
49. Dhū al-Rumma, Diwan, 567.
50. Ibn Bassam, 2, 1, 512.
51. Ibid, 2, 2, 610.
52. Ibid, 1, 2, 770-773.
54. Abu Nuwas, Diwan, 361.
55. Imru al-Qays, Diwan, 111.
56. al-Marzubanî, 294.
58. Ibn Bassām, 2, 2, 703-705.
59. Ibid, 1, 1, 322.
60. Ibid, 1, 1, 287.
62. Ibn Bassām, 1, 1, 19.
64. Ibn Bassām, 1, 2, 752.
65. Ibid, 1, 2, 773-774.
66. Ibid, 2, 1, 70.
68. Ibid, 1, 1, 81.
69. Ibn Rashīq, 1, 189.
70. Ibn Bassām, 4, 1, 36-38.
71. Ibid, 2, 1, 428.
72. Ibid, 4, 1, 44-45.
73. Ibid, 2, 1, 187.
PART II

IBN BASSAM AS A STYLIST
IBN BASSAM AS A STYLIST
There are two different aspects that it has seemed worth investigating, in an attempt to arrive at some kind of overall view of the style of Ibn Bassām's prose-writing. In fact, these two are probably inseparable, but, for our purposes, it has been practicable to treat them as separate. The first is more tangible than the second, since it is concerned more with the mechanics of the writing. This is not necessarily to say that Ibn Bassām deliberately set out to produce a specific rhythmical effect at a given point; clearly, rhythm in writing, even in saj, is something that is instinctive, rather than contrived. Nevertheless, it is easier to pin down than other characteristics of a style, and it is for this reason that the first section of this part is devoted to it, and to rhyme, which, in this type of writing, is its intimate companion. The system that has been adopted in representing rhythm on the page is that which is generally used for scanning verse, a series of long and short marks, indicating the quantity of the vowels, as they would function in verse. This may appear to be somewhat bold, since, in verse, quantity and stress are not always congruous; however, in Arabic verse they coincide to a very considerable degree, and thus it is, we feel, not inappropriate to represent saj in quantitative terms, since, in many ways, it is more akin to verse than to prose. For this reason, too, we use the terms "metre" and "scansion" in speaking of the patterns of long and short syllables that we find in our analyses, even though these may not be thought of as customarily applying to prose rhythms.
In the second part, the analyses have been made in a somewhat impressionistic way, and different passages have been differently approached. Not all of the points that might have been brought up have been; certain considerations have tended to dominate, at the expense of others that might, perhaps, have been given equal weight. At all times, however, the object of the analyses has been to endeavour to show the contribution of the part of the passage under discussion to the effect produced by the passage as a whole.

Some of the terminology adopted may require explanation. The term "unit" is used throughout to designate a section of saj that is approximately equivalent to a "hemistich" in terms of verse. The phrase "outside the scheme" indicates that the clause or phrase to which it is applied may be regarded as preceding a passage, or units, of saj, rather than constituting part of it, or them.
RHYME AND RHYTHM IN THE PROSE OF IBN BASSAM: AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PASSAGES.

1

1356

أبو الوليد ابن زيدون

كان أبا الوليد صاحب منشور ومنظوم، وخاتمة شعراء مخزوم، أحد من جُرّ الأيام.

وفات الأشام طرأ، وغرر السلطان نفعا وغرر، ووعس البيان نظما ونشرا.

إلى أدب ليس للبحر ضفقة، ولا للبحر ناقة.

وشعر لي للبحر بيانه، ولا

للنجوم الزهر اقترانه، وحظ من النثر غريب العبائي، شعرى الألفاظ والمعاني.

صاحب منشور ومنظوم

و yatmaa شعراء مخزوم

كان أبو الوليد is outside the scheme. The second unit is two syllables longer than the first. The scansion of the two units is completely different, except for the first three syllables (disregarding ٣) and the last ٢. The rhyme words have the same sense but are from different roots.

أحد من جُرّ الأيام جرأ

وفات الأشام طرأ

أحد مسن is outside the scheme; the remainder is almost identical in scansion between the units. The meaning of the first unit is vague; the meaning of the second is clear.

صرّل السلطان نفعا وضرأ

وروع البيان نظما ونشرا
Again there is almost an identical scansion between units; they are quite similar to the previous two units except that there is the extra syllable in the verbs, and, ـثـرًا ـثـرًا ـثـرًا ـثـرًا are inserted. ـثـرًا ـثـرًا ـثـرًا is a less good rhyme than the others, and it seems rather uninventive to repeat the root contrast so soon, even though the order is reversed. Possibly, however, this is deliberately perverse, since it would not be expected, especially in view of the weak rhyme of ـثـرًا ـثـرًا. I do not think that it is particularly effective, though.

After the common introduction: ـثـرًا ـثـرًا ـثـرًا ـثـرًا, the two units are the same length, if we include و و. How does ـثـرًا ـثـرًا connect with previous statement?

The two units are of identical length, except that ـثـرًا ـثـرًا ـثـرًا ـثـرًا is again a common introduction, so that second is, in fact, longer. They are syntactically identical to each other and to the two previous units; الزهر الزهر الزهر الزهر is inserted in the second. The sense of الزهر الزهر is ambiguous (cf. the use of الزهر الزهر twice, in different senses - p.209, below: once with بيان ).
The second unit is shorter than the first, except that is really introductory again, so that the second unit is effectively longer. It is somewhat bold to repeat again, especially (indirectly) contrasted this time with rather than also repeats in the previous couplet.

Is surely a strange expression? suggests as the rhyme, which more or less necessitates as its pair; this makes a double inevitable in the second unit, and so makes this unit naturally longer.

2

...
Leaving out of account, the second unit has two extra syllables, but the central section is identical between units. There is parallelism in and also chiasmus, in that i.e. first and last. is a very vague expression.

The first three units all have eight syllables, but different scansion. Two longer units follow, of eleven and fourteen syllables respectively.

The fourth unit has a semi-rhyme in the middle which makes one dubious about the pattern of the series because so far it is shorter than the first 3 (6 syllables). However, one then realises that this is not the rhymed word, which in fact comes fairly quickly thereafter, taking one somewhat by surprise. The fifth unit has in the middle, but this time one does not expect a rhyme pause at this point, and indeed the unit continues for a further seven syllables.
Excluding ج، there is the same number of syllables in both units, but they have a different scansion. The "scattering" sense of ج، which necessitates the ج،
gives expectation of the ج، as possible rhyme, linked with the ج،

A different number of syllables. There is a play on the word ج، does not lead one to expect a particular rhyme, and in fact it is not until ج، occurs that a lion becomes the obvious contrast with ج،; it is still not clear what the rhyme will be, so a suspense is maintained.

The construction is parallel throughout, and the scansion is identical for the first nine syllables in each unit. (excluding ج، و ). Although the remainder of the first unit is actually longer, the long syllables of ج، give it equal weight, if not more. The "stringing" sense of both ج، and ج، creates the image in the first unit; the "scattering" sense of ج، does not necessarily have any connotation until...
we come to the مَسْكَةُ, which is frequently associated with "scattering" in poetry. مَسْكَةُ perhaps leads to an expectation of the كَافُور as the rhyme word, but not inevitably.

The second unit is shorter than the first for the first time; also for the first time the second unit continues the sense rather than being parallel (even though it is a relative clause). الأُلْمُودُ is dictated as a rhyme by الجَلَّودُ There is a possible ambiguity in the second: قَبْلُ can mean both 'before' and 'rather than'.

The units are the same length. The last seven syllables of each have identical scansion. The first three syllables of the second (excluding و) are the reversal of the first three syllables of the first.

أبو عبد الرحمن بن طاهر

كان أبو عبد الرحمن بن طاهر أحد من جمع الحديث إلى القدم، وارتقي من رياضة الأقلاع إلى سياسة الأقاليم، وانتفض لبني طاهر بالفلتنة المطفية، رياضة كـورة مرسية في خبر أراضيته عنه لطوله ولأني قد أورده في كتابي المترجم ب"ملك الجواهر من ترسيل ابن طاهر". فكان أبو عبد الرحمن يكتب عن نفسه بهذا الافق، كالمصاحب ابن عباد بالشرق، وله رسائل تشهد به نفسه، وتدل على نباهته، لا سيما إذا هزل فأنه يتقدم على الجماعة، ويستولي على ميدان الصناعة، ولمخـ خطـب أبو بكر ابن عمّ سمراء ملوك الأندلس بعضه، وتردّد ينتهجهم بمايده ورقاه.
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي في الصورة.
The two units have quite different lengths and scansion. They resemble each other in that each has two almost identical patterns joined by the second unit has a play on different words of the same radicals and also the jingle of the respective lengths of the units are reversed from the previous two. There is nothing very unusual here. The scansion of the second unit is rather monotonous. The rhyme is poor. The second unit is a continuation of the sense, not a parallel.

Here there is no rhyme at all, except in the title of the book; it constitutes a parenthesis, in which rhyme is perhaps inappropriate.
This is scarcely saj at all; there is only a perfunctory effort to rhyme.

Parallel construction with very short units. The second is one syllable longer. Again, the rhyme is poor. He has perhaps not really got into his stride in this piece yet.

This is improving now: different scansion and length, parallel construction. He inserts an extra word ميدان in the second unit.

The first unit is apparently much longer, but the name intervenes, so that the second is effectively longer. There is a remarkable correspondence of 1 long, 5 short and 1 long syllables at the end of each. There are a great many short syllables in general, especially in the second.
The two units have the same length, excluding ٩, but different scansion; the verbs and last words correspond.

جع ابا عبد الرحمن بن طاهر/موقع هقه
ووجه آنـه

There is nothing interesting here, except for the slightly different scansion.

ولما الذي المعتمد إلى ابن عمار بيده
وقلده ( ) تديير دولته وبلده

The parenthesis does not really count, except to delay the rhyme, but this is probably not part of the artistic effect. There is nothing much to be said about this pair. They are parallel, but they also advance the narrative.

بعشه على حرب ابن طاهر/بغا لتفجه
ويشاه على آنه

Again, there is nothing interesting. We have merely two short parallel phrases, slightly different in form.

فأقبلة وجوه الجياد ، وأخذ عليه الشعر والأسداد

The second unit has a couplet where one word would do, to give extra length and weight. Again, the two are parallel, but advance the narrative.

حتى فت في عضده
Again, an extra word is added for length and weight. Again, the two are parallel, but advance the narrative.

An extra word is added in the second, once again. In each the first verbs correspond the second are varied. The scansion is quite similar, given that the length is different.

The last words have identical scansion.

The roots and are both repeated.

The second unit again has an extra word.
Again, an extra word is inserted. There is identical scansion towards the end of the units.

There is nothing interesting here but the rhyme and the opposition. There is continuation of sense rather than parallelism.

There is a couplet in the second where one word would do. The two words have the same meaning, as does also the final word of the first.

There is metrical correspondence in the last word in each unit. There is continuation of sense, rather than parallelism. Considering the length of the passage, there is comparatively little to say about it. It has none of the deliberate
artistic complexity of 191. Many of the rhymes are not very complex, and names interfere with the flow a great deal. No doubt, because it is narrative rather than descriptive, the need to advance the action overrides the author's concern with the intricacy in his saj\(^c\), even though there are a number of cases where the second unit is parallel rather than additional. Rhymes are never sustained for more than two units. One characteristic that emerges is the very frequent use of a common introductory phrase, followed by two parallel rhyming phrases, which are comparatively short. Very often the second of these is lengthened and strengthened with an extra word, either forming a muḍāf-muḍāf ilayh or a couplet. It is not perhaps a terribly impressive passage.

There is nothing much here to comment on, except for the doublet after بَيْن: it is reminiscent of previous doublets, and contrasts with the slightly extended, but straightforward, مضاف - مضاف إليه construction in the first unit. The sense is continued في عين لي - عبد العزيز.

No rhyme - intermission in saj\(^c\).
This is the first example of triple rhyme - and rhyme with a name. The first two continue the sense; the third qualifies the second, in a very fanciful manner, which contrasts with the very matter of fact narration of the rest.

No rhyme - another intermission.

Here we have almost identical scansion and parallelism.

No rhyme - intermission.

There is nothing remarkable here. The most fortuitous rhyme seems to produce a deliberately casual effect, which is slightly spoilt, in retrospect, by the repetition of two lines later.
This is the first example of triple rhyme - and rhyme with a name. The first two continue the sense; the third qualifies the second, in a very fanciful manner, which contrasts with the very matter of fact narration of the rest.

No rhyme - another intermission.

Here we have almost identical scansion and parallelism.

No rhyme - intermission.

There is nothing remarkable here. The almost fortuitous rhyme seems to produce a deliberately casual effect, which is slightly spoilt, in retrospect, by the repetition of
Saj^c within saj^c. This is a quotation of someone deliberately aiming for effect. It is not very special (perhaps spoilt by the obscurity of). 

The names again artificially prolong the first unit. The second is effectively longer. The rhyming of the introduction with the proverb is effective and necessary, because the proverb has no internal rhyme.

Here we have almost identical scansion in parallel units, which is very typical of normal saj^c. It does not advance the narrative, and the rhyme is poor.

Here we find identical scansion in the last four syllables in both units, although the syntax is quite different. This is perhaps more typical of saj^c advancing the narrative.
From لـ and بكرامة, we have almost identical scansion, although quite different syntax. The only difference is the long syllable of هـ instead of بكرمـة. يـت as a rhyme is determined by يقبلـها.

A common introduction, advancing the narrative.

There is similar scansion in the doublet, which this time is not just a conventional doublet, but part of the story.

There is a play on the words وجه and رأس. The two words in the second unit, قواده واجناده, give extra length and weight, although we already have a longer prepositional phrase. The perfectly good rhyme قواده anticipates the ending, which actually has the same form as the original rhyme word; the identical scansion of وجه قواده and رأس اشحدود.
(at least until the end of the second) also leads one to expect the rhyme there, and so maintains the tension, which is then overridden.

The scansion in two units of this couplet is very similar.
The difference in the forms of the verbs also keeps it from banality, as perhaps does the variation between also.

The subtlety here lies in the different scansion of apparently similar, but actually different syntax, since has different syntactical functions and is parallel with whereas not, whereas is parallel with
The first two units (after \( \text{وكان} \)) are identical. The third has a longer adjective and an extra word.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{عَلَى المَقْطَعُ} & , \quad \text{عَبْسُ مَعِيَّنِي} \\
\text{وَأَشاَمُ بِنِمَ الحَدَائِقُ} & , \quad \text{وَأَشَامُ فِي نَمْحِ الحَدَائِقُ} \\
\text{وَعَلَى الْسَّنَةَ رَوَائِهُ} & , \quad \text{وَأَعْرَقُ} \\
\end{align*}
\]

This section has a fairly complex structure; has the same scansion as \( \text{غَرَبَ وَشَرَقٌ} \), with which it is, of course, parallel. However, it is interrupted by another parallel couplet, which rhymes within the main couplet, and has very similar scansion between its two units and also very similar scansion (except for the final \( \text{ٞ} \) where the main couplet has \( \text{ٞ} \)) to the main couplet.

There is some advancement of sense -
This is a simple parallel couplet with identical scansion.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{لا جرم فاته كان شاعر لا يباري} \\
\text{و ساحرا لا يباري}
\end{array}
\]

This is another parallel construction, with very similar scansion.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{اذ منح استنسل العصم} \\
\text{وان هجا أسس الصم}
\end{array}
\]

You expect to follow the pattern of the previous two and to rhyme with them, even when the parenthesis begins.

You do not expect the rhyme to be made with the end of the parenthesis. It is perhaps strange to use أسس in consecutive sentences, but it is used in different ways.

There is a reference to a Hadith, as elsewhere.

سحر is repeated from two couplets earlier ( ساحرا)، and is to be repeated again, as a rhyme-word, in the following couplet (but in a different sense).

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{وكيف لا يرغب في شعره} \\
\text{و يتنافس فيما ينفث به من سحره}
\end{array}
\]
There is great disparity in length of units.

Here we have two alternating rhymes, with long and short units corresponding. There is rather different scansion in both; this is less surprising in the long units than in the short. The two long units are at first sight parallel in sense. The two short ones develop the metaphor of begun by the verbs at the beginning of the longer units, the second part of the metaphor being the result of the first.

There is little correspondence here in length or scansion. This is not surprising, perhaps, since the sense continues over the first unit rhyme. The extra words in the prepositional phrase in the second unit serve to weight the sentence appropriately.
Again, there is little correspondence in scansion, but the length of the units is the same. The prepositional phrase in the first unit is weightier this time than that in the second. Since, again, the sense continues over the first unit rhyme, no doubt the intention is to provide some contrast with the previous couplet. It is not quite satisfactory.

I am not sure if this is meant to be a rhyme or not. I think it is probably meant just to suggest one and to leave the reader/hearer wondering, especially in view of the incongruity of the subject matter and the jaunty rhythm. Is it a slightly tasteless joke?

Again, there is no real correspondence in scansion. The lengths are not greatly different, but there is no great significance in that. The second unit is a somewhat unnecessary (for the sense) addition that merely serves to round off the paragraph resoundingly with an internal parallelism. There is a parallelism in and \( \text{i.e.} \) first and last.
is introductory to a parallel couplet.

There is an obvious contrast in - آخـر. The two units are approximately the same length; the substitution of for علماج الجزيرة makes it appear that the second unit will be shorter, but this is compensated for by the two words after . The rhyme is not perfect.

The first part of each unit is almost identical metrically and syntactically (also with the first part of the second
unit of the preceding couplet). There is double rhyming in

اتمادا - طلقتا، منظوما - علوم

these again are not perfect rhymes. The second unit is lengthened by the

insertion of

The second unit is actually slightly shorter, but it seems longer, because of the زمان حدثاتها - اضافة The sense conveyed by ولي استخف and is virtually the same.

This is fairly conventional; the second unit is lengthened by

في

Here we have a triplet: One long unit and 2 short; in fact, combined they are still shorter than the first.

This is the first of two couplets of identical pattern. At first sight, the presence of the two nouns in the first unit seems to make it longer, but كما يقلل in fact make the second unit longer.

Precisely the same applies in this as to the previous couplet.
This forms a subdivided couplet, similar in pattern to the previous two, but the first half of the first unit rhymes with the first half of the second unit, and the second half of the first with the second half of the second. The first half of the first unit is longer than the first half of the second unit, but the second half of the first unit is shorter than the second half of the second unit, because of the (inevitable) insertion of 

The rhyme here is minimal. The second unit is shorter than the first.

أبو مروان عبد الملك بن محمد بن شماخ

وأبو مروان هذا أحد من شافهته وذاكرته، وأنشدني شعره، وكان باهر الضوء، صادق التنو، ينغم بالبحر في عقد النظم والنشر، ويوفر على أنواع البديع، ايفاءً نيسان على محاسن فعل الربع، الى علم أعجب من الناس، وأكثر من خص الدهناء، وهم أذكى من الشمس، وأجري من النفس في النفس، وولا مّا أجزر، لبهار الشمس والقمر، وقد أجريت من نظمه ونشره، ما يشهد باسمه، وبدل على

عدد علمه.

أحد من/ غافته

وذكرته
Here we have a simple initial doublet, the second unit of which only slightly amplifies the sense of the first, followed by a non-rhyming unit, as something of a surprise.

This is another exactly parallel doublet, slightly longer than the previous one; the first unit is vague in reference, the second unit much more precise, and establishes the "star" image for both units.

The rhyme here is poor, but perhaps dictated by the content, the Quranic image. The sense is continuous, and the couplet may represent a deliberate hiatus in genuine parallelism.

These two units are not precisely parallel, in that the second amplifies the sense of the first and continues the construction rather than repeating it. ـ نـيـسـان ـيـنـيـس~
its (rhyming) مضاف إليه. It prolongs the sense of the previous couplet in a slightly unexpected way, with a different sense of أوفي إلى علم/أذكى من الماء وأكثر من حس الدهاء;

The second unit of this couplet is lengthened in a conventional way. The image is changed violently into a contrast between water and the desert.

This couplet is parallel to, though not rhyming with, the previous couplet. The second unit is again longer, but is expanded in a different way from the previous couplet. The first halves of both syntactically identical, but metrically slightly different.

The image is again changed violently into a contrast between sun and breeze. The rhyme is not quite complete, but the compensates somewhat for this.

Again, the rhyme is not perfect.

The two units are about the same length, but are complementary not parallel, in sense. بحر and شمس are introduced again, but in combination this time.

Once more, the rhyme is imperfect, but it is related, also imperfectly, to that of the previous couplet. The last two
words in the second unit are longer, but equally so, than the last two words in the first unit which are also equal. There appears to be a deliberate visual, but not syntactical, similarity between

This is a kind of new common introduction, which lies outside the scheme.

The rhyme is imperfect, which is strange for the ending of a paragraph; otherwise this is an unremarkable parallel. The second unit is as usual, longer than the first; this is achieved by the use of a longer preposition and the addition of one word.

This appears to be saying nothing. How many times have we seen a similar expression?

Again, this is banal in the extreme. It is perhaps relieved by the conjunction of stars, i.e. a particular moment, as opposed to the age/epoch in general?

"The acme of practice and theory - in poetry and prose". The three constitute an ascending trio - ascending to the
utmost extravagance. This has surely not been thought out; it is a purely mechanical eulogy.

This still appears mechanical. The image is not uncommon.

Ibn Bassām is now repeating himself; the root has three times occurred so far, and twice. The writing is again mechanical. It makes almost inevitable.

He starts to be specific here, and marks this with a poor rhyme and an unimaginative tajnīs. It may represent irony, after the earlier extravagance.

What does mean here? Doing well in literary terms, or in general terms? Are we meant to think of and especially ?

It looks as though were in Ibn Bassām's mind. The horse-race image (perhaps) clarifies the preceding one. It certainly picks up the first image. Perhaps too, illuminates the sense in which is intended.

Ibn Bassām is really insisting on roots; this must be deliberate. is also emphasised. twice, in so short a passage, must be intended to arouse comment.
With the two preceding units, we have four rhymes. The last two allude to heroic (pre-Islamic) Bedouin matters: أعلامـه = way-posts or flags (probably the former) and آيامـه = battles, as well as days. Thus they reinforce the image. Altogether, this is rather a stilted passage, even if it betrays some loss of interest on the part of Ibn Bassām. In these units, what exactly he means by شرحة آيامـه and رسمـه أعلامـه is far from clear.

I suspect that he is more concerned with the establishment of his image than with characterising his subject.

He could simply have said ظريفاـه في أمره is unnecessary, except for the rhyme.
It is not a very good rhyme, either, and a banal conjunction of 
However does actually tell us something, together with 
We are now given some solid information, contained in real prose. There are just two, not very important, internal rhymes and . What exactly are the connotations of ?
i.e., "He had neither the scope nor the ability to emulate Muhammad Ibn Hajjaj". Could imply meanness as well?
His lack of ability is then particularised:
He was entirely second-rate. Ibn Bassam is enjoying himself, as usual when criticising adversely. All of this sheds a very interesting light on what he means by 
Are two meanings of hinted at here? The second leads one to expect the exclusion of the subject, but this is not realised.
So far, the suspense is maintained.
The suspense is almost resolved, if the reader knows what

is.

The suspense is completely resolved, but in a sneering way

This is Bathos. It is dismissive and a return to the second
unit. It is deliberate repetition, in the same order,
reminding us that when the phrase first appeared, all we
knew was that he was

and

Much has intervened since then, enlarging on his two traits.
"young and valiant" with a hint of "wild". The internal rhyme is most unusual. There is no corresponding rhymed unit.

This is narrative, with metaphors describing the consequences of... The first is clear, the second is almost clear, but what is the precise meaning of... The metaphors, unusually, are completely unconnected; the connotation of "water" is "nourishment", and that of "pillar/column" is "strength/support".

The non-rhyming unit perhaps introduces a further desolate note, especially as the image is of "flowering/sprouting". The repetition of... from the internal rhyme above... seems deliberately prosaic; is there any special significance in the use of this word?

This is still narrative, in a sense. The interest lies in what the rhyme to... will be.

"is simply hyperbole."

This is simple prose, somewhat unexpectedly rhyming with the next unit.
which rather depreciates his subject;

must be derogatory.

This depreciatory tone is maintained.

is this sarcastic? Possibly not; it may be just regretful.

This is simple prose.

What is Ibn Bassam's true mood here? It is surely not mocking, although it appears so. However, having regard to the circumstances previously described, and to the response made to the regret, a mocking tone would surely be out of place.
Ibn Bassām's sense of humour is shown here. It is all that he has really any business to talk about. The first line leads one to expect the usual flattering and imprecise description of intellectual qualities and literary abilities. The mal is rather a shock. There follows quite a neat enumeration of types of possession (خُرق، ورق كراع، متاع، دفاتر، آتية، آثاب، عيبات...);
is a shock, but one becomes reconciled to that.

Ibn Bassam is being uncomplimentary. How well-known are the people referred to? In order to achieve the proper effect they should be very well-known. He does not prolong the images, as one might expect; they are quite plain, striking and effective.

-gives an even greater shock; self-esteem is one thing, but miserliness is a definite fault. He has changed his technique; he does not now enumerate names, as with He just mentions the ghaḍḥ, which is both clever and literary. There is quite an economical feeling about the two parallel doublets - are more complete rhymes than .

Finally, we come to the  كتابة ; we have almost lost sight of this kind of thing by now. Even then he begins by saying that it is the least of the four things, although he concedes that Abū Ja'far wrote quite a lot (which he expresses in a rather jingly fashion, with four rhyming members, two single and two double).

2

أبو المطرف عبد الرحمن بن فتح

بلغني أنه كان يعرف بابن صاحب الاستفرياسب من مشاهير الأدباء، ولعل

شعر كثير إلا أن ابنته نور بسيّر، ولعل تأليفه في الأدب ترجمه بكتاب

"الأغراف في رزق الله"، ورفع إلى المأمون يحيى بن ذي النون، وتصنيف آخر سمّاه بكتاب "الاشارة إلى معرفة الرجال والعبادة"، وكتاب

سمّاه "بيان الملوك"، ورفعه إلى ابن جهور أيام امارته بقرطبة.
Ibn Fattūḥ, which is fairly bombastic (Is it Ibn Fattūḥ's own or Ibn Bassām's?). There is a doublet describing Ibn Fattūḥ's intellectual qualities, whether the subject or his father.

The next sentence is very bald; it begins as though it were a simple statement, possible even preceding a substantive description of the subject's literary qualities. It is a surprise, then, to have the "and" clause follow. It is very early in the passage to introduce a sharp note, or indeed criticism at all.

Then, however, Ibn Bassām quietly goes on, as though nothing had happened, to detail the titles of his prose works and his dedicatees.

There follows indirect speech by Ibn Fattūḥ, which is
stimulation by Ibn Burd, and then his (still thanks to Ibn Burd) success is a nice touch; then Ibn Bassām, rather naughtily, quotes Ibn Fattuḥ talking elevatedly about hunting for a (this section is not in Saj). Ibn Bassām then resumes his own words and, taking up the metaphors of Ibn Fattuḥ, produces 2 rhyming doublets:

all concentrating devastatingly on: and follows it with a shorter parallel clause rhyming with with more or less the same meaning, but rather more general, and expressing overt disapproval. He describes Ibn Fattuḥ's poetry as Is this a play on ? The comparison with Ibn Burd is nicely done, with one letter difference in both noun and adjective.

Even then, Ibn Bassām feels that he has been unfair to Ibn Burd, and gives further comparisons, after which he makes a definite statement about the poetry of each. It is not clear precisely what he means by concentrating on gawāf. Does his criticism imply a really inept use of rhyme on the part of Ibn Fattuḥ? The sentence about Ibn Burd's poetry is not Saj, whereas the crushing one about Ibn Fattuḥ's poetry is Saj; both units of the latter are quite simple, and parallel, but finishing the whole section with the second unit shorter, and simpler (it has only one epithet), than the first achieves a quiet but definitive annihilation of the subject.
وكان فردًا من أفراد الشعراء والكتاب، وبجأ من جهور المعارف والآداب، شق كام الكلام عن أفئتين النور والزهور، ورقب من النسر والنظام بين الآصال والبيكر، ولم يقع إلي من شعره ونثره إلا نبئته كيامات المربب بذات صدره، وفهما أثبت منها ما يغريب، بذكره، ويغريب عن عجب أسره وأقام بالمرينة مدة تحت ضنك معيدة، مع عدد من مناحي، رفعها لأميرها ابن صمادج، فلمّا كان يومًا عهد أشدائه شعرًا.
He begins with two almost exactly parallel phrases, the only differences between them being variations in the...
are almost totally banal, being notable only for the parallelism of وعرب the customary and يعرب added to the second unit, and the rather poor rhyme of أمره ذكره.

The next two units are informative and of no great interest technically; it must have been convenient that

ابن صادق أبو عمر بن عبس الالبيري

من أفراد الزّهاد - كان في ذلك الأوان، ومع ما كان آدم عليه يؤمن من الأمور، وجعل إليه من التنقيم والتأخير، فأتى وجدته خالد الأدب، (محصب الغريب)، ذهب بنصومه وعيمونه، وتلاعب بمثوره ومورونه، وُصِرَّ بين مذاله ومصونه، إلا أن أكثر ما ألفته من المقروءات والآيات، في الزهد والعظات، وقد كتب منها ما هو من شرط هذا المجموع.

is postponed here to provide the rhyme with أوان.

How many times have we seen expressions similar to this:

من أفراد الزّهاد
من أفراد الشعراء والكتاب
من أفراد العصر

The precise meaning of these two units is not clear, somewhat unusually for Ibn Bassam, who on the whole is more precise than this when referring to the lives, rather than the literary abilities, of his subject. We must suppose that his audience were presumed, in this case, to know something of the career of أحمد، or, perhaps,
that there was some delicate political point that he
did not wish to make explicit. The more probable
implication is that Ahmad had some important position,
in which he was able to exercise تأخير تقديم over others, but the phrasing is such that it is just
possible that he was himself the object of these.

If the former is the case, تأخير تقديم تأخير seem
to be enlargements on الأمور rather than explanatory of them; thus the two units have here more of a parallelism
than of the more common narrowing and defining relationship.

فاني ودحته خالص الأدب

This is another vague phrase, clearly of approbation,
which may be made more explicit by the accompanying unit.

محمد السيب

What exactly does محمد السيب mean here? Are we meant
to think of قوي الأسباب, implying a firmly-rooted
education. This perhaps, although still vague, indicates
the sense in which خالص is to be understood.

ذهب بفكره وعيونه
وتاعب بمنتوره وموزونه
وحرص بين مذاله ومصننه

He begins this series of three units with a general
and obscure remark, which he then defines more closely,
and then again, while further defining, somewhat modifies.
It is possible that مصيره is his point of departure,
although it is equally possible that منشوره وموزونه is, on
the grounds that منشوره وموزونه is a far more
obvious pair than either of the others. Certainly, it does not appear probable that gave rise to this sequence.

It seems likely that the poetry is part of باب_، so that Ibn Bassām is here further developing and narrowing down his statements in the preceding three units. He seems to lose interest in his rhymes, to some extent, being content with three rather feeble sounding feminine plural endings (if, that is, المقطوعات والابيات are intended to provide an internal rhyme). It looks as though المقطوعات والابيات were designed both for this not very impressive rhyme and also to indicate that this poet's work survived only in very small fragments.

5 أبو حفص ابن برد الأصفر

كان أبو حفص ابن برد الأصفر في وقته ذلك البلاقة الذاكر، ومثلها السائر: نفث فيها بصحر، وأقام من أودها بنام نزمه وتباهر نشره، ولقد ابها طرق، وفي عروقها الصالحات عروق. إذ كان جده أبو حفص الأكبر – على ما تقدم ذكره – واسطة الملك، وقبط رحبي الملك، بالحضرة العظمى قرطبة، وقد تقدم من أخبارها المأثوره ورسائله المشهورة في أخبار سليمان، وغيره من ملوك بني أبي عامر، وبني مروان، ولم يشهد أن آل برد جمهور كتابة، ومحور خطابة. وقد خفر أبو حفص هذا بذلك في كتابه الموسيم بـ "سر الأدب وسـك الدـهب".
Ibn Bassām makes the first unit longer than the second by referring to the *mudāf ilayhi* of the first simply by a pronoun in the second. It is not very clear whether there is any particular point in the juxtaposition of the two metaphors. The sense given is, as often, one of vague but extravagant praise. Neither مَلِّي فِلَك nor مَلِل has any particular appropriateness in connection with بلاغة although the participles describing both are ones frequently associated with their nouns. In the next two units the subject is described as having done two somewhat obscure things to بلاغة, the first of which must surely refer to the Qurān, and the second of which can be paralleled elsewhere in Ibn Bassām (Chapter on أبو حفص بن بدر, 1, 1, 103); both perhaps imply the improvement of what is unsatisfactory - in this case, no doubt, in بلاغة in general, rather than Abū Ḥafṣ's own. It is not made entirely clear, either, what the means are by which he has made this improvement, بلاغة and بلاغة also being vague terms of approbation. Note, incidently, a kind of internal rhyme between these two.

In the next two units, the second is made longer than the first in a manner familiar in Ibn Bassām's writing. It looks as though the first عروق (roots) was his starting point here; this gave him the عروق: مصدر (penetration) as an obvious play on words, which then led him to عروق: طرائق - in the first unit - giving again a somewhat vague sense, and by no means an obvious one.
It is, presumably, implied that Abū Ḥafs's grandfather was also well-known for his ٌمٍشد، but the metaphors used to describe him do not make this plain. Indeed, they suggest or rather the second does, the first being completely non-committal as to the area in which he was central, that he was an important figure in the state, rather than in literature. It is interesting to note that these two units are cited verbatim from the account of Abū Ḥafs al-Akbar; one might have expected Ibn Bassām to produce some variation on what he wrote there.

He proceeds to elaborate on the grandfather's literary accomplishments and how these foreshadow those of the rest of the family, in two fairly uncomplicated units (although with an internal rhyme ٌشسرور - ٌمانثور in the first), followed by two rather more sophisticated ones, which may include a purely visual internal rhyme, one that was intended to mislead readers,

ٌمٍحور خطابة - ٌحور خطابة

is reasonably clear, both in sense and image; is obscure in image, although fairly clear in gist. The only rhyme in the final section is that in the name of Abū Ḥafs's book, which itself is slightly strange, since ٌس and ٌس do not appear to be parallel.

The whole passage, although quite vivid in its vocabulary, is, at the same time, incoherent in its imagery, imprecise in its information and extravagant in its airy eulogy.
This is a particularly interesting account, since Ibn Basṣm is not indulging merely in loose eulogy, but has something definite to say throughout.

It is not at all clear why he should avoid a rhyme in the first two units; such a course is most uncharacteristic, and one would suppose that he could have produced a rhyme if he had wished to do so. It would seem, then, that he felt that a more arresting effect would be made by not rhyming, and it may be that he does this simply for a contrast with his usual technique. It rather depends on what he is saying. It looks, at first, as though the second unit is just an elaboration of the first, pinning down Abū al-Ḥasan's Western domicile more precisely. It may, however, be that, by not rhyming, Ibn Basṣm is pointing out a contrast between Abū al-Ḥasan's place of growing up and his place of residence, a contrast that would have passed unnoticed if he had rhymed.
as well as meaning "Western" in general, which it would certainly be taken to in a rhymed couplet, may also mean "from the Algarve"; this would be more likely to be noticed if the reader received a shock from the lack of rhyme.

The next two units are fairly standard, with little hard information, and a characteristic pattern; the second is perhaps disproportionately long, especially after the semi-internal rhyme one wonders if a further rhyme is to come, and one is kept in suspense.

The next two units, as is frequent at least once in a passage of Ibn Bassâm's prose, reverse the usual order of length. They are straightforward and informative, except for the slight obscurity of correspondence, i.e. something like ? It is ironical, no doubt deliberately, that has a rather poor rhyme in ; one expects the next unit to rhyme again, since it is parallel, syntactically, if not in sense, with , but it does not, thus, perhaps, drawing particular attention to the technical literary critical terms, and .

The next three units, describing Abû al-Hasan himself, follow a familiar pattern; augmentation of the second unit by an extra noun, and the change to a relative clause in the third unit. Positive information, once again, is conveyed. The next two units depend, syntactically, on the third unit of the preceding group; they are parallel,
except for the negative-positive variation, and again the
normal length order is reversed, presumably to emphasize
the real reason for Abū al-Ḥasan finding writing painful.
The repetition of لَحْيَةٍ, for which there is no real need,
must be for the sake of emphasis on this quality as being
preeminent in Abū al-Ḥasan. It is not clear if لَحْيَةٍ
is to be understood literally or metaphorically; زمانة،
a little later, perhaps hints at a literal intention, but
it is difficult to say. Once again, the following unit
might have been expected to rhyme, but does not. Here,
however, it is not parallel to the preceding second unit;
it is much more like the third unit of the previous section
in its syntactical relationship to the first and second
units, except that it is not, this time, a relative clause,
Ibn Bassām has produced a further variation: first, he had
a third unit parallel to the second, but not rhyming with
it; then he had a relative clause additional to two parallel
phrases (not independent clauses), but rhyming with them;
now he has a separate elaborating sentence, not rhyming
with the two parallel preceding phrases. These variations
are all, until this last sentence, dependent on what has
gone before, back to كلامه. Incidentally, في منه is a somewhat surprising conclusion; one expects something
meaning 'with effort, difficulty.'

The rhyme in the next two units, which constitute,
together with the following two, a general reflection on
the particular situation just described, is rather feeble,
especially with the introduction of a second, and less
common masdar of kataba; it may be intended as an
ironical illustration of what Ibn Bassām is saying. There is certainly an element of the ludicrous in the 'writers'finding 'writing' painful. The sense of 'book' is probably also intended to be present: those who 'write' professionally are often incapable of the sustained effort of producing an actual 'book'. The reasons given in the next two units, again with a fairly perfunctory rhyme, also have a comic element: physical disability and poor handwriting are hardly what one would associate with professional كتَاب. The pattern of these two units is again a familiar one. The in the first unit is slightly odd; as it is unnecessary, it must have a point; perhaps it is present simply for the balance of the phrase; perhaps it introduces a further touch of irony.

The next two pairs of units are, as is often the case with such concluding sections, not particularly remarkable. Yet again, there is an apparent reversal of length-pattern in one and two, except that is really outside the scheme. The pattern of three and four is typical, except for the almost non-existent rhyme.

The poverty of rhymes is noticeable throughout this passage. is rather vague, especially if it excludes ; there does not appear to be a great deal left.
The pattern of the first units is fairly familiar, with the insertion of 'الروية' to lengthen the second. 'روية' and 'ارجل' are frequently contrasted: composed poetry and improvisation. The archery metaphor, although not particularly common, is in line with the other military and sporting metaphors that Ibn Bassam favours. The informational content seems to be greater than it in fact is; we are not actually told very much here.

The second two units, apart from telling us who his mentor/patron was, are not much more informative. The metaphors are apparently incongruous: the straightening of the lance perhaps ties in with the archery metaphors above, and may indicate some kind of sharpness in satire - or, on the other hand, merely an ability to make a point in general; the polishing of the mirror, again, perhaps connotes an ability to reflect things as they are - possibly in satire once more. The parenthetic 'زعموا', which
is very common in Ibn Bassam, may be ironical, but may simply be an idiosyncracy with no special significance. The third two units, which again follow a familiar pattern, with an elegant variation in the reference of the two indefinite accusative nouns and adjectives to different things, are equally vague: the two possible senses of 'shining' (obviously appropriate to a favourite word of Ibn Bassam's) and 'penetrating,' once again possibly point to satire; the second unit is singularly uninformative, unless we can extract a second sense from , both 'conspicuous' as a conventional epithet qualifying , and 'stripping flesh from the bone.' If we are right in attributing two meanings to , this would seem probable, and would add a certain point to the unit, which nonetheless remains somewhat flat. The next two couplets tell us a little more, although they are still couched in vague terms. The basic meanings of and are similar; the insertion of is typical of Ibn Bassam, both for its lengthening effect and for the sense - only a little would have been enough. The two apodotic units are purely rhetorical: the pattern is again familiar; the implication of the second unit is, presumably, speed; that of the first is obscure, although it must surely refer back to . With the next two units we come at last to some hard information, at least in the first; the second is a rhetorical embellishment. (It is noteworthy, incidentally, that Ibn Bassam uses three verbs
of motion + in this short passage - he has a tendency to labour particular constructions within a small compass). Rhyming, so blatantly, a plain statement of someone's dying at a certain age seems somewhat tasteless, but this may not have struck his readers in this way.

In the next two units من أمره appears to have been inserted merely for the sake of the balance of the sentence and the semi-rhyme.

The next sentence is purely informative and contains no rhyme, apart from the internal one in the title of the book, and no rhetorical devices at all. The repetition of أربعة in the next unit is odd; I can see no particular point to it. The pattern of this unit and its accompanying one is again familiar; the similar meaning of وَفَوْرًا and غَيِّرُ perhaps displays a somewhat uncharacteristic lack of invention.

The last two units are very typical of Ibn Bassām's method of concluding an account, coming so soon after غَيِّرُ may seem a trifle clumsy; possibly, however, Ibn Bassām wishes to link abundance of all three things.
In the first two units, we must suppose that the second to some extent explains the first. The herd image is clearly presented in the latter, but the precise implications of the first unit are not clear, until (perhaps) we come to the high places, which seems to continue the same image, that of gathering in what has gone astray, and thus suggests, at least, that the high places, difficult of access. The length pattern of the two units is a familiar one. The parenthetical must be present simply to balance, and divide, the first unit. It cannot be intended to convey information. The pattern of the second two units is again familiar, with a differentiation of the sense of the augmented prepositional phrase in the second from that of the simple one in the first, even though they both convey essentially the same import. The actual information contained in the couplet is somewhat more concrete than that in the first couplet, if still rather rhetorical and hyperbolical.

The third couplet has yet another familiar pattern. The first unit really clarifies the second (somewhat unusually), which would be a little obscure without it. It should be noticed that there is a contrast of outward and inward motion in the two.

In the next couplet the first unit is longer than the second, and the second is dependent on the first, with a mudāf masdar construction. Partly, no doubt, the more
usual length relationship is reversed to provide variety; at the same time, however, could hardly appear without , so that the adverbial phrase of the first is necessarily long.

The precise sense of the next three units is somewhat vague. It looks as though refers to rank and refers to stars again; in fact, the following couplets seem only to refer to the last unit of the three, since numbering or putting in order in any way is scarcely relevant to or . The pattern of these five units is quite simple: the third is augmented with respect to the first and second; the fourth and fifth depend, in parallel, on the first three; the fifth is augmented with respect to the fourth.

The next two units are again more or less parallel, except that which is common to both, being external, clearly contrasts in meaning with in the first unit, but with nothing in the second. The second unit, too, is considerably augmented with respect to the first. The imagery in the two is not coherent; as far as there can be said to be any in the first, it refers to packing away and folding; in the second, it is based, right at the end, without any preparation, on two aspects of the movement of water.

The subject of the verbs in the last couplet, the two units of which are almost parallel syntactically, is presumably the that have just been mentioned. If this is the case, the sense of the first unit is reasonably straightforward; that of the
second, while superficially clear, is obscure. "They sit in wait for invention" is a difficult concept to apply to things that must be the products of invention. Is it perhaps a quotation, which Ibn Bassām has used without really thinking what he was saying?

The solid information content of this whole passage is extremely small. Almost all of it consists of extravagant eulogy. The only hard facts that we learn from it are 1) that the subject was famous, 2) that he was visited a lot, and 3) that he wrote a large number of works.

The first unit, to مخزوم, has no accompanying rhyming unit, presumably deliberately, since مخزوم presents no difficulties for a rhyme (comes swiftly to mind, and it may be that this is what Ibn Bassām intends his audience to expect). However, it could also, just, be thought of as an introductory half-rhyme for the next two units. In these we have one of Ibn Bassām's fairly frequent reversals of the normal relative length, with the shorter second unit dependent on the first.
is a slightly surprising word to indicate what must be knowledge or skills, rather than teaching. We also have one of Ibn Bassām's favourite parenthetical. The syntax of the first four lines of this piece is somewhat unusual, with the of considerably delayed. When it comes, in the second couplet, it is both something of an anticlimax, with the banality of the first unit, and something of a puzzle, with the lack of precision of in the second (given the freedom of Ibn Bassām's rhyming, we cannot be certain whether to read or, and neither seems more probable that the other). The next two units continue the of , either as a hal or as two parallel phrases to ; in sense, the first is both comprehensive (eulogistic, the second is specific and, while apparently giving definite information, actually somewhat unclear concerning the precise things that he put on paper.

The next unit, as it appears in the edition, should probably be divided at . This couplet, is informative, with a slightly clichéd conclusion. The final three units are more or less completely narrative, with the exception of the description of Abū Abd Allah, in which a sort of double rhyme occurs, as a rather rudimentary couplet.
The first unit is, in a way, made longer than the second artificially, since clearly continues its sense; thus, Ibn Bassam achieves a slightly unusual effect by purely formal means. We may, perhaps, see a contrast of static respectability and dynamic brilliance in the metaphors used here; we should also bear in mind the metaphor غلب الحرب, 'heroes'.

The structure of the following two sentences, both of which consist of two units, is almost the same, except for some subtle variations. The pattern:

( من ) + verb + preposition + idafa, which is straightforward in the second sentence, is not so in the first, as the verb is passive, the preposition has an attached pronoun that refers back to ممن and the subject is provided by the idafa. Thus, the variation occurs, as it were, in the first sentence, while that on which the variation is formed occurs in the second sentence. In the second units
of the two sentences, there is a similar parallelism of structure, in fact, a much closer one, in that the pattern is virtually identical: idāfa of verbal-noun + noun + preposition governing noun, and the mudāf ilayhi is in both cases subjective; the difference is merely one of sense, in that Sulayman, who appears governed by a preposition, controls the Jinn, whereas the clouds, which appear governed by a preposition, are controlled by the winds.

The next two units, which are approximately equal in length, are obscurely metaphorical. Evidently they connote aspiration and, perhaps, achievement; the image of the second is clear, but that of the first not entirely so; but the association of ٰٓٗٓٓٓٓٓٓٓٓٓ and ٰٓٗٓٓٓٓٓٓٓٓٓ seems to be a common one, c.f. the verse of Sulaym b. Wathil al-Riḥīqī:

أنا ابن جلا وطلع الشنابى

The next two units convey some information, the name of the family clearly forcing the rhyme; it is not actually stated what form his انشاءات took, but since Ibn Bassam nowhere indicates that he wrote poetry, we may perhaps assume that they consisted largely of رسائل. This is supported by the second of the next two units, since clearly the 'burdens' referred to were those of administration. The pattern of these two units is a familiar one; considerable variation in both syntax and sense is achieved in a very short space, with a chiasmus of animate and inanimate nouns.

The next unit is really purely informative, with
short, rhyming accompaniment attached, containing quite a vivid and appropriate image.

In the final three units we find considerable complexity. First we have a progression from a preposition and one noun to two prepositions and two nouns 
بالفعل في صاغته to one preposition (with another understood) with one simple noun and an idāfa والقدم على جماعته. There is also a succession, perhaps again almost a progression, of dependence: the second unit depends on the first, the third is parallel to the second part of the second, but dependent on a preposition in that second unit. The addition of أكستر in the last section is typical of Ibn Bassam's style.

First two units: the second is shorter than the first, and parallel to it only in being mudaf ilayhi to أهـ; it
employs two noun plurals of the same form as the adjectival plural ْمِرْةُ, the second of which may be considered as ambiguous in function—either qualifying the first adjectivally or as a nominal supplement to it (a badl). Although the information conveyed is commonplace, the manner in which it is conveyed is striking.

The second two: These are virtually syntactically identical, the second again being slightly shorter than the first, with the compensation of the ْمِرْةُ against the ْمِرْةُ. The metaphor of the second is reasonably clear, that of the first is not, unless it is similar to that of the second, which acts as a clarification of it. This seems to be the case, but Ibn Bassām's normal practice makes it unlikely (should the ْمِرْةُ be the ْمِرْةُ? If not, what is the significance of the ْمِرْةُ here?).

The next three: A very typical sequence in Ibn Bassām. The first two are syntactically parallel, the second being lengthened by the addition of the muḍaf and having a longer verb and preposition; the third is parallel to the final part of the second. The sense of the first is straightforward, but vague; that of the second is more specific; that of the third is virtually identical with the part of the second with which it is parallel, but leaves one wondering if something extra is intended.

The next two: Almost identical syntactically, but with a difference of function in the prepositional phrases, the second apparently being more necessary to the sense of...
the sentence. They convey the same information, more or less, through different metaphors, the second of which is the more obvious (is the first drawn from the training of horses?).

The next two: These follow a familiar pattern, in being, first, dependent on the two previous units, and secondly, of the relative proportions that they are: The first has a longer verb, the second is lengthened by the added muḍāf. The variation achieved by not using مخارجه is also typical.

The next two: Another familiar pattern: again the metaphor in the second parallel sentence is more obvious than that in the first. The first must imply that the subject aspired high in his craft (incidentally, the whole passage from علی خیابانه to خیابان فیها is pervaded by هب occurrences) but the actual metaphor is unclear. The reference is presumably to علی الشنايا (c.f. 246), where the noun means 'mountain passes', implying something that requires effort in its attainment, and it would seem that the image is of one looking down on a concealed valley from the surrounding hills, having succeeded in climbing, from outside, to the pass that gives access to it.

The next section: Ibn Bassām here, if the text is correct, seems to be experimenting, perhaps with humorous intentions. The simplest means of analysing this section - one can scarcely refer here to 'units' - is to set it out according to the rhymes:
A certain pattern is discernible: one word, "Unauthorized" follows a long and short unit that rhyme together, although not at the end of the short unit, this being occupied by the single word, which, in the case of "Unauthorized" establishes the rhyme for the following long and short unit, and in the case of "Unauthorized" establishes the rhyme for the final sentence of the section. The separate words, too, produce an effect; in the case of "Unauthorized", the subject of the sentence is almost unnaturally postponed; in the case of "Unauthorized", the adjective that is of significance in indicating the quality that was found reprehensible in the "Unauthorized" (and perhaps also), is finally supplied, against all reasonable expectation, and at the same time disturbs the balance of the four nouns.

It is rare to come across a passage of saj' as intricate as this, especially when the language in which it is phrased is so comparatively simple.
The final two units: These revert to a familiar pattern, with the mudaf and the longer verb of the second extending the concluding clause to produce a final, somewhat vague-sounding, but satisfactorily comprehensive, cadence.

The first two units: A conventional beginning, with modest variation in the form of the nouns.

The second two units: The second is lengthened by addition of one word. Ibn Bassam perhaps intends one to think that

The final two units: These revert to a familiar pattern, with the mudaf and the longer verb of the second extending the concluding clause to produce a final, somewhat vague-sounding, but satisfactorily comprehensive, cadence.

And history tells of Abu Bakr's role in the Quran, and the moderator of the second extending the concluding clause to produce a final, somewhat vague-sounding, but satisfactorily comprehensive, cadence.

The first two units: A conventional beginning, with modest variation in the form of the nouns.

The second two units: The second is lengthened by addition of one word. Ibn Bassam perhaps intends one to think that
provides the (rather poor) rhyme and then to be immediately proved wrong. (تیرا ئه twice cannot be correct).

The third two units: Syntactical parallelism here is varied by a prepositional phrase in place of the masdar of the main verb. It seems clear that poetry has been concentrated upon here as the sole topic; both مطبوع and مجيد are, as far as I know, technical terms in poetic criticism. The first unit is vague in sense until elucidated by the second. تصرف seems an odd verb to choose.

The fourth two units: An abrupt break occurs - if the text is correct. The only connection is poetry. The units are almost exactly parallel, but for the reversal in length of the first and second nouns. The sense of both, which clearly commendatory in general, is unclear in detail: how do poems resemble the face (?) of the moon, and how do diwans resemble the open sea? It is probably easier to interpret the latter, as referring to great bulk; the former may connote either clarity or beauty, but, if beauty, in what respect?

The fifth two units: These present a familiar pattern, with the masdar of the verb in the first constituting a comparison in the second. The sense of both, while perfectly clear in general terms, is, as so often in Arabic, of uncertain application in particulars; it requires the elucidation of the succeeding units. The مدعف ilayhi to the masdar is necessitated by the construction. The idafa after ـ in the second unit
varies the two nouns dependent on ٌ in the first.  

The sixth two units: The fairly length introductory main clause, common to both, is the essential part of the elucidation of the preceding two units; the parallel, but varied 'relative' clauses, which actually specify what the subject did, are subordinate both in syntax and sense. The second is expanded in a familiar way, with the qualification that ِ is inserted here purely as a filler: It would yield no sense were it not for its association with ِ.

The seventh two units: It is, perhaps, slightly unusual to find two units of this length exactly parallel in syntax. The parallelism is not precisely maintained in the orientation of the sense, and the similes are of quite different types, but the similarity of pattern is striking. Another unusual feature is the apparent continuation, in the first unit, of the image of the preceding two units: The precise significance of the simile is not clear, but it appears to refer to fear of an ambush. This perhaps makes the force of the simile in the second unit all the more powerful; I think a degree of irony is detectable in both, which is pointed by the contrast of ٌ ٌ and ٌ. The further implied contrast between ٌ ٌ and the clear-sightedness suggested by ٌ adds a further dimension.

The eighth two units: As not infrequently happens, an introductory sentence is inserted, to which both refer. This is designed solely to advance the narrative, and incidentally serves to vary the pace of the passage. The parallel units in this case, which follow a familiar
pattern, the second being lengthened by the addition of 
compensated for by the longer verb in the first, 
also advance the narrative, but less directly.
The ninth two units: Here again we have a narrative 
introductory sentence and two almost exactly parallel 
narrative units. The combination is precisely similar 
to that of the preceding two units, as is no doubt intended 
to be obvious, but there is, of course, no common rhyme. 
The tenth two units: These are syntactically exactly 
parallel and differ formally by the length of only one 
syllable, but present a contrast in that the sense of 
the first is vague and that of the second fairly precise. 
It is not clear whether the second is intended to 
illuminate the first; one could make a case either way. 
The eleventh two units: After a large number of parallel 
units, a welcome variation is provided by the second being 
dependent on the first, and by the disparate length of 
the two. The rhyme is an obvious one, but it is probably 
governed by the desirability of introducing 

The twelfth two units: We return to strict parallelism, 
with a short common introduction. The units here are the 
shortest in the passage, as befits the decisive sense. The 
abrupt effect of the anticipatory pronoun adds to this 
effect.
The thirteenth two units: Another slight variation is 
added by the common introduction this time leading into 
a familiar pattern of the lengthening of the second unit 
by an added madaf ilayhi as well as a longer madaf. There
is also a contrast between the prosaic and matter-of-fact and the metaphorical انقطاع العين والأصفر بعد السفر.

The fourteenth two units: Once again an introductory sentence advances the narrative, before the passage concludes with two almost parallel static units. Neither of these conveys an immediately assimilable image. It is clear that both are intended as derogatory characterization of the desert, but precisely how is obscure:

"Where the face of the day (the sun?) gives no pleasure and the pouring down of (rain-) drops is not praised".

The first two units: The formal pattern of these is familiar, with the added القول lengthening the second, against the compensation of the shorter عبادة. It is not unusual, either, to encounter totally different metaphors in each, with the more specific in the second; but it is somewhat unexpected to find this second one the less
grandiloquent. The first presumably implies that the subject held office in a number of states. The exact point of in the second is not altogether clear, unless it is that the "billows" are only on the surface of something much greater. The rhyme is a disappointing one.

The second two units: Again, it is not uncommon for a construction to be continued over more than one couplet. Almost inevitably, Ibn Bassām varies his pattern, by producing two parallel clauses referring to one subject, this time verbal rather than nominal. The lengthening of the second by one word is to be expected; it is not clear that we are to see more significance than a rhetorical flourish in the related pair.

The third two units: These appear very straightforward, with a simple lengthening of the second. This is no doubt intentional, as leading up to greater complexities.

The fourth two units: These continue the work of the preceding two and are also reasonably straightforward, although less so than the former. The tajnis provides a further dimension, and the change of construction, which interrupts the parallelism only minimally, introduces an elegant variation. A slight hesitation is induced by since the reader is uncertain what can be said about them in terms congruous with what has been said about the other three subjects; the somewhat mystifying response is quickly perceived to refer back to the first unit of the piece.
The fifth two units: Here, what at first promises to be a further couplet of the same type as three and four turns out to be two parallel protaseis with variations in their second halves: The first has a noun qualified by two adjectives, the second a mudāf and two mudāf ilayhis. The meaning of the first unit is vague, that of the second specific.

The sixth two units: Instead of the expected apodosis/apodosis, we have two further parallel protaseis, still of a simple kind, with one additional word lengthening the second. Again, the sense of the first is vague compared to that of the second. However, considerable tension has now been, quite economically, created. What can Ibn Bassām say, in one couplet, about these four disparate things? It has to be something that will apply to all four, since otherwise it would be difficult to sort out what applies to what.

The seventh two units: The two protaseis are produced, and the tension is resolved; the answers are something of an anticlimax, as in the exact parallelism of the two, but this perhaps contributes to the completeness of the relief. Everything is neatly tied up. This is a rather formal piece of rhetorical composition, almost severe in its measured development.
The first three units: The rhymes are undistinguished, but it seems clear that they are intended as such. The pattern is 1 - 2 (+3 dependent on 2), but the second is almost too short to count as a parallel to the first, and the third is really the parallel unit. The sense is trite in the extreme, and the manipulation of the units is not imaginative enough to inject much interest into them.

The next section is chiefly remarkable first for not rhyming (one would certainly expect a rhyme for the sentiment expressed are fairly conventional, and not very informative) and second for the criticism explicitly stated in its sense reversed, although ironically, in still without rhyme.

The second two units: These complete the preceding section and explain the immediately foregoing paradoxical assertion. At first, since rhyme seems to have been
abandoned, we are tempted to think that may be the single parallel to the vagueness of the phrase - what does refer to here? - encourages a lessening of our expectations, but we then realise that it is only the first half of a double second unit, the rhyme word of which perhaps explains, by implied contrast, what we are to understand by .

The third two units: The passage is greatly tautened by the reversal of the usual order of length of units and the adversative sense of the second. The meaning of the couplet is quite clear, but our interest is maintained by a certain doubt as to whether we are to be given further reasons for this assertion, since it might be thought of as being consequential upon the previous section.

The fourth two units: We are indeed given further reasons here, but we do not find a rhyme where we anticipate it and both arouse expectations, which are disappointed in succession. When the rhyme does come, it does so somewhat abruptly: the second unit is made to appear even shorter than it is (There is no counterpart to ) by the measure of as opposed to . At the same time, the sense of the second unit is a little obscure, since, at first sight, it seems to contradict the sense of the rest of the sentence.

The fifth two units: I am not sure if we expect a rhyme at all here. Ibn Bassam often does not rhyme in sections such as this. We are held for some time in suspense; I think , which is, after all, mere padding,
hints that there may be one. However, the second unit also proceeds for a while in a way that does not really suggest that rhyme is forthcoming. At the very last moment the tension is resolved, in a slightly cheeky way, the rhyme being both unexpected and obvious.

This passage is a rather curious one. It is not, I think, very well composed, even though the technique is fairly subtle in places. Ibn Bassam is clearly enjoying a mild joke, but his handling of his material is perfunctory, and I suspect that he was not much in sympathy with his subject.

The first two units: A fairly straightforward pair of units with parallel syntax and (almost) syllable count, both dependent on اد . Virtual *tajnis* between كلام and أفلام . Six words, all plural but one (كلم = kind
of collective), and that is a rhyme-word; two different plural forms of the participle. The instruments with which the items in the first unit are produced are given in the same order, presumably deliberately, since a chiasmus would have been possible, in order to produce an effect of simplicity.

The second two units: Again, a very close parallelism, with common مـن; the first unit, even without مـن, is slightly longer than the second, thus redressing the balance of the preceding couplet, although the difference in both is negligible.

The third two units: Parallel again, again with the first unit longer than the second, this time more significantly. A modest rhetorical variation in the repetition of كـابر.

The first three couplets form a progression, which modifies the strict internal parallelism.

The next section interrupts this rhyming parallelism briefly, although the names of the brothers constitute an alternative type of parallelism. However, the former type is quickly resumed.

The fourth two units: These form a characteristic pattern, with the idāfa in the first and the two parallel mudāf ilayhis in the second. The general laudatory intention is clear, although the precise sense is vague.

The fifth two units: Parallelism is abandoned here, in both syntax and length, the connection between the two depending entirely on the astronomical image. The doublet السنة والسنة seems to be purely rhetorical; intensification
rather than differentiation seems to be the purpose.

The sixth two units: These contain, more or less, a double rhyme in each. There is a sustained parallelism of syntax, with variations: the verbs of the first halves are of different lengths, as are those of the second halves, chiastically. (Note, however, that there is a correspondence in length, and almost in sound, between the verbs of the two halves of the first unit, whereas those of the second are completely different); the mudāf of 1a is accusative, whereas that of 2a is governed by ـ،, and the mudāf ilayhis are respectively single and double; the verb of 1b takes a direct object, whereas that of 2b requires ـثـ; the second object of 1b consists of two parallel nouns, whereas the object of 2b consists of a noun (adjective really) qualified by an adjective. The two units contain quite different metaphors, one nomadic, the other sedentary, but both connected with nourishment.

The next section is purely information and does not immediately fulfil the promise hinted at by the early internal couplet, with customary variation:

The seventh two units: These provide a somewhat meagre conclusion, with a rather poor rhyme. The metaphor of adornment, however, connects them.
The first two units: These follow a familiar pattern, with the additional mudaf lengthening the second. The sense of the first is strange, yet I think, comprehensible.
The second two units: There is a common first clause introducing these, which are precisely parallel. I imagine that there is a play here on the two senses of وجوهد, in view of the anatomical allusions in the two units. كناني probably refers both to the glimmess of the Egyptians and Malik's Egyptian origin. It is curious to find لسان repeated in such a short space.

The third three units: These are unremarkable, with the third unit lengthened by an extra object, and by the longer rhyme word. Again the virtual repetition - فصول - is unusual.

The fourth two units: A familiar pattern again, with a common introduction, and precise parallelism.

The fifth two units: These constitute the beginning of a kind of parenthesis consisting of ten units, in which the subject is implicitly praised by contrast. Again, we find a common introduction to two short, precisely parallel, rhyming phrases, the sense of which, while clear in general terms, is vague in its particular reference.

The sixth two units: These are almost precisely parallel, and form the predicate of the main verb of the introduction to the preceding two units. كليل and فليل are obviously very close in sound. لسان occurs a third time, now as a rhyme word. It is perhaps slightly unusual in Ibn Bassàm to find two units like this without any variation.

The seventh two units: Once again, there is a common introduction to two precisely parallel clauses; this time, however, they rhyme internally and not with each other,
except for the final ـهـ.

The eighth two units: Here we find more characteristic variations: the lengthening of the second with ـعـ; the different form of the participles, one active and one passive; and the different patterns of the mudaf ilayhis, one singular and one plural.

The ninth two units: These have a short common introduction, with parallelism modified by the additional verb, and the longer first word, in the second. The point of this sentence, as opposed to the actual meaning, is not clear.

The tenth two units: Yet again, there is a common introduction. The parallelism is modified by the additional masdar + preposition in the second. The sense of this second comparison is perfectly clear but is curiously abstract.

The eleventh two units: Here Ibn Bassâm embarks upon a fairly lengthy piece of narrative, in which, somewhat unusually, he incorporates a high proportion of short rhyming units. In this case, we have something of a jingle, with no parallelism.

The twelfth two units: These continue the sense of the previous two units; at least, the first continues that of the second of the latter. The second here is rather more loosely attached. The last two words of each (in the case of the first, the complete unit) rhyme in a way. There is considerable disparity in length and no parallelism, except in the syntax of the rhyming words themselves. The second unit, in fact, is really parallel
to the second of the preceding two units, plus the first unit here, so that an interesting clash is produced between sense and rhyme.

The thirteenth two units: These return to a simple and typical pattern, with an additional noun lengthening the second.

The next section: Here we have a non-rhyming introduction to two pairs of units, the first of which is dependent on the second. The patterns of them are again very straightforward, as is the sense of the whole passage.

The sixteenth two units: A common introduction precedes two parallel clauses, both dependent on . The second is lengthened by the substitution of for and, visually, but not actually, by that of for .

The seventeenth two units: These have little in common but the rhyme, and the first person verb at the beginning. The second is shorter than the first, even when the preamble is discounted, which is rather unusual in a rhetorical utterance.

The next section: This is an explanatory sentence and an introduction to a passage of poetry, without any rhyme at all. After the verse quotation, another short narrative passage follows, in which two names are rhymed, but no other artistic manipulation is evident. A further introductory sentence and another verse quotation follows.

The next three units: After a brief introduction, we find a familiar pattern of three parallel units of increasing length: the second has an additional object,
as does the third, but in this last, each of the three words is longer than its counterpart in the second.

The next two units: These are almost exactly parallel; the rhyme words are of exactly the same pattern, the verbs are of different forms but have a very close visual, and aural, resemblance - the principal difference is the greater length of the prepositional phrase in the second. The general sense of the five units is plain, but the specific reference is vague.

The next two units: Narrative. The second of these is both longer and dependent upon the first. There is no parallelism except for the form of the verbs at the end of each. It seems rather to contradict the implications of the previous five units.

The next two units: These consist of an introduction, followed by two quasi-parallel circumstantial clauses, the tense of which is different. The second is lengthened by the addition of one verb, and by a longer subject. The change of subject is typical, as is the use of the two verbs of contrasting meanings in the second.

The passage concludes with a quotation, introduced by the previous two units, and with a brief informative statement, neither of which rhyme.

In spite of its length, and the amount of rhyming units in it, this passage does not contain any very remarkable features. It displays no great degree of artistic composition or imaginative use of language.
The first two units: Poor rhyme, conventional hyperbole.
Almost precisely parallel.

The second four units: Presumably these are meant to rhyme, although they do not do so very convincingly. The sequence is somewhat unusual in the way in which the first unit is the longest, even subtracting من ممن. The metaphor of 1 and 2 is not uncommon, but is well sustained. The point of البدو أو بالسحر, or the "nomads and the "water," in which case a chiasmus is to be presumed. The greater proportional length of 4 and 3 is
usual. The names are odd: we have met أبو بحر before; is it al-Jahiz? He is usually called عمرو بن بحر; and surely the poet is عمرو بن. كشوم؟

The third two units: These are syntactically parallel, and follow a standard pattern, with a longer verb and a double idāfa in 2.

The fourth five units: The rhyme, again, is poor, but the division according to sense is quite - not very - interesting. 1 and 2 are parallel phrases in the apodosis to the preceding two units, with a common introduction of a somewhat unusual type. The variation in the parallel phrases is standard, with an idāfa in 2 taking the place of a simple noun in 1. The sequence 3, 4 and 5 all parallel, but with 5 varied, so that the rhyme word is delayed until after مـن, is a typical device to produce suspense; this appears not to be easily relaxed, since فـفر is an unusual (?) word, of obscure meaning (?). Thus, the expected, but delayed, denouement is not forthcoming.

The fifth two units: An abrupt change of direction takes place. The data become almost concrete, although 2 is metaphorical, whereas 1 is starkly literal.

The next unit: A non-rhyming unit is suddenly interposed, the metaphor of which reverts to units 3 and 4.

The sixth two units: These are precisely parallel, if one omits لا بل and فـفر. The metaphor appears to alter slightly, although still of a liquid.

The seventh two units: Common introduction and two parallel phrases: another common device فمن is a strange word to apply to the sun; it really breaks the metaphor by referring back to the subject of the passage and perhaps
explains نُفِرَ.
The next unit: Non-rhyming; purely narrative.

The eighth three units: Common introduction and two parallel phrases, followed by temporal clause, somewhat mischievously unexplicit, and also rhyming on the same root as 2.

The ninth two units: Common introduction and two parallel clauses, synonymous in sense, slightly varied.

The tenth two units: Almost precisely parallel, with 2 slightly shorter than 1.

The eleventh two units: A familiar pattern; two parallel phrases with 2 lengthened by inclusion of two prepositions plus nouns, in place of preposition plus pronoun.

The twelfth seven units: This is a very long sequence of one of Ibn Bassām's favourite rhymes. The first five are all connected, quite coherently. 1 and 2 are parallel, after a common introduction, but with maximum variation: 1 is a simple idāfa; 2 has a precisely similar mudāf, but the mudaf ilayhi is a relative clause, of moderate length. 3 qualifies the relative clause of 2, quite shortly. 4 and 5 are parallel, with variations, after a common introduction, which constructs with the verbs implicit in the mudāfa of 1 and 2, giving the impression of a slightly impatient resumption of the informative element of the sentence, after a digression; the parallel phrases, however, are mere clichés, which again slow the sentence down. 6 makes a new start, quite abruptly, but not disruptively. It indicates that it is putting an end to the section, but naughtily (?) uses as its rhyme the two identical words with which 2 finished.
This, if anything, emphasises the finality of the unit — except that a dependent clause is still to come. There is no parallelism here, which in one way makes one think that there may be a further parallel phrase or clause to come, although the thumping effect of seems decisive.

This passage is really quite a good one. Ibn Bassam keeps the reader at arm's length for a while with his seemingly careless rhyming; his metaphors, however, are lively, and the information conveyed is considerable. He varies his pace and his devices; he inserts non-rhyming elements, and he concludes with one outrageous string of rhymes. I think that I detect a derisive tone in what is being said, which is admirably complemented by the manner in which it is said.

أبو عامر بن مسلمه

طائل الدهر، وعلم بردة ذلك العصر، وأحد جهاده الكلام، وجماله النشأة والنشر، ومن قوم طالما ملكوا أزمنة الأيام، وخصوصاً بالسنة السيوية والأقلاج، لم يزالوا أقلاج في آفاق الكتاب، وصدروا في صدور المراتب، وكان أبو عامر هذا من شرفهم بمنزلة القلم من الخاتم، ومكان السر من مدر الحرم. ولمّا كتبت تلك العروض الأموية، واختلت تلك الدولة الخرطومية، تحيزة إلى المعتضد، لاملك قديمة كانت له في البلد، فعاش يفضل وفره وتحون على الدخيل في شيء من أمره، إلا عن زيارة للمأم، ومنشددة في بعض الأيام، جذبه إليها، وغله مفطرًا عليها، ولم يزل يتخادعه عن ذلك استدفاعة لسره، ومداراً على بقية عمره، حتى مات مستورًا بناله، ميقي على أشكاله، وله منظم مطبوع، ونشر بديع، وقد وقع الي من إملاءاته...
The first two units: The usual kind of variation, with the additional mudāf in the second. It is interesting that Ibn Bassām clearly feels that ِذلك is necessary for reasons of rhythm; it is hardly necessary for reasons of sense.

The second two units: Another common kind of variation, with two mudāf ilayhis. One would not have thought that ِجَمَاهِر had very complimentary connotations.

The third two units: These continue the rhyme of the preceding two. It is, I suppose, a kind of syncopation to make the protasis (two parallel clauses) do this, while the apodosis (two parallel phrases) does not. The variations in the two clauses are standard, with a preposition governing the mudāf in the second and the additional mudāf ilayhi. The use of ِآرِمةَ الآيَات as a counterpart to ِالسَنَة السَيِّدَة والأَطْلَام is quite satisfying, the former having a doubled consonant in either word, the latter two different consonants in either, and the two words separated.
The fourth two units: Here we have exact parallelism, with only a difference in the pattern of the corresponding words. (The first can hardly be correct: might be suggested, but Ibn Bassām may well have written something better). The actual sense of clear in the way that has with . One might also suggest that a double play on words is intended, with the root of being associated with writing, and that of with arranging or drawing up ranks of soldiers.

The fifth two units: A familiar pattern; a common introduction and two parallel phrases. One expects the addition of a mudāf (although not perhaps as soon after ), but one does not expect as a replacement for . Since this is utterly unnecessary for the sense, and indeed is rather less satisfactory than , it can only be intended to introduce another variation of rhythm.

The sixth two units: Beginning of a narrative passage, in a slightly ornate way, with two parallel clauses as the protasis of a temporal sentence. The parallelism is fairly precise; there is nothing noteworthy, apart perhaps from the variation in the use of , once with a plural noun and once with a singular.

The seventh two units: The apodosis of the temporal sentence is contained in the first of them. The second is
dependent on this and explanatory of it. Except for the (unsatisfactory) rhyme, there is no similarity between the two at all. One may wonder why the word نُصْرُ is used; perhaps it is meant to contrast with the very ordinary wording of the second unit?

The eighth two units: Semi-narrative; again, two dissimilar sentences, except for their being parallel from the point of view of the narrative. One small point to notice is that, in contrast to the usual pattern, there is an idāfa in the first and none in the second.

The ninth two units: Here again, we have an idāfa, very prominently in the first, and at first just مَنْاء in the second. We expect this to be مَعَامِل and are brought up short when it is not. The flow is restored, however, although in a banal manner, with an idāfa after the preposition.

The tenth two units: A very commonplace variation in parallelism, with a ḥāl participle in the second.

The eleventh two units: A common introduction, with two parallel phrases indicating purpose. The variations in the parallelism are typical: the different verb forms, the longer preposition in the second, the addition of the mudāf. There is some ambiguity in the pronoun of مَنْءُ, just as there was with مَنْءُ in 8 and with مَنْءُ in 12.

The twelfth two units: The parallelism here is again varied in a familiar manner, with different forms of the passive participle, a longer preposition in the second and a longer rhyme word. The sense of the second is less
specific than that of the first; this is unusual
but not unprecedented.

The thirteenth two units: Presumably is used
both for variation and for rhythmical purposes, since
would have given an exact parallel to .

The first unit has a much more ponderous feel than the
second; whether this is intended to say something about
the relative merits of the subject's poetry and prose
is hard to tell.

The fourteenth two units: Common introduction, followed
by two parallel phrases governed by , the second
with an additional mudaf. The second, in fact, is more
or less decorative, and its sense somewhat obscure.

The fifteenth two units: Common introduction, followed
by two parallel phrases. The first is, unusually, slightly
longer than the second.

The next section: This consists only of a rhyming book title.

The sixteenth two units: Commonplace exact parallelism.
Conventional sense.

The seventeenth two units: (If intended to be considered
as such at all). Purely informative. Offhand semi-rhyme.
Not a very interesting or imaginative passage.
The first two units: Not a very good rhyme, but no parallelism either. A fairly common contrast of vague eulogy in the first and specific information in the second. A somewhat subdued beginning.

The second two units: Here we find a kind of internal rhyme in each unit, with no common rhyme. Both are dependent, in parallel, on the preceding two, which is not known until they begin. The latter half of each is syntactically parallel, with a variation in the length of the masdars in the second unit. The first half of each is also parallel, but with much greater elaboration in the second unit.

The third two units: A familiar pattern, with a common introduction, and parallelism, with variations: the first as the same root in the very and the subject, separated by a prepositional phrase referring to the object; the second has a longer verb, with an object, pronoun and two parallel, formally identical subjects, with tībaq.
The fourth two units: Again, a common introduction, and parallelism, with variations. This time the parallel elements are simply prepositions governing nouns, the second unit being lengthened by an idāfa.

The next unit is purely narrative and does not rhyme.

The fifth two units: Another familiar pattern, containing a simile, the first unit containing the main statement, the second necessarily containing an idāfa with the masdar of the verb in the first, but giving the overall impression of parallelism by echoing in its second half, the second half of the first.

The sixth two units: Again a common introduction, and parallelism. Here the parallelism is almost exact, except for the longer subject in the second, compensated for by the longer-sounding verb in the first. The vague sense of the first, supplemented by the specific sense of the second, is also familiar.

The seventh two units: Another familiar pattern: the double subject of the second is compensated for by the longer verb and prepositional phrase of the first. The meanings of both are not much different in specificity.

The eighth two units: A fairly lengthy common introduction, of fairly straightforward narrative, is followed by two parallel units that more or less rhyme, both referring to the same person; the first is informative, the second much less so and probably included largely for the sake of the (not very good) rhyme.
The next unit simply gives the name of the person referred to, without rhyming.

**The ninth two units:** We return to another familiar pattern; the two simple verbs + objects in the first are paralleled by a verb + preposition + noun + pronoun (referring to one of the objects in the first) and by a longer verb + object. The two pronouns in the first refer to different people; the two in the second refer to the same person.

**The tenth two units:** In combination with the two preceding units, these represent a progression from simple, factual statement, through a more metaphorical statement, to a realm of complete metaphor, where the gist of the information to be conveyed is clear enough, but is almost swamped by the metaphors. In this vague culminative imagery, we find, as is not infrequent, that parallelism is more strictly adhered to than in the more prosaic sections. In fact, the parallelism is almost complete here; the verbs are of different forms, and the first nouns are of different lengths, but apart from this, the units are identical in form. They say the same thing in two different images, one extremely fanciful, and astronomical, one more everyday and practical.

**The eleventh two units:** In a way, these reverse the previous two, in that the fanciful metaphor comes first. The parallelism, too, is varied in a familiar way. The name of the family (ٌٍ) is set against في الجود لٌٍٍٍ is stated, and perhaps understood, as applying to only the first.
Concrete noun + adjective is countered with abstract noun + two adjectives. The fanciful image is vivid; the more prosaic statement is rather ordinary.

The twelfth two units: Here we have, again, a common introduction, consisting principally of a name, as the subject to two parallel predicates, neither of which tells us very much. The mudāf ilayhīs of these units are modestly varied.

The thirteenth two units: The second unit is simply a continuation of the first; in fact it is an expansion of the concluding phrase of the first, and there is, as might be expected, no parallelism. اِلْجَبَر, as so often, leads to العراق as a rhyme, which in turn requires الحال to precede it; it is difficult to say which occurs to the writer first, but the inevitability of the rhyme is not really affected by this doubt, and contrivance is certainly clear.

The fourteenth three units: The second is dependent on the first; the rhyme between then, which is not very good, is almost internal. The rhyme of the third is also not very good, and the reader is perhaps left wondering to which of the two preceding rhymes it is meant to be closer - probably the first (?). The lack of parallelism causes the sentence to move quickly, as does the variation in the approach to the rhyme words: 1. mudāf + mudāf + mudāf ilayhī; 2. preposition + noun; 3. noun + preposition (with different kind of function) + noun. The sense of the لَمَع root is
held in doubt, too; there is something of a play on words here. Nonetheless, the ending is somewhat subdued; there is no sense of climax, which is appropriate, since a long illustrative quotation follows.

A most unusual passage. One is not sure for a while if it is artistic prose or ordinary prose. Acts as a signal. Since there is really no need for it as far as sense is concerned, and since أوان is a very common rhyme word, it is almost certain that a rhyme will follow. So it does, although the second sentence has virtually no connection with the first. Although a rhyme has occurred, it can hardly be said that the style or the language are elevated, apart
perhaps from أدواتا, which is a slightly odd word in the context, but seems to be something of a favourite with Ibn Bassām. The next five units are not elevated either, although they are not entirely without rhetoric, nor is there any rhyme, although the opportunity presents itself and the parallelism would seem to invite it. One might perhaps say that theفرورية was introduced to rhyme with الجندية
but, even if it is, it scarcely demonstrates a masterly technique. It is not clear how more than one thing can be
الغلب.
The next unit is presumably intended to follow up what has come before.
We now move into narrative, where after two further
unrhyming sentences, it looks possible that, if a rhyme is
to come at all, it will come in a unit parallel to فاكرم نزله
However, this opportunity is passed over, and من خانه
arrives. This again looks a probable word with which to
rhyme, but the beginning of the next unit does not look
promising. However, بلطانه is inserted, quite
unexpectedly. We still do not know, however, if this was
deliberate and if it suggests a return to rhyme in general
or not. It looks, again, as though rhyme has been
abandoned, as we proceed with the unadorned narrative,
until we reach بغيير الزمان, which shocks us into
thinking: "surely this is not intended to rhyme with المكان
towards the beginning of the sentence, where there is no
break, an adjective المكين following it?" We are soon
drawn off this false trail, however, when ـتقلب appears, since this must obviously be parallel to بتغلب; nonetheless, although we now find the expected two *mudāf ilayhis*, the rhyme is missing - unless ـالائم is meant to be some kind of half-rhyme. But, just as we have given up, ـبالإنسان is delivered. After this static passage, we switch, still a little disorientated, back into narrative, and ـَالْرَأْبَة has the feel of something with which to rhyme; when ـَالفاِقَّة comes, however, which is not a very good rhyme, we are not quite sure if the rhyme has arrived, but it has, and the passage is finished. We are left in the air, and not quite knowing whether there was rhyme in the passage or not. This is quite a clever variation in presentation.

The mysterious ـٰــٰــٰـ ـ ـــٰـــ ـــٰــ ـ ـــٰــ ـــٰــ ـ ـــٰــ ـــٰــ ـ ـــٰـ～ economical syntax. If it is correct, it can only mean, as far as I can see "who had been fostered", i.e. the equivalent of ـَالذي كان مرشحا. It is still a very odd phenomenon, and such a usage could hardly be reconciled with regular Arabic syntax.
The first three units: A common introduction followed by three parallel phrases of increasing length, with slight variations: 1. simple  idāfa; 2 and 3 idāfa + adjective. The long vowels of 3 give it a weightiness suitable to the comprehensiveness of its meaning. In addition there is the sharp contrast between the singleness, and implied sharpness, of نكتة and the all-embracing solidity and rectangularity of ديوان.

The second four units: Two pairs, all four units being
parallel syntactically, and all referring back to which gives even greater weight to that unit. The first two of these four are varied by the different verb patterns and by the additional object in 2. The images are disparate, but both relate to Bedouin life. The second two are almost the same length, but are varied by the different patterns both of verb and noun. The images this time are possibly to do with farming (?) and so from settled life.

The third two units: A typical pattern: parallel syntax with a longer preposition and an extra noun in the 2nd (two nouns opposite in meaning here). The rhyme words are not only of the same pattern but are phonetically almost identical.

The fourth five units: A highly organised passage. It is comparatively unusual to find so many units with the same rhyme, and yet it is most appropriate here, with the developing series of metaphors, as reinforcing the integrity of the passage. The first two units, to some extent, follow the pattern of the preceding two, with a longer preposition and an extra noun in the 2nd (two nouns of very similar meaning this time). I think it likely that is intended to suggest قطار, in order to pave the way for the metaphor in the second.

The third unit is again syntactically parallel to the first two; as might be expected, it is varied, but only minimally, with a longer verb and a longer prepositional phrase. The two nouns are still of the same pattern. As far as the sense is concerned, يامر comes as something of a shock. The
verb has prepared us for adds a new dimension to the development of the picture, adding to the suggested image of a journey the clear implication that it is a hazardous one through the desert. The implication is also present that something valuable is the object of the quest. This is made explicit in 4 and 5. Here we find a common introduction and two parallel dependent nouns plus relative clauses. The relative clauses are varied in a familiar manner, with different patterns in the subject nouns and an extra noun in the predicate of the second. One does not really expect the rhyme to continue in 4; perhaps in 5 one is more prepared for it and as soon as occurs, it is inevitable. The parallel clauses and the rhyme (this is the first rhyme in the section to be of a different pattern) indicate fairly conclusively that the section is finished. The sense of the last unit is not immediately obvious, except in so far as it must be amplifying that of 4, but it is most likely intended to suggest that the process of thought is a lengthy and arduous one and that the effort that has gone into the production of the precious merchandise enhances its value.

The next section: Explanatory sentence, with merely the rhyme of the subject's book title.

The fifth two units: A couplet of no great interest. It is not easy to see the point of the tajnis, which is hardly a subtle one.

The sixth four units: We have here two pairs of rhyming units, the first of which is parallel after the second of which consists of (1) a phrase dependent on the first unit of the first pair, and (2) the apodosis of
the conditional sentence. The protasis seems awkward, with 1(2) interrupting the flow of the clause, without adding much with its curious metaphor, and with the redundant 

which do not even provide a good rhyme (appears actually to detract from the sense, and to be present only for the sake of providing a couplet with ). Then again, there seems to be inadequate connection between (an odd phrase, surely: "The book of adab" (?) and the following couplet, which looks as though it should be a relative clause, but, formally, is not. This section is, technically, rather unimpressive.

The seventh two units: A familiar pattern: a common introduction and two parallel clauses, varied in a normal manner - different verb patterns, and a preposition + pronoun in the first and a noun + pronoun in the second. The import of the metaphor in 1 is not clear.

The eighth two units: A common, informative introduction, with two parallel noun + adjective phrases, exactly parallel, with a double rhyme. They both constitute clichés, and their use seems to imply some loss of interest in Ibn Bassām in what he is saying.

The ninth two units: Two book titles, each of which more or less rhymes.

The tenth three units: 2 and 3 are exactly parallel, and very close phonetically; both depend on 1. The rhyme words
are of the same pattern. The images from nature seem to continue the garden metaphor hinted at in the book titles; they are actually rather banal, and it may be that Ibn Bassām is not being altogether sincere.

The eleventh two units: Common informative introduction, with two clauses dependent on ל, very neatly differentiated with respect to the function of the noun qualified by the pronoun referring to ל in each, and with the complication of the introduction of a noun qualified by a pronoun referring to the subject of the piece in the position where it rhymes with a noun qualified by a pronoun referring to ל. The scheme is:

1st unit: negative verb subj.
         noun + ל pron.

2nd unit: negative verb subj.
         obj. noun + ל pron.
         ↓ (same) noun + (same) pron. (with different ref.)

This is a very uneven piece. There are some excellent parts, as regards both technique and imagery, and there are some that are either clumsy or just dull.
The first two units are of a fairly conventional nature, being almost syntactically identical, and introducing both النظم والنشر, which are extremely frequent at the beginning of such a passage. زعم and رأى are almost synonymous. النظم is, as so often, introduced, as a couplet with النشر, partly in order to lengthen the end of the second unit. The odd - but not infrequent in Ibn Bassām - position of كن is justified here by its rather unexpected use as a rhyme with الأوان; this has the appearance of being something of an afterthought, the principal rhyme being النشر and الأوان. The second two units are syntactically almost identical - more nearly identical than the preceding two - and both transfer أبū ābād Allāh predicatively into feminine metaphors, with corresponding feminine verbs. These two metaphors provide a kind of Tibāq, in that they represent two different elements out of the four: fire and water.
word that differs only in one radical from a word with which it is often associated: غمرة فحم instead of فحم is mudaf with علم, which does not produce the same effect, but has a parallel, in meaning, between علم and فهم possibly acts as a Tibaq with سالت, in conveying a sense of rapidity as opposed to gradualness.

وجه apparently has its surface sense of "faces", which can be scorched by a fire, but may, at the same time, imply the greatest people; this would perhaps fit better with أعلام. الأعيان can, again, bear a similar sense, but also, apparently, has a surface meaning, "way-marks/boundary marks", capable of being swept away by water; الأعيان fits equally well with either sense of أعلام.

The third pair of units, which this time are syntactically and morphologically completely identical (excluding, of course, فكم له من) specify more particularly than does the second pair (even though we can perceive, by hindsight, that this was implied there) the area of literary activity in which Abu C Abū Abd Allāh excelled. This is fairly clearly hija. Two distinct, but similar, metaphors are employed here, and the nouns that introduce them are represented as attributes of Abū C Abū Abd Allāh, rather than personifications of him. وقتة does not seem to be intended to convey any particular form of striking, except that لاسم indicates "wounded in the brain"; نكرة clearly implies the biting of a snake, or something similar, as does سليم, which, in its turn, provides an opportunity for جناس with سليم.
The next section consists of two common introductions, or rather, one that is divided into two parts, the first of which is followed by two units, which, while syntactically identical, appear to change the referents of their possessive pronouns - at least, if the metaphor is consistent, it seems to require this. In addition, the second is made longer than the first principally by means of a longer preposition, but also, perhaps by the long vowel of (actually the same number of syllables as ). The parenthetical is difficult, as often in Ibn Bassam, to explain, following the second part of the common introductory sentence.

The couplets at first sight seem to be parallel, with the second, as is common, slightly longer than the first, by virtue of the two words for one . In fact, the second is, in a way, explanatory of the first, since it describes, in greater detail, the process .

The reintroduction of the element of water leads to the mention of a third element, namely air. The absence of the fourth element, earth, is perhaps a little disconcerting, unless we consider that it is represented - though surely only retrospectively - by , or indeed by one of the persons named.

The final two couplets, again after a common introduction, are again syntactically identical, varied by the different patterns of and by the longer preposition in the second. The identical scansion of the last two words in each produces a weighty conclusion. The sentiments, and indeed the metaphors, are somewhat uninteresting and certainly hyperbolical.
CONCLUSION

From the analysis that we have made of the various passages of Ibn Bassām's work, we may indicate some of the general characteristics of his style, giving examples that have not always occurred in the passages analysed.

1- Variation of length and metre in units of sajã, for example:

\[
\text{وقلت دولة من دول الطرائف بالأندلس إلا وقد ابتلى البها وسيلة، وأعمل في الهجوم عليها حالا وحيلة.}
\]

Obviously, in producing a parallelism between the two clauses dependent on إلا وقد ابتلى البها وسيلة, he could, as the balancing clause to وأعمل عليها حيلة, write حيلة. However, he finds it more aesthetically pleasing to create assymetry between the two by means of introducing حالا في الهجوم and حالا (it is noticeable that there is still internal symmetry in the second clause, and, indeed, this seems to be the principal reason for the introduction of حالا, although it also provides tajnîs with حالا).

Another example, where, in addition to the necessary insertion of السروف, which enhances the sense, the mechanical correspondence is broken by the ب attached to السنة, is:

\[
\text{من قوم ملكوا أزمة ثلاثة أيام، وخصموا بالسنة السروف والأفلام.}
\]

Sometimes additions are made, it would seem, for the sole purpose of achieving a variation, as in:

\[
\text{جذب البها وقليه مضطرا عليها}
\]

Ibn Bassām generally prefers to have the second unit, or the last of a longer series, longer than the first, or the preceding ones, although on occasion the contrary occurs,
particularly in the course of an elaborate passage of sajū.

2- The use of unusual, and often obscure, imagery, e.g.:

There are numerous other examples. This last is particularly strange, since one would expect rain and clouds in the desert to be praised, and indeed it is for this reason that rain is called غيث. It may be that the desert is here thought of as being so hostile that even rain can do no good.

3- Frequent use of perfectly, or almost perfectly, balanced units, from the point of view of both metre and syntax, in contrast to the assymetrical units referred to in 1 above, e.g.:

In this last example, the two parallel subordinate phrases that rhyme with the phrase on which they depend also incorporate almost complete internal rhyming.
4- Frequent use of very short rhyming expressions, such as:

شاعر وشاعر، وشاعر متألق، نشر فسح، ونظم فننهم

These, however, are often interspersed in much longer units, which may have no inherent rhymes of their own, such as:

ولم يحضروني من أشعارهم ومستفرخ أشيارهم حين اخراجهم هذه النسخة من هذا المجموع إلا ما أ skbته لأبي بكر منهم.

5- Frequent use of words of opposite meaning or implication within the same sentence (tibāq), e.g.:

ضرر السلطان نفسه وضراً

and:

وكان أبو عامر شيخ الحضرة العظمى وفناها، ومبدأ الغاية القصوى ومنبتها

where contrast with and مبتدأ مبتدأ and contrasts with مبتدأ and مبتدأ, respectively of the non-contrasting الغاية القصوى and الحضرة العظمى.

Again, (which we can relate also to 1 and 3 above):

وأبو محمد في وقتنا سر الإله المكنوم، وشرف فهر الحديث والقديم

and:

من رجل لم يثبت له قائم ولا حصيد، ولا سلم عليه قريب ولا بعيد.

6- The tendency to play on words, as in:

فان هزل فسح الحمام، وإن جد فزهج الأسد الضرعام

where the word سحم has two senses, that of the 'cooing of doves' and, of course, that of 'rhymed artistic prose'.

7- The common use of virtual synonyms, such as:

من رجل مدره خطر، وجدل خدعة ومكر

قود ومسيار بلادها ناب وظفر، وموجب عبادها دم هدر، وما ليا لا عين ولا أثر

وملوكها أشداد، وأهواه، أهلها ضفائان وأعقاد، وزعائمهم فساد وافساد.
8- The frequent repetition of the same root in the same sentence, generally in the form of the **maficul muṭlaq** of a verb already used, e.g.:

```
اشتهر في حملة الأقلاع، أشتهر البدر في السمااء.
خرج من وشقة، خرج البدر من محاققته.

Similar to this is the repetition of the same actual form of the root, generally **muḍāf** to the object of comparison, e.g.:
```
ملح من العلم، محل الصواب من الحكم، واقتداره على النشر والنشر.

9- There are a fair number of instances of the use, at various points in the work, of identical, or very similar expressions, mostly of a rather vague laudatory nature, such as:

```
لاعب بالمنشور والموزون، لاعب الرياح بأعطاف الفضون.
لاعب بالملوك بأخلاقنا، لاعب الرياح بالإغتصان.
فندروه عن مكانه، أثراء الخائف من الرماد.
من وادي الحجاره، فرد من أفراد العصر.
وأبو يكر في وقتنا واحد عصبره.
فلما بعد أن أصبح نسيج وحضده.
كان أبو يكر في ذلك العصر شيخ الصناعة، وامام الجماعة.
وكان بحر براعة، ورأس صناعة، وجميع جماعة.
فتمجه تعلمه انه بحر النظام، وبقية الأعضاalam.
وبينه وبين أبي علي بن رشيق ماج بحر الدراسة ودام.
ورفع نجم هذه الصناعة واستقام.
حتى تضاءلت الهداف عن قدره، وما جت الأرض ببحره.
تدفقت بها بحور الأدب، وطلعت منها نجوم الكتائب.
وكان أبو عبد الله محمد ابن أيمن باقينا أعجوبة الدهر.
وفرد العصر، وفارس ميدان النظم والنشر.
فانه يتقدم على الجماعة، ويستولي على ميدان الصناعة.
من قدماء الأدباء كان بذلك الشفر، ومن كتاب العصر.
المتمرفين في النشر والنشر.
```
Although the repetition that he indulges in may cause a certain irritation in the reader, Ibn Bassām nevertheless possesses a considerable command of imagery and rhetorical facility, as shown, for example in the following passage:

وكان أبو جعفر وقته أحد الأعلام، وفرسان الكلام.

The not infrequent exceeding of two sentences or phrases with the same rhyme; three or four units of saj<sup>c</sup> occur often, and, on occasion, as many as seven are used.

وعلى ذلك فلم يدع مساجل الأحوال، ومرارة من برطم بهذا الديوان، من بين الأوان، بما يشهد له أنه بديع الزمان، وفارس الميدان، وقد أثبت له بهذا الديوان.

A certain predilection for the use of proper names as rhyme-words, for instance:

ما يقيم له أوضح برهان.

زعم بلنسية - كان - في ذلك الأوان.

فظء بعد أبي عبد الرحمن، خلوق الكرية من يد الدبران،

ومقام بالمرية تحت شنق معينة مع عدة مدائح، رفعها لأميرها ابن صادح.

Deliberate self-restraint from saj<sup>c</sup>. This is comparatively infrequent, and is presumably for the purpose of relief, and also for that of imparting important information in circumstances when rhyme is either inconvenient or unsuitable. Two examples of this will suffice:

وأبو بكر في وقتنا على مفر صلح شهاب فهم ونيل، قلما يخطو شعره من بديع،

وأخرجته فتنة ظليطة - جبره الله - الآنى خبرها في القسم الرابع من هذا المجموع.

لم يضطروني من أشعارهم ومستطرف أخيرهم حين أخراج هذه النسخة من هذا المجموع،

الأما أثبتته لأبي بكر منهم خاصة.
14- Tendency to hyperbole. This is a feature of most saj. In Ibn Bassam, it is noticeable not only in the expressions that he repeats (see 9 above), but also in those that occur only once or twice, such as:

نهبة الخبر والخبر، أو رصد أهل الافق

It is most prominent in eulogistic utterances.

15- The derivation of images from a limited number of sources. Ibn Bassam's range here is wide, but he has certain classes of image that he uses significantly often, for example, those derived from martial or sporting pursuits, from desert life, and particularly from natural phenomena, such as the sea, the sun, the moon, mountains, plains, etc.

For example:

أبو يقر بن سليمان المعروف بابن القصير، هو في وقتنا جمهور البراعة، وقية أئمة الصناعة، وعدبة اللسان العربي، وسيدة قلب هذا الأقليم الغربي، بحرا علم لا ينزح، وجبل حلم لا يترجح.

16- The use of humour and satire. This is only occasional in Ibn Bassam. It may be that it is not always apparent, and that it occurs more frequently than is realised. However, among quite clear instances, we may cite the following:

وكان رحمه الله ظريفا في أمره، كثير handleMessage في نظمه ونشره، وآراه فيما انتحاه، تقلب منبجع بسيه وكتبته محمد بن حجاج بالعراق، فضاقت ساحته، وقصرت راحته، وأعياه الامبرح فمضى ولم يحسن المبيل فنثى، ولما كان هذا المجموع كتاب أدب، وعبدا يجمع الدق والمخلب، رآيت أن لا أخليه من ذكره، وهذه فصول من نظمه ونشره.
A similar mood can be seen also in this passage:

"كان أبو جعفر هذا قد بذ أهل زمانه في أربعة أشياء:
المال أولاً،
والعجب،
والبخل،
والكتابة."

where another characteristic of Ibn Bassam's style is also to be found, namely that of enumerating the qualities, talents or possessions of his subject. This may also be exemplified, although not, this time, in a humorous or satirical vein, by another passage:

"من حيلة من وفد أيضا على البلد في ذلك الأوان، وكان غالب على أدواته علم اللسان، وحفظ الغرب والشعر الجاهلي والاسلامي، إلى المشاركة في أنواع التعاليم، والصرف في حل الراح، والحق بالآت الجندية، والنفاد في معاري الفروسية، فكان الكامل في خلق جمع.

17-The use of internal rhyme, in addition to final rhyme. This occurs quite frequently, as for example:

"بحر معرفة لا تعبره السفن، ولو جرت بسهوتها الراح، وقود علم لا ترقى إليه الخلق، ولو سما بهاائم والإيداع، وأدب لا تعبر عنه الأنس، ولو أندتها الأوتار الفصاح.

Sometimes units rhyme alternately, e.g.:

"من ذلك الأفق طلعت نجوم الكلام، فأضاءت البلاد، ونشأت غيوم التشار والنظام، فطيقت الهدب والوهاد."
18- Quotation or allusion. Ibn Bassām very frequently alludes to earlier poetry. For example, there is a clear reference in this passage, which occurs in the biography of Ibn Abī al-Khīṣāl:

بحر معرفة لا تعتبره السفن ولو جرت بشؤوته الرياح
to the qasīda of al-Mutanābbī beginning:

بم الجعل لا أهل ولاوطن ولا دنيم ولا كأس ولا سكينة
ما كلما ضمئي المرء بدركته حجري الرياح، بما لا يشفى السفن

In a passage in the biography of Abū Bakr ābd al-ʿAzīz b. Saʿīd al-Baṭalīyūṣī:

أحد فرسان الكلام والكلام، وحلة السيوغ والأقلام، من أسرة أصالة، وبيت جلالة، أخذوا العلم أولا من آخر، وروده كابرا عن كابر.

We can see, perhaps, a resemblance to some lines of Ibn Khazīm on Bishr b. Marwān (although such conceits are not infrequent elsewhere in early verse):

حتى انتهى إلى أبيك العني

In the biography of Abū al-Walīd ḥassān b. ʿal-Muṣīṣī, the passage:

يحسان كل بضاء، شحماً، ويتخلان كل ضوء نجمة

may well derive from the verse (anonymous):

وكان حسبنا كل بضاء، شحماً

which, in its turn, comes from the proverb:

ما كل بضاء شحمة

Again, the expression in the biography of Abū al-Muṭrif ābd al-Rahmān b. Fakhīr, known as Ibn al-Dabbāgh:

ونجا برأس طمرة ولجام

may be supposed to allude to Ḥassan b. Thābit's reproof to al-Ḥārith b. Hishām on his flight:

ترك الأحية، أن يقاتل دونهم

ونجا برأس طمرة ولجام

The passage from the biography of Abū ʿAmīr b. Maslama:
is reminiscent of Abu Tammâm's:

هدا الخيل جابت قسطل الحرب صعوا

and, in Kitāb al-sinā'atayn, p. 243, we find:

لا الناس اذا ما استحكم الروؤ كروا

which he echoes, in a way, in the biography of Ibn Burd al-Akbar:

وقد أبو حفص هذا ديوان الانشاء بعد ابن الجزيري ثم كتب عن سليمان المستعين

This may well be an allusion to the lines of Kuthayyir یززا:

وادنيتي حتى اذا ما سبيشي

indicating, almost certainly, his familiarity with, among others, Abū Nuwas:

لا أذوق المدام إلا شميا

which is reminiscent both of al-Mutanabbi:

لا وصلت بنفس قد حطعت شعاعا، وذهب أكثرها النيامة.

and, perhaps, of Quṭrī b. al-Fuţā'a:

ايما الراحان باللوم لوما

Further examples of Ibn Bassām's propensity in this direction are:
1. On Abū Muḥammad ŠAbd al-Jalīl b. Wahbūn al-Mursī:

which may recall Abū Tammām:

لا تذكر عظت الكريم من الغنى
فالليل حرب للمكان العالي

2. On Abū al-Faḍl Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. Sharaf:

ويام صالحها أتجر ذكره وفار
recalling al-Αshā:

 أبي بري ما لا يرون وذكره
أغار لعمري في البلاد وانجذا

3. From the Introduction:

ويا راب محصن مات احسانه حذله
repeated in the biography of Ibn al-Labbāna:

وات قبل موته شعره
perhaps alluding to Dībil b. ŠAli al-Khuzāʾī:

بوقر أبي ببيت محمد الناس أمره
وأكثر من أهل الروايات حامل
وجيهد يبقى وإن مات فآكله
10

4. On Abū Ḥafs b. Burd al-Asghar:

كان أبو حفص ابن يرد الأمغَر في وقته فلك البلاغة الدائر، مثلها السائر

which is quite similar to his remark on Abū ŠAmīr b. Shuhayd:

خادرة الفلك الدوار، وأعجوبة الليل والنهر
both probably deriving from Abū ŠUmar b. Darrāj al-Qaṣṭallī:

في أهل دار كالكوكب والنواة
بعد الدواز فلك يهم دوار

to say nothing of the allusion in the former to Qur'ān
(113, 4) al-Falaq.

5. Speaking of the Muwashshah form:

وهي أوزان كثير استعمال أهل الأندلس لها في الغزل، ثق على ملابس مصونات
الجبوب، بيل القلوب،

recalling al-Mutanabbī:

راميات بأسم ريشها البيض
تشق القلب قبل الجلود 11
As might be expected, Ibn Bassam also frequently cites; or refers to, passages from the Qur'ān. When, for example, he writes, in this biography of Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Majīd b. ʿAbdūn:

وَمَدَرْ بِمَحْرَّمَةِ الْشَّيْءَ، وَالْصِّفَت

the reader is instantly reminded of:

لاِيِّافَ قَرْيَةً، أُقِيِّمْنِمُي رَحْلَةَ الْشَّيْءَ، وَالْصِّفَتِ فِي عَبْدُ حَذَّرِهِمْ رَبُّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ، الَّذِي

Atehmm men jaroo wa-ansem min kawf. 12

On occasion he adapts quite extended passages. For instance, this passage, from the biography of Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Saʿīd al-Baṭayyusī:

امَتَّرَوْا أَخِلَافَ الْفُحْرِ فَأَمْضَتْهُمْ شِبَعًا وَرَبَّآ، وَهُزِّوا بِجَزِعِ النَّظَمِ وَالْبَيْتِ فَأَصَفَاقَ

is surely taken directly from Ṣūrat Maryam(25), :

وهَزِّ الْبَيْتِ بِجَزِعِ النَّظَمِ تَسَاقَطَ عَلَيْكَ رَبِّي جَنِي.

13

Among many other examples of Qur'ānic citation and allusion, two further ones may be given here; they are to be found in the biographies of:

1. Abū ʿAmīr al-Takarnī:

كَانَ أَحَدَ مِنْ مَرْقِ مَنْ ظَلَمَاهَا، وَأَوَى إِلَى جَبِلِ عَصْمِهِ مِنْ مَائِهَا.

cf. Ṣūrat Ḥud (43), :

14

قَالَ سَأَوَى إِلَى جَبِلِ يُعْصُنُوُ مِنْ المَاءِ

2. Abū al-Faḍl Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad b. Sharaf:

وَهُوَ الْيَوْمُ بِهَا فَقَدْ طَلَقَ الْشَّعْرُ كَلاَهَا، وَنَقَصَ غَزِلَهُ بِعَدَّةِ قُوَّةٍ إِنَّكَاهَا.

cf. Ṣūrat al-Nāḥl (92), :

15

كَلِئَتِي نَقَصَ غَزِلُهَا مِنْ بَعْدَ قُوَّةٍ إِنَّكَاهَا.

Finally in the biography of Abū Bakr b. al-Ḥasan al-Murādī:

انْزَوَاهُ الْخَائِفُ مِنْ الرَّمْضَانِ.
we may probably see an allusion to *Surat al-Jinn* (9),

In addition to references to poetry and the Qur'ān, there are clearly many other literary allusions in Ibn Bassām's writing. In all probability, these are even more frequent than one is likely to realise. Many expressions and images give the impression of being taken from elsewhere rather than being of Ibn Bassām's own creation. It has proved impossible, however, to identify any specific source for these:

At all events, it is possible to point out a few examples, such as that in the biography of Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Umar b. ʿAbd al-Barr al-Nimrī:

Here we find an allusion to a proverbial saying, of which there are two explanations given: the first, and more obvious, is that a man went out to seek his supper but fell in with a wolf, which ate him instead; the second makes Sirḥān the name of a man, Sirḥān b. Muṣṭib, who killed a man of the B. Asad who grazed his beasts on private pasture-land that he was guarding.

When he says, in the Introduction:

he is alluding to al-Huṭay'ā's response, when asked who was the best poet, as reported by Ibn Qutayba:

His remark, also from the Introduction:
is reminiscent of al-Mas'ūdī on al-Jāhiz:

When he says, in his biography of Abū Ībād Allāh Muhammad b. Sharaf:

he is most probably alluding to Abū Hilāl al-Askarī's remarks concerning common metaphors:

Quite frequently, he falls into actual poetic metre, or something approximating very closely to it, at least for a few feet. This is probably unconscious on his part. As examples, we may cite the following:

We find in his style a very considerable fondness for alliteration, and an advanced degree of sophistication in its use, quite apart from its employment in the actual rhymes of his sajī. Consider, for example:

Ibn Bassām is not very precise in his use of critical terms. When, for example, he says of a poet:

we cannot tell whether he wishes to indicate that the poetry in question is devoid of artificiality and badī or elegant and passionate, and when he follows this statement
again we cannot tell whether he means that it is skilfully varied and innovative or full of the different figures of badi\textsuperscript{c}. Are the two phrases intended as complementary or contrastive?

He is not, of course, merely or even primarily either a critic or a biographer, even though the whole of his large work is ostensibly devoted to criticism and biography. The style in which he chooses to compose his essays amply demonstrates that. He is essentially a "man of letters", an ad\textit{Th}, intent upon making his own contribution to artistic prose writing as important as, or more important than, that of any of his subjects.

In all sa\textsuperscript{j}, there is the danger of prolixity, of repetitiveness, of saying the same thing in various different ways. Ibn Bassam does not always avoid this danger. It is difficult, for example, to see that the second unit adds greatly to the force of the statement here:

\[
\text{من نبض في الصناعة بالبلاع الأسد ، وأخذ فيها بالساعد الأشد}
\]

or even here:

\[
\text{شُرِّف بهندسة النص من الخاتم ، ويمكان السر من صدر الحازم}
\]

There is perhaps rather more justification for the latter, but it still gives a distinct impression of having been introduced principally for the sake of having a couplet.
He is, without doubt, extremely skilled in the manipulation of words, within the confining bounds of the medium in which he chooses to express himself. His saj\textsuperscript{c}, which he does not hesitate to interrupt with ordinary prose on occasions, is one of the most supple examples of this genre that one could hope to find. He varies the length of the units and their relationship to one another, sometimes having one unit dependent upon the one preceding it, sometimes having it parallel to it, sometimes making it more specific, sometimes making it less so. One of his favourite constructions is that exemplified by the following passage, in which he first splits a sentence in the middle, for the sake of rhyming, by using the maf\textsuperscript{o}l mutlaq in \textit{id\textsuperscript{a}fa}:

كأن أبو محمد قد حل من كتاب الأقليم ، محل القمر من النجوم
and follows it with a second split sentence, usually again rhyming with the first, either with a very similar sense, or, as here, with a completely different one:

وتصرف في التأخير والتقديم ، تصرف الشفرة في الأديم

This example also demonstrates another characteristic of his writing, in that we are left in some uncertainty as to what precisely he means by \textit{al-ta'khir wa-al-taqdîm}. He does not depend on the introduction of unusual or obscure words to create his effects; indeed, most of the actual words that he uses are perfectly familiar. The not infrequent obscurity that we encounter in his writing comes from the images into which he weaves these words, as, for example, when he says of Abū Manṣūr al-Tha'\textsuperscript{a}libî:

تكفّد للإقتراع بـالخصوص
As a representative example of his sajā'-composition at its best and most limpid, devoid of any affectation, awkwardness or dubious taste, perhaps we may conclude with this passage, from his biography of al-Ā'īma al-Tulaytullāh:

له أدب بارع، ونظر في غامضه واسع، وفهم لا يبارى، وذهن لا يبارى، ونظم كالسحر الخلال، ونشر كالماء الزلال، جاء في ذلك بالتنادر المعجز، فسي الطويل منه والموجز، نظم أخبار الأمم في لبنة القريش، وأسمع فيه ما هو أطرف من نغم معيد والجريش، وكان بالأندلس سر الأحسان، وفردا في الزمان، إلا أنه لم يطل زمانه، ولا امتد أوانه، واعتبت عندما به اغتبط، وأضحت نواضير الآداب لفقده رمدة، ونفوس أهل متفجعة كمدة، وقد أثبت ما يشهد بالأحسان والانطباع، ويشن عليه أعماة السماع.
7. **Diwan Abī Nuwās**, 325.
9. al-Aqlām, 122, 36.
10. Ibn Rashīq, 1, 114.
11. al-Ibāna \textsuperscript{c}an Sariqat al-Mutanabbi, 28.
12. al-Qurān al-Karīm *Quraysh*, 106.
14. **Sūrat Hūd**, 43.
APPENDIX

THE LITERARY FIGURES OF AL-DHAKHIRA


3. Abū Ja'far, b. ʿAbd al-Dānī. From Dénia, where father was a member of Mujāhid’s shurṭa. Sāhib Dīwān ʿAl-ʿInshāʾ under al-Muʿtaḍid.


5. Abū al-ʿAṣbagh, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Muḥammad b. Arqam. From Guadix, but lived at Almeria. Spent some time with Iqṭāb al-Dawla ʿAlī b. Mujāhid at Dénia, then returned to Almeria, where al-Muʿtaṣim b. Ṣumādīḥ sent him, with Abū ʿAbd Allāh Bakr b. Ṣāḥib al-ʿAbūṣ, some time after 460 A.H., as envoy to al-Muʿtaḍid. Author of al-Anwār fī Durūb al-ʿAshār, which he also epitomised as al-ʿAbdāq. Died during reign of al-Muʿtaḍid.

grammarian and poet. Some of his work included in
Abū al-Walīd's (see 36) al-Badīrūnī, Fāṣil al-Rabīrūnī.

From village in province of Zaragoza. Respected by
Banū Hūd, but wrote most of his madīn for al-Muṣṭaṣim
b. Ṣumādīh, of Almeria.

Prose writer and poet. Addressed many poems to al-Maʿmūn
al-Qāsim b. Ḥammūd, the caliph at Córdoba. Lived at
Zaragoza under patronage of Mundhir b. Yaḥyā al-Tujībī,
but later moved to Valencia. Died 452 A.H.

9. Abū ʿAffār, b. al-Aṣīlī. Distinguished prose writer and
poet of Mukhammasat. From noble family of Zaragoza.
Travelled much in al-Andalus.

10. Abū Bakr, Muḥammad al-Muṣṭaffar b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Maslama,
called Ibn al-Aftas. Established dynasty in Badajoz.
Author of 50 volume work, al-Tadhkīrā or al-Kitāb al-
Muzaffarī. His rule lasted from 437 to 456 A.H.

(38) after Abū al-Walīd al-Haḍramī. Poet and prose writer.
Quarrelled with Ibn al-Dabbāgh when the latter also
became, for a time, wāzīr.


17.  Abū ʿAbd Allāh, Muḥammad b. ʿĀhmad al-Bizīlīyānī. From Malaga. Served Ḥabbūs b. Māksin until the latter's
defeat by al-Mu'taḍid in 443 A.H., when he became scribe to ʿAbbad's son al-Muṭamid. Killed by al-Mu'taḍid for his part in revolt of the latter's son Isma'īl.


19. Abū ʿUbayd, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Bakrī. Born 432 A.H. Author of ḥadīth works such as: Sharḥ al-Amālī, Fāṣl al-Maqāl, and geographical works, such as: al-Masālik wa-al-Mamālik and Muḥjam mā Istajam.


22. Abū ʿAbd Allāh, Muḥammad b. al-Bayn. One of the most eminent poets of Badajoz. Follower of Muḥammad b. Hānī.

of ĈAmirid dynasty. Supported ĈAbd al-ĈAzīz b. ĈAbd al-Ğrahmān when he took over.

أبو جعفر أحمد ابن عبدالله ابن هريرة القيسي الأعمى القطلي


أبو الحسن علي ابن محمد الدهامي


أبو منصور عبد الملك ابن اسماعيل الثعالبي


أبو الحسن ابن محمد ابن الجد


أبو القاسم محمد ابن يحيى ابن فرح ابن الجد


أبو الفتح شايب ابن محمد الجراحني


32. Abū Marwān, Abd al-Malik b. Idrīs al-Jazīrī. Secretary and wazīr to Amīrīds. Imprisoned but afterwards released by al-Manṣūr. Said to have been strangled in prison by black slaves, at the instigation of the wazīr Īsā b. Saʿīd al-Qaṭṭā in 394 A.H.


35. Abū al-Walīd Iṣmā'īl b. Muḥammad, called Ḥabīb. A student of Ibn al-Abbar. Rāwi and extemporiser. Author of al-Badī‘ fī Faṣl al-Rābi‘. Said to have died at the age of 22, but according to another version, killed by al-Muṭṭāqīd at the age of 29, in 440 A.H.


Lived in Almeria, and served al-Mu'tasim Muhammad b. Ma'n b. Sumadin. Wrote many madih poems to him; left him for al-Muqtadir b. Hud in Zaragoza in 461 A.H. Later returned to Almeria and died there 480 A.H.


50. Abu Marwān, Ḥayyān b. Khalaf b. Ḥusayn b. Ḥayyān al-Qurṭubi. 377-469 A.H. Studied under his father, ʿAbd ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Nahwī and Saʿīd al-

 أبو إسحاق إبراهيم ابن الفتح ابن عبد الله ابن خفاجة


 أبو عبد الله محمد ابن مسعود ابن طيب ابن خلصة


 أبو عبد الله ابن خلصة الشريش النحوي

53. ʿAbū ʿAbd Allāh, Ibn Khalsa al-Ṭarī al-Nāwū al-Shadbūnī al-Dānī. One of the most distinguished grammarians and poets of his day. Lived at Denia. Fl.c. 440 A.H.

 أبو أحمد عبد العزيز ابن خيرة القرطبي

54. ʿAbū Aḥmad, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Khayra al-Qurtubi, called al-Munfatil. One of the most distinguished poets and prose writers of Elvira under the Muḥūk al-Ṭawāfī.

 أبو عمر أحمد ابن ذراع القسطلي

55. ʿAbū ʿUmar Aḥmad b. Darrāj al-Qasṭallī 347–421 (428) A.H. He worked as a clerk for al-Manṣūr b. Abī ʿĀmir. The most noteworthy poet of al-Andalus of his time. Mentioned by al-Thaʿalībī as being "as famous in
al-Andalus as al-Mutanabbī in the East ".


62. Abu al-Walid Ibn Zaydun, Ahmad b. 'Abd Allâh. 394-463 A.H. His father, a faqîh in Córdoba, was of Makhzûm Quraysh, his mother of Qays. Courtier of al-Musta'in; elevated by Abu al-Walid b. Jahwar and sent on embassies. Died in Seville. Poet and author of several prose works, such as al-Risâla al-Jaddiyya and al-Risâla al-Hazaliyya.


69. Abu al-Qasim Khalaf b. Faraj al-Ilbiri, called al-Sumaysir. Distinguished poet, especially in Hijā; wrote Muzdawaj poetry. Satirised Badis b. Ḥabbūs and had to take refuge with the Banū Šumadiḥ.


73. Abu JaCfar, Ahmad b. CAbd Allāh, called Ibn Shanja. Of the circle of Abu Marwān (see below 78) for 40 years. Ibn Bassām says he was well-versed in poetry, but cites little. "Rapacious and ill-natured". Died 414 A.H.


77. Abū Marwān Ābād al-Malik b. Muḥammad b. Shammākh. Brother of Jaʿfar. Poet. Wrote poems to other literary figures of his time, such as Ābād Allāh b. Ḥamdīn.


82. Abū al-Muṭarrāf, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīn b. Fākhir, known as Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh. Considerable poet. First served al-Muqtadīr b. Ḥūd, then al-Muṭamīd b. ʿAbbād, in Seville, who employed him to negotiate with al-Muṭawakkil b. al-Āfṭas. Exiled by al-Muṭamīd after quarrel with Ibn ʿAbmār; went to al-Muṭawakkil in Badajoz, then returned to Zaragoza, where he was killed.


87. Abū Yaḥyā, Muḥammad b. Maʿn b. Ṣumādiḥ al-Tujībī. His grandfather, Muḥammad b. Āḥmad b. Ṣumādiḥ, Abū Yaḥyā, was the owner of Washqa and its surrounding area. He first served Hishām, then Sulaymān, who entrusted him with the ministerial positions of Dhū al-Ḡūrāratayn. He was defeated by his cousin Mundhir b. Yaḥyā al-Tujībī and died about 484 A.H.


97. Abū Bakr b. Ẓahrār. Author of much madīh poetry to Abū al-Mughīrah b. Ḥazm, well-known for his generosity, although poor.


101. Abu Ja'far, Aḥmad b. ČAbbād. Wazīr to Zuhayr al-fatah, (see 60). Prose writer and rhetorician. Great book collector, said to have amassed 400,000. Also known for love of money. Killed by Bādis b. Ḥabbūs, at Granada.

102. Abū Muḥammad, ČAbd al-Majīd b. ČAbdūn. Wazīr and secretary to Banū al-Aftas, then to Yūsuf b. Tāshfīn, at fall of the former. Celebrated poet, best known for ČAbdūniyya, on al-Mutawakkil. Classed by Ibn Bassām as one of four distinguished secretaries of his age, with Ibn al-Qaṣīra (see 136), Ibn ČAbd al-

Abū Bakr, b. Ṣabd al-ʿAzīz. From noble family. His father was a secretary of the wāzīr, Abū ʿAmīr b. al-Ṭakarnī in Valencia. Himself appointed wāzīr to ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, called al-Muṣṭaffar. Died 456 A.H.

Nothing known about him, except mentioned by al-Ḥumaydī.

108. Abū al-Faḍl, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Waḥḥāb al-Baḥdādī al-Dārimī. 388-454/5 A.H. From learned literary family. Went to Qayrawān during rule of al-Mūṣīz b. Bāḍīs (introducing al-Thaʿalībī's Kitāb al-Yatīm) in 439 A.H. After destruction of Qayrawān returned to al-Andalus, first to Toledo, then to Susa and Denia, during time of Ibn Mujāhid, then to Valencia, then back to Toledo.


110. Abū ʿAlī, al-ʿAsqallānī, al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Ṣamad b. Abī al-Shakḥbā, known as al-Muḥīd Dhū al-Fadīlātayn. Poet and prose writer. al-Qāḍī al-Faḍīl is said to have used his works in the writing of his own treatises. Died 482/486 A.H.


127. al-Qāsim b. Ḥammūd, brother of ʿAlī, (see 173 ). Caliph in Córdoba. (1) 408-412 A.H. (2) 413-414 A.H. Killed by his nephew Yaḥyā b. ʿAlī, who ruled in Córdoba between al-Qāsim's two caliphates.


134. Abū Āumar b. al-Qalūb. Secretary and later wāzīr to Ibn Hūd. Author of much prose and poetry.


137. Muḥammad b. al-Kittānī al-Mutāṭabbīb. Wrote prose and some poetry. Learned in medicine, logic and philosophy. Best known work Muḥammad wa-Suʿda. Fl.c. 400 A.H.

139. Abū ʿIsā, b. Labbūn, Dhu’l-Wizaratayn. Companion of al-Qādir b. Yaḥya, of Toledo. Qādī and wazīr in Valencia under Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. Subsequently became ruler of Marbitar in the province of Valencia, but relinquished it to Abū Marwan ʿAbd al-Malik b. Razīn (44), ruler of Santa Maria del Oriente. Remained there with Ibn Razīn until his death; also said to have died at Zaragoza.


144. Abū Ṭālib Ṭālib b. 'Abd al-Jabbār, called al-Mutanābbī, from Island of Shaqar. Writer of historical Urjuzā, and also of Ghazal.

145. Ĕumar b. al-Muṣaffar called al-Mutawakkil. King, poet and prose writer. There was hostility between him and his brother Yaḥyā. Killed with his son by the Almoravids 487 A.H.


Aziz al-Tunusi on scientific topics. Died at Dakul.

Abū al-Qāsim, al-Sharīf al-Murtada. Poet, faqīh, adīb and grammarian. Author of Tayf al-Khayāl and many other works.


al-Qāsim b. Marzuqān. A wazīr, poet and prose writer under the Banū ʿAbbaḍ.


155. Abū ʿAbd Allāh, Muḥammad b. Masʿūd. From Córdoba. Prose writer and poet. His poetry was particularly humorous and was compared to that of Muḥammad b. Hajjāj in Iraq. Ibn Bassām did not consider him accomplished, but al-Ḥijārī appears to have thought him distinguished.


157. Abū ʿAbd Allāh, Muḥammad b. Muṣlim. One of the greatest writers of epistles of his time. His collected epistles are known as Ṭayy al-Marāḥīl.


163. al-Mu'tadid bi-Allah. Succeeded his father, Muhammad b. 'Abbad (see 101) at the age of 26. At first called Fakhr al-Dawla. An arrogant and tyrannical ruler. Wrote many poems which were collected by his nephew Isma'il. Died 461 A.H. at Cordoba.


168. Mundhir b. Yaḥya. Ruler of Zaragoza. He began as a common soldier and received advancement under the final Amirids. Famous for horsemanship, generosity and magnanimity. Killed by cousin, ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥakam, 430 A.H.


175. ʿAbū al-Walīd, called al-Nihlī. Poet. First served Ibn Ṣumādīh, then al-Muʿtamīd, to whom he wrote Madīḥ, while writing hijā on Ibn Ṣumādīh. He later returned to Almeria, having obtained Ibn Ṣumādīh's forgiveness, but afterwards left again.

176. Ismāʿīl b. Yūsuf, called Ibn al-Naghmīla al-ʿIrāṣīlī. Wazīr to the ruler of Granada, Bādis, in which post he was succeeded by his son Yūsuf, who was murdered by the populace. Conspired with Banū Ṣumādīh against Bādis. Corresponded with Ibn Ḥazm.

177. ʿAbū al-Ḥasan, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd b. Ḥarūn al-Shantamrī. From family that ruled in Santa Maria de Algarve until deposed by al-Muʿtamīd b. ʿAbdād in 444 A.H.


181. al-Qadi Abu al-Walid Sulayman b. Khalaf b. Sa'id b. Ayyub al-Bajj. Faqih and Muhaddith. Spent 13 years in East; three years in Baghdad from 426 A.H. to study fiqh, on which he then wrote a number of works, such as: al-Muntaqa, Ikhkam al-Fusul fi Ahkam al-Ushul. Died 474 A.H. at Almeria.


BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. ČAbbas, Ihsan:
   c) Tārīkh al-Adab al-Andalusī ČAsr Siyādat Qurtuba, Beirut 1968.


9. al-Baghdādī, Ismā'īl Basha:
   a) Ḩdāh al-Maknum fi al-Dhayl Ǧašf al-Zunun ġan
       al-Kutub wa-al-funun, ed. Muḥammad Sharaf and Rifa'at
       Billika, Istanbul 1945.
   b) Ḩadiyyat al-ʿArifīn fi Asmaʾ al-Mu'allīfīn wa-Athar
       al-Musannīfīn, Istanbul 1951.

10. Bayḍūn, Ibrāhīm, al-Dawla al-ʿArabiyya fi Isbanyā min

11. al-Bustānī, Butrus, Udab ʿAlār ʿArab wa-ʿAsr al-Inbīrath,
    Beirut 1948-53.

12. al-Bustānī, Fuʿād Afrām, Mawsūʿat al-Bustānī: Qāmus ʿĀmm
    li-kull Matlab wa-Fanūn, Beirut 1965.

13. Chejne, Anwar, Muslim Spain, Minneapolis 1974.

14. al-Dabbī, ʿAbīn man b. Yaḥyā b. ʿUmayra, Bughyāt al-Multamīs
    fi Tārīkh Rijāl Ahl al-Andalus, Madrid 1884.

15. Dhu al-Rumma, Diwan Dhī al-Rumma, ed. ʿAbd Qaddūs Abu
    Śalīh, Damascus 1972.

16. Gómez, García, al-Shīr al-Andalusi (Arabic translation


19. Haykal, Ahmad.
   b) Dirasat Adabiyya, Cairo 1980.


   b) al-Hulla al-Sir'a, ed. Husayn Mu'nis, Cairo 1963.


29. Ibn al-Khaṭīb, Lisān al-Dīn;


31. Ibn Qutayba, Abu Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Muslim al-Dinawarī:
   a) K. al-Shi'r wa-al-Shu'ara, ed. M. J. De Goeje, Leiden 1902.

32. Ibn Rashiq al-Qayrawānī, Abu ʿAlī al-Ḥasan:
   b) Qurraṭat al-Dhahab, ed. al-Shadhilī Bu ʿYaḥyā, Tunis 1972.


36. Ṣūfīn, Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh.
   a) al-ʿĀthar al-Andalusiyya al-Baqiya, Cairo 1961.
   b) Duwal al-Tawaʾif, Cairo 1960.

37. ʿIsā, Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, Tarikh al-Taʾlīm fi al-Andalus, Cairo 1982.


41. Khālis, Ṣalāḥ:
42. Makki, al-Tahir Ahmad Masadir al-Adab, Cairo 1976.


54. The Holy Qur'an

55. Sallâm, Muhammad Zaghlûl, Tarîkh al-Naqd al-'Arabi ila al-Qarn al-'Ashir, Cairo, n.d.


57. al-Sûlî, Abu Bakr. Akhbar Abî Tammâm, Cairo 1937.


ADDITIONAL REFERENCE: