

**THE MUSIC  
AND  
THE LOVE POETRY  
OF  
AL-ANDALÚZ**

For Professor A. Obeid

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# PART I - THE LOVE POETRY OF AL-ANDALÚZ

## A. INTRODUCTION

Andalucian Love Poetry was a particular genre that evolved during the Umayyad and Abassid Periods from the classical Arabic lyric poetry. The genre was the result of an elegance in poetry that had been reached and perfected to its highest degree in Al-Andalúz by the Arabian poets who had come to Spain.

The two important literary forms which evolved from the genre were the muwashshah and the zajal. The Arabian Andalucian poets, through their genius, were able to refine exceedingly the new forms. They charmed both the masses and the elite simply because they were easy to learn and easy to understand.

The principle charms of the new poetry were its melody, its combination of words, its alternate rhyme scheme and its striking estribillo or refrain (markaz).<sup>1</sup> Its influence was enormous. In the 13th century, a collection of songs called Las Cantigas de Santa María was written by King Alfonso el Sábio of Spain.<sup>2</sup> The collection reflects Arabian melodies and other important characteristics of the lyric system of the Andalucian Arab poets. Songs later composed in Europe by Guillaume IX of Poitiers proved to be very similar in stanza, rhyme scheme and rhythm to the muwashshah.

During the Middle Ages the influence of the muwashshah and zajal spread to North Africa, Asia and India and has lasted until the present day. It is also important to note here that wherever the literary forms of the muwashshah and zajal went, so did the music to which they were sung.<sup>3</sup>

These and other facts have been substantiated through the early music of the Tunisians and the Basques, who live on the borders of the Pyrenees. However, the affinity between Arabian-Andalucian and Old Provençal poetry is still an elusive subject, since its study is so dependent on intuition and familiarity of all the aspects of both cultures. While European researchers would like to take the credit for the many contributions the Arabs have made in literature and music, very few of them, in fact, have the knowledge or qualifications to judge the details competently.

The new Love Poetry had its roots in the desert poems of the Pagan Arabs. But its evolution and development belong solely to the Andalucian Arabian poets and it attained its highest standard

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<sup>1</sup> A. R. Nykl,

Hispano-Arabic Poetry.  
Baltimore: 1946, p. 380.

<sup>2</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 190.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid,

p. 141.

during the Ummayyad Dynasty.

## **B. ANDALUCÍAN LOVE POETRY**

### **1. THE QUINTESSENCE OF ANDALUCÍAN LOVE POETRY**

Andalucían Love Poetry was the quintessence of the intense feelings of the poet, while at the same it revealed certain of his characteristic traits. Often these fluctuated between good and evil. The new genre also expressed the thoughts of the poet at a particular time or moment in his life and therefore brought a kind of duality to the poetry.

This duality was, in later centuries, to become an outstanding characteristic of Spanish music. In the monumental work of Isaac Albéniz, Iberia, duality is expressed by the comparison or combination of two or more dance rhythms, sometimes with two of them in total opposition to each other. At other moments the personal identity of the composer is exposed, as well as the full, emotional power of the work. All the components must be understood before the whole may be properly interpreted.

### **2. REASONS FOR THE EVOLUTION OF ANDALUCÍAN LOVE POETRY**

One reason the literary forms of the muwashshah and the zajal evolved mainly in Al-Andalúz was cultural unity. This cultural unity grew out of contact and assimilation of Arabic, Spanish and Jewish elements and was stimulated by the constant struggle against the Christians.<sup>4</sup>

The second reason for their evolution was because of the Spanish Contribution. When the Arabian poets initially arrived in Spain around the 9th century, they found three things which were to profoundly influence the evolution and development of their own lyric poetry.

### **3. THE SPANISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO ANDALUCÍAN LOVE POETRY**

#### **(a) The Beauty of the Al-Andalúz**

The first major discovery by the early Arabian poets which contributed to the evolution of the new poetry was Spain itself. The fame of Al-Andalúz, particularly its beauty, was already known in Baghdad. Its reality was overwhelming. It was therefore not surprising that the combination of the genius of the early arrivals and the Paradise to which they had come began to reveal a new and much more sensuous kind of love poetry. It must be noted at this point that it was most fortunate and to the credit of their predecessors who had landed in Spain a century earlier that nothing of the culture or the country had been demolished or destroyed.

The beauty which the Arabian poets found in Al-Andalúz was to have a profound impact, for

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<sup>4</sup> H.A.R. Gibb,

“Literature”, Legacy of Islam.  
London: Oxford University Press, 1931, p. 187.

example, on how they developed the themes and images of their love poetry. In Al-Andalúz, to illustrate the point, there is a beautiful species of climbing shrub or tree, as it is sometimes classified, called Night Jasmine. The Night Jasmine grows very tall and has branches that are long and tender. Its wood is not hard. The tree has an exotic, perfumed flower whose calyx slowly opens as evening falls. The Night Jasmine tree was brought to Spain by the Phoenicians in the 2nd century B.C. and is indigenous to certain parts of Al-Andalúz only.<sup>5</sup>

The common simile, “a tender girl of tall and beautiful stature”, was used by the 6th century Pre-islamic poet, Imru al Kais. King Al-Mu’tamid (1040-1095) of Sevilla, an accomplished poet, singer and ud player, uses a similar image in his poem, Night by the River. Inspired by the exotic Night Jasmine, the King proceeds to develop his image and refine it in a most elegant manner.

*Night By The River*

*Sweet night of joyous merriment  
Beside the swerving stream I spent  
Beside the maid about whose wrist,  
So sweetly swerved her bracelet’s twist:*

*She loosed her robe, that I might see  
Her body, lissom as a tree:  
The calyx opened in that hour  
And oh! the beauty of my flower!<sup>6</sup>*

*King Al-Mu’tamid - Sevilla*

The theme centers on the King’s beautiful concubine and his image of her is “as lissom as a tree.” The image is developed by picturing the beautiful concubine without her robe and her naked charms are then compared to the perfumed flower of the Night Jasmine tree when it has fully opened as evening begins to fall.

The perfumed flower represents the concubine’s soft, clinging gown, which at first is revealed to the King, then loosened for him.<sup>7</sup> Spain abounds in rivers and streams sparkling in the Andalusian sunlight. Bordered with bushes and overhanging trees, they emerge from their verdant covering and literally gleam as the sun shines down upon the open waters.

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<sup>5</sup> Michael George and Consuelo M. Correcher, The Gardens of Spain.  
New York: Henry N. Abrams, Incorporated, 1993,  
p. 153.

<sup>6</sup> A.J. Arberry, Moorish Poetry.  
Florida: Granger Books, 1976, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. xv.

In Pre-islamic poetry, a river was often compared to a lady's gleaming wrist as it emerged from her green cloak. The King's image of his beloved's wrist is firstly shown to us on the banks of a winding stream. It is enhanced by the lady wearing a bracelet. Through the adornment of the bracelet and the winding stream, the gleaming wrist image is refined most elegantly in two ways.<sup>8</sup>

Often, on a hot summer's day in Andalu'ía, the sky is a cerulean blue with no hint whatsoever of a cloud. Only the brilliant sun is in its panorama. Without any warning, a heat cloud will gather which is slightly off white in its colour. Just as suddenly as the white cloud appears, it disappears, leaving the blue sky once more clear.

In Pre-islamic poetry, the comparison of a "beautiful face" to the "moon" and the "noonday sun" was well known. In another poem by King Al-Mu'tamid, The Handsome Knight, the image of the sun is applied to the Knight. The hero is gay and reckless and faces mortal danger on the battlefield which is shrouded in darkness and veiled in dust. The Knight is compared to the laughing sun.<sup>9</sup>

*The Handsome Knight*

*And when, accoutred in your mail  
And with your helmet for a veil  
That hid your beauty from the day,  
You charged into the fray,*

*We deemed your countenance to be  
The noonday sun, now suddenly  
Occluded by an amber cloud  
Its radiance to shroud.<sup>10</sup>*

Through the genius of improvisation, the King enhances his image of the Knight by likening the helmet which he is wearing to a heat cloud. The cloud is covering the sun. It is described as amber, which is off-white. The helmet is now compared to the light, off-white heat cloud which covers the head of the reckless Knight.<sup>11</sup>

One of the most beautiful scenes of Spain, especially in Al-Andal'úz, is the saffron which grows in the countryside and is found on the wild narcissus. When the cattle eat the flowers, the saffron colours their lips bronze. It is a spectacular sight at first glimpse. The language of Abul Hasan's poem, Golden Glow, compares the saffron on the lips of the cattle to the reflection of the golden

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. xv.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. xv.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. xv.

wine on the saki's fingers. The comparison again reflects the genius of the poet simply because it is so appealing and so unexpected.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Golden Glow*

*See, his slender fingers shine  
In the sunlight of the wine,  
As the wild narcissus tips  
With its gold the oxen's lips.*<sup>13</sup>

Descriptions of scenes and sensations were not a new impulse in the evolution and development of the Andalucían Love Poetry. The old desert poets had done this centuries before. They recognized that even minute differences to the austere environment could result in great beauty. The Andalucían poets used the same humour, brevity and eloquence as the desert poets, but they were able to enjoy the beauty of the land to which they had come. This was the major difference and allowed them to treat scenes and sensations in a manner that had never been done before.<sup>14</sup>

#### **(b) The Spanish Strophic Measure**

The second major discovery made by the Arabian poets when they came to Al-Andalúz and which was to have an enormous influence on their new poetry forms was the Spanish Strophic measure. The typical, primitive Andalúz strophic schemes both had refrains and delighted the Arabs because their particular arrangement of 6 lines could be more easily varied with respect to construction and rhyme. The estribillo or refrain was an even greater delight. For the Arab poets, the two schemes were to lend themselves exceedingly well to the new poetic forms, the muwashshah and zajal. The primitive Andalúz strophic schemes the Arabs found were as follows:

- (a) *aabbbaa* (last *a* is the refrain)
- (b) *abaaab* (last *a* and *b* constitute the refrain).<sup>15</sup>

#### **(c) The Spanish Zejel**

The third important discovery made by the Arabian poets in their new Paradise was the Ancient Andalucían song form known as the zejel. The ancient song form alternated between a copla

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. xvii.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. xviii.

<sup>15</sup> Julian Ribéra , *La Música de las Cantígas*, Vol. III.  
Madrid: La Real Academia Española, 1922, p. 134.

sung by a soloist and a refrain which was danced or played by a guitarist. The refrain always alternated with the copla or stanza and kept the same pattern of rhythm and melody. The old Andalusian poetic song form had a 4 line stanza. The charm of the form lay in the music which accompanied the words. The Spanish zejel had already penetrated Persia, particular parts of the Orient and India in the third and fourth centuries, long before the Arabian poets arrived in Spain.<sup>16</sup> Its form had also undergone changes from the pure primitive Persian quatrain of *bbab*. Spanish musicians decided to repeat the first phrase (*a*) instead of the second phrase (*b*) as the primitive Persian-Arabs did. The result was the form *aaab* which the Arabs found when they arrived in Al-Andalus.<sup>17</sup>

Confirmation of pure, traditional Spanish zejels may be found in ancient Portuguese songbooks, particularly numbers 190, 1017, 1048, 1080, also pages 950 and 952 (Cancionero Portugues del Vaticano).<sup>18</sup> Various zejels of Alfonso Alvarez de Villasandino may be found in the Al-Andalus de Baena. Numbers 7, 8, 51, 141, 196, 203 and 219 are of the primitive type Spanish zejel.<sup>19</sup>

The Songs of Granada, a collection of Tunisian words set to ancient Spanish melodies, is a further confirmation that the Ancient Andalusian zejel was known outside of Spain before the coming of the Hispano-Arabe poets.<sup>20</sup>

## C. ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE MUWASHSHAH

### **1. MOCADDEM BIN MOAFA - ITS INVENTOR**

The Arabian-Andalusian poets were not mere imitators of the discoveries that they had made in Spain, but rather they renewed and transformed them with the invention of the lyric forms, the muwashshah and the zajal and made them peculiar to Al-Andalus.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 139.

<sup>17</sup> Julian Ribéra,

La Música de las Cantigas, Vol. III.  
Madrid: La Real Academia Española, 1922, p. 93.

<sup>18</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 153.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid,

p. 153.

<sup>20</sup> Julian Ribéra,

La Música de las Cantigas, Vol. III.  
Madrid: La Real Academia Española, 1922, p. 93.

<sup>21</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 119.



The inventor of the muwashshat was Mocadem bin Moafa, a blind poet from Cabra. He began to compose muwashshat in Spain by singing refrains which reflected national characteristics using the Romance tongue current at the time among Andalusians. Very little is known about this poet, yet he was to make a tremendous contribution to later literature of both Arabic and European peoples. His "new poetry" was considered to be vulgar, since it was classified as Romance literature and was beneath the classic Arab forms.<sup>22</sup> The reason Mocadem used the Romance language was that he felt that the evolution and development of the muwashshat and zajal could only take place if the people understood the verses.<sup>23</sup> Because of the Romance language in which Mocadem's poetry was written, it became exceedingly popular. It was also effective because of the metrical system on which the refrains were based. The system was familiar to the populace and they were able to sing the estribillos.<sup>24</sup>

## 2. AL-RAMADI - CROSS RHYTHMS

Another court poet of the much feared Al-Mansur to make a contribution towards the evolution of the new poetic form of the muwashshat was Al-Ramadi. Intimately on terms with the Christians of Cordoba he was accused by heterodoxy since before drinking any wine, he would make the sign of the cross over his cup. Popular among the masses and nobles, he wrote in the old classic and new styles.<sup>25</sup>

Al-Ramadi introduced certain novelties into the early muwashshat begun by Mocadem by multiplying the crossing of rhymes at the pauses or caesuras, especially in the strophe. (No single poem seems to have remained of either of these poets for example purposes). Harun al-Ramadi also introduced the use of several markaz combined together, setting a different markaz at each pause (in reciting). Most poets continued to follow this method.<sup>26</sup>

## 3. UBADA BIN MA-AS-SAMA - THE TASGIR

The poet who is said to have brought the Andalusian Love Poetry metric system to its greatest perfection was Ubada bin Ma-As-Sama. His perfection of the new form consisted of making corrections to the bad habits of the common poets who used the class of verse and introducing a greater variety into the existing rhyme schemes. His most important innovation was the tasgir or shortening. He used pauses within the hemistich and combined them in the same way that Al-Ramadi made up pauses for each markaz. The tasgir appears to have been the interlinear

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 120.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 124.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 125.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 127.

<sup>26</sup> A. R. Nykl, Hispano-Arabic Poetry.  
Baltimore: 1946, p. 387.

rhyme used by two of the European Troubadour poets, Cercamon in his Song IV and by Marcabru in his song, En abriu.<sup>27</sup>

Forms for Ma-As-Sama's muwashshat included a long refrain with varied rhythms and a stanza with a subdivided ternary element and independent rhymes in each strophe, beside the part whose rhymes were the same throughout the composition, as well as in the refrain. Some of the forms of this poet may be studied in the Kitab Fuat Al-Okian, page 254, by Ibn Shakir.<sup>28</sup>

Ma-As-Sama's poetry became increasingly esteemed because of the artistic and elegant combinations he had introduced into his forms. With Ubada bin Ma-As-Sama, a lyric system of poetry had been developed which included every kind of form from the simple four-lined stanza to those of greater complexity. An example of the latter would be *f g f g f g a b c d e*.<sup>29</sup>

#### **D. THE ALMÓRAVID PERIOD**

##### **1. IBN QUZMAN AND THE ZAJAL**

Other forms, such as the mawali,<sup>30</sup> were introduced into Spain from the Orient. Although imitated in some of the poems by Abu Uthman bin Said, these forms did not take root in Al-Andalúz. The zajal, on the other hand, became very popular and was the chosen medium by many poets.

During the Almóraid Period the literary form of the zajal shone. One poet whose fertility of genius still remains in its entirety and who achieved leadership in the specialization of the zajal was Ibn Quzman. Secretary to King Al-Mutawakkil of Badajoz, Ibn Quzman began early to devote himself to the making of verses in the classic form and used the inflections of the grammarians. His poetry, although graceful, was considered by the common people to be insipid, lacking in "grazioso" and not spontaneous.<sup>31</sup> Realizing that he would not be able to compete with the other great poets of the day, especially Ibn Khafaja de Alcira, Ibn Quzman determined to specialize on the zajal in the Andalucían vulgate.

Following the model of the poet Akhtal bin Nomara, Ibn Quzman began to mold a poetic form that could be sung by many people and incorporated into the form of a language that was intelligible to all. He used the language of the day but refined and corrected it. Knowing that the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 387.

<sup>28</sup> Julian Ribéra, Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 128.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 128.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 128.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 131.

interest of the public was also necessary, he chose subjects such as scenes that were gay and smiling, akin to those of the street musicians. Lastly, he continued to maintain an elegant form and structure, but veiled them with a naturalness which made his poems appear to be spontaneous and effortless.

While Ibn Quzman's poetry was full of sweetness, elegance and beauty, it was alas, saturated with the vices of the shamelessness of the tavern and contained indecencies of language that belonged to the worst section of Cordoba. However, it must be understood that if so much roughness and coarseness did appear in his zajals it was only because the common Andalusian songs were far, far from his purifying efforts.<sup>32</sup>

Ibn Quzman's metrical schemes were elegant, marvellously complex and without precedent. His poems were constructed on a refrain or little strophe that was thematic and consisted of stanzas that had 4 to 12 verses.<sup>33</sup>

The majority of Ibn Quzman's zajals consisted of 5 to 7 strophes with estribillos of 1 to 4 lines. The rhyme scheme for his zajals was *A A d d d a*.<sup>34</sup> His use of the estribillo corresponded later to the tornada of the troubadours. His forms may be compared with the old Spanish and Portuguese counterparts, Las Cantigas de Santa María and El Cancionero de Baena. The following excerpts demonstrate the comparison of form between Ibn Quzman's zajal XCLX, a Spanish Cantiga and a Portuguese Cancionero. The first two lines are the estribillo, the next three are the stanza and the last line has the same rhyme ending as lines one and two.

<u>Zajal XCLX</u>		<u>Cantiga de Santa María</u>		<u>Cancionero de Baena (Juan Ruiz)</u>	
Ya melih ad-dunya ul:	A	Mis ojos non veran luz,	A	Vivo ledo con razon,	A
Ala's ent ya' bni matul?	A	pues perdido he a Cruz.	A	Amigos, toda sazón,	A
Ey ana indak wagih,	d	Cruz Cruzada, panadera	d	Vivo ledo e sin pesar,	d
Yatmaggag minnu wafih	d	tome por entendedera;	d	pues amor me fizo amar	d
Tumma f'ahla na tatih	d	tome senda por carrare	d	a la que podre llamar	d
Targa anasak wasul!	A	como (faz el) andaluz	A	mas bella de cuantas son. <sup>35</sup>	A

Ibn Quzman's zajals were not intended for the masses or the ordinary man on the street. They were meant for highly sophisticated intellectuals, to be sung in the magalis al-uns. He had a

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 132.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 132.

<sup>34</sup> H. A. R. Gibb, Arabic Literature: An Introduction. 2nd. Ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 191.

<sup>35</sup> A. R. Nykl, Hispano-Arabic Poetry. Baltimore: 1946, p. 273.

predilection for diminutives and preferred composing his zajals in the Cordóban dialect, especially after he had consumed a goodly amount of old, pure, expensive Spanish wine.<sup>36</sup>

## **E. OTHER ANDALUCÍAN POETS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS**

### **1. IBN HAFAGA - ANDALUCÍAN SENSIBÍLIDAD**

Born at Alcira (1058), Ibn Hafaga was known as the Gardener of Al-Andalúz. He had earned this name for himself because of his charming descriptions of flowers, rivers and gardens in his poetry. Nearly all of Ibn Hafaga's poems were permeated by the Andalucían "sensibílidad" in the true Spanish fashion. This "sensibílidad" was to become a particular characteristic of the new Love Poetry of Al-Andalúz. Here is an excerpt from one of the poems of Ibn Hafaga's youth which demonstrates the Andalucían sensibílidad.

6. I watched her emerge from her embroidered robe  
Like a white sword blade being slowly unsheathed:
7. Soft was the touch of her straight, shapely form,  
Her shoulders trembled in their pure nakedness:
8. I stroked that body, a tree on a sandy hill,  
And kissed that face, a rising sun of Good Fortune:
9. Was she not exactly like that? Then indeed she was  
Of the same kind, as shoelace is cut from leather:
10. My palms, caressing her, slid along her body,  
At times her waist they touched, at times her breasts:
11. One of my hands slid down along her hip, and  
The other slowly moved up toward her bosom!<sup>37</sup>

### **2. IBN ZAMRAK - TWO IMPORTANT RHYME SCHEMES**

Another outstanding poet of the Granáda Period (1248-1492) whose muwashshat were to influence Provençal poetry was Ibn Zamrak. Notable contributions of this poet to Provençal poetry were his rhyme, structure and the number of strophes which he composed.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 300.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p. 228.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 357.

Ibn Zamrak was born on June 29, 1333 and grew up in the Albaicin of Granáda. He wrote poetry that was called hafagi in its character and was distinguished by its great artistry of words and polished expressions. He was a careful observer of the grammatical rules and strictly adhered to the rules of versification. He did not compose zajals. Most of the verses that adorn the walls of the great Alhámra in Granáda are those of Ibn Zamrak. Two important rhyme schemes that he contributed to the form of the muwashshah were as follows:

(a) *AA AA bc bc bc AA AA*

(b) *ABAB cd cd cd ABAB*<sup>39</sup>

The muwashshah and zajal spread to all corners of Spain, but the flame of the new poetry shone most brilliantly in Granáda. The technical refinements and laws of meter and rhyme which had been imposed upon the Spanish strophe and zejel resulted in an ingenious lyric system that was elegant in form, natural and spontaneous.<sup>40</sup>

By the beginning of the 11th century the lyric system for the muwashshah and zajal had been fully developed. The estribillo was the foundation of the new poetry and the essence of its system. The zajal was such a perfect classic form that it was readily accepted into native Spanish poetic patterns and became exceedingly popular. Later, the muwashshah and zajal were to become models for all other forms of poetry.

## PART II

### MUSIC AND THE LOVE POETRY OF AL-ANDALÚZ

#### F. EL CACIONÉRO DEL PALÁCIO

##### 1. CACIONÉRO #159

Like the poetry of the Pagan Arabs, the muwashshah and the zajal were set to music. Early Pre-islamic poetry was not set to music.<sup>41</sup> The poetry was either a form of recitation or a chant.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid,

p. 367.

<sup>40</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Historia de la Música Árabe Mediéval y Su  
Influéncia en la Española. Vol. L, Serie G.  
Madrid: Editorial Voluntad, S.A., 1927, 12.

<sup>41</sup> Henry George Farmer,

A History of Arabian Music.  
London: Luzac & Co., W.C., 1929, p. 16.

The later forms of poetry set to melody were the nauba, nashid, basit and the q'ita.<sup>42</sup>

When the Arabs came to Al-Andalúz in the 8th century, they also found 6 rhythmic modes and 4 melodic modes which were somewhat similar to those of the Eastern schools of Arabia.<sup>43</sup> The old forms of poetry had influenced Arabian music just as the new, ingenious strophic system of the Hispano-Arabs was to influence the ancient Andalucían musical forms and much later profoundly to influence European music and poetry.

Spanish music developed independently from that of Europe, thanks to the ingenious strophic system which had evolved and been developed by the writers of the muwashshah and zajal. Their strophic system, as well as many Arabian and Oriental musical influences have been found in a particularly exciting collection of songs from the 15th and 16th centuries entitled El Cancionéro del Palácio. This rich and interesting collection contains poems in the archaic language whose lyrics follow the form of Ibn Quzman's zajals.<sup>44</sup> Further confirmation of the Arabian zajal in the collection has been reinforced by the use of a chorus and strophes, a ternary or three-part element and a common rhyme at the end of each poem. The general rhythm of many of the poems is a first takil - Allegro.<sup>45</sup>

The very old Spanish melodies of the Cancionéro hold the secret of the poetic form. The Arabian melodic influences which may be found in the collection embody minor tonality (a predominate feature of Oriental music), the range of the melody which does not exceed 8 notes (an octave) found in Al-Mosuli's compositions and the use of the same sound for the first and last notes.<sup>46</sup>

Cancionéro #159 is of particular interest since its poetic scheme follows that of the Arabian zajal - *a a b b b a* and its music is based on that of an ancient Andalucían melodic scheme, *a b a a a b*. In addition to its Arabian poetic form, the song flows in a stepwise motion and ends on a minor chord, both of which are Arabian melodic characteristics. Its sad and bitterly melancholic theme has been found in the cante jondo (deep song) component of the soleares which is a form of flamenco.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Julian Ribéra,

La Música de las Cantígas, Vol. III.

Madrid: La Real Academia Española, 1922, p. 22.

<sup>43</sup> Henry George Farmer,

A History of Arabian Music.

London: Luzac & Co., W.C., 1929, p. 17.

<sup>44</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.

New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 162.

<sup>45</sup> Julian Ribéra,

La Música de las Cantígas, Vol. III.

Madrid: La Real Academia Española, 1922, p. 87.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid,

p. 88

<sup>47</sup> Ibid,

p. 90

## 2. THE MELODIC PERIODS OF THE COLLECTION

The melodic periods of all the Cancionero correspond to the metric dispositions of the Arabic poetic quatrains. The rhyme scheme for 85 out of 100 canciones is based on an estribillo of two melodic phrases, *a b*, and a strophe which is composed of "x", repeated, followed by the repetition of the two phrases of the estribillo.<sup>48</sup> Following is a manuscript example.

# OF CANTIGAS	RHYTHM	EUROPEAN TIME SIGNATURE	ARABIAN RHYTHM	EUROPEAN RHYTHM
149	hejez - preferred for lute toccatas	2 3 4 4 4 4		
83	ramel	3 4		
12	1st takil - serious, suave, tender, danceable	3 8		
22	2nd takil - favourite of the Arabian poets, used in many Cancionero, also found in cante jondo (flamenco)			
1	makhuri - used in the low taverns			

## 3. THE ESTRIBILLO

The estribillo always indicates the theme, the meter and the rhyme which the stanzas are to adopt. The musical scheme for the stanza takes two forms.

1. Spanish Scheme: take the first line of the refrain and repeat it 3 times; then add the second line. The resulting scheme is *a a a b*.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid,

2. Arabic-Persian Scheme: take the 2nd line of the refrain (*b*) and repeat the second line once. Then add the first line (*a*) and the second line (*b*). The resulting scheme is *b b a b*. Number 35 is an example; unfortunately there is no manuscript available.<sup>49</sup>

One single fact stands out with respect to the 15th century Collection of Spanish Songs. Both the music and the words are symmetrically matched. Verses with the same rhyme endings are matched to a particular musical phrase. Indeed, this matching of words and music was not a coincidence.<sup>50</sup> It had been popular during the time of Harun al-Rashid, for whom symmetry, nuances and accents were an important part of the construction of the Arabian-Andalucian poetic and musical system. Rests were also included and were specifically detailed.<sup>51</sup>

## G. LAS CANTÍGAS DE SANTA MARÍA

### 1. LYRIC SYSTEM OF THE CANTÍGAS

Three centuries earlier there had existed in Spain a collection of songs which exhibited exactly the same Arabian-Oriental poetic and musical influences as the Cancionero. The archaic type of songs from which the Cancionero were derived was called Las Cantígas de Santa María. The author of the collection was King Alfonso the Wise.<sup>52</sup>

Poetically, the lyric system of the Cantígas was the same as that of the Andalucian Arabs. 90% were in the zajal form created by the Arabian poets who had come to Al-Andalus in the 9th century. A small strophe of one or two lines, thematic in character, headed each cantíga. This was the refrain which was to be sung by the chorus. A three-lined strophe in monorhyme followed the estribillo and a 4th line with a common rhyme for the soloist followed the strophe.<sup>53</sup>

### 2. LINK TO THE POETRY

In demonstrating the link between the Cantígas and Andalucian Love Poetry, the following points

- <sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 171
- <sup>50</sup> Julian Ribéra, Historia de la Música Árabe Medieval y Su Influencia en la España. Vol. L, Serie G. Madrid: Editorial Voluntad, S.A., 1927, 12.
- <sup>51</sup> Julian Ribéra, La Música de las Cantígas, Vol. III. Madrid: La Real Academia Española, 1922, p. 93.
- <sup>52</sup> Julian Ribéra, Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain. New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 189.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid, p. 192.



may be helpful .

1. The rhyme was absolutely essential to the verse; where there was no rhyme, this was an indication of a caesura or a line that was not full.
2. The estribillo was never divided; only the stanzas were divided at the rhymes.
- 3.(a) The use of a lyric strophe indicated a more complex musical form than that for narrative or epic poetic forms.
- (b) Choral form indicated that the theme was to be continuously interrupted by the chorus.

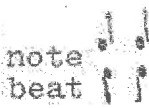
Both of the above statements in #3 substantiate the fact that the music for the Cantígas was written first.

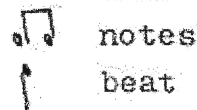
Peculiarity - while the subject and poetic form were not always homogeneous, the music and poetry were always a perfect match. <sup>54</sup>

### 3. MUSICAL FORM OF THE CANTÍGAS

Like the Cancionéro del Palácio , the musical form for the Cantígas de Santa María followed the Arabian zajal *a b x x a b*, which was a fusion of the primitive Arabic-Persian quatrain and the Andalusian Arabic rhyme scheme. Since 54 of the Cantígas are written in the primitive Arabic-Persian form, it would possibly indicate that this form had been introduced to Spain (or already known) by the early Arabian poets.<sup>55</sup>

The musical structure between the Cancionéro and the Cantígas is identical with:

one note per beat -  ; or

  
a subdivided beat -  
(that is, two or more notes over a beat note).

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid,

p. 191.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid,

p. 192.

#### 4. THE ARABIAN RHYTHMS

The 5 main Arabic rhythms found in both collections, of which at least two can be linked to Andalusian Arabian Poetry, are as follows:

# OF CANTIGAS	RHYTHM	EUROPEAN TIME SIGNATURE	ARABIAN RHYTHM	EUROPEAN RHYTHM
149	hejaz - preferred for lute toccatas	2 3 4 4 4 4		
83	ramel	3 4		
12	1st takil - serious, suave, tender, danceable	3 8		
22	2nd takil - favourite of the Arabian poets, used in many Cancionero, also found in cante jondo (flamenco)			
1	makhuri - used in the low taverns			

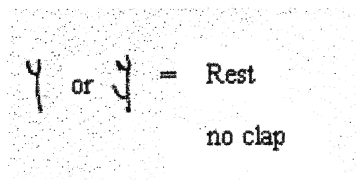
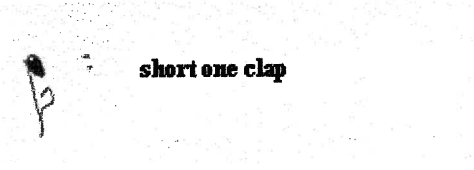
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#### LEGEND:

To find the rhythm for the above-mentioned Arabian rhythms, CLAP and say to the following:

= long one clap



<sup>56</sup> Ibid,







To add the Beat, do the following:

Rest the heel of the foot on the floor with the toe up. When you clap a LONG NOTE put the toe down on the floor and raise it to the original starting position (up). There are two motions, one down and one up with the toe.

When you clap a short note, the toe will be in its raised position.

When you have a rest  and a note , the toe will go down on the rest and up on the note.

					
<b>NOTE</b>					<b>Move foot</b>
<b>FOOT</b>	<b>down up</b>		<b>down up</b>	<b>down up</b>	<b>up and down</b>
<b>HANDS</b>	<b>clap</b>	<b>no clap</b>	<b>clap</b>	<b>clap</b>	<b>evenly</b>

A further link between the Cantígas and Andalusian Love Poetry may be seen in the Alternation of Phrases. Following the scheme of alternate rhyme, phrases I and III of some of the Cantígas end on a tonic or dominant note, while the second phrase usually ends on a note of a lesser used chord.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Barbara Solís,

The Barbara Solís Method of Teaching.  
(Unpublished).

<sup>58</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 208.

Both the Cancioné<sup>ro</sup> del Palá<sup>cio</sup> and Cantí<sup>gas</sup> de Santa Marí<sup>a</sup> had a well-defined harmonic system for both major and minor modes. The system reflected good use of consonant and dissonant chords, and short but bold modulations as a result of the Arabian-Oriental influence which had been brought to Spain in the 9th century. None of these theoretical points were known in Europe until 1792 when a European composer named Rameau wrote a treatise on harmony which became the starting point for European harmony.<sup>59</sup>

## 5. THE ARABIC PERSIAN QUATRAIN

Most of the Cantí<sup>gas</sup> followed the form of the Persian dubait, *a b a a b a*, and the strophic form which evolved out of it (as a result of the ingenious development of the Andalucí<sup>an</sup>-Arabian poets). However, some of the cantí<sup>gas</sup> were also written in the metric form created by the Spanish poets, *a a a b*, (based on the primitive Persian quatrain but altered - see page 8, Part I) and another Spanish invention, the Persian Spanish form, *c c a b*. The new strophic form which evolved out of the Persian dubait was known as the Arabic Persian quatrain. Its form, *a a b a*, was to have a tremendous influence on European music. The form is still in use today.<sup>60</sup>

## H. INFLUENCES OF ANDALUCÍ<sup>AN</sup> LOVE POETRY ON EUROPE

### 1. THE TROUBADOURS

The music of the Troubadours reflects the old Spanish melodies. Their earliest strophic form reflects that of Mocadem of Cabra, the 10th century Andalucí<sup>an</sup> Arabian poet who is credited with the invention of the muwashshat.<sup>61</sup>

### 2. SONGS OF MARCABRU

Songs of Marcabru are eloquent proof of the influence of the Arabian Andalucí<sup>an</sup> metric system. Number 1, Dirai vos senes doptansa, is modelled after the Andalucí<sup>an</sup> quintilla, *a a a a b, c c c c b*. The 4 monorhymed verses are followed by a 5th which is in a common rhyme.

The rhythms of all four of Marcabru's songs are Arabian. Numbers 12 and 4 use the ramel, while number 3 uses the nejez. His songs also contain the same alternations of harmony, modulations and themes as the Cantí<sup>gas</sup>.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p. 204.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p. 221.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 226.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, p. 227.

## I. FLAMENCO AND ANDALUCÍAN LOVE POETRY

A final link between Andalucían Love Poetry and the musical forms of Spain may be seen in flamenco. Flamenco was thought to have originated around the beginning of the 15th century when the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, decided to rid the country of all the minority groups. Expulsion was enforced by the Inquisition. As a result, three persecuted peoples, the Arabs, the Jews and the Gypsies, found themselves allied. Christian dissenters added a fourth element to the blend.

Originating at a most primitive level and created in an atmosphere of underground caves from the elements of the four outcast societies, flamenco was to evolve into a highly sophisticated musical form.

The main form of flamenco in the 15th century was cante jondo or deep song of the soul. Cante jondo was the direct result of the Arabian contribution to the new musical form, poetically and from the standpoint of the dance. An example of the Andalucían-Arabian poetic influence may be seen in the following verse from the Playera. The Playera is a form of flamenco which is sung, danced and played. Originally, the Playera was a lament which was sung only in the procession to the graveyard and again at the gravesite. Its verses, which speak of the relentless stalking of death and the hopelessness of living in a cruel world, follow the Arabian alternate rhyme scheme (Ibn Zamrak).

*Detrás del carríto  
lloraba mi madre  
no lloraba aquito  
que lloraba sangre*

*Behind the funeral cart  
sobbed my mother  
she didn't weep tears  
she wept blood!<sup>63</sup>*

## J. CLOSING REMARKS

The poetry of the Pagan Arabs was the “essence of their history”<sup>64</sup> and revealed the depth of their true culture through its artistry and its beauty. The poetry of the Andalucían Arabs continued to be a historical essence and flourished particularly in Al-Andalúz because of its originality and its inspiration.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> D. E. Pohren,

The Art of Flamenco.  
England: Musical New Services Limited, 1984, p. 23.

<sup>64</sup> A. R. Nykl,

Hispano-Arabic Poetry.  
Baltimore, 1946, p. 400.

<sup>65</sup> Julian Ribéra,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
New York: DaCapo Press, 1970, p. 141.

The musical and rhythmical elements of Andalusian Love Poetry became so unmistakable that they were in later centuries to be distinguished in the Cantigas de Santa María by King Alfonso the Wise and El Cancionero del Palacio.<sup>66</sup> These elements later found their way into the musical form of Spanish flamenco.

The artistic symmetry and richness of the Andalusian Love Poetry has not been the result of “mere hazard”.<sup>67</sup> Rather, through careful cultivation Arabic music and poetry in Spain, it was introduced to Europe where it reached a perfection and elegance that may be compared to European music of the 18th century.<sup>68</sup>

In conclusion, the writer must concur with Señor Julian Ribera that the history of music needs to be rewritten to include facts of supreme importance which reveal the Arabian influence poetically and musically on Spanish music and the enormous debt that European music and poetry owe to the Love Poetry of the Andalusian Arabs.

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<sup>66</sup> H. A. R. Gibb,

Arabic Literature: An Introduction. 2nd. Ed.  
London: Oxford University Press, 1974, p. 190.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid,

p. 191.

<sup>68</sup> Julian Ribera,

Music in Ancient Arabia and Spain.  
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