

Exile and Nostalgia
in Arabic and Hebrew Poetry
in al-Andalus (Muslim Spain)

Thesis submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of London

by

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December, 1987



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A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this study is to examine the notions of "exile" (ghurba) and "nostalgia" (al-ḥanīn ilā-al-Waṭan) in Arabic and Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus (Muslim Spain).

Although this theme has been examined individually in both Arabic and Hebrew literatures, to the best of my knowledge no detailed comparative analysis has previously been undertaken. Therefore, this study sets out to compare and contrast the two literatures and cultures arising out of their co-existence in al-Andalus in the middle ages.

The main characteristics of the Arabic poetry of this period are to a large extent the product of the political and social upheavals that took place in al-Andalus. Some of the cities which for many years represented the bastions of Islamic civilization were falling into the hands of the invading Christian army. This gave rise to a stream of poetry that reflects the feelings of exile and nostalgia suffered by those poets who were driven away from their native land.

This Arabic poetry had a substantial influence on the literary works of the Jewish poets who were reared within the cultural circles of the Arabic courts. As a consequence the Hebrew poetry they composed, in many respects, bore the stamp of the Arabic poetry in form and content.

This thesis is divided into three major parts organized as follows: the first part deals with the themes of exile

and nostalgia in Arabic poetry in al-Andalus. It contains three chapters: chapter one begins with a study of the origins of the themes of exile and nostalgia in the Arabic poetic tradition. Chapter two focuses on the nostalgia and lament poetry in al-Andalus describing the characteristics of each period through examining specimens of Andalusian poems. Chapter three is devoted to a study of the poetic product of Ibn Ḥamdīs, the Sicilian (d.1133) and discusses how the themes of exile and nostalgia became the framework of both his life and his poetry.

The second part of the thesis parallels the first part in that it deals with the Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus. It consists of three chapters: chapter one investigates the origins of the concept of the homeland in the Biblical sources. Chapter two discusses the form and the structural scheme of the Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus and the influence of the Arabic poetry on the Hebrew poetic works. Chapter three is devoted to a study of the poetry of the Jewish poet, Judah ha-Levi (d.1140) and his nostalgic expressions for Zion.

The third part is a comparative literary study of two specimen poems of Ibn Ḥamdīs and ha-Levi. The aim of this study is to develop methods for an analysis of the motifs and internal structure of these two poems. The linguistic analysis is focussed mainly on the levels of phonology, morphology and syntax, while the traditional analysis is focussed primarily on the content and imagery.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

There is a number of people who have contributed to this work some way or another, and to whom I owe a debt of gratitude.

First of all I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor J. Wansbrough for his help and constant encouragement without which this work would not have materialised. Working with him proved both intellectually and socially stimulating.

Next I must thank my country, Egypt and its government for providing me with the grant to carry out this research. In particular I would like to thank the Egyptian cultural attaché, Dr. Ahmad Galal.

I would like also to thank Dr. Imran Alawiye and his wife, Zaynab as well as Mr. Jamal Ouhalla for their invaluable assistance.

I wish also to express particular thanks to Dr. Ibtisam al-Bassam for her help.

Finally, special thanks to my dear parents and wife for their care and patience that have sustained me throughout this work.

C O N T E N T S

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P A R T O N E

Exile and Nostalgia in Arabic Poetry

Chapter One: Origin and Development

Chapter Two: Nostalgia and Lament Poetry in
 al-Andalus

Chapter Three: Exile and Nostalgia in the Poetry
 of Ibn Ḥamdīs, the Sicilian

C h a p t e r O n e

Origin and Development

- (1) Man and his environment
- (2) Al-ḥanīn in ancient literature
- (3) The concept of al-waṭan in the Arabic tradition
- (4) Al-ḥanīn in pre-Islamic poetry
- (5) Islam's view of al-waṭan and al-ḥanīn (Qur'ān, Hadīth)
- (6) Al-ḥanīn in Islamic poetry (early Islamic, Umayyad, Abbasid)
- (7) Aṭlāl, ḥanīn and 'āthār poetry

There is no doubt that man is influenced physically and spiritually by his environment. The Arab sociologist Ibn Khaldūn, in his celebrated book Al-Muqaddima refutes the idea that black people inherited their dark colour from their ancestor Hām, the son of Noah, and indicates that they gained their dark colour through the sunny climate of their environment.⁽¹⁾

It may be said that nostalgia is a sentiment recorded in the earliest literature. Ancient Egyptian literature, for instance, exhibits concern with that sentiment. For example, four thousand years ago, a story was narrated about an Egyptian called Sinuhe who escaped from Egypt to Syria, where he lived in luxury for a long time. In spite of that he missed his country and decided to return. He wrote a song relating his story and asking his god to allow him to return to his homeland:

"I was nothing in Egypt when I escaped, and now I am a respectable and well-known person in the royal court in Syria. I was starving in my country, and now I help the poor people to survive. I left my country because I had nothing to wear, and now I am wearing the best clothes. I was lonely and solitary, but now I have many friends and slaves serving me. Now I live in a big luxurious house and have no problems. But in spite of all that I miss my country very much. O god, please help me to return to my country, where my heart lies, and fulfil my dream to be buried where I was born."⁽²⁾

The Arab writer al-Jāḥiẓ comments on the feeling of nostalgia of the Greek kings as follows:

"Those Greeks obtained all they wished when they left their country, enjoyed themselves and never missed anything other than their country. In spite of their success and the great wealth they gained, they felt homesick and yearned for their homeland." It is interesting to note that Persian tradition defines the wise man as follows:

"The wise man is he who helps his brothers and yearns for his country." (3)

An Indian philosopher also declares that man should love his country as much as he loves his parents, because they feed him and are themselves fed by the country. (4)

A literary study of Dīwān al-ʿArab from the pagan ages (al-Jāhiliyya) up to Muslim Spain shows that the phenomenon of al-ḥanīn ilā al-waṭan occupies an important part not only in the Arabs' sentiments but also in their tradition and literature.

It seems necessary at the beginning to define the concept of waṭan (homeland) in Arabic tradition. Classical Arabic dictionaries refer to the word waṭan as the gathering place of sheep and camels. (5) Later on the definition was expanded to include man and his dwelling place. (6) It is worth pointing out that waṭan, according to the classical dictionaries, does not have to be the birth-place.

The climatic and geographical conditions of the Arabian peninsula rendered it unsuitable for cultivation or permanent

settlement. Its inhabitants shifted continually from one place place to another in search of pasturage and water.⁽⁷⁾ The philologist , Ibn Sayyida, therefore interprets waṭan as follows, "al-waṭan is any place where one stays for a period of time."⁽⁸⁾ However, the concept of al-waṭan in the Jāhil-iyya (pre-Islamic period) seems to be social more than geographical, in that it does not designate specific boundaries, but relies mainly on series of family and tribal relationships.⁽⁹⁾

A study shows that the Arabs who lived in the Arabian peninsula before Islam were deeply attached to their land and yearned for their desert environment even when they moved to a better place. The Classical Arabic tradition preserves a number of anecdotes and proverbs exhibiting their emotions and nostalgia⁽¹⁰⁾, for example:

- ١ - يحب الأوطان عمرت البلدان
- ٢ - أكرم الأبل أشدها حنيناً إلى أوطانها
- ٣ - من إمارات العاقل بره لآخوانه وحنينه لأوطانه
- ٤ - الغربة كربة والقلّة ذلة
- ٥ - لا تجف أرضاً بها قوايلك ، ولا تشك بلداً فيه قبائلك
- ٦ - يحن اللبيب إلى وطنه كما يحن النجيب إلى عطنه
- ٧ - كما أن لحاضنتك حق لبنها - كذلك لأرضك حق وطنها

1. Countries are inhabited because of nostalgia.
2. The best camel is the one which yearns for its dwelling-place the most.
3. The wise man is he who is kind to his brothers and misses his country
4. Alienation is a disaster and loneliness is lowliness.

5. Do not turn your back on where your intimates live and do not complain about a country in which your tribes dwell.
6. The sage yearns for his homeland like the good camel longing for its place.
7. Just as you owe your mother who feeds you, so you owe your country which accommodates you.

It is interesting to note that Arabs in the Jāhiliyya had the custom of taking some sand from their land with them when they travelled, and they would smell it as a cure in case of illness:

ولا بد في اسفارنا من قبضة
من التراب نُستقّاها لـحب الموالد (11)

The Arab writer al-Jāḥiẓ relates that when some bedouin were asked about happiness and humiliation they said that happiness is to stay at home and live amongst brothers, and humiliation is to be torn away from one's country and to keep moving from place to place.⁽¹²⁾

According to the Classical concept of waṭan which, as we mentioned, is anywhere one stays for a period of time, the Arab gained a new waṭan whenever he moved to a new place, for instance in search of fresh pasturage for his livestock. He did not dismiss the old waṭan from his life however. He kept it in his mind and when he passed by or travelled near that place he would pause at his diyār (that is to say, his dwelling place or homeland) and recall his happy memories, and he would weep over the aṭlāl (the ruins of his former dwelling-place).⁽¹³⁾

It is worth pointing out that the phenomenon of al-wuqūf 'alā-'l-diyār wa 'l-būkā' 'alā al-aṭlāl (pausing at the dwelling-place and weeping over its ruins) occupies a very important part of classical Arabic poetry in the Jāhiliyya.

The pre-Islamic poets, when composing a qaṣīda, would introduce it with a nasīb ('elegiac reminiscence' in the words of H.A.R. Gibb), designed to evoke nostalgia and sympathy on the part of the listener.⁽¹⁴⁾ They would describe the aṭlāl, the places where the beloved once camped with her tribe in the sands and where now the sands begin to cover the last traces of happy hours spent in a now vacant desert. The Jāhili poets, in the aṭlāl section of their poems, would also describe everything attached to the diyār and its aṭlāl. I shall now list the motifs the Jāhili poets dealt with in their aṭlāl poetry which was evoked by their yearning for the diyār and their longing for the happy past spent with the beloved.

The motifs, as the Classical Arab critic, al-'Āmidī, sets them out in his celebrated book, Al-Muwāzana, are as follows:

- a) - the pause at the diyār;
- b) - greeting the diyār;
- c) - the designation of the site of the diyār;
- d) - weeping over the diyār;
- e) - the duration of the parting;
- f) - questioning the diyār and receiving no response;
- g) - the watering-call for the diyār;
- h) - the description of the diyār and its ruins;

- i) - the destruction of the diyār;
- j) - the wild animals living in the abandoned diyār;
- k) - the poet's mood when pausing at the diyār;
- l) - the poet asking his friends to share his sorrow;
- m) - the mention and praise of the speaker's beloved.

It should be noted that it is not necessary to begin with the first motif of the list and that the poet does not have to deal with all these motifs in one poem.⁽¹⁵⁾

It is worth pointing out that the aṭlāl section of the poem is not meant only to evoke sympathy and nostalgia; it is in fact the most highly stylized section of the poem, and as such, is the section where the technical competence of the poet is demonstrated.⁽¹⁶⁾

As a specimen of these aṭlāl poems I quote some lines from a famous collection of seven odes called the Mu'allāqāt which are either pre-Islamic or were written in the early Islamic era (late sixth or early seventh century).

The most celebrated poet of al-Jāhiliyya, Imru' al-Qays (d. 450 A.D.) was fond of adventure and travel. Ibn Qutayba reflects the high esteem in which Imru' al-Qays is held, in that he attributes the poet with having invented the deserted encampment theme in the nasīb section.⁽¹⁷⁾

"Halt (you two) and let us weep for the memory of a
beloved and an abode at the edge of the dune's winding,
between al-Dakhul and Hawmal,
And Tudih and al-Miqrat, whose trace is not erased by
what wove across them of north and south wind.

You see the dung of the oryxes in their courts and
their hollows, as though it were grains of pepper.
As though I, the morning of parting, the day they
loaded, by the acacias of the tribe, were a splinter
of colocynth.

Halting in them, my companions, over me, their mounts,
say, "Don't die (of grief), but be seemly."

Truly, my remedy is tears poured out - but is there at
a fading trace any reliance?"

قِفَا بَنِكَ مِنْ ذِكْرِي حَيْبٍ وَمَنْزِلٍ	بِسَقَطِ الْأَوَى بَيْنَ الدَّخُولِ وَخَوْمِلٍ
فَتَوْضِحَ فَلِمِ الْقَرَاةِ لَمْ يَمُفْ رُسْمُهَا	إِمَّا نَسَجْتَهَا مِنْ جَنُوبٍ وَشَمَالٍ
تَرَى بَعَرَ الْأَرَامِ فِي عَرَصَاتِهَا	وَقِيَعَانِهَا كَأَنَّهُ حَبٌّ فُلْفُلٍ
كَأَنِّي غَدَاةَ الْبَيْنِ يَوْمَ تَحْمَلُوا	لَدَى سَمَرَاتِ الْحَيِّ نَاقِفٌ حَنْظَلٍ
وُقُوفًا بِهَا صَحْبِي عَلَى مَطِيئِهِمْ	يَقُولُونَ لَا تَهْلِكِ أَسَى وَتَجْمَلِ
وَهَذَا شِفَاؤِي عَبْرَةً إِنْ سَفَحْتُهَا	وَهَلْ عِنْدَ رَسْمِ دَارِسٍ مِنْ مُعْوَلٍ!
كَدِينِكَ مِنْ أُمَّ الْحَوَيْرِثِ قَبْلَهَا	وَجَارَتِهَا أُمَّ الرَّبَابِ بِمَاسَلِ
فَقَاضَتْ دُمُوعُ الْعَيْنِ مَنَى صَبَابَةً	عَلَى النَّحْرِ حَتَّى بَلَ دَمْعِي مَخْمَلِي (18)

These lines (1-6) show a great deal of thematic unity of observation and sentiment. They belong to the nasīb section where most of the aṭlāl motifs are presented, the location is clearly designated, but no individual woman is mentioned. The poet shifts from the present to the past, to the scene of his memories accompanied by friends who halt their camels to comfort him. The word "wuqūfan", "standing, halting" in line 5 plays a complex triple role (associatively not

grammatically), describing the poet in the past, the poet in the present (still weeping) and the poet's friends. However, the poet, in line 6, shifts from nostalgia which is the basic characteristic of the nasīb to a series of light and boastful romantic reminiscences, which are loosely linked together by the fact that the incidents take place at different times of day. The ending allows the poet to restate the mood of unhappiness which is associated with the nasīb.⁽¹⁹⁾

Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā (d. 607 A.D.) is one of the greatest representatives of pre-Islamic poetry. Zuhayr belonged to a well-off and respectable family which had the distinction of producing a galaxy of fine poets.⁽²⁰⁾ He was called the foremost poet (shā'ir 'l-shu'arā') by the caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.⁽²¹⁾ I quote the nasīb section of his celebrated mu'allaqā:

Is there from Umm Awfa a trace which has not spoken,
in the rocky-plain of al-Darraḡ and al-Mutathallam,
And a dwelling of hers in al-Raqmatayn, as-though it
were the retracings of a tattoo in the sinews of a wrist?
In it the wide-eyed (wild cows) and the oryxes walk (in)
succession and their young arise from every reclining-place.
I halted at it after twenty years, then (with) difficulty
I recognized the dwelling, after (effort of) imagination:
Trivet-stones, blackened, in the resting-place of a pot, and
a ditch like the breastwork of the cistern, which is not
breached.

Then when I knew the dwelling, I said to its spring campsite,
"Good morning, o spring-campsite, and hail."

أَمِنْ أُمَّ أَوْفَى دِمْنَةً لَمْ تَكَلِّمْ بِحَوْمَانَةِ الدَّرَاجِ فَالْمُتَنَلِّمْ
 وَدَارَ لَهَا بِالرَّقْمَيْنِ كَأَنَّهَا مَرَّاجِعُ وَشَمِّ فِي نَوَاشِرِ مِقْصَمِ
 بِهَا الْعَيْنُ وَالْأَرَامُ يَمُشِينَ حَلْفَةً وَأَطْلَاؤُهَا يَنْهَضُنْ مِنْ كُلِّ مَجْشَمِ
 وَقَفْتُ بِهَا مِنْ بَعْدِ عَشْرِينَ حِجَّةَ فَلَأَيَّا عَرَفْتُ الدَّارَ بَعْدَ نَوَاسِمِ
 أَتَانِي نُسُغًا فِي مُعَمَّرَسٍ مِرْجَلِ وَنَوْبًا كَجِدْمِ الْخَوْضِ لَمْ يَنْتَلِمِ
 فَلَمَّا عَرَفْتُ الدَّارَ قُلْتُ لِرَبْعِهَا أَلَا انْعَمَ صَبَاحًا أَيُّهَا الرَّبِيعُ وَالسَّمِ (22)

These lines deal with the deserted campground. The poet hardly recognizes the traces of his beloved's diyār, which are like tattoo marks in the campground now occupied by gazelles and antelopes, and he must use his imagination to evoke the encampment, in order to salute it. These aṭlāl lines show the poet's attachment to his beloved's diyār. He includes a great deal of circumstantial detail, the name of the woman, the period of time that has elapsed (twenty years), and a number of place names, and in line 6 he shows that this is where he belongs.

Another good example of aṭlāl poetry may be seen in these lines of the mu'allāqa of 'Antara b. Shaddād (525-615 A.D.):

Have the poets deserted a place-needing-to-be-patched?
 Or have you recognized the dwelling (only) after
 imagination?
 O dwelling of 'Abla in al-Jawā', speak - Good morning,
 dwelling of 'Abla and hail.

So I halted my she-camel in it and (it was) as-though
it were an Apadana, that I might fulfil the need of
the lingerer,

Whereas 'Abla camps in al-Jawā' and our people in
al-Haẓn and al-Ṣammān and al-Mutathallam.

May you be greeted, as a remnant whose epoch has long-
past, (which) became desolate and empty after Umm al-
Haytham.

She camped in the land of the visitors, and the seeking
of you became difficult for me, daughter of Makhrām.

هل غادر الشعراءُ من متردِّمٍ أمْ هل عرفتَ الدَّارَ بعدَ تَوَهُّمٍ
يادارَ عَيْبَلَةَ بِالْجَوَاءِ نَكَلَمِي - وَرِعْيَى صَبَاحًا دَارَ عَيْبَلَةَ وَأَسْلَمِي
فَوَقَفْتُ فِيهَا نَاقَتِي وَكُأْنَهَا فَدَنْ لَأَقِضِيَ حَاجَةَ الْمَتَلَوِّعِ
وَتَحْمِلُ عَيْبَلَةُ بِالْجَوَاءِ وَأَهَانَا بِالْحَزَنِ فَالْصَّمَّانِ فَالْمَتَشَلِّمِ
حُبِّيَّتْ مَنْ طَلَلِ تَقَادَمَ عَهْدُهُ أَقْوَى وَأَقْفَرُ بَعْدَ أُمِّ الْمُهَيْمِ
حَلَّتْ بِأَرْضِ الزَّائِرِينَ فَاصْبَحَتْ عَسِيرًا عَلَى طَلَابِكَ ابْنَةَ مُخْرَمِ (23)

The poet begins his nasīb with a rather enigmatic question
and then addresses the camp-ground of his beloved 'Abla
using the second person pronoun which exhibits his feelings
of nostalgia towards the diyār of his beloved and his people
and he mentions a list of place-names as a sign of love and
yearning.

The Bedouin poet, Labīd b. Rabī'a (d. 661) was deeply
attached to his diyār and its aṭlāl as he demonstrates in
the following lines:

The dwellings have become-obliterated, their pitching-
 place and standing-place, in Minā, their Ghawl
 and Rijām have gone-wild,
 And the water-courses of al-Rayyān, their traces are
 denuded, weathered-smooth, just-as their stone-slabs
 have preserved the inscriptions,
 Traces (such that) there have terminated, after the era
 of their habitation, years elapsed, their profane-
 months and their holy-months,
 Which are provided-for in the spring-months of the stars,
 and which there has struck the out-pouring of the
 thunderers, their cloud-burst and their drizzle,
 From every night-travelling (cloud) and darkling morning
 (cloud), and evening (cloud), reechoing their thundering.
 So the sprouts of wild-rocket went-up, and there have
 brought-forth-young on the (two) slopes its gazelles
 and its ostriches.

تَنَفَّت الدِّيارَ مَحَلَّها فَمُقامَها بِمِني تَابَدَ غَوَّها فِرْجَانِها
 فَسَدَ أَفْعُ الرِّيَّانِ عُرَّتِي رَسْمِها خَلَقًا كَمَا ضَمِنَ الوُحْيَ سِلَاقِها
 دِ مَن تَجَرَّمَ بَعْدَ عَهْدِ أَهْلِها حَجَجَ خَلَوْنَ حَلَاها وَحَرَامِها
 رَزَقَتْ مَرابِيعَ النُّجُومِ وَصَافِها وَذُقْ الرِّواعِدِ جَوْدُها فِرْها
 مَن كُلِّ سَاريَةٍ وَغَادِ مُذْجِنِ وَعَشِيَّةٍ مُتْجَاوِبِ إِرْزَامِها
 فَتَمَلَّأَ فُرُوعُ الأَئْيَمِّانِ وَأَطْفَافُ

بِالْجَنَّةِ ظِلَاؤُها وَنَمَامُها (24)

The nasīb section in Labīd's poem (21 lines) is a fine piece
 of nostalgic description. In these six lines quoted above
 the poet sets out to establish a mood of sorrow and sympathy,

but at the same time he seems to be more fascinated with his diyār and the changes in the camp-ground, than grieved by the fading traces of the camp of his beloved. The lines refer to a number of places where he had kept the company of his beloved and which, since her departure, have become the haunts of wildlife.

It may be said that the concept of al-waṭan in early times was limited to the neighbourhood where men and their families dwelt, and that concept has expanded and developed during the Islamic period. Obviously, with the Qur'ān and with Islam, deep religious feelings unknown to the Jāhiliyya were born and reached gigantic proportions.⁽²⁵⁾ Islam rejected the prevalent tribal spirit which dominated Arab life in the Jāhiliyya and spread a new spirit of peace and brotherhood in the Arabian peninsula.

It is worth pointing out that the Qur'ān refers, in some verses, to the strong relationship between man and his homeland and shows how emotionally stressful it is to leave or to be driven from the homeland, e.g.

"وَمَالْنَا أَلَا نَقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أَخْرَجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَائِنَا"

"And why should we fight in God's cause when we and our children have been driven from our homelands?"⁽²⁶⁾

Another example can be seen in these verses:

(قال الملا من قوم فرعون : إن هذا ساحر عليم ، يريد أن يخرجكم من أرضكم ، فإذا تأمرون ؟) .

(قالوا : إن هذان لساحران ، يريدان أن يخرجاك من أرضك بسحرهما) .
ضخكم بسحر

"The great ones among Pharaoh's people said: "Verily, this is indeed a sorcerer of great knowledge who wants to drive you from your land." (Said Pharaoh) "What, then, do you advise?" They said (to one another): "These two are surely sorcerers intent on driving you from your land by their sorcery." "(27)

These verses show the deep attachment of the Egyptians to their land when they thought that Moses and his brother, Aaron, came to expel them from their country.

One more example exhibits the prophet Abraham's patriotism and nostalgic feeling for his country:

« قال ابراهيم . رب اجعل هذا البلد آمناً ، وارزق أهله من الثمرات . . »

"O my sustainer, make this a land secure, and grant its people fruitful sustenance." (28)

A prophetic tradition (ḥadīth) also shows how deeply the prophet Muḥammad was attached to his native city, Makka. When he had to leave he expressed a feeling of nostalgia and patriotism. Addressing Makka, he said:

"By God, you are the most lovely land in God's eyes and I have had to leave you; otherwise I would never have left you." (29)

However, when Muslims started the conquests to spread Islam over the world, they found themselves, for the first time, far from their countries and compelled to live in different environments and climates. Many poems were written at that time exhibiting feelings of deep alienation and nostalgia, e.g.

أقريّة الوادى التى خان الفها من الدهر أحداثُ أتت وخطوبُ
تعالى أطارحك البكاء فإننا كلانا بمرّ الشاهجان غريب (30)

The poet is using the standard image of addressing the bird, which weeps over its partner's departure, in order to exhibit his sense of alienation in the foreign country. Another example from this era can be seen in these lines which show the poet suffering from alienation in Iran where the snow, to his astonishment, covers the earth. He yearns for his country, Iraq, and its soil:

وأرى بمرّ الشاهجان تنكربُ أرضُ تتابعُ ثلجها المذرورُ
أسنى على برّ العراقِ وبحرِهِ أن الفؤادَ بشحومِ معذورُ (31)

There are also some lines which show how much the Arab poets missed their desert environment and its date palms:

ألا فاسلمى يا نخلة بين قادس وبين المذيب لا يجاورك النخل (32)
ألا يا نخلة الركبان لازلت فانضرى ولا زال فى اكناف جرعائك النخل (32) (33)
أيا نخلة دون المذيب بتلعة سقيت الغواصي المدجنات من النخل (33) (34)
أيا نخلة دون المذيب بتلعة سقيت الغواصي المدجنات من النخل (34)

A literary study of the Islamic poetry in all Islamic periods (early Islamic, Umayyad and Abbasid), shows that the majority of poets continued to begin their poems with an

aṭlāl section, despite the fact that many of them did not live in the desert or even know it. That is not surprising because the poems are derived from Arabic origins and bedouin sources.⁽³⁵⁾ When the first muhājirūn had to leave Makka and went to Yathrib, they wrote poetry expressing their yearning for their country and their wish to return. One of these poets exhibits his attachment to the soil of his country, comparing it to herbs with special fragrances:

أَكَرَّرُ طَرْفِي نَحْوَ نَجْدٍ وَأُنِّي إِلَيْهِ، وَأَنْ لَمْ يُدْرِكِ الطَّرْفُ، أَنْظَرُ
حَنِينًا إِلَى أَرْضٍ كَبَانَ تَرَابُهَا إِذَا أَمْطَرْتُ عَوْدٌ وَمَسْكٌ وَعَنْبَرُ
بِلَادُهُ كَأَنَّ الْأَقْحَوَانَ بِرَوْضَةٍ وَنُورَ الْأَقْحَى وَشَى بُرْدٍ مَحْبَرُ
(36) أَحْنُ إِلَى أَرْضِ الْحِجَازِ وَحَاجَتِي خِيَامُهُ بِنَجْدٍ دُونَهَا الطَّرْفُ يَقْصُرُ

Another good example of al-ḥanīn, that is to say yearning for the homeland, can be seen in these lines by the poet 'Urwa b. Ḥizām, who illustrates in an artistic image his ḥanīn for his beloved country while his camel at the same time yearns for its home:

فَمَنْ يَكُ لَمْ يَفْرِضْ فَنَانِي وَنَاقَتِي بِحَجَرٍ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْحِمَى غَرِيزَانِ
هُوَ نَاقَتِي خَلْفِي وَقُدَّامِي الْهُوَى وَأُنِّي وَأَيَّاهَا لِمُخْتَلَفَانِ
تَحْنُ فُتُبْدِي مَا بَهَا مِنْ صَبَابَةٍ وَاخْفِي الَّذِي لَوْلَا الْأَسَى لَقَضَّائِي
(37) فَيَا كَبْدِينَا أَجْمَلَا قَدْ وَجَدْتُمَا بِأَهْلِ الْحِمَى مَا لَمْ يَجِدْ كَبْدَانِ

The poet Waḍḍāḥ al-Yaman could not stay in Syria away from his country. He recalls his diyār and his beloved, begging the winds to send his greeting to both of them:

أَبَتُ بِالشَّامِ نَفْسِي أَنْ تَطْيِبَا تَذَكَّرْتُ الْمَنَازِلَ وَالْحَبِيبَا
تَذَكَّرْتُ الْمَنَازِلَ مِنْ شَعُوبٍ وَحَيًّا أَصْبَحُوا قَطَعُوا شَعُوبَا
سَبَّوْا قَلْبِي فَحَلَّ بِحَيْثُ حَلُّوْا وَيُمَظِّمُ إِنْ دَعَوْا أَلَا يُجِيبَا
أَلَا لَيْتَ الرِّيحَ لَنَا رَسُولُ إِلَيْكُمْ إِنْ شَمَالًا أَوْ جَنُوبَا (38)

The poet Jamāl b. Ma'mar (d. 701) shows his pride and patriotism for his country, the Ḥijāz:

أَنَا جَمِيلٌ وَالْحِجَازُ وَطَنِي فِيهِ هَوَى نَفْسِي وَفِيهِ شَجَنِي (39)

Another example is in these lines by the poet Abū Ziyād al-Ṭā'ī, where he exhibits his hānin and nostalgia for the country which raised him and which he had to live away from:

أَحَقُّ أَعْبَادَ اللَّهِ أَنْ لَسْتُ نَاسِيَا بِلَادِي وَلَا قَوْمِي وَلَا سَاكِنَا نَجْدَا
وَلَا نَظَرَ أَنْحَا الْحُمَى الْيَوْمَ نَظَرَةً أَسْأَلِي بِهَا قَلْبِي وَلَا مُحَدِّثَا عَهْدَا
بِلَادُهَا نِيَطَتْ عَلَى تَمَائِي وَكَانَ بِهَا عَصْرُ الصَّبَا نَضِرَ آرْعَدَا
بِلَادُهَا قَوْمِي وَأَرْضُ أَحِبِّهَا وَإِنْ لَمْ أَجِدْ مِنْ طَوْلِ هَجْرَتِهَا بُدْأَا (40)

The image of the camels evoking the poet's hānin for his country is employed in these lines by Majnūn Layla (Qays b. al-Mulawwah) who greets his diyār and his beloved as well:

أَحْنُ إِذَا رَأَيْتُ جَمَالَ قَوْمِي وَأَبْكِي إِنْ سَمِعْتُ لَهَا حَنِينَا
سَقَى الْغَيْثُ الْمَجِيدُ بِلَادَ قَوْمِي وَأَنْ خَلَّتِ الدِّيَارُ وَأَنْ بَلِينَا
عَلَى نَجْدٍ وَسَاكِنِ أَرْضِ نَجْدٍ تَحِيَّاتُ يَرْحُنُ وَيَقْتَدِينَا (41)

The poet emphasizes his theme through the intensive use of words referring to his country and his people: "aḥinnu, ḥanīnan, jimāl qawmī, bilād qawmī, al-diyār, arḍ, Najd"

(yearn, yearning, my peoples' camels, my peoples' countries, the dwelling places, land, Najd).

In another poem he declares that life means nothing to him away from his homeland and his beloved:

وَأَنْ يَكُ لَا لَيْلٍ وَلَا نَجْدٌ فَأَعْتَرِفُ بهجرٍ إلى يوم القيامةِ والوعدِ (42)

The poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a (d. 720 A.D.) demonstrates his feelings of homesickness. He yearns for his country and declares that no other place can be an alternative to it:

هيهات من أمة الوهاب منزلنا إذا حملنا بسيف البحر من عدنِ
وحل أهلك أجياداً فليس لنا الا التذكر ، أو حظ من الحزنِ
لا داركم دارنا يا وهب أن نرحلت نواك عنا ، ولا أوطانكم وطني
خلست أملك إلا أن أقول إذا ذكرت : لا يمدنك الله ياسكني (43)

Another good example of hanīn imagery can be seen in these lines by the poet al-Farazdaq (d. 730 A.D.) who employs the camel in an artistic image as an element which evokes his tears and his yearning for his country:

وليلة بتنا ديرة حسان نبيت هجوداً وعيساً كالخسبياتِ ضُفرا
نبكت لنا قفى ليلاً فهاج بكاؤها فؤاداً إلى أهل الوريعةِ أصورا
وحنت حنيناً منكراً هيّجت به على ذى هوى من شوقه ما تنكرا
فبتنا قعوداً بين ملتزم الهوى وناهى جان العين أن يتحدثراً
تروم على نمان في الفجرِ ناقي
وان هي حنت كنت بالشوقِ اعذرا (44)

The poet Jarīr (d. 734 A.D.) uses the standard image of the

wind and the mountain to refer to his enchantment and nostalgia for his country:

يا حبذا جبلُ الريانِ من جبلٍ وحبذا ما كنُ الريانِ من كانا
 وحبذا نفعاتُ من يمانيةٍ تاتيكَ من قِبَلِ الريانِ أحيانا
 هبت شمالا فذكرى ما ذكرُكمُ عند الصفاة التي شرقي حوراننا (45)

The Abbasid poet Abū Tammām follows the majority of the Jāhilī poets and links the beloved to the homeland. The two merge to become a symbol of love and yearning:

نقلُ ذؤادك حيث شئت من الهوى ما الحب إلا للحبيب الأول
 كم منزل في الأرض يألفه الفتى وحنينه أبداً لأول منزل (46)

The poet Ibn 'l-Rūmī attempts to answer the question, Why does one love one's country? He believes that the deep attachment to the homeland and the nostalgic emotions for it derive their aspiration mainly from the happier times spent with the beloved ones. He portrays in a fine image his homeland as a body where his soul is at peace:

ولى وطنٌ آليتُ أن لا أتيه وألا أرى غبرى له الدهر مالكا
 عهدتُ به شرخَ الشبابِ ونعمةً كنعمة قوم أصبحوا في ظلالكا
 فقد ألفتُ النفسُ حتى كأنه لها جسدٌ لولاهُ غودرتُ هالكا
 وحبَّبتُ أوطانَ الرجالِ إليهم ما رُبُّ قضاها الشبابُ هالكا
 إذا ذكروا أوطانهم ذكرتهم عهود الصبا فيها فحنوا لذلكا (47)

All these examples, from the Jāhilī era up to the Abbasid period, prove, basically, in my view, the developing link between the atḷāl theme in the Jāhilī era and the ḥanīn and ghurba (yearning and alienation) in the Islamic

period. The aṭlāl, in spite of the fact that there is no complete poem devoted to that theme, traditionally occupies the introduction of the majority of Jāhilī poetry. In that section, the poet pours out his emotions and attachment to his old diyār which he had to leave. Most of the Classical Arab critics interpret the phenomenon of al-wuqūf ‘alā al-aṭlāl (pausing at the ruins) as a consequence of the desert environment which forces its inhabitants to shift frequently, searching for pastures and water.⁽⁴⁸⁾ They pause at the aṭlāl recalling their happy past and formulate just such feelings of nostalgia and yearning.⁽⁴⁹⁾

The Egyptian critic Shawqī Ḍayf indicates that Arabs have been brought up with affection for the dwelling place embodied in the aṭlāl poetry of the Jāhiliyya and they developed and expanded it until it became an independent theme, entitled al-ḥanīn ilā al-waṭān (yearning for the homeland) which occupies much of Arabic poetry. It uses the standard imagery of the beloved's diyār or employs the wind and pigeons as elements which evoke the poets yearning for the homeland.⁽⁵⁰⁾ The majority of modern Arab critics agree with this view since the aṭlāl is the sanctuary and the refuge in which the Arabs lived for a while and had happy memories of their beloved people. Therefore they feel grateful and express their yearning and patriotism for their old homeland which they had to leave.⁽⁵¹⁾

Moreover, the phenomenon of the aṭlāl and weeping over it can be interpreted as a lament over the poet's fate and his suffering from the severe life in the desert where no

settlement is a permanent home. Hence he keeps searching and yearning for his memories in the aṭlāl.⁽⁵²⁾

It is worth noting that the genre entitled al-wuqūf 'alā al-āthār (standing amongst ruins) derives from the aṭlāl poetry, using almost the same imagery and the same motifs. The poet laments over the ruins of his city or his country, recalling the past glory of his people and expressing his emotions and yearning for that great past.⁽⁵³⁾ It can be said that the origin of al-āthār poetry was in the east, particularly in Iraq, where the poets lamented and wept over the destruction of two of the most important cities at that time, Baghdād and Baṣra. In the year 812 A.D. Baghdād was attacked and devastated by al-Ma'mūn. The poet 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Malik stands amongst the ruins of his beloved city weeping over it and his people and recalling its past glory:

من ذا أصابك يا بغدادُ بالعينِ	ألم تكني زماناً قرّة العينِ
ألم يكن فيك قوم كان مسكنهم	وكان قريبتهم زيناً من الزينِ
صاح الغرابُ بهم بالبين فافترقوا	ماذا لقيت بهم من لوعة البينِ
أستودع الله أرواماً ما ذكرتهم	إلا تحدر ماء العين من عيني
كانوا ففرقهم دهرٌ وصدّ عنهم	والدهر بصدعٍ ما بين الفريقينِ (54)

Another example of the same theme can be seen in these lines by Ibn 'l-Rūmī who laments the city of Baṣra which was violently hit by the long rebellion of the Zanj slaves, black people from East Africa pressed into servitude in the salt pans of lower Iraq. The insurrection lasted from A.D. 870 to 883; Baṣra was devastated in 871 A.D.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Ibn 'l-Rumi wrote the following lament over the destruction of the city, opening with a nasīb, whose theme is the sleeplessness

of the distraught lover:

Sweet sleep has been barred from my eyes by their
preoccupation with copious tears.

What sleep (is possible) after the great misfortunes
that have befallen Baṣra?

What sleep (is possible) after the Zanj have violated
openly the sacred places of Islam?

This indeed is such an affair as could scarcely have
arisen in the imagination.

Wide awake we have witnessed matters which it would
have sufficed us were they visions seen in a dream.

The accursed traitor ventured how recklessly against
her (Baṣra) and against God

And named himself without right an Imam - may God not
guide aright his labours as Imam.

My soul cries alas for thee, O Baṣra, with a sigh
like the blaze of a conflagration;

My soul cries alas for thee, O mine of excellences,
with a sigh that makes me to bite my thumb;

ذاد عن مقلتي لذية المنام	شغلها عنه بالدموع السجام
أنى نوم من بعد ما حلّ بالـ	صرة ما حلّ من هبات عظام
أنى نوم من بعد ما انتهك الزنـ	جُ جبهاراً محارمَ الإسلام
إنّ هذا من الأمور لأمر	كاد أن لا يقوم فى الأوهام
لراينا مستيقظين أسوراً	حسبنا أن تكون رؤيا منام
أقدم الخائن اللعين عليها	وعلى الله أيما إقدام

وتسقى بغير حق إساقاً لا هدى الله سعيه من إسام
 لهف نفسي عليك أيتها البصر رة لهفنا كمثل لهب الضرام
 لهف نفسي عليك يا معدن الخير رات لهفنا يُعْضِنِي إِبْهَاسِي (56)

It is interesting to note that some of the Arab poets wrote a number of poems lamenting the last vestiges of other nations which they once admired and whose former civilizations once fascinated them, e.g.

Anxieties attended my lodging, therefore I turned
 my sturdy she-camel in the direction of the
 white (palace) of Ctesiphon
 Consoling myself for what chances had come (upon me),
 and grieving for a decayed abode of the House of
 Sāsān.

Successive vicissitudes reminded me of them - and
 vicissitudes are apt to make a man remember,
 and forget -

When they dwelt at ease in the shadow of a tall
 (palace) over-looking (the surrounding land),
 wearying and weakening the eyes (that gazed
 at it),

Its gate locked against the mountain of al-Qabq,
 as far as the broad lands of KhTlat and Muks -
 Abodes that were not like the traces of the
 encampment of Su'dā in smooth-swept wastes
 of wildernesses.

حضرت رجليّ الهموم فوجهم أت إلى أبيض المدائن عَنسِي
 أنسلّي عن الحظوظ وآسى لمجلى من آل ساسان دُرْس
 ذكرتهم الخطوب التوالى ولقد تُذكر الخطوب وتُنسى
 وهم خافضون فى ظلّ عالٍ مُشرفٍ يُخسر العيون ويُنسى
 مُفلّق بابّه على جبل القُبّ ق إلى دارتى خِلاطٍ ومُنسى
 حلّل لم تكن كاطلال سُعدي فى قِفارٍ من البساسى مُنسى (57)

The Abbasid poet al-Buḥturī (d. 897 A.D.) writes a long ode (56 lines) in the genre of al-āthār, using the same features and imagery of the atḷāl poetry, referring to the close link between the two themes. The standard imagery of the atḷāl poetry can be seen throughout the lines, e.g. leading the camels to the ruins of the Sasanid throne (line 1), lamenting over its ruins (line 2), referring to the atḷāl of his ancestors (line 6), and weeping over it (line 8) and finally adding a new motif to the āthār poetry, and at the same time giving the reason behind composing his poem which is to learn a lesson by looking at those traces (line 7).

However, the genre of al-wuqūf ‘alā al-āthār along with the al-ḥanīn poetry was expanded and developed in Muslim Spain, al-Andalus, where the environment was suitable and the atmosphere encouraging for such themes as lament and yearning. The long conflict between the rulers of the Spanish Muslim cities, and the conquests from Africa by the Berbers, as well as the wars between the Muslims and the Christians of Northern Spain all inspired the poets to write much poetry expressing their feelings of nostalgia

and patriotism, and exhibiting their lamentations and moaning over their country and their people.

In summary, I have tried to trace in this chapter the origin and development of the Arabic literary tradition that deals with exile and nostalgia. The first four sections are aimed at explaining the notions of al-ḥanīn and al-waṭan as understood in the poetry of the pre-Islamic era. We found out that the Arabs were deeply attached to their land in spite of its arid environment and regarded the nostalgic feeling as a sign of gratitude and wisdom. We also discovered that al-ḥanīn ila al-waṭan became a phenomenon and occupied a major part of the Arabs' life as well as their tradition.

The next two sections were intended to show how the concepts of al-ḥanīn and al-waṭan acquired new nuances and dimensions with the coming of Islam, and how the poets' vision was affected as a consequence. The concept of al-waṭan was expanded and developed to include all Islamic land anywhere.

The last section showed the developing relationship between the aṭlāl motifs in the Jahili poetry and the theme of ḥanīn in the Islamic period and how both were the origin of the birth of the new genre, al-bukā' 'alā al-'āthār, which first appeared in the East and developed and was elaborated in the West, Muslim Spain, al-Andalus.

In the next chapter we will see how nostalgia and lament poetry developed and flourished in the civilized and cultured atmosphere of al-Andalus.

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C h a p t e r T w o

Nostalgia and Lament Poetry in Al-Andalus

1. Nostalgia and nature poetry

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1. Nostalgia and Nature Poetry

Spain, for almost eight centuries in the hands of Muslim leaders, was a great example of a civilized and cultured country. Art, literature, philosophy and science flourished. In Muslim Spain, al-Andalus, "everything that makes a kingdom great and whatsoever tends to civilization was found there."⁽¹⁾

(a) The Caliphal period: joy and pleasure

Under the rule of the Umayyad Caliph, 'Abd 'l-Raḥmān III, the Andalusians became one people and a united nation.⁽²⁾ Cordoba, the capital city of al-Andalus, was one of the largest and strongest cities in the Mediterranean region.⁽³⁾

Poetry flourished in al-Andalus and poets were experimenting with every theme, from the Nawriyya or floral poem to the classical qaṣīda. The Andalusians composed a great number of poems expressing feelings of nostalgia and admiration of nature. Perhaps the most interesting features of the Andalusian poetry are the romantic feeling prevailing in the love poems, and the modern sensibility to the beauties of nature.⁽⁴⁾ Ibn Darrāj al-Qastallī (d. 1030) was one of the greatest poets of al-Andalus to cultivate floral poetry, the Nawriyyāt, which developed quickly and became popular in the Caliphal period. It is not surprising that the Andalusian poets managed skilfully to convert the beauty of their natural landscape into a poetic genre.

The following lines, from the Andalusian Umayyad prince, al-Sharīf 'l-ṬalṬq (d. 1009), are part of a floral poem where he describes the beauty of the Spanish landscape and expresses his joy with it:

And many a cloud sending forth rain is such that
its showers are drinking companion to the garden,
for it sings and pours out drink.

Moreover, it is as though the earth were its jail
and as though the plants were a criminal who has
been imprisoned.

The lightning clothes (the cloud's) sides with its
glittering brocade robe when it flashes,

And it is as though the dark undercloud in it
were a black (horse) on whom (the lightning)
has cast a motley hue,

And as though the wind, when it blows along (that
horse) starts a flock of magpies consisting of
(its own substance) into flight.

On certain nights on which the planets wander
astray, losing their way without being able
to distinguish their orbits,

The lightning lights up its lantern for them so
that the face of their gloom turns into a sunrise,
While the thunder softly mourns, so that the cups
of the rain flow over (the garden) exuding moisture.

The sun rose, weaning (the garden) having wrapped
it in a cloak which submerges it, consisting of
its own light.

Thus it is as though the sun which revives (the
garden's) breath were the brightness of the
beloved reviving the lover burning with desire,
And as if the rose, covered with dew, were the
cheek of the beloved sprinkled with drops
of perspiration.

وَعَمَامٍ هَاطِلٍ شُؤْبُوهُ	نَايِمٍ الرَّوْضِ فَنَنْسَى وَسَقَا
فَكَأَنَّ الْأَرْضَ مِنْهُ مُطِيقٌ	وَكَأَنَّ النَّصَبَ جَانٍ أُطِيقَا
خَلَعَ الْبَرْقُ عَلَى أَرْجَائِهِ	تَوَبَّ وَثِيٍّ مِنْهُ لَمَّا بَرَقَا
وَكَأَنَّ الْعَارِضَ الْجَوْنَ يَسِيهِ	أَدْهَمُ خَلَى عَلَيْهِ بَلَقَا
وَكَأَنَّ الرِّيحَ إِذْ هَبَّتْ لَكُ	طَيَّرَتْ فِي الْجَوِّ مِنْهُ عَقَمَا
فِي لَبَالٍ ضَلَّ سَارِي نَجْمِهَا	حَايِرًا لَا يَسْتَبِينُ الطَّرْقَا
أَوْقَدَ الْبَرْقُ لَهَا مِصْبَاحَهُ	فَأَنْشَنَى وَجْهَ دُجَاهَا مَسْرَقَا
وَشَدَا الرَّعْدُ حَنِينًا فَجَرَّتْ	أَكْوُسُ الْمَزْنِ عَلَيْهِ عَرَقَا
وَعَدَّتْ تَجْدِيبُهُ الشَّمْسُ وَقَدْ	أَلْحَفَتْهُ مِنْ سَنَاها غَرَقَا
فَكَأَنَّ الشَّمْسَ تُحْيِي نَفْسَهُ	غُرَّةُ الْمَعْشُوقِ تُحْيِي الشَّيْثَا
وَكَأَنَّ الْوَرْدَ يَغْلُوهُ النَّدى	وَجَنَّةُ الْمَحْبُوبِ تُنْدِي عَرَقَا (5)

(b) The Mulūk 'l-Tawā'if period: romance and exile

The greatest poet of Muslim Spain was Ibn Zaydūn. He was born in Ruṣafa, a suburb of Cordoba in 1003 A.D. He prospered during the last days of the Umayyad dynasty which had ruled Spain almost since its conquest in 711 A.D.⁽⁶⁾

However in the first half of the eleventh century the Umayyad Caliphate collapsed and Cordoba with the other Andalusian cities came under the rule of the Mulūk 'l-Ṭawā'if (the Party Kings).⁽⁷⁾ Ibn Zaydūn associated with the new rulers, Abū al-Ḥazm al-Jahwar and his son Abū Walīd. Ibn Zaydūn entered upon a political career and became the confidential vizir of Ibn Jahwar.⁽⁸⁾ During this period of his life Ibn Zaydūn was involved in a love affair with Wallādah, a daughter of the last Umayyad Caliph, al-Mustakfī. She was a beautiful and talented princess. After a few months Wallādah turned against Ibn Zaydūn for unknown reasons and had an affair with Ibn 'Abdūs who was acting as a vizir in Abū al-Ḥazm's court. Ibn Zaydūn wrote his rival a scathing satire called the Comic Letter, to which he signed Wallādah's name. Ibn 'Abdūs, for this, denounced Ibn Zaydūn as plotting a secret restoration of the Umayyads and he was imprisoned for almost a year.⁽⁹⁾ He wrote the Serious Letter, begging Abū al-Ḥazm to release him, which had no effect, and later he escaped.⁽¹⁰⁾ Although he was isolated in seclusion in Cordoba, he felt happy about being able to remain in his native city and near his beloved Wallādah. In the hope of seeing her, despite the danger of showing himself openly, he stayed in al-Zahrā', the royal suburb of Cordoba built by 'Abd 'l-Raḥman III.⁽¹¹⁾ His stormy love for Wallādah inspired the better part of his literary production. While hiding in al-Zahrā', he wrote a poem expressing his love and yearning for Wallādah, combined with his fascination for the beauty of the natural landscape.⁽¹²⁾ Both feelings, for the beloved and for nature, are fused, reflecting the

happy memories of the past and the present sad state. This poem depicts the lovely scenery of al-Zahrā' and may serve to illustrate the deep feeling of Ibn Zaydūn for the beauty of his country's natural landscape which is one of the characteristics of Andalusian poetry in general.⁽¹³⁾ I quote the poem, which consists of 15 lines:

I remembered you at al-Zahrā' passionately
 The horizon was free and earth's view limpid
 The breeze was weakening in its evening
 As if it pitied me and was calm in mercy
 The garden with its silvery waters smiled
 As if you tore collars from the neck
 We played, inclining the eye to a flower
 The dew so heavy in it the neck bent
 As if its eyes saw my thinness
 Wept for my pain and tears poured clear
 A rose flashed in its splendid growth
 And light increased in the dawn's eye
 The lotus perfume spreading at night
 Slumber, the dawn roused the eyes from it
 All excites in us my memory of our love for you
 The heart turns not from it so it suffers
 Allah did not quieten a heart your memory split
 It did not fly flapping with love's wings
 If wind's breath wished to carry me at night
 It brought you a man thinned by what he met
 A day, like days of pleasure taken from us
 We spent the night there secretly while time slept

If wishes came true in our meeting with you
 It would have been creation's finest day
 O my high jewel, bright, dear to the soul
 Whenever loves have owned such jewels
 Payment was in sincerity of love for a time
 A field of friendship where we ran freely
 Now the best we had of our promise to you
 Was that you consoled and we remained lovers.

وَالْأَفُقُ طَلَقَ وَمَرَأَى الْأَرْضَ قَدَرًا قَا	إِنِّي ذَكَرْتُكَ بِالزَّهْرِ مُشْتَقَا
كَأَنَّهُ رَقٌّ لِي فَاعْتَلَّ إِشْفَا قَا	وَلِلنَّسِيمِ اغْتِسَلَ فِي أَصَابِلِهِ
كَمَا شَقَقْتَ عَنِ اللَّبَاتِ أَطْوَا قَا	وَالرَّوْضِ عَنْ مَائِهِ الْفِضَى مُبْنَسِمًا
جَالَ النَّدى فِيهِ حَتَّى مَالَ أَعْنَاقَا	نَلْهُو بِمَا يَسْتَمِيلُ الْعَيْنَ مِنْ زَهْرٍ
بَكَتْ لِمَا بِي فَجَالَ الدَّمْعُ رَقْرَا قَا	كَأَنَّ أَعْيُنَهُ إِذْ عَايَنْتْ أَرْقِي
فَازْدَادَ مِنْهُ الضُّحَى فِي الْعَيْنِ إِشْرَا قَا	وَرَدُّ تَأَلَّقَ فِي ضَاغِي مَنَابِتِهِ
وَسَنَانُ نَبَّةٍ مِنْهُ الصُّبْحُ أَحْدَا قَا	سَرَى يَنَافِجُهُ نَيْلُوفَرٌ عَيْقُ
إِلَيْكَ لَمْ يَعُدْ عَنْهَا الصَّدْرُ أَنْ ضَا قَا	كُلُّ يَهِيحٍ لَنَا ذِكْرَى تَشْوِقُنَا
فَلَمْ يَطِرْ بِحَنَاحِ الشَّوْقِ خَفَا قَا	لَا سَكَنَ اللَّهُ قَلْبًا عَقَّ ذِكْرَكَ كُ
وَإِذَا كُمْ بِفَتَى أَضْنَاهُ مَا لَا قَى	لَوْ شَاءَ حَمَلِي نَسِيمَ الرِّيحِ حِينَ سَرَى
بِتَنَا لَهَا حِينَ نَامَ الدَّهْرُ سَرَا قَا	يَوْمٌ كَأَيَّامٍ لَذَاتٍ لَنَا انْصَرَمَتْ
لَسَكَانٍ مِنْ أَكْرَمِ الْأَيَّامِ أَخْلَا قَا	لَوْ كَانَ وَفَى الْمُنَى فِي جَمْعِنَا يَكُمُ
نَفْسِي إِذَا مَا اقْتَنَى الْأَحْبَابُ أَعْلَا قَا	يَا عَلِقِي الْأَخْطَرَ الْأَسْنَى الْحَبِيبَ إِلَى
مَيْدَانِ أَنْسِ جَرِينَا فِيهِ أَطْلَا قَا	كَانَ التَّجَارِي بِمَخْضِ الْوَدِّ مُذْ زَمَنِ
سَلَوْنُكُمْ وَبَقِينَا نَحْنُ عُشَا قَا	فَالآنَ أَحْمَدُ مَا كُنَّا لِعَهْدِكُمْ

(14)

Later, Ibn Zaydūn had to leave Cordoba and he fled to Seville, which had become a paradise for poets as well as

the new cultural capital of al-Andalus.⁽¹⁵⁾ Ibn Zaydūn was received by al-Mu'taḍid, who treated him as an intimate friend and he became the first minister in his court. After the death of al-Mu'taḍid, his son and successor, al-Mu'tamid, retained Ibn Zaydūn in the same position and he became his favourite poet.⁽¹⁶⁾

In spite of the great success he gained in Seville, Ibn Zaydūn now found himself away from both his loves, Wallāḍah and Cordoba. He wrote a long qaṣīda rhymed in nūn which is considered his masterpiece. It is not only a description of his beloved's beauty but also an expression of his own innermost conflicts and personal feelings:

My departure gleamed in place of our meeting
 Our quarrel replaced sweetness in our union
 Parting's dawn rose, destruction came
 To us, our mourner stood with us in grief
 Who informs us of our doubts in their remoteness
 Grieving with time not tired but tiring us:
 That the times won't stop smiling at us, friendly
 In their nearness, but it came to make us cry?
 The foe was jealous of our giving love and prayed
 That we avert eyes and fate said: Amen
 So was loosed what was knotted in our souls
 And cut what was bound with our hands
 We were so and our parting not feared
 But today we exist and our meeting not hoped
 O would that I knew, who never blamed your foes,
 If our foes got joy from satisfaction

We did not grant your going anything but trust

In your vision nor gird on other belief

Not true for us they cooled envy's eye

In us nor that they rejoice the hate in us

We say in despair his passions would console us

And we despaired and not excited by despair?

You went and we did, but our sides were not dry

When our thoughts escaped you we almost

Came to an end in grief except we suffered

Our days changed with your loss and became

Dark but there were our white nights with you

When the flanks of life were free of our loving

And love's meadow was pure in our sincerity

Then we pulled union's branches drawing

Their fruits and picked what we wanted of it

May your bond be slandered as promise of joy for

You were for our souls nothing but our balm

Don't think your absence from us changes us

If long ago your love's distance did not change

By Allah our desires sought no change

From you and our faith turned not from you

O all my lightning, early to the palace and pour

Pure love and passion that gives us drink

And ask there: Was it our thinking of us tired

A friend whose thinking at eve disquiets us?

O east wind bring our greeting to one

Who if alive at a distance would greet us

Do I not see time judge us tyrannically

In this even after not summoning us?

Servant of rule as if Allah had created him
 Of musk when he made men a creation of clay
 Or shaped him of silver pure and crowned him
 With bright gold as a marvel and ornament
 When the necklace pearls bend him heavily
 With comforts and soft anklets bled him
 The sun was to him a foster mother in his veil
 No, he unveils not to her except to shame us
 As if was fixed in the hollow of his cheek
 Star's brightness like talisman or amulet
 It mattered not we were not his equal in rank
 For in love there is enough to satisfy us
 O garden, long ago it gave fruit in our glances
 Love polished him freshly as red and white rose
 O life that pleases us with its brightness
 Sorts of desires and types of pleasures
 O joy, we were shaken by its fertility
 In varied grace we trailed its skirt there
 We have not named you due to honour and respect
 Your rank exalted exempts us from that
 Since you were unique and shared no qualities
 Description clear enough for us and bright
 O eternal garden we exchanged its trees
 Kawthar's sweet for Zaqqum and our sweat
 As if we spent no night and our union was a third
 While joy cast down our gossips' eyelids
 If the meeting was weak in the world yet at
 Resurrection station we meet and you conquer
 Like two secrets in darkness's mind it hid us
 Until almost the tongue of dawn revealed us

No wonder we thought then prohibition had forbidden
Grief for him and we left patience forgot
We recited our despair on parting's day like
Writings and we took patience as it came to us
As to your love we swerve not from its source
As a drink even if it slaked and gave us thirst
We do shun beauty's horizon, you are its star
Praying to us nor do we flee it hating
Not by choice have we put it aside a short space
But our hardships hatefully have opposed us
We grieve because of you when wine stirred us
With its mixing and our singers sang to us
Wine cups do not produce in us our drunkenness
A sign of peace, nor does the lute delight us
Stay with me, faithful to the oath while we live
For the free man treats fair and is treated
We did not want a friend in you who detained us
Nor aided a lover in place of you to deter us
In darkness's full moon inclined to us from
Its high rising it would not take us like you
Weep for faith and if you grant me no union
The spectre satisfies us and memory suffices
In answer there's good if you intercede for it
With white hands which you still keep near us
For you from us Allah's peace for as long as
Love stays with you we hide it and it reveals us.

أَضْحَى الثَّنَائِي بَدِيلًا مِنْ تَدَانِينَا
أَلَّا وَقَدْ حَانَ صُبْحُ الْبَيْنِ صَبَحْنَا
مَنْ مُبْلِغُ الْمَلِيسِينَا بِانْتِزَاجِهِمْ
أَنْ الزَّوْمَانِ الَّذِي مَا زَالَ يُضْحِكُنَا
غِيْظَ الْعِدَى مِنْ تَسَاقِينَا الْهَوَى فَدَعَوْا
فَانْحَلَّ مَا كَانَ مَعْقُودًا بِأَنْفُسِنَا
وَقَدْ نَكُونُ وَمَا يُخْشَى تَفَرُّقُنَا
يَا لَيْتَ شِعْرِي وَلَمْ نَعْتَبِ أَعَادِيكُمْ
لَمْ نَعْتَقِدْ بَعْدَكُمْ إِلَّا الْوَفَاءَ لَكُمْ
مَا حَقُّنَا أَنْ تُقِرُّوا عَيْنَ ذِي حَسَدٍ
كُنَّا نَرَى الْيَأْسَ تُسْلِينَا عَوَارِضُهُ
بَيْنُكُمْ وَبَيْنَا فَمَا ابْتَلَتْ جَوَارِحُنَا
نَكَادُ حِينَ تُنَاجِيكُمْ ضَمَائِرُنَا
حَالَتْ لِفَقْدِكُمْ أَيَّامُنَا فَعَدَّتْ
إِذْ جَانِبُ الْعَيْشِ طَلَقَ مِنْ تَأَلُّفِنَا
وَلِإِذْ هَضَبُنَا فُتُونِ الْوَصْلِ دَانِيَةٌ
لِيُسْقَ عَهْدُكُمْ عَهْدُ السُّرُورِ فَمَا
لَا تَحْسَبُوا نَأْيَكُمْ عَنَّا يُغَيِّرُنَا
وَاللَّهِ مَا طَلَبْتَ أَهْوَاؤُنَا بَدَلًا
يَا سَارَى الْبَرْقِ غَادِ الْقَصْرِ وَاسْقِي بِهِ
وَاسْأَلْ هُنَالِكَ هَلْ عَنَى تَذَكُّرُنَا
وَيَا نَسِيمَ الصَّبَا بَلِّغْ تَحِيَّتِنَا
فَهَلْ أَرَى الدَّهْرَ يَقْضِينَا مُسَاعَفَةً
رَبِيبُ مُلْكٍ كُنَّ اللَّهُ أَنْشَاءُ

وَنَابَ عَنْ طِيبِ لَقِينَا تَجَافِينَا
حِينَ قَفَامَ بِنَا لِلْحَيْنِ دَاعِينَا
حُزْنًا مَعَ الدَّهْرِ لَا يَبْلَى وَيُبْدِلُنَا
أُنْسًا بِقُرْبِهِمْ قَدْ عَادَ يُسْكِنُنَا
بِأَنْ نَغْصَى فَقَالَ الدَّهْرُ آمِينَا
وَانْبَتَّ مَا كَانَ مَوْصُولًا بِأَيْدِينَا
فَالْيَوْمَ نَحْنُ وَمَا يُرْجَى تَلَايِينَا
هَلْ نَالَ حَظًّا مِنَ الْعُتْبَى أَعَادِينَا
رَأْيَا وَلَمْ نَتَقَلَّدْ غَيْرَهُ دِينَا
بِنَا وَلَا أَنْ تُسْرُوا كَاشِحًا فِينَا
وَقَدْ يَتَسَّنَا فَمَا لِلْيَأْسِ يُغَيِّرُنَا
شَوْقًا إِلَيْكُمْ وَلَا جَفَّتْ مَا قِينَا
يَقْضِي عَلَيْنَا الْأَسَى لَوْلَا تَأَسَّيُنَا
سُودًا وَكَأَنْتَ بِكُمْ بَيْضًا لِبَالِينَا
وَمَرْبَعُ اللَّغْوِ صَافٍ مِنْ تَصَافِينَا
قِطَافُهَا فَجَنَيْنَا مِنْهُ مَا شِينَا
كُنْتُمْ لِأَرْوَاحِنَا إِلَّا رَبَاحِينَا
أَنْ طَالَمَا غَيَّرَ النَّأْيُ الْمُحِيطِينَا
مِنْكُمْ وَلَا انْصَرَفَتْ عَنْكُمْ أَمَانِينَا
مَنْ كَانَ صِرْفَ الْهَوَى وَالْوَدَّ يَسْقِينَا
إِلْفًا تَذَكُّرُهُ أَمْسَى يُعْنِينَا
مَنْ لَوْ عَلَى الْقُرْبِ حَيًّا كَانَ يُحْيِينَا
مِنْهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ غِيًّا تَقَاضِينَا
مِسْكًا وَقَدَّرَ لِإِنْشَاءِ الْوَرَى طِينَا

أَوْ صَاعُهُ وَرِقًا مَحْضًا وَتَوَجَّهَ
إِذَا تَأَوَّدَ آدَتُهُ رَفَاهِيَةً
كَانَتْ لَهُ الشَّمْسُ ظُهُرًا فِي أَكْلَتِهِ
كَأَنَّمَا أُثْبِتَتْ فِي صَحْنٍ وَجَنَّتِي
مَا ضَرَّ أَنْ لَمْ نَكُنْ أَكْفَاءَهُ شَرَفًا
وَفِي الْمَوَدَّةِ كَافٍ مِنْ تَكَاثُفِنَا

يَا رَوْضَةَ طَالَمَا أَجَنْتَ لَوَاحِظِنَا
وَيَا حَيَاةَ تَمَلُّنَا بِزَهْرَتِهَا
وَيَا نَعِيمًا خَطَرْنَا مِنْ غَضَارَتِهِ
لَسْنَا نُسَمِّيكَ إِجْلَالًا وَتَكْرِمَةً
إِذَا انْفَرَدَتْ وَمَا شُورِكَتْ فِي صِفَةٍ
يَا جَنَّةَ الْخُلْدِ أَبَدْنَا بِسِدْرَتِهَا
كَأَنَّا لَمْ نَبْتَ وَالْوَصْلُ ثَالِثُنَا
إِنْ كَانَ قَدْ عَزَّ فِي الدُّنْيَا اللَّقَاءُ فَفِي
سِرِّانٍ فِي خَاطِرِ الظَّلْمَاءِ يَكْتُمُنَا
لَا غُرُوفٍ أَنْ ذَكَّرْنَا الْحُزْنَ حِينَ نَهَتْ
إِنَّا قَرَأْنَا الْأَسَى يَوْمَ النَّوَى سُورًا
أَمَّا هَوَاكِ فَلَمْ نَعْدِلْ بِمَنْهَلِهِ
لَمْ تَجْفُ أَفَقَ بَهَامٍ أَنْتِ كَوَكْبُهُ
وَلَا اخْتِيَارًا تَجَنَّبْنَاهُ عَنْ كَثَبِ
نَأْسَى عَلَيْكَ إِذَا حُثَّتْ مُشَعَّعَةٌ

لَا أَكْثُوسُ الرِّاحِ تُبْدِي مِنْ شَمَائِلِنَا
دُوبِي عَلَى الْعَهْدِ مَا دُمْنَا مُحَافِظَةً
فَمَا اسْتَعَضْنَا خَلِيلًا مِنْكَ بِحُبِّنَا
وَلَوْ صَبَا نَحْوَنَا مِنْ عُلُوِّ مَطْلَعِهِ
سِيمَا ارْتِيَا حِجَابَ وَلَا الْأَوْتَارُ تَلْهِمُنَا
فَالْحُرُّ مَنْ دَانَ إِنْصَافًا كَمَا دِينَا
وَلَا اسْتَفَدْنَا حَبِيبًا عَنْكَ يَشِينُنَا
بَدْرُ الدُّجَى لَمْ يَكُنْ حَاشَاكَ يُصْدِينَا

أَبْسَى وَفَاءَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَبْذُلِي صِلَةً فَالطَّيْفُ يُقْنِعُنَا وَالذِّكْرُ يَكْفِينَا
 وَفَى الْجَوَابِ مَنَاعٌ إِنْ شَفَعْتَ بِهِ بَيْضَ الْأَيْدِي الَّتِي مَا زِلْتُ تُؤَلِّينَا
 عَلَيْكَ مِنَّا سَلَامٌ اللَّهُ مَا بَقِيَتْ صَبَابَةٌ بِكَ نَخْفِيهَا فَتَخْفِينَا (17)

It may be said that the poet uses his rhyme skilfully. He employs the rhyme syllable (īnā) to evoke the main theme of his poem. The rhyme word "nā" seems to suggest to his beloved that his feeling for her is mutual. The main theme of the poem is love and yearning. It can be divided into three subsections:

1. a comparison between the happy past and the sad present (1-19);
2. love for the natural landscape of Cordoba (20-35);
3. begging the beloved and a hope for return (36-51).

The combination of the beloved and the natural landscape is "an expression of the Neoplatonic fusion of the souls".⁽¹⁸⁾ The poet, in a number of his lines, addresses his speech to the second person (lines 19,30,31,32,35); and it seems hard to tell whether he is addressing Wallādah or Cordoba. It may be said that both of them were fused or perhaps his beloved Wallādah became a symbol of his country.

One final example might best elucidate how hard it was for Ibn Zaydūn to be separated and alienated from his love and his native city. He wrote a poem when he was in Badajoz expressing his alienation and yearning for both his loves:

My two friends, no 'Īd al-Fiṭr, no 'Īd al-Aḍḥā joys
 is lover's state at night like that at dawn?
 If the Dawn of 'Uqāb makes me sad I am still
 devoted to a love profound in this plain
 Nor has Jūfīy 'l-Ruṣāfa ceased from my feeling
 motives of memory end in pain of parting
 Knight's Castle stirs my heart with love
 steel ceases not to strike grief's flint
 Not blamed the time of Advisor's Council
 I received in excess of passion advice there
 As if I did not suffer at 'Ayn Shahda
 the attack of blame whose end was victory
 Attacks of her evil sins and even if humility's
 envoy went between us to strengthen peace
 Many a day of union at 'Aqīq I exacted
 otherwise its return was the Aḍḥā and Easter
 Evenings of pleasure at King's Bar given over
 to drinking when you wished or swimming
 Near a pool that captivated you by its surface
 unmoving green you thought it softly sleek
 Meeting place of pleasure, home of passion
 I gained my high desires as an arrow there
 Is the return of a distant one to al-Zahrā'
 ended as it exhausts his tears of dryness?
 The palaces of kings whose sides were gleaming
 seemed to us in dark night during its dawn
 Fancy figures its two fires to me openly
 its dome and star immense and the terrace

Resting place whose perfume recalls eternity
 as youth feels he thirsts there or faces sun
 There the blue lake bedews its surroundings
 shadows, I thought time a generous youth there
 Exchanged, for the singing girl's friends
 desert thirst driving off sleep with a gasp
 He who brings me the cup guaranteed by its host
 is fear's shock at which I bear the lance
 Yes, the nights on the banks of the Nīṭa were
 swifter than nights on the Āna or Baḥā.

خَلِيلٌ لَا فِطْرَ بَسْرٌ وَلَا أَضْحَى
 لَنْ شَاقِي شَرْقُ الْعُقَابِ فَلَمْ أَزَلْ
 وَمَا انْفَكَ جُوفِي الرُّصَافَةِ مُشِيرِي
 وَبَهَنَاجُ قَصْرُ الْفَارِسِيِّ صَبَابَةٍ
 وَلَيْسَ دَمِيماً عَهْدُ تَجْلِسِ نَاصِحٍ
 كَأَنِّي لَمْ أَشْهَدْ لَدَى عَيْنِ شَهِدَةٍ
 وَقَائِعُ جَانِبِهَا التَّجَيُّ فَإِنْ مَشَى
 وَأَيَّامُ وَصَلِي بِالْعَقِيقِ اقْتَضَبَتْهُ
 وَأَصَالُ لَهْوِي فِي مُسْنَةِ مَالِكٍ
 لَدَى رَاكِدٍ يُصْطَبِكُ مِنْ صَفْحَانِهِ
 مَعَاهِدُ لَذَاتٍ وَأَوْطَانُ صَبَوَةٍ
 أَلَا هَلْ إِلَى الزَّهْرَاءِ أَوْبَةٌ نَازِحٍ
 مَقَاصِيرُ مُلْكٍ أَشْرَقَتْ جَنَابَهَا
 يُمَثِّلُ قَرْطَبِهَا لِي الْوَهْمُ جَهْرَةً
 مَحَلُّ ارْتِيَاحٍ يُذَكِّرُ الْمُخْلَدَ طَبِيعَةً
 فَا حَالُ مَنْ أَسَى مَشُوقاً كَمَا أَضْحَى ؟
 أَحْصُ بِمَحْضِ الْمَوَى ذَلِكَ السُّفْحَا
 دَوَاعِي ذِكْرِي تُغْقِبُ الْأَسْفَ الْبَرَحَا
 لِقَلْبِي لَا تَأْلُو زِنَادَ الْأَمَى قَدَحَا
 فَا قَبْلَ فِي قَرْطِ الْوَلُوعِ بِهِ نَضْحَا
 زَالَ عِنَابِ كَانَ آخِرُهُ التَّشْحَا
 سَفِيرُ خُضُوعٍ بَيْنَنَا أَكَّدَ الصُّلْحَا
 فَإِلَّا يَكُنْ مِيعَادُهُ الْعِيدَ فَالْفِصْحَا
 مُعَاطَاةً نَدَمَانِ إِذَا شِئْتَ أَوْ سَبَحَا
 قَوَارِيرُ خَضِرُ خِلَتَهَا مُرَدَّتْ صَرَحَا
 أَجَلْتُ الْمُغَلَى فِي الْأَمَانِي بِهَا قِدْحَا
 تَقْضَى تَنَائِيهَا مَدَامِعُهُ نَزْحَا
 فَخِلْنَا الْعِشَاءَ الْجَوْنَ أَثْنَاءَهَا صُبْحَا
 فَقُبَّتْهَا فَالْكَوْكَبَ الرَّحْبَ فَالْسُّطْحَا
 إِذَا عَزَّ أَنْ يَصْدَى الْفَتَى فِيهِ أَوْ يَضْحَى

هُنَاكَ الْجِمَامُ الزُّرْقُ تَنْدَى جَفَافِهَا ظِلَالُ عَهْدَتِ الدَّهْرِ فِيهَا فَتَى تَمَحَا
 مَنَعَوْضَتْ مِنْ شَدْوِ الْقِيَانِ خِلَافِهَا صَدَى فَلَوَاتٍ قَدْ أَطَارَ الْكَرَى ضَمَحَا
 وَمِنْ حَمَلِي الْكَأَمْسِ الْمَفْدَى مُدِيرُهَا تَقَحُّمُ أَهْوَالٍ حَمَلْتُ لَهَا الرُّمَحَا
 أَجَلٌ إِنْ لَيْلَى فَوْقَ شَاطِئِ نَيْطَةٍ لَا قَصْرُ مِنْ لَيْلَى بِأَنَّهُ فَالْبَطَحَا

(19)

The poem shows the poet's sadness in spite of the happy occasion Muslims celebrated, ‘Īd al-Adḥā. He returns to the scene of his memories recalling the happier times he spent in his native city and its suburbs and great palaces: Ruṣāfa, Zahrā' and al-Fārisī. The poem is an outcry and a sad expression of nostalgia and ḥanīn reflecting the poet's alienation. (20)

However, when al-Mu‘tamid invaded Cordoba, Ibn Zaydūn was able to return to his native city from which he had been exiled. Ibn Zaydūn was torn from his native city again when al-Mu‘tamid sent him to Seville to restore order after a riot (had happened there.) His people in Cordoba, who were proud of him, were disappointed when he set off. ¹⁴¹⁰⁷¹ Soon he fell sick and died (in 1071) and was buried away from the city he loved. (21)

To amplify the account of ḥanīn and nostalgia themes I shall give another example of a great poet of al-Andalus, the last native ruler of Seville, al-Mu‘tamid Ibn ‘Abbād (d. 1095).

Seville, under the rule of Banū ‘Abbād (1031-1091) became a haven for poets, where they found a residence and

a literary school of poetry.⁽²²⁾ However, al-Mu‘tamid Ibn ‘Abbād led a life full of poetry, romance and victory. He expanded his kingdom, conquering Cordoba and other cities.⁽²³⁾ When he realized the real threat of the Christian advance by Alfonso VI to al-Andalus, he requested the assistance of the Almoravid (al-Murābiṭūn). Yusuf ibn Tāshufīn, the chief of the Almoravid, entered al-Andalus with a large army and gained a great victory over Alfonso in the battle of Zallāka in October 1086.⁽²⁴⁾ The following year he returned to Spain, conquered Granada and later Seville. Al-Mu‘tamid, however, was thrown in chains and sent to Morocco where he was imprisoned in Aghmāt in 1091 A.D.⁽²⁵⁾

In exile, Ibn ‘Abbād wrote a number of touching poems yearning for his homeland and lamenting the misery of his native city, the sufferings which he and his family had to endure, and the tragic fate which deprived him of his country, friends and power. (For his laments, see below, p. 64.)

Al-Mu‘tamid Ibn ‘Abbād ranks as one of the greatest poets of al-Andalus who loved his country and devoted his life and his poetry to it, as Dozy declares, "the last Spanish native king who represented worthily, nay, brilliantly, a nationality and culture which succumbed, or barely, survived, under the dominion of Barbarian invaders."⁽²⁶⁾

A further example of the Mulūk 'l-Ṭawā'if period can be seen in the poetry of the skilful poet Ibn 'Ammār (d. 1086). He was born in Shilb (Silves) where poetry was everybody's patrimony and was appreciated everywhere. "The people in this city were makers of verse and if you passed by a labourer standing behind his plough and asked him to recite some verses, he would at once improvise on any subject that you might demand." (27)

Ibn 'Ammār was a close friend of al-Mu'tamid and wrote a number of poems praising him in a panegyric and describing the beautiful landscape and nature of Seville.

As a specimen of these poems showing how much Ibn 'Ammār was influenced and fascinated by the beauty of the natural landscape of his country, I quote some lines containing two types of poetry, Nawriyya (floral poetry) and Khamriyya (wine poetry) in a skilful combination reflecting his poetic skills and mastery:

Pass round the glass for the breeze has arisen
and the stars have slackened the reins of night
travel;

The dawn has bestowed upon us its camphor
after the night has claimed back (its)
ambergris;

And the garden is like a fair woman dressed by
its flowers in a robe of many hues; decked
by its dew in a necklace of pearls,

Or like a boy who, when he blushes, turns red
because of the roses of his cheeks, while

he is proud of the myrtle-like down that
has grown on them.

(It is) a garden such that the river in it seems
like a limpid wrist on a green robe,
While the east wind makes it ripple so that
you would think that it is the sword of Ibn
'Abbād scattering an army.

أَيُّ الرُّجَاةِ مَالَتِمْ فِيهِ أَنْتَرَى وَالنَّعْمُ قَدْ صَرَفَ إِيْمَانٍ عَنِ السُّرَى
وَالصُّحُفُ قَدْ أَهْدَى لَنَا كَأُورَهُ لَمَّا أَتَتْ رَدَّ النَّيْلُ مِثْلًا انْعَبَرَا
وَالرَّوْمُ كَالْحَنَّا كَسَاءُ زَهْرُهُ وَثَبًا وَقَلْدَهُ نَدَاءُ جَوْهَرَا
أَوْ كَالْغَلَامِ زَهَا يَسُوزِي حُدُودِهِ خَجَلًا وَنَاءً بِأَيِّهِنَّ مُعَذَّرَا
رَوْحُ كَأَنَّ النَّهْرَ بِهِ يَنْقَضُ صَافٍ أَطْلَعَ عَلَى رِداؤِ أَخْصَرَا
وَتَبْرُهُ رِيحُ الصَّبَا مَتَحَا سَبَقَ آيِنِ عِبَادٍ بِيَدَدُ سَنَكْرَا

(28)

(c) The Almoravid period: sadness and alienation

In the twelfth century, under the Almoravid rule, the Andalusian natural landscape preserved its position as a significant poetic theme. Unlike the nature poetry of the Caliphate which reflected the joyous background of festivity and pleasure, or the poetry of the Mulūk 'l-Jawā'if where nature reflected varying states of the poet's feelings, nature in the twelfth century reflected sadness and alienation. (29) The poetry of Ibn Khafāja is a good example of this theme, exhibiting great unity of observation and description. (30) Ibn Khafāja was born in Valencia and is considered one of the greatest Andalusian descriptive poets. He wrote much nature poetry full of charming pictures of idyllic scenery.

He was known as al-Jannān, the garden poet⁽³¹⁾ and he was also also regarded as the best composer of nature poetry in Spain. (32). A beautiful description of Andalusian natural landscape during a rain-shower can be seen in the following lines:

How many flower chalices, before which the morning
dropped the veil and revealed, by this,
cheeks covered with dew,

As in a vale where the mouths of the daisies
sucked at the breasts of each cloud shedding
forth generously

The hand of the south-east wind strewn across
the lap of the earth pearls of dew and
ducats of flowers.

The branch of the sandy region draped himself
in his cloak and the (channel-) necks
adorned themselves with water bubbles these
gems.

I settled down there where the water is like
the cheek of a laughing and merry person,
there where the river reminds one of a minion
who first appears.

The breeze from the early morning shakes the
hair of the hills and the drizzle moistens
the face of the trees.

I divided my attention between the beauties of
a hill's summit and the waistline of a low
ground,

And also an arāk tree, which for the ringdove,
singing in the branches at the moment when
the dawn uncovers the forehead of the day,
Stirs his resilient boughs, and often the
bird dons the cloak which the flowers
gave to him.

وَكِمَامَةٌ خَدَرَ الصَّبَاحُ قَنَاعَهَا عَنْ صَفْحَةٍ تَذْدَى مِنَ الْأَزْهَارِ
فِي أَبْطَحٍ رَضَعَتْ ثُغُورُ أَقَاخِهِ أَخْلَافَ كُلِّ غِمَامَةٍ مِدْرَارِ
نَشَرَتْ بِحِجْرِ الْأَرْضِ فِيهِ يَدُ الصَّبَا دُرَّرَ النَّدَى وَدِرَاهِمَ النُّوَارِ
وَقَدْ ارْتَدَى غِصْنُ النِّقَا وَتَقَلَّدَتْ حَلَى الْحَبَابِ سَوَالِفُ الْأَنْهَارِ
فَحَلَلْتُ حَيْثُ الْمَاءُ صَفْحَةً ضَاخَاكُ جَذَلَ وَحَيْثُ الشَّطُّ بَدَأَ عِذَارِ
وَالرِّيحُ تَنْفُضُ بُكْرَةً لِمَمِّ الرَّبِّي وَالطَّلُّ يَنْضَحُ أَوْجَهَ الْأَشْجَارِ
مُتَقَسِّمُ الْأَلْحَاطِ بَيْنَ مُحَاسِنِ مِنْ رِذْفِ رَابِيَةٍ وَخَصْرِ قَرَارِ
وَأَرَاكَةَ سَبَجَ الْهَدِيلُ بِفِرْعَا وَالصَّبْحُ يُسْفِرُ عَنْ جَبِينِ نَهَارِ
هَزَّتْ لَهُ أَعْطَافَهَا وَلَرَبَّمَا خَلَعَتْ عَلَيْهِ مُلَاعَةَ النُّوَارِ (33)

Ibn Khafāja, in another poem, describes his personal
experience of living in the beautiful landscape of the
paradise of al-Andalus:

O residents of Spain, what fortune is it for
you to have waters, shades, rivers and trees
The Garden of eternal felicity is nowhere if
not in your territory; if the choice were
given to me, I should choose the latter.
Do not believe that you may enter Inferno
tomorrow; nobody enters hell-fire by way
of Paradise.

يا أهلَ أندلسِ ! لله دَرُكُكُمْ ، ماءٌ وظِلٌّ وأنهارٌ وأشجارُ
 ما جَنَّةُ الخلدِ إلّا في ديارِكُمْ ، ولو تَخَيَّرْتُ هذا كنتُ أختارُ
 لا تَحْتَسُوا ، بعدَ ذا ، أن تدخلوا سَقَرًا ، فليس تَدْخُلُ ، بعدَ الجَنَّةِ ، النارُ (34)

His great poem on the mountain exhibits a view of
 Andalusian landscape and expresses feelings of sadness and
 alienation:

By your life, do you know whether it is the
 violence of the south winds dashing against
 my saddle, or the backs of excellent camels?
 For hardly had I observed a certain star in the
 early dawn, when I set off at sunrise (and
 travelled on) until the very end of the
 sunset.

Alone, while the waterless deserts led me on
 from one to another. Thus I see the faces of the
 fates (hidden) under the veil of deepest gloom,
 For there is no refuge save in a keen blade, nor
 is there any home save in the wooden saddle
 frames of the riders.

And there is no human companionship save in my
 sporting for a (short) hour with the mouths which
 are the objects of my desire, contained in the
 faces from which I seek the satisfaction of
 my wants,

And many a night which passed as I said: "It has
 finally come to an end", has revealed a promise

that belies conjecture.

On such a night I dragged the (edges of the mantle)
of a darkness black of locks, that I might
embrace (the goal of my) hopes, white of breasts.

Then I tore the collar of the nights off the form
of a greyish (wolf) which appeared bright of
front teeth, grinning.

I observed with him a fragment of the dawn during
the last part of the night, contemplating a
certain star that had lighted up, a shining one.

(I also observed) a mountain with a sharp peak,
lofty of summit, grandiose, vying in height
with the (uppermost) regions of the sky, having
a (crest) like the upper part of a camel's hump,

Stopping the blowing of the wind from all directions
and at night, pressing against the stars above it
with its shoulders,

Rising gravely over the surface of the waterless
plain, as if through the long nights it were
one reflecting on the consequences of (all)
things.

The clouds wind black turbans around its (head)
in such a way that the flashes of lightning
make it appear to have red locks.

I listened to it even though it was dumb and
silent, yet during the nights of journeying
it informed me of marvels,

Saying: "Lo, for how long will I be the shelter
of murderers and the abode of sorrowing
penitents devoted to God's service?

And how many times have travellers going off at
night and returning (by day) passed by me,
while riding beasts and riders have taken
their siesta in my shade,

And contrary winds have lashed out at my flanks
while the green seas have dashed against my
sides

And all this took place only in order that the
hand of death might enfold them and so that
the wind of separation and misfortune might carry
them off in its flight.

The quivering of my groves is but the panting
of a (feverish) chest (struggling for breath),
while the mourning of my doves is but the wail
of one lamenting the dead.

Nor has consolation restrained my tears; rather
I have exhausted my tears in separation from
my companions.

Until when will I remain behind when a dear one
travels away, saying farewell to him when
he departs never to return?

Until when will I watch the stars (like a
shepherd watches his flock), remaining
awake all night long, for they will rise
and set to the end of the nights?

Hence show merciful compassion, O my lord,
for the plea of a humble entreater, who
extends a supplicating hand toward your
blessing."

In this way it caused me to listen, in its
exhortation, to every useful example
which the tongue of trials interpreted
for it;

Moreover it gave consolation by moving to
tears, and joy by causing grief, when it
was the best of companions during the night
journey,

So I said, having turned away from it to reach
a (certain) goal: "Farewell, for some of us
must remain while others must depart."

بَعْبُكَ هَلْ نَدْرِي، أَهْوَجَ الْجَائِبِ،	تَحَبَّ يَرْحَلِي، أَمْ طُهورُ التَّجَائِبِ؟
مَا لُحْتُ مِ أَوْلى النَّمَارِ فِي كَوْكَبَا	فَأَشْرَفْتُهُ حَتَّى جِئْتُ أُخْرَى السَّارِبِ
وَحِيدًا تَبَادَلِي النِّقَابِي، مَا جَنَلِي	وَجُودَ السَّيَا، مِ فِنَاعِ النِّجَابِ
وَلَا جَارَ إِلَّا مِنْ حُسامٍ مُصَّصِمِ،	وَلَا دَارَ إِلَّا مِ قُصُودِ الرِّكَابِ
وَلَا أُنْسَ إِلَّا أَنْ أَضَاجِكَ، سَاعَةً،	تُغَوِّرُ الْأَنَانِي مِ وَجُودِ السَّطَابِ
وَنَبِيلِ، إِذَا مَا قُنْتُ قَدْ بَادَا، فَاتَّقِصْ،	تَكْتَفَعَنْ وَعَدٍ مِ الطَّنِّ كَانِبِ
تَحَبَّتِ الدِّيَابِي فَبِهِ سُوْدَ دَوَابِ،	يَلْقَنِيكَ الْآسَمَالُ يَبِغِي تَرَابِ
مَمَرَّقَتْ حَبَبَ النَّبْلِ عَنْ تَخْصِي أَطْلَسِ	تَطْنَعُ وَصَاحِرِ الْمَضَاجِكِ فَاطِ
رَأَيْتُ بِي فِطْمًا مِ الْفَجْرِ أَغْبَتَا،	تَأَمَّلَ عَنْ نَجْمٍ، تَوَقَّدَ، نَائِبِ
وَأَرَعَنْ صَّاحِرِ الدُّوَابِّ بَارِئِ،	بُطَاوِلُ أَغْنَانِ السَّمَاءِ يَنَارِبِ
بَسَدَ مَهَبِ الرِّيحِ عَنْ كُلِّ وَجْهِ،	وَبَزَحَمَ، لَيْلًا، نُسْبَهُ بِالْمَنَابِ
وَقَوِي، عَلَى صَهْرِ انْقِلَابِ، كَلْبَتُهُ،	طَوَالَ اللَّيَالِي، مُتَغَيِّرُ فِي الْعَوَابِ
بَلُوكَ عَلَيْهِ الْغَيْمُ سُوْدَ عَمَائِمِ،	لَهَا، مِنْ وَبِصِي الْبَرَقِ، حُمُرُ دَوَابِ

أَصَحْتُ إِلَيْهِ، وَهُوَ أَخْرَسُ صَائِتُهُ،	مَدَدْتَنِي لَبَلِ الشَّرَى بِالْمَجَائِبِ
وَقَالَ: أَلَا كَمْ كُنْتُ مَنَجَلًا فَايِلِ،	وَمَوْطِنَ أَزَامِ، تَبَنَّنَلْ، نَائِبِ

وَكَمْ مَرَّ بِي مِنْ مَدْلِجٍ وَمَوْجٍ وَقَالَ يَضْتَلِّي مِنْ مَلِيقٍ دَرَكِي
 وَلَا ظَمَ، مِنْ نُكْبِ الرِّبَاحِ، مَا ظَفِي، وَزَاتِمَ، مِنْ خُمْرِ الْبَحَارِ، غَوَارِي
 مَا كَانَ إِلَّا أَنْ حَوَّتْهُمْ يَدُ الرَّدَى، وَطَارَتْ بِهِمْ رِيحُ النُّوَى وَالنَّوَابِي
 مَا حَقُّ أَتَيْكِ عَبْرَ رَجَلَيْ أَطْلَعِ، وَلَا نَوُحُ دُرِّي عَبْرَ صَرْخَةِ نَادِي
 وَمَا غَبَعَ السُّلُوفُ دَمْعِي، وَإِنَّمَا تَزَقَّتْ دُمُوعِي فِي فِرَاقِي الصَّوَابِي
 مَحْنِي مِنْ أَتَقَى، وَيَطْمَسُنُ حَاجِبِ، أَوْدَعُ يَنْهُ رَاحِلًا عَبْرَ آتِي
 وَحْنِي مِنْ أَرَمَى الْكَوَكِبَ سَاهِرًا، بَيْنَ مَالِيعِ، أُخْرَى النَّبَالِي، وَغَارِي
 مَرْتَعَاكَ بِأَمْوَالِي، دَعَاؤَ غَارِي، يَمُدُّ إِلَى تُغْمَاكَ رَاحِلَةَ رَاحِي
 مَا نَمَنَنْتَنِي، مِنْ وَعْظِي، كُلَّ عِبْرَةٍ، يُنْتَرِجُهَا عَنْهُ لِيَانُ الْجَارِي
 مَلَّتْ بِمَا أَتَكْسِي، وَتَرَى بِمَا نَجَا، وَكَانَ، عَلَى مَهْدِ الرُّيِّ، خَبَرُ حَاجِبِ
 وَقُلْتُ، وَقَدْ نَكَبْتُ عَنْهُ لِيُظْهِرَ، تِلَامٌ، فَإِنَّا مِنْ مَغْبِمْ وَنَاهِبِ (35)

Ibn Khafāja, following the tradition of the Arabic qaṣīda scheme, starts his poem with a desert journey, completely foreign to Andalusian nature (1-5), then moves on to the main theme of the poem: a mountain, with human traits complaining at his loneliness and expressing his alienation. The poem shows the fusion of the poet with his country's nature, using the mountain as a symbol of the instability of love and peace, reflecting probably the political conflict in al-Andalus at that time.

As a further example of nature poetry, showing to what degree the Andalusian poets were attached to, and their poetry was influenced by, the beauty of the Spanish landscape, I quote some lines by Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 1374)⁽³⁶⁾ from his muwashshah, which was composed in imitation of the one by Ibn Sahl:

May the rain cloud be bountiful to you when
 the rain cloud pours, O time of love
 union in al-Andalus

Union with you is now a dream during
 drowsiness, or the deceit perpetrated by
 a deceiver.

When Time leads to the dispersion of hopes
 we transcribe the writing as they have
 traced it,

Being dispersed alone and in pairs (answering
 a call) as the Meccan places of
 pilgrimage beckon the pilgrims.

Yet the rain once filled the garden with radiance
 so that the mouths of the flowers smiled in it.

And al-Nu'mān related traditions on the authority
 of Ma' 'l-Samā, as Malik related traditions
 on the authority of Anas.

For beauty clothed (the anemone) in a varicoloured
 garment whereby it glories in the most
 splendid clothing.

On certain nights which would have concealed
 love's secret with (their) darkness, were
 it not for the suns of brightness,

During which the star of the cup set and then
 rose again straight on its journey, good
 omened in its path,

There was a desirable situation whose only
 defect was that it passed by (swift as)
 a glance.

When sleep had been pleasant awhile, or as
dawn intrudes upon (one) with the intrusion
of police officers,
The bright stars carried us away or perhaps
the eyes of the narcissus left an impression
on us.

جَادَكَ النَّيْتُ إِذَا النَّيْتُ هَمَى	بَا زَمَانَ الْوَصْلِ بِالْأَنْدَلُسِ
لَمْ يَكُنْ وَضْكَ إِلَّا حُلَمًا	فِي الْكَرَى أَوْ خَلَّةَ الْمُخْلِيسِ
إِذَا يَفُودُ الدَّهْرُ أَفْئَاتِ الْمَتَى	تَنْقُلُ الْخَطْوَ عَلَى مَا تَرُومُ
زُمَرًا بَيْنَ فُرَادَى وَتُنَا	مِنْلَمَا يَدْعُو الْحَجِيجُ الْمَوْسِمَ
وَالْعَيَا قَدْ جَلَلَتِ الرُّؤُوسَنَا	فَتُنُورُ الزَّهْرِ فِيهِ تَبِيسُ
وَرَوَى الثُّمَانُ عَنْ مَاءِ السَّمَاءِ	كَيْفَ يَرَوِي مَا لَيْكَ عَنِ أَنْسِ
فَكَسَاهُ الْحُزنُ نَوْبًا مُعْلَمًا	يَزِدُّهُ مِنْهُ بِأَبْنَى مَلَبَسِ
فِي لَبَالٍ كَتَمَتْ سِرَّ الْهَوَى	بِالْدُّجَى لَوْلَا نُمُوسُ الْمُسَرِّ
مَا لَ نَجْمُ الْكَافِ فِيهَا وَهَوَى	مُسْتَقِيمَ السَّيْرِ سَعْدَ الْأَنْسِ
وَطَرُ مَا فِيهِ مِنْ عَيْبٍ يَوَى	أَنْتَهُ مَرَّ كَلَمَحِ الْبَصْرِ
حِينَ لَدَى النَّوْمِ تَيْنًا أَوْ كَمَا	هَجَمَ الصُّبْحُ هُجُومَ الْعَرَسِ
غَارَتِ الْفُجُبُ بِنَا أَوْ رُبَّمَا	أَثَرَتْ فِينَا عُيُونُ الشَّرَجِ (37)

2. Laments of al-Waṭan

The collapse of the Umayyad Caliphate in Spain, which took place in the first half of the eleventh century, left the Andalusian nation torn asunder by the civil war of the Berbers and Slavs who divided the kingdom between them. (38)

The great empire of 'Abd 'l-Raḥman III was broken up, and from its ruins emerged party states ruled by kings called the Mulūk 'l-Ṭawā'if.⁽³⁹⁾ Meanwhile the Christians in the north had not been dormant spectators of this turmoil and strife. Alfonso VI, the sovereign of Castile and king of the Spanish Christians, determined to reconquer the whole peninsula.⁽⁴⁰⁾

The political turmoil of al-Andalus along with lamentations over its ruins in the eleventh and twelfth centuries are exhibited in its regional poetry, which I shall now describe.

(a) Cordoba

Cordoba suffered first from the Slavs, then from the Berbers who captured the city in 1012 A.D. and pillaged and ransacked every street.⁽⁴¹⁾ Ibn Shuhayd (d. 1035) is one of the greatest poets of al-Andalus who brought a fresh spirit to the Andalusian poetry.⁽⁴²⁾ Ibn Shuhayd witnessed the civil war that ruined his native city and he lamented it in some of his poems, e.g.

There is no one in the abandoned encampment to inform
us of the beloved ones, so from whom will we seek
information about their condition?

Ask none but separation for it is what removes
you from them whether they go to the lowlands
or to the highlands.

Time has done them injury so that they have
dispersed in all directions while the majority

of them have perished.

The vicissitudes of fortune have run over the
places where their abodes were established as
well as running over them, so that the two
have decayed.

So call upon time to embellish their courtyards
with blossoms so bright that hearts are almost
lighted up (with joy) by them.

For the weeping of one who weeps with an eye
the tears of which flow endlessly is not enough
(to lament the loss of) such as Cordoba.

(It is) a city such that (we pray) that God may
forgive its inhabitants' lapse, for they became
Berberized, mingled with Moroccans, and adopted
the creed of the Egyptians.

In every direction a group of them is scattered,
perplexed by separation.

I was well acquainted with it when its state of
affairs unified its people and life in it was
green.

And the prevalence of its splendour shone over them
(like the breath of a flower) (exuding) fragrance
from which ambergris escapes.

And perfection had pitched its tent in that abode
while it was beyond any decrease (in its splendour).

And its people were in safety from any reversal
of its beauty so that they donned its beauties
as a turban and as a veil.

O for their pleasant circumstances in its palaces

and curtained apartments when its full moons
 were concealed in its palaces
 And the palace, being the palace of the sons of
 Umayya, abounded in all things, while the
 Caliphate was even more abundant
 And Al-Zāhiriyya shone brightly with pleasure
 boats and al-Āmiriyya was rendered flourishing
 by the stars.
 And the Great Mosque was packed by all those who
 recited and studied whatsoever they wished
 (of the Qur'ān) as well as (those who) looked
 on.
 And the alleys of the markets bore witness that
 because of those who crossed them, doomsday's
 assembly would hold not a few.
 O Paradise such that the wind of separation has
 blasted it and its people so that both have been
 destroyed, I am afflicted by death over you, and it
 is my duty to be so afflicted, for we did not cease
 to boast of you during your life
 Your courtyard was, to the one making for it, a Mecca
 in which the fearful used to take shelter, and they
 were given help (therein).
 O dwelling place on which and on whose inhabitants
 the bird of separation has alighted so that they
 have decayed and have become unknown,
 The Euphrates and the Tigris; the Nile and Kawthar
 caused (their waters) to flow generously through
 your two shores

While you were given to drink the water of life
 by a cloud such that your gardens flourished and
 blossomed by means of it
 My affliction is for an abode whose spring
 encampments I was well acquainted with when
 its young she-gazelles walked with a stately gait
 in its courtyard,
 During the days when the eye of every respectful
 regard looked upon it from all directions;
 During the days when command was one in it, possessed
 by its commander and by the commander of him who
 was invested with command;
 During the days when the palm of every security
 was raised up to it in greeting and was
 hastening toward it.
 My mourning is reiterated for its generous leaders,
 the narrators of its traditions, its honest ones,
 its defenders;
 My soul sighs for its graces, its happy life, its
 elegance, and its high rank;
 My heart is torn apart for its wise and forbearing
 men, its men of letters and its men of taste.

مَا فِي الطُّلُولِ مِنَ الْاُحْيَاءِ مُخِيرُ	فَمَنْ اَدَى عَنْ حَائِلِهَا تَنْتَبِيرُ
لَا تَنَالُنَّ يَوْمَ الْاِيرَاقِ مَا شَاءَ	يُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَنْ اَتَّجِدُوا اَمْ اُغْوَرُوا
جَارَ الزَّمَانِ سَبِيحُهُمْ مَتَعَرَّوْا	فِي كُلِّ سَاجِدَةٍ وَبَادِ الْاُتَّعَرَّ
تَرَّتِ الْخُطُوبُ عَلَى مَحَلِّ دِيَارِهِمْ	وَعَلَيْهِمْ مَتَعَبَرَتْ وَتَقَبَّرُوا
قَدَحَ الزَّمَانُ بِصَوْغٍ فِي عَرَصَاتِهِمْ	تَوَرَّأَ نَكَادُ لِسَةِ الْغُلُوبِ تَنَوَّرُ
فَلْيَبْتَلِ قُرْطُوبِي بِفُلِّ بُكَاءٍ مَنْ	يَبْكُو بِعَيْنَيْنِ دَمْعُهَا مُنْعَجَّرُ

دَارُ أَقَالَ النَّفْثَةَ عَنْهَا !
 مِي كُلِّ نَاحِيَةٍ قَرِيبُ مِنْهُمْ
 عَهْدِي بِهَا وَالشَّمْلُ فِيهَا جَائِعُ
 وَرِيَا حُ زَهْرَتِهَا تَلَوُّ عَلَيْهِمْ
 وَالِدَارُ قَدْ صَرَبَ الْكَمَالُ رِوَاغَهُ
 وَالْقَوْمُ قَدْ أَمْنُوا تَغْيِيرَ حُتْنِهَا
 بِأَطْبَئِهِمْ بِفُصُورِهَا وَخُدُورِهَا
 وَالْقَصْرُ قَصْرُ بَيْتِي أُمْبَتِي وَأَقْرُ
 وَالزَّاهِرِيَّةُ بِالْمَرَائِكِبِ تَزْهَرُ
 وَالْجَائِعُ الْأَعْلَى يَنْسُ بِكُلِّ مَنْ
 وَمَالِكُ الْأَنْوَايِ تَقْدَهُ أَتْهَا
 يَا جَنَّةَ عَصَفَتْ بِهَا أَوْبَاءُهَا
 آتِي عَلَيْكَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَحَقِّي لِي
 كَانَتْ عِرَاصُكَ لِلْمُبْتَلَمِ مَكَّةُ
 يَا مَنْزِلًا نَزَلَتْ بِهِ وَبَاءُهَا
 جَاءَ الْفُرَاتُ بِأَحْتَبِكَ وَدَجَلَةُ
 وَغِيَّتْ مِنْ مَاءِ الْحَبَابِ عُمَامَةُ
 أَتَعِي عَلَى دَارِ عَهْدِ رَبُّوعِهَا
 أَبَاكَ كَانَتْ عَيْنُ كُلِّ كَرَامَةٍ
 أَبَاكَ كَانَ الْأَمْرُ مَبْهَامًا وَاجِدًا
 أَبَاكَ كَانَتْ كَعَا كُلِّ سَلَامَةٍ
 حُزْنِي عَلَى سَرَوَانِهَا وَرُوَانِهَا
 نَفْسِي عَلَى أَلَانِهَا وَصَفَانِهَا
 كَيْدِي عَلَى عُلَمَانِهَا حُلَمَانِهَا
 مَتَبَرَّزُوا وَتَغَرَّبُوا وَتَمَقَّرُوا
 مُنْقَطِرُ يَفْرَانِهَا مُنْجَبَرُ
 مِنْ أَهْلِهَا وَالْعَبَثُ فِيهَا أَخْفَرُ
 يَرْوَانِ بِقَتَرِ مِنْهَا الْعَنْبَرُ
 فِيهَا وَبَاغُ النِّفْعِ فِيهَا يَقْصُرُ
 فَتَمَقَّرُوا بِجَمَالِهَا وَنَأَزَرُوا
 وَبُدُورُهَا بِفُصُورِهَا تَتَخَدَّرُ
 مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرِ وَالْجِلَامَةُ أَوْقَرُ
 وَالْعَامِرِيَّةُ بِالْكَوَاكِبِ تُعَمَّرُ
 يَنْتَلُو وَيَنْتَمِعُ مَا بِنَاءُ وَيَنْظُرُ
 لَا يَنْتَقِلُ بِأَلْيَكِيهَا الْمَحْضَرُ
 رِبْعُ النَّوَى فَتَدَمَّرَتْ وَتَدَمَّرُوا !
 إِذَا لَمْ تَنْزَلْ بِكَ فِي حَيَاتِكَ تَفْخَرُ
 بِأَيِّ إِلَيْهَا الْخَائِفُونَ قَبْنَمَرُوا
 طَبْرُ النَّوَى فَتَتَبَّرُوا وَتَتَكَّرُوا !
 وَالْقَبْلُ جَاءَ بِهَا وَجَاءَ الْكَوْنُ
 تَحَبَّأَ بِهَا مِنْكَ الرِّيَاضُ وَزَهْرُ
 وَضِيَاؤُهَا بِغِيَاثِهَا تَنْبَخَّرُ
 مِنْ كُلِّ نَاحِيَةٍ إِلَيْهَا نَنْظُرُ
 لِأَمِيرِهَا وَأَمِيرِ نَسْنِ بِنَاءُ
 تَسْلُو إِلَيْهَا بِالسَّلَامِ وَتَبْدُرُ
 وَنِغَانِهَا وَحُمَانِهَا يَنْتَكَّرُ
 وَنَافِثِهَا وَنَافِثِهَا تَنْحَنَّرُ
 أَوْبَانِهَا طُرَانِهَا تَنْقَطِرُ

(b) Seville

Al-Mu'tamid Ibn 'Abbād did not know that he was digging his own grave when he requested the aid of the Almoravids to fight against the Christian army of Alfonso VI. The Almoravids defeated Alfonso in the battle of Zallāka and eventually all the Andalusian land came under their rule, including Seville.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Ibn 'Abbād was thrown into chains and exiled to Morocco at Aghmāt. In exile, he lamented in touching poems his country and his state of misery.

A stranger, captive in the lands of the West, will
be mourned by a certain pulpit and throne.
Should he come to naught, no caravan leader
will hear of his sweet mention, or see that
sporting of his again.

The white, sharp (swords) and also the spears
will mourn for him and shed many a tear
between them.

In this Zāhī and the Zāhir, largesse and its
seekers will seep for him, as well as
benefaction, (now) followed by refusal.

It is said that his generosity has died in
Aghmāt, it is because a flourishing state is
not to be expected after death.

A time during which kingship was well used to his
company has elapsed, while today he has been
pushed aside from it.

Their fate has humbled the sons of Ma' 'l-Samā, so
that the abasement of the sons of Ma' 'l-Samā is
very great indeed

(It has done so) in accordance with the corrupt
decree of an erring destiny; yet when have the
Fates ever been just to the just?

Hence their water is made of tears shed over them,
of which oceans pour over men's hearts.

Would that I knew whether I shall ever again spend
a night with a garden before me and a pool of water
behind me.

In a grove of olive trees, the heritage of nobility,
where doves coo and birds warble,

In its towering Zāhir, where the fine, soft rain
refreshes it while the Thurayyā points at us and
we at it,

While the Zāhī glances at us with its Sa'd Su'ūd,
both of them jealously, for the much devoted
lover is ever jealous

You will note that all this is (now) hard to attain
rather than easy, yet what God wills is always
easy (to bear)

عَرِيبٌ يَأْتِي الْمَرْبِيبِ أَسْبَرُ	تَبَيَّنِي عَلَيْهِ يَتَبَرُّ وَتَبَرُّ
إِذَا زَالَ نَمَ يَتَمَّعُ بِطَبِيبٍ زَكْرِي	وَلَمْ يَزِ ذَاكَ الْفَلْهُو مِنْهُ مُبِيرُ
وَتَقْدُبُهُ الْبَيْتُ الْمَوَارِثُ وَالْفَتَا	وَيَهْلُ تَمَعُ بَيْنَهُنَّ غَزِيرُ
تَبَيَّنِي فِي زَاهِيهِ وَالزَّاهِرِ الْبَدَى	وَ طَلَابُهُ وَالْعَرَفُ نَمَ تَكْبَرُ
إِذَا قَبِلَ فِي أَفْعَاءَ قَدْ مَاتَ جُودُهُ	مَا يَرْتَجِي بَعْدَ الْمَقَاتِ نُورُ
نَمَى زَمَنُ وَالْمُنْكَ مَسْقَاتُ بِسَه	وَأَصْبَحَ عَنْهُ الْجُودُ وَهُوَ نُفُورُ

أَذَلَّ بَيْتِي مَاءُ الشَّامِ زَمَانُهُمْ وَذُلُّ بَيْتِي مَاءُ الشَّامِ كُنْبَرُ
يَرَايَ مِنَ الدَّهْرِ الْمُضَلَّ فَايِدُ نَتَى طَلَعْتُ لِلْمَايَحِينَ دُمُورُ
فَمَا مَأْوَاهَا إِلَّا بَكَاءُ عَلَيْهِمْ يَفِيضُ عَلَى الْأَكْبَادِ بِنْتُ بَحُورُ
فَبَا تَبْتَ نِعْمِي هَلْ أَبْنَى لَيْلَةً أَمَايِي وَخَنَفِي رَوَّمَةٌ وَغَدِيرُ
يَمْتَنِيهِ الرِّبُونُ مَوْرُونِي الْعَلَى نَعْتِي حَمَامٌ أَوْ تَرِينُ طَبُورُ
يَزَاهِرُهَا الشَّامِي الذَّرَى جَادَهُ الْحَبَا تُبِيرُ الثَّرِيَّا تَحُونَا وَنُيُسِيرُ
وَيَنْحَطُّنَا الزَّاهِي وَسَعْدُ سُودِيهِ غُبُورَيْنِ وَالصَّبَا الْمَحِبُّ غُبُورُ
نَرَاهُ غَيْرًا لَا يَسِيرًا مَنَانُهُ أَلَا كُلُّ مَا نَاءَ إِلَهُ بِسِيرُ (45)

The poem is an expression of nostalgia and a lament over the poet's state of misery in prison. It was composed in exile and sent to the Sicilian poet, Ibn Ḥamdīs during the first year of his captivity in Aghmāt⁽⁴⁶⁾ (see below, p. 97). Ibn 'Abbād begins his poem mourning himself in prison and expressing feelings of despair and alienation.

Then he moves on to the scene of his memories, recalling his former happiness and reminiscing about his splendid palaces in Seville, describing the beauty of their landscape. Ibn 'Abbād ends his poem by asking himself hopefully whether it will ever again be granted him to spend a night in his country.

Ibn 'l-Labbāna of Denia (d. 1113) was one of the poets who flocked to the 'Abbādid court in Seville and remained faithful to al-Mu'tamid after his fall. Ibn 'l-Labbāna, in one of his major poems, laments al-Mu'tamid in his exile, expressing his sincere devotion to him in stylistic and

artful verses⁽⁴⁷⁾:

The heavens weep with their morning and evening
 rain clouds over those excellent lords,
 the Banū ‘Abbād
 Over those (lofty) mountains whose very foundations
 have been demolished, though the earth was
 endowed with pegs thanks to them alone;
 As for the plants on the hills, their flowers
 have faded and have appeared in the morning
 in the depressed vale (of Death).
 They were a cover into which misfortunes intruded
 despite their snakes and lions in it,
 And a Ka‘ba which hopes once served, yet today
 no one dwells in it, nor does any nomad (visit it).
 O guest, the home of generous deeds has become
 vacant to prepare to depart and gather together
 the remaining provisions for the journey;
 And O you who hoped to settle in their vale;
 the inhabitants have fled and the crops have
 withered in the valley.
 The road leading to generosity has misled the traveller,
 so journey to another goal, for no guide can
 guide you
 And you, O rider of horses which once proudly pranced
 in their harnesses, in countless numbers,
 Put down your weapons and lay down your Mashrif sword
 for you have come to find yourself in the maw of a
 hostile lion which seizes its prey unawares.

Those spears were spears of Khaṭṭ which the
vicissitudes of Fate straightened in an unexpected
manner,

While those swords were sharp-pointed blades whose
edges were notched and turned away from their
scabbards by the hands of Death.

When the appointed hour draws near no weapon can avert
it, for everything is subject to an appointed hour
and place.

How many stars of good fortune have set, and how
many pearls destined for unique glory have
shattered

If they were deposed, so were the Banū 'l-Abbās
(before them), while before Seville, the land of
Baghdād was likewise destroyed.

The ones were a light and the others a flower, yet
the latter, after its prosperity, has withered away,
while the former has been extinguished after being
kindled.

They defended the privacy of their women's quarters
until, when they were overpowered, they were driven
off in single file, led along by a rope.

Once they were lodged on the backs of grey (steeds),
but soon they were borne on (the surface of) black
(ships) like unto those steeds.

Each collar of their coats of mail was destroyed and
iron collars were fashioned out of them for
(their) necks.

May I forget all but the sunrise on the river,
 when they, in the ships with sails unfurled
 (for the departure), were like corpses in
 their tombs,

While the people filled the two shores and sadly
 gazed at (those) pearls floating on the foamy
 crests of the waves.

The veil was lowered, for no secluded maiden
 concealed her face. Likewise faces were rent
 (in grief) as garments also were rent.

They separated, having once been neighbours after
 each family had grown up with another family,
 and children with children.

The moment of farewell arrived and every woman
 and man cried out loudly, each one saying:
 "May I be thy ransom"

Their ships set sail accompanied by mourning, as
 though they were camels urged on by the song
 of the caravan leader.

How many tears flowed into the water, and how many
 broken hearts did those galleys bear away

Who will avail me of you, O Banū Mā' 'l-Samā when
 the water of heaven refuses to quench the heart
 of one who thirsts (for you)?

تَبْكِي السَّمَاءُ بِمُزْنٍ رَائِحٍ غَادٍ عَلَى الْبَهَائِلِ مِنْ أَتْسَاءٍ مُبْشَادٍ
عَلَى الْجِبَالِ الَّتِي هَدَّتْ قَوَائِدُهَا وَكَانَتْ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ ذَاتَ أَوْنَادٍ
وَالرَّابِيَاتُ عَلَيْهَا الْبَايِعَاتُ دَوَّتْ أَتَوَارُهُنَّ هَدَّتْ فِي خَفِيِّ أَوْهَادٍ
يَمْرِيَةً تَخَلَّتْهَا النَّائِمَاتُ عَلَى أَمَاوِيٍّ لَهُمْ فِيهَا وَتَسَادٍ
وَكَمَلَتْ كَانَتْ الْأَسَالُ تَخْدِيهَا فَالْيَوْمَ لَا عَاكِفٌ فِيهَا وَلَا بَادٍ
بِأَضْفٍ أَفْقَرِ بَيْتِ الْمَكْرُمَاتِ فَخُذْ فِي ضَمٍّ رَحْلِكَ وَاجْمَعْ فَظْلَةَ الزَّادِ
وَبِأُمُوتَلٍّ وَادِيهِمْ يَبْسُكُنْكُهُ خَفَّ الْقَطِينُ وَجَفَّ الزَّرْعُ بِالسَّوَادِ
صَلَّتْ سَبِيلُ النَّدَى بِأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَيَزِرْ يَخْبِرُ قَصْدِي مَا يُهْدِيكَ مِنْ هَادٍ
وَأَنْتَ يَا فَارِسَ الْخَيْلِ الَّتِي جَعَلْتَ تَخْنَالُ فِي عُدَيْهِ مِنْهُمْ وَأَنْدَادِ
أَنْقِي السِّلَاحَ وَحَلِّ الْمَضْرِبِيَّ فَقَدْ أَصْبَحَتْ فِي كَهْوَاتِ الصَّبْغَمِ الْعَادِ
يُنْكَ الرَّمَاخُ رِمَاخُ الْخَطِّ تَقَعُّهَا حَطَبُ الرَّمَاكِ يَفَاكُ غَيْرَ مُنْعَادِ
وَالْبَيْضُ بَيْضُ الطَّاءِ فَتَنْتَ مَآرِبَهَا أَبْدَى الرَّدَى وَتَنْتَهَا دُونَ إِنْغَادِ
نَمَّا دَنَا الْوَقْتُ لَمْ تَخْلُفْ لَهُ عُدَّةً وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ لِيَبْقَاكِ وَمِيسَادِ
كَمْ مِنْ دَرَارِيٍّ سَعِدَ قَدْ هَوَتْ وَوَهَتْ هُنَاكَ بِسِ دُرَرٍ لِلْمَجْدِ أَفْرَادِ
إِنْ يَخْلَعُوا قَبْلُكَ الْعَبَاسِ قَدْ خَلِمُوا وَقَدْ حَلَّتْ قَبْلَ جَمْعِ أَرْضٍ بَنَادِ
نُورٌ وَتَوَّرَ فَهَذَا بَعْدَ يَنْعَمِيهِ ذَوَى وَذَاكَ حَبَا مِنْ بَعْدِ إِبْقَادِ
خَسُوا خَرِيَّتَهُمْ حَتَّى إِذَا غُلِبُوا يَبْقُوا عَلَى نَقِيٍّ فِي حَبْلٍ مُقْتَادِ
وَأَنْزِلُوا فِي مُشُونِ الشَّهْبِ وَأَخْنَمِلُوا فَوَيْقَ دُحْرِ يَنْفُكُ الْخَيْلِ أَنْدَادِ
وَعِيتَ فِي كُلِّ طَوْقٍ مِنْ دُرُوبِهِمْ فَصَبَّغَ مِنْهُمْ أَغْلَالُ لِأَجْسَادِ
نَيْبَتْ إِلَّا غَدَاةَ النَّهْرِ كَوْنَهُمْ فِي الْمُنْيَاتِ كَأَمْوَاتٍ بِالنَّحَادِ
وَأَنسَاءُ قَدَمَلَاوُا الْعَبْرِينَ وَأَغْتَرُوا مِنْ لَوْلُو طَائِبَاتٍ نَوَقَ أَرْبَادِ
حُطَّ الْغِنَاغُ مَلَمَ تُسْتَرُ مَحْدَرَةٌ وَمَزَقَتْ أَوْجُهُ تَمْرِيقَ أَبْرَادِ
نَعْرِفُوا جِيزَةً مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا نَفَقُوا أَهْلًا بِالْمَقِيلِ وَأَوْلَادًا بِأَوْلَادِ
حَانَ الْوَدَاعُ نَضَبَتْ كُلُّ صَارِخَةٍ وَصَارِعٍ مِنْ مُعْدَاةٍ وَمِنْ قَارِ
سَارَتْ مَعَايِنُهُمْ وَالنُّوحُ بِمَضْجَبِهَا كَلَّتْهَا إِنْزِلُ يَحْدُو بِهَا الْعَادِ
كَمْ سَالَ فِي الْمَاءِ مِنْ دَمْعٍ وَكَمْ حَمَلَتْ نَلَكَ الْقَطَائِعُ مِنْ قِطَاعِ أَكْبَادِ
مَنْ لِي بِكُمْ يَا بَنِي مَاءِ السَّمَاءِ إِذَا

(c) Badajoz

Ibn 'Abdūn (d. 1134) found patronage and worked as a secretary under the Banū Muẓaffar of the Aftāsīd dynasty of Badajoz. They were deposed and murdered by the Almoravid in 1094 A.D.⁽⁴⁹⁾ Ibn 'Abdūn wrote a fine qaṣīda mourning his patrons and the fall of Badajoz. The poem is impregnated with historical references exhibiting the downfall of all the powers and dynasties throughout the ages. The poet begins his poem with a general lament over the betrayal of fate (1-9), then he gives some examples of this principle taken from the history of the East and of his country, al-Andalus (10-47). The final part of the elegy is devoted to a lament over the Aftāsīds of Badajoz in which he expresses his bitterness and despair (48-75).

It is Fate (alone) that causes us distress, first
by the blow itself and then by the traces
it leaves; so what is the use of weeping
over illusions and vain imaginings?

I warn you, I warn you, I unceasingly warn you
against dozing between the fangs and claws
of the lion

For Fate is (like) wartime even though it
manifests peace, while men of pure honour
and chiefs of noble rank are like white
swords and tawny lances;

Nor is any peace to be found between the pommel
held in the hand of the smiting warrior and
the sharp steel blade.

Therefore be not deceived by the (apparent)
 slumber of your world, for the (real)
 occupation of both its eyes is none
 other than to be ever vigilant.

What thing of Time's - may God forgive our
 lapse - belongs to Time, when the land
 of fortune's vicissitudes has betrayed
 it?

In each of its moments, in each of our members,
 it leaves wounds, even though they are
 hidden from sight;

It causes us to enjoy a thing, yet (only) that
 it may deceive us by means of it, just like
 the viper that rushes from the flower upon
 the (unsuspecting) gatherer.

How many a state that has ruled for its duration
 with divine aid is such that no trace
 remains of it - consult your memory

(Time) hurled Darius down (from power) and notched
 the edge of (Alexander) his slayer's sword;
 though the latter was a sharp, lustrous
 sword drawn against kings,

It reclaimed from the Banū Sāsān what it had
 given them, and left no trace of the Banū Yūnān.

It joined Ṭasm to its sister tribe (Jadīs),
 while (Fate), the undoer of all powers,
 turned against ʿĀd and Jurhum,

Nor did it spare the fair Yemenites, nor did
 it protect the lofty-goaled Muḍarites.

Moving to lamenting his country, al-Andalus:

It has bound every Mu'tamid in its noose and
irritated the eye of every Muqtadir with
its mote.

It has terrified every Ma'mūn and Mu'tamin,
and betrayed every Manṣūr and Muntaṣir

It has tripped up the family of 'Abbād - may
they rise up once more - with the train
of a great misfortune (which, unlike)
a hairy-faced camel, (is so stubborn that)
it does not shy away in panic (at the shadow
cast by its own beard).

O Banū Muẓaffar since Time - may it not be
inhabited - is made up of road stations one
day's journey apart, and men are every journeying
because of it,

May the day (of your death) be accursed among
days, and may no night bear its equal in
time to come

Who will (sit on) thrones and (manage) the reins
(of government) and who will guide the lances
to the frontier?

(Who will wield) sword edges and spearpoints
now that the tips of their tongues have been
bound by speechlessness,

And (Time) has caused the black Fates to encircle
their white helmets to oppress them? Therefore
wonder at it all, for only memory of them survives

(Who will ply) the pen? Who will be accomplished
in every excellence? Who will be generous?
Who will reward or punish?

(Who will) repel a blow of misfortune, avert an
impending doom, prevent an evil accident that
renders even Fate power-less?

Woe to generosity; woe to courage - should they
still be sound - for the mourning of religion
and the world (is poured out) over (Abū Muḥammad)
‘Umar (al-Mutawakkil ibn al-Muẓaffar of Badajoz)

May the fresh graves of al-Faḍl and al-‘Abbās
(his sons) be watered by a flowing (rain cloud)
which, insofar as generosity is concerned, is
related to them rather than to rain.

الدهرُ يجمع بعد العَيْنِ بالأنسِ	فما انكأ على الأنساج والصویر؟
أهباك أنهباك لا آتوك موعظاً	عن تومغ بين ناب الليث والطفر
فالدهرُ حرباً وإن أبدى مسالمةً	والبيض والتودمئل البيض والشمر
ولا هوادة بين الرأي نأخذ	يد القرايب وبين الصارم الذكر
ملا تفرقتك من دنياك تومنها	فما صناعه عينها يوى الشر
ما لبالي أقال الله عثرتنا	من اللبالي وخانتها يد البير
في كل جيب لها في كل جارح	يتأجراج وإن زافت عن النظر
نسر بالشيء ليكن كفى نسر به	كالإبر نار إلى الجاني من الزهر
كم دولي ولبت بالنصر خدمتها	لم تبقي ينها ولم يكرام من خير
هوت بداراً وقلت غريباً فابليه	وكان غضباً على الأملاك ذا أنس
وأترجعت من بني سامان ما وهبت	ولم تدع لبني يونان من أنس
وأنحفت أحنها طمناً وعاد على	عادي وحرم منها نافي السر
وما أقال ذوى الهبتات من يميني	ولا أجارت ذوى الغابات من مقبر

وَأَوْنَعَتْ مِىْ مُرَاهَا كُلَّ مُنْعِمِيْهِ وَأَنْزَعَتْ بِقَدَاهَا كُلَّ مُقْنَعِيْهِ
 وَرَوَّعَتْ كُلَّ مَأْمُونٍ وَمُؤْتَمِرِينَ وَأَلْمَعَتْ كُلَّ مَنصُورٍ وَمُنْتَعِمِيْهِ
 وَأَعْرَجَتْ آلَ عَبَّاسٍ لِّمَا لَهُمْ يَذْبُلُ زَبَاءٌ لِّمَنْ تَنْفِرُ مِنَ الدُّعْرِ
 بَنِي الْمُطَقَّرِ وَالْأَيْتَامُ - لَا تُزَلُّ - مَرَاهِلُهُ وَالسُّورَى مِنْهَا عَلَى سَفَرِ
 نَحْفًا لِبَيُوتِكُمْ يَوْمًا وَلَا حَمَلًا بِمَنْبِلِهِ لَيْسَلُهُ فِي غَابِرِ السُّمْرِ
 مَنْ لِلْأَيْرَةِ أَوْ مَنْ لِلْأَيْنَةِ أَوْ مَنْ لِلْأَمْنَةِ يُهْدِيهَا إِلَى الثَّقَرِ
 مَنْ يَلْطَفُ وَيَعْوِي إِلَى الْخَطِّ قَدْ عُقِدَتْ أَطْرَافُ أَلْسِنِهَا بِالْمَقِّ وَالْحَصْرِ
 وَطَوَّقَتْ بِالسَّنَابِ السُّورِ بَيْنَهُمْ فَاعْجَبْ لَذَاكَ وَمَا مِنْهَا يَوْمَ الذِّكْرِ
 مَنْ لِلْبَرَاعَةِ أَوْ مَنْ لِلْبَرَاعَةِ أَوْ مَنْ لِلسَّمَاحَةِ أَوْ لِلنَّفْعِ وَالنَّقَرِ
 أَوْ دَفَعْ كَارِنِي أَوْ رَدِّعْ آزِفِي أَوْ قَمْعْ حَادِنِي نَعْبًا عَلَى النُّقَدِ
 وَتَبَّ السَّمَاحِ وَوَتَبَّ الْبَلَّاسِ لَوْ تَلَمَّأَ وَخَسِرُهُ الدِّينِ وَالْدُنْيَا عَلَى عُمرِ
 تَمَّتْ تَرَى الْغُفْلِ وَالْعَبَاسِ هَامِيَةً تُغْمَزِي إِلَيْهِمْ سَمَاحًا لَا إِلَى الْمَطَرِ (49)

(d) Granada

Granada is located in the richest and most fertile part of Spain. It is the splendid city in which Muslims made their prolonged and last stand.⁽⁵⁰⁾ The empire of the Almoravid was overthrown and supplanted by another African dynasty, the Almohades (al-Muwahidūn), who easily captured Algeciras, Seville and Malaga, and a few years later ruled over all of al-Andalus (1145-1230 A.D.).⁽⁵¹⁾ The new dynasty was much more enlightened and cultured than the Almoravid.⁽⁵²⁾

However, the Christian reconquest gradually gained ground and by 1230 A.D. the Almohades had been driven out of al-Andalus. The only Andalusian city under the rule of Muslims was Granada where Muḥammad Ibn al-Aḥmar founded the

Naṣrīd dynasty in 1232 A.D. which maintained itself for well over two centuries.⁽⁵³⁾

Ḥāzim al-Qartājannī (d. 1285) fled from his native city Cartagena, after its conquest by the Christians in 1241 A.D., to Tunisia where he wrote a number of poems mourning his native city and the other Andalusian cities which fell into the hands of the Christians.⁽⁵⁴⁾ In one of these poems, addressed to Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā of the Ḥafsid court of Tunisia, the poet congratulates him and praises his bravery and his powerful dynasty, trying to inspire him to come to al-Andalus to help its people against the Christians in defence of Islam:

O rightful heir to the Guidance; conquests all
belong to you; the rapidly approaching
future one of them as well as the past
on that has already been observed.

While the Conquest of Ceuta came to you leading
(Ceuta) as the caravan follows the footsteps
of its leader.

So congratulations for the brilliant conquests
(like an opening up of enemy territory) that
have accrued to you, just as flowers open
up in the garden's bed.

What an auspicious investiture (of your rule)
they have constituted; on account of them
the party of error is in grief, while the
party of the Guidance is cheerful and happy
How much good news and congratulations does

the peninsula enjoy on account of them;
the eyes of (all) hopes are inclined in their
direction,

For they have renewed certain traces that had
become effaced here, for the Guidance; traces
along (the path on) which both Christians and
Moors gallop,

On every deep black (steed) dragging its feet,
clattering over stones, lofty of stature so that
the hillocks and knolls humble themselves in
its presence,

And (on) lean (horses) such that the goals (they
hoped to reach) kept them all one-eyed, after
the training places where steeds are made lean
had reduced their fat.

The Imam of a Guidance seeking victory from God,
victorious through God, attacks the enemy by
means of the necks (of those steeds).

(He is also) an offshoot of glory, pure in respect
of goodness, and there is no wondering at the
goodness of an offshoot whose constituent
elements are pure.

A (poem like a) virgin (in that its like has never
been attempted before), in which all beauty is
confined, has come to you, falling short of the
generosity there is in you.

وَبِوَيْهٍ تَهْدِي إِنْ الْفُجُوحَ لَكُمْ مَعْلُومٌ فَايَمٌ مِنْهَا وَمَنْظُورٌ
وَمَنْحُ يَبْتَنَى قَدْ وَافَاكَ بِقُدِيمِهَا كَمَا أَفْتَقَتْ أَنْتَ الْعَادِي بِهَا الْعِيرُ
مَا هُنَا يَنْزِلُ فُتُوحٌ طَالَعَتَكَ كَمَا تَفْتَحَتْ فِي نَظَرِي الرَّوْحِ الْأَرَاهِيرُ

أُيْمِنُ بِهَا بِتَمَعَةٍ حِزْبُ الضَّلَالِ نَحِ . بِهَا وَجِزْبُ الْهَدَى جَذْلَانُ مَقْبُورِ
 كَمْ يَلْتَجِزِيرُهُ مِنْ بُشْرَى وَتَهْنِئَتِي عَنْهَا عُيُونُ الْأَنَانِي نَحْوَهَا صُورِ
 مَجْدَدُوا مِنْ رُسُومِ لِلْهَدَى دَرَسَتْ هُنَاكَ يَسْتَقُ فِيهَا الرُّومُ وَالْمُورِ
 يَكُلُّ جَمُودٍ زُخُوفٍ بِالْحَصَى زَجَلِ سَامِ تُخَانِيعُ فِيهِ الْأَكْمُ وَالْقُورِ
 وَتَرْبٍ أَتَقَتِ الْغَابَاتُ أَغْبَتَهَا غُورًا وَقَدْ أَضْمَرَتْ مِنْهَا الْمَضَامِيرِ
 تَرْمِي الْعِيدَا يَهْوَاهِهَا إِمَامٌ هُدَى يَلْتَمِ مُسْتَنْصِرٌ، يَا لَيْلُ مَنْصُورِ
 وَقَرَعُ مَجْدٍ زَكَ طَبِيبًا وَلَا عَجَبُ مِنْ طَبِيبٍ قَرَعِ زَكَّتْ مِنْهُ الْعَنَاصِيرِ
 جَاءَ نَكَ تَقْصُرُ عَمَّا فَبِكَ مِنْ كَسَمِ يَكْرُ عَلَيْهَا جَمِيعُ الْخُسْنِ مَقْصُورِ (55)

(e) Abū al-Baqā' 'l-Rundī and his masterpiece

Abū al-Baqā' 'l-Rundī (d. 1285 A.D.), a native of the city of Ronda, did not flee from his country and saw the Christian armies everywhere triumphant.⁽⁵⁶⁾ He witnessed the fall of the Andalusian cities one after another and finally the collapse of the Islamic empire in al-Andalus. In a great poem⁽⁵⁷⁾, a masterpiece of art and style, he expresses his sorrow and nostalgia, lamenting his country and its splendid cities. He mentions them by name: Valencia, Murcia, Jativa, Jaen, Cordoba and Seville, and introduces each city with its special and well known characteristics. It is interesting to note that in spite of the sorrow and the atmosphere of disappointment which prevails throughout the poem, the poet expresses his enchantment with the beauty of the nature of his country and describes its splendid landscapes. The poem contains 42 lines and is divided into two subsections. The poet, in the first part (1-13) introduces his theme with a philosophical

phrase in the first hemistich of the first line, "Everything declines after reaching perfection", then he gives some examples of the fall of past dynasties and empires. In the second part, he moves on from the past to the present where he laments the recent collapse of his country, al-Andalus, and mourns over the great qualities of its cities. Abū al-Baqā' pours out his sincere emotions and deep sorrow for his country, ending the poem by addressing the kings of North Africa, appealing to them for aid for his country:

Everything declines after reaching perfection
therefore let no man be beguiled by the
sweetness of a pleasant life.

As you have observed, these are the decrees
that are inconstant: he whom a single
moment has made happy, has been harmed
by many other moments;

And this is the abode that will show pity
for no man, nor will any condition remain
in its state for it.

Fate irrevocably destroys every ample coat
of mail when Mashrifī swords and spears
glance off without effect;

It unsheaths each sword only to destroy it
even if it be an Ibn Dhī Yazan and the
scabbard Ghumdān.

Where are the crowned kings of Yemen and where
are their jewel-studded diadems and crowns?

Where are (the buildings) Shaddād raised in

Iram and where (the empire) the Sassanians ruled
in Persia?

Where is the gold Qārūn once possessed; where
are 'Ād and Shaddād and Qaḥṭān?

An irrevocable decree overcame them all so that
they passed away and the people came to be
as though they had never existed.

The kingdoms and kings that had been came to
be like what a sleeper has told about (his)
dream vision.

Fate turned against Darius as well as his slayer
and as for Chosroes, no vaulted palace offered
him protection.

It is as if no cause had ever made the hard easy
to bear, and as if Solomon had never ruled
the world.

The misfortunes brought on by Fate are of many
different kinds, while Time has causes of joy
and of sorrow.

For the accidents (of fortune) there is a consol-
ation that makes them easy to bear, yet there
is no consolation for what has befallen Islam.

An event which cannot be endured has overtaken
the peninsula; one such that Uhud has collapsed
because of it and Thahlān has crumbled

The evil eye has struck (the peninsula) in its
Islam so that (the land) decreased until whole
regions and districts were despoiled of (the

faith)

Therefore ask Valencia what is the state of Murcia;

and where is Jativa, and where is Jaen?

Where is Cordoba, the home of the sciences,

and many a scholar whose rank was once

lofty in it?

Where is Seville and the pleasures it contains,

as well as its sweet river overflowing and

brimming full?

(They are) capitals which were the pillars of

the land, yet when the pillars are gone,

it may no longer endure

The tap of the white ablution fount weeps in

despair, like a passionate lover weeping

at the departure of the beloved,

Over dwellings emptied of Islam that were first

vacated and are now inhabited by unbelief;

In which the mosques have become churches wherein

only bells and crosses may be found.

Even the mihrabs weep though they are solid;

even the pulpits mourn though they are wooden

O you who remain heedless though you have a

warning in Fate: if you are asleep, Fate is

always awake.

And you who walk forth cheerfully while your

homeland diverts you (from cares), can a

homeland beguile any man after (the loss of)

Seville?

This misfortune has caused those that preceded it
to be forgotten, nor can it ever be forgotten
for the length of all time

O you who ride lean, thoroughbred steeds which
seem like eagles in the racecourse;

And you who carry slender, Indian blades
which seem like fires in the darkness caused
by the dust cloud (of war),

And you who are living in luxury beyond the sea
enjoying life, you who have strength and
power in your homelands,

Have you no news of the people of Andalus,
for riders have carried forth what men have
said (about them)?

How often have the weak, who were being killed
and captured while no man stirred, asked
our help?

What means this severing of the bonds of Islam
on your behalf, when you, O worshippers
of God, are (our) brethren?

Are there no heroic souls with lofty ambitions;
are there no helpers and defenders of righteousness?

O, who will redress the humiliation of a people
who were once powerful, a people whose
condition injustice and tyrants have changed?

Yesterday they were kings in their own homes,
but today they are slaves in the land of the
infidel

Thus, were you to see them perplexed, with no
 one to guide them, wearing the cloth of
 shame in its different shades,
 And were you to behold their weeping when they
 are sold, the matter would strike fear into
 your heart, and sorrow would seize you.
 Alas, many a mother and child have been parted
 as souls and bodies are separated
 And many a maiden fair as the sun when it rises,
 as though she were rubies and pearls,
 Is led off to abomination by a barbarian
 against her will, while her eye is in tears
 and her heart is stunned.
 The heart melts with sorrow at such (sights),
 if there is any Islam or belief in that
 heart

لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِذَا مَا تَمُّ نَقْصَانُ	فَلَا يُغَرُّ بِطَيْبِ الْعَيْشِ إِنْسَانُ
هِيَ الْأُمُورُ كَمَا شَاهَدْتُهَا دَوَّلُ	مَنْ سَرَّهُ زَمَنٌ سَاءَتْهُ أَزْمَانُ
وَهَذِهِ الدَّارُ لَا تُبْقَى عَلَى أَحَدٍ	وَلَا يَدُومُ عَلَى حَالٍ لَهَا شَانُ
يَمْزُقُ الدَّهْرُ حَتَّى كُلَّ سَابِقَةٍ	إِذَا تَبَتَّ مَشْرِفَاتُ وَخِرْصَانُ
وَيَتَنَضَّى كُلُّ سَيْفٍ لِلْفَنَاءِ وَلَوْ	كَانَ ابْنُ ذِي يَزَنٍ وَالْفَعْدُ غَمْدَانُ
أَيُّنَ الْمُلُوكِ ذُووُ التَّيْجَانِ مِنْ يَمِينٍ	وَأَيُّنَ مِنْهُمْ أَكَالِيلُ وَتَيْجَانُ
وَأَيُّنَ مَا شَادَهُ شَدَادُ فِي لَارِمٍ	وَأَيُّنَ مَا سَاسَهُ فِي الْفَرَسِ سَاسَانُ
وَأَيُّنَ مَا حَازَهُ قَارُونُ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ	وَأَيُّنَ عَادَ وَشَدَادُ وَقَحْطَانُ
أَتَى عَلَى الْكُلِّ أَمْرٌ لَا مَرْدَ لَهُ	حَتَّى قَضَوْا فَكَأَنَّ الْقَوْمَ مَا كَانُوا
وَصَارَ مَا كَانَ مِنْ مُلْكٍ وَمِنْ مَلِكٍ	كَمَا حَكَى عَنْ خِيَالِ الطَّيْفِ وَسَنَانُ
دَارُ الزَّمَانِ عَلَى دَارٍ وَقَاتِلُهُ	وَأَمَّ كَسْرَى فَمَا آوَاهُ إِيْوَانُ
كَأَنَّمَا الصَّعْبُ لَمْ يَسْهَلْ لَهُ سَبَبُ	يَوْمًا وَلَا مَلِكُ الدُّنْيَا سَلِيمَانُ

فجائع الدهر أنواعٌ متنوعةٌ
وللحوادث سلوانٌ يسهلها
دهى الجزيرة أمرٌ لا عزاء له
أصابها العينُ في الإسلام فامتُحنتُ
فأسألُ بِلِسَانِيه ما شأنُ مُرسيةٍ
وأين قرطبةُ دارُ العلوم ، فكم
وأين حصنٌ وما تحويه من نُزوةٍ
قواعدُ كُنَّ أركانَ البلادِ فما
تبكى الحنيفةُ البيضاء من أسفٍ
على ديار من الإسلامِ نخاليةٍ
حيث المساجدُ قد صارتُ كنائسٍ ما
حتى المحاريبُ تبكى وهي جامدةٌ
يا غافلاً وله في الدهر مرعطةٌ
وما شياً مرحاً بلهيه موطنه
تلك المصيبةُ أنست ما تقدمها
باراكبين عتاق الخيلِ ضامرةٌ
وحاملين سيوف الهندِ مرهفةٌ
ورابتعين وراء البحر في دعةٍ
أعندكم نبأٌ من أهل أندلسٍ
كم يستغيث بنا المستضعفون وهم
ماذا التقاطع في الإسلام بينكمُ
ألا نفوسُ أبياتٍ لها هممُ
يامن للذة قومٍ بعد عزهمُ
بالأمس كانوا ملوكاً في منازلهمُ
فلو تراهم حيارى لا دليلَ لهمُ
ولو رأيت بكاهم عند بيعهمُ
ياربِ أم وطفلٍ حبلٍ بينهما
ومطفلة مثل حسن الشمس إذ طلعتُ
يقودها العليجُ للمكروه مكرهةً
لمثل هذا يذوب القلبُ من كمد

وللزمانِ مسراتٌ وأحزان
وما ليما حلٌ بالإسلام سلوان
هوى له أحدٌ وانهد شهانُ
حتى خلت منه أقطارُ وبلدان
وأين شاطبةٌ أم أين جبانُ
من عالمٍ قد سما فيها له شان
وسهرها العذبُ قياضٌ وملآن
عسى البقاء إذا لم تبق أركانُ
كما بكى لفراقِ الإلفِ هيمان
قد أفقرت لها بالكفر عريان
فبينَ إلا نواقيسٌ وُصليانُ
حتى المنابرُ ترفي وهي عيان
إن كنت في سنةٍ فالدهر يقظان
أبعدَ حصنٍ تغر المرء أوطان
وما لها مع طولِ الدهر نسيان
كانها في مجال السبقِ عقبانُ
كانها في ظلامِ النقعِ نيرانُ
لهم بأوطانهم عز وسلطانُ
فقد سرى بحديث القوم ركبان
قتلى وأسرى فما يهتز إنسان
وأنتم يا عباد الله إخوان
أما على الخير أنصارٌ وأعوان
أحال حالهمُ مكفرٌ وطغيان
واليوم هم في بلادِ الكفرِ عيانُ
عليهم من ثيابِ الذل ألوان
لهالك الأمرُ واسموتك أحزان
كما تفرق أرواحٌ وأبدان
كأنما هي ياقوتٌ ومرجان
والعينُ باكيةٌ والقلبُ حيران
إن كان في القلبِ إسلامٌ وإيمان (58)

In this chapter we shifted our interest to al-Andalus where an interesting body of nostalgia and lament poetry developed that will prove extremely useful for us to have a deeper understanding of Ibn Hamdis's poetry, studied in the next chapter. The main conclusions that we reached in the first section were:

- (a) the poetry of the Caliphal period was dominated by pleasure and sensibility to the beauties of the natural landscape of al-Andalus;
- (b) the romantic and nostalgic feelings were the main features of the poetry of Mulūk 'l-Jawā'if period;
- (c) the Almoravid period, unlike the previous periods, reflected sadness and alienation which loomed large in the minds of contemporary poets.

The dramatic change is quite apparent in the development. The second section tried to show how this development is manifested in the contemporary poetry by studying poets that are truly representative of their period as well as their physical surroundings.

Notes to Chapter Two

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23. D. Wasserstein, The Rise of the Party Kings, p. 130
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30. Frederick P. Bargebuhr, The Alhambra (Berlin, 1968), p. 37
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46. Raymond P. Scheindlin, Form and Structure in the Poetry of Al-Mu'tamid Ibn 'Abbād (Leiden, 1974), p. 113
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57. This elegy was written on the fall of a number of Andalusian cities into the hands of the Christians in 1267 A.D.
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C h a p t e r T h r e e

Exile and Nostalgia in the Poetry of

Ibn Ḥamdīs, the Sicilian

1. Sicily under Islamic rule
2. Sicily under the Normans
3. Ibn Ḥamdīs's life in Sicily: pleasure and amusement
4. His first exile in Spain: prosperity and homesickness
5. His second exile in North Africa: despair and grief
6. The themes of exile and nostalgia:
ghurba wa ḥanīn

1. Sicily under Islamic rule

Since the beginning of expanding Muslim conquests in the first half of the seventh century, Sicily, which was a Byzantine province, had felt the effect of the Muslims when Mu'āwīya b. Abī Sufyān in 652 A.D. sent an Arab force to raid Sicily.⁽¹⁾

For over two centuries the Arab raids against Sicily did not stop until the middle of the ninth century when Sicily became a part of the Muslim world.⁽²⁾ The successful expedition against Sicily was in 827 A.D. under the leadership of the qāḍī, Asad b. al-Furāt. It was composed of several elements including Arabs, Berbers and Spanish Muslims. The Muslim army defeated the Byzantine forces and headed towards Syracuse across Sicily.⁽³⁾ They took Palermo as a capital in 831 A.D. and started a series of campaigns to conquer the rest of the island. Only by the end of the ninth century did the Muslim conquest cover the whole island, when they eventually succeeded in conquering the Val Demone in 902 A.D.⁽⁴⁾

Sicilian society was composed of a mixture of many different peoples, races and religions: Muslims, Christians, Jews, Greeks, Berbers - and Arabs, who formed the ruling elite.⁽⁵⁾

However, from 947 A.D. and for ninety years Sicily was ruled by the Kalbite dynasty. Under the rule of Abū al-Futūḥ Yūsuf, the emir of Sicily, the island lived in peace

and prosperity, when poets and writers flocked to his court. (6) The Kalbite dynasty declined in 1040 A.D. and Sicily was divided into several petty principalities. (7) Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (known as Ibn 'l-Thumna), one of the Sicilian petty kings, expanded his territory (Syracuse) by attacking the other principalities. A conflict between Ibn Ḥawwās, the master of Castrogiovanni, and Ibn 'l-Thumna ended in the defeat of the latter. In desperation Ibn 'l-Thumna offered the island to the Normans in Southern Italy, hoping vainly that they would crown him over Sicily after conquering it. (8)

It is certainly a fact that under Arab Islamic rule, Sicily grew to be a true link between the East and the West, and a complete fusion of Greek genius and Arab genius took place. (9) It produced a number of Arabic philologists and poets, e.g. Ibn al-Khayyāt, who was an admirer of the Sicilian landscape (10), Ibn 'l-Sūsī, who made Palermo his home and wrote of Sicily with nostalgia. (11)

The poetic tradition in Sicily was continued and acclimatised and the poets wrote on the themes of eulogy, love, wine and the praise of palaces, lute, lamp, orange and palm. (12)

2. Sicily under the Normans

The Normans were tempted by the richness and fertility of the island and the civil war and anarchy in Sicily attracted them. The Normans started their conquest of Muslim Sicily in February 1061 A.D. and only after thirty

years of Muslim struggle was the conquest complete and the last city fell to the Normans.⁽¹³⁾

The picture of Sicily in peace and in war is vividly reflected and illustrated in the poetry of its famous poet, Ibn Ḥamdīs who loved his homeland and lamented it in a number of very touching verses.⁽¹⁴⁾

3. Ibn Ḥamdīs's life in Sicily: pleasure and amusement

‘Abd al-Jabbār Abū Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Azdī, known as Ibn Ḥamdīs, was born in Syracuse in 1055 A.D. just before the Norman conquest of Sicily which began in 1061 A.D. Ibn Ḥamdīs spent his youth in the beautiful natural landscape of Sicily and became the most celebrated lyric poet in the island.⁽¹⁵⁾

However, the poems composed during this period of his life are concerned only with pleasure and amusement.⁽¹⁶⁾ In one of these poems, he describes a brook that circled around a garden and along which carousers were seated. A cupbearer was pouring wine out, filling each goblet and floating it down the brook to every drinker, who would take it from the water, drink its contents and return the empty vessel via the water to its point of origin. There the cupbearer would refill it:

I remember a certain brook that offered the
impiety of drunkenness to the toppers
(sitting) along its course, with (its)

cups of golden (wine),
Each silver cup in it filled as though it
contained the soul of the sun in the
body of the full moon.
Whenever a glass reached anyone in our company
of toppers, he would grasp it gingerly
with his ten fingers.
Then he drinks out of it a grape-induced
intoxication which lulls his very senses
without his realizing it.
He sends (the glass) back in the water, thus
returning it to the hands of a cupbearer
at whose will it had (originally) floated
(to him).
Because of the wine bibbing we imagined our
song to be melodies which the birds sang
without verse,
While our cupbearer was the water which brought
(us wine) without a hand, and our drink was
a fire that shone without embers,
And which offered us delights of all kinds,
while the only reward (of that cupbearer)
for (giving us those delights) was that
we offered him to the ocean to drink.
(It is) as if we were cities along the
riverbank while the wine-laden ships sailed
(the stretch) between us,
For life is excusable only when we walk along
the shores of pleasure and abandon all
restraint.

وساقيةٍ تَسْقِي النَّدَامَى بِمَدَّهَا كَوْساً من الصَّهْبَاءِ طَافِغَةَ السَّكْرِ
 يَوْمٌ فِيهَا كُلَّ جَامٍ كَأَنَّمَا تَضْمَنَ رُوحَ الشَّمْسِ فِي جَسَدِ الْبَدْرِ
 إِذَا قَصَدْتُ مَنَا نَدِيماً زَجَاجَةً تَسَاوَلَهَا رَفَقاً بِأَنَمَلِهِ الْعَشْرِ
 فَيَشْرَبُ مِنْهَا سَكْرَةً عَيْنِيَّةً تَنُومُ عَيْنَ الصَّحْوِ مِنْهُ وَمَا يَدْرِي
 وَيُرْسِلُهَا فِي مَائِهَا فَيُعِيدُهَا إِلَى رَاحَتِي سَاقٍ عَلَى حَكْمِهِ تَجْرِي
 جَعَلْنَا عَلَى شُرْبِ الْعُقَّارِ سَمَاعِنَا لِحُوناً تَغْنِيهَا الطَّيُورُ بِلَا شَعْرِ
 وَسَاقِينَا مَاءً يَنْبِلُ بِلَا يَدٍ وَمَشْرُوبِنَا نَاراً تُضِيءُ بِلَا جَمْرِ
 سَقَانَا مَسَرَّاتٍ فَكَانَ جَزَاؤُهُ عَلَيْهَا لَدَيْنَا أَنْ سَقِينَاهُ لِلْبَحْرِ
 كَأَنَّا عَلَى شَطْرِ الْخَلِيجِ مَدَائِنُ تَسَافِرُ فِيهَا بَيْنَنَا سُفُنُ الْخَمْرِ
 وَمَا الْعَيْشُ إِلَّا فِي تَطَرُّفٍ لَذَّةٍ وَخَلْعٍ عِذَارٍ فِيهِ مُسْتَحْسَنُ الْعَذْرِ (17)

It is not known whether the poet took part in some of the battles against the Normans before he left.⁽¹⁸⁾ He wrote a number of poems expressing his feelings for his country and his people and urging them to struggle against their invaders, such as the following:

بَنِي الثَّغْرِ لَسْتُ فِي الْوَغَى مِنْ بَنِي أُمِّي إِذَا لَمْ أَصُلِّ بِالْعَرَبِ مِنْكُمْ عَلَى الْعَجْمِ
 دَعُوا النُّومَ إِنِّي خَائِفٌ أَنْ تَدُوسَكُمْ دَوَاهٍ ، وَأَنْتُمْ فِي الْأَمَانِي مَعَ الْحُلُمِ
 وَكَأْسٍ بِأَمِّ الْمَوْتِ يَسْمَى مُدِيرُهَا إِلَى أَهْلِ كَأْسٍ جَسَتْهَا بَابِنَةُ الْكُرْمِ
 فَرَّدُوا وَجْهَ الْخَيْلِ نَحْوَ كَرِبَةٍ مُصْرَّحَةٍ فِي الرُّومِ بِالشَّكْلِ وَالْبُتْمِ
 تَهْلِيلُ مِنَ النِّقْعِ الْمَحْلَقِ بِالضُّحَى عَلَى الشَّمْسِ مَا هَالَتْهُ لَيْلٌ عَلَى النَّجْمِ
 وَصُولُوا بَيِّضٍ فِي الْعَجَاجِ كَأَنَّمَا بِرُوقٍ بِضَرْبِ الْمَسَامِ مَحْمَرَةُ السَّجْمِ
 وَلَا عَدِمَتْ فِي سَلْطَانِهَا مِنْ غَمُودِهَا ظُهُوراً فَقَدْ تَخْفَى الْجَسَادُ وَالرُّجْمِ
 وَقَرَعُ الْحَسَامِ الرَّأْسَ مِنْ كُلِّ كَافِرٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ سَمْعِي مِنَ النَّقْرِ فِي الْبَمِ (19)

The poet opens by using the term "banū al-thaghr", the people of the frontier, which occurs in his poetry several times, referring to the important role played by Sicily as a link between East and West. The poem belongs traditionally to the theme of ḥamāsa and fakhr, where the poet shows his pride in his country and his peoples' bravery following the model of Abū Tammām in his ḥamāsa poetry.

Ibn Ḥamdīs managed to combine in the traditional medieval image of knighthood, the elements of love and war, reflected in his poems, e.g.

يا بني الحرب ما بنو الحب إلاً مثلكم في لقاءٍ صَرَفِ المنونِ
أنتمُ بالكفاحِ صَرَعِي العوالي وهمُ بالملاحِ صَرَعِي العيونِ
فسيوفُ القيون ، أقطَعُ منها بين أهل الهوى ، سيوفُ الجفون (20)

Another example emphasizing the same theme can be seen in the following lines:

لقد جنحتُ لسلمي كما جنحتِ لحربكِ
فبالدلالِ الذي زا دَ في ملاحَةِ عُجْبكِ
فُكّني من الأسْرِ قلباً عليه طابَعُ حُبِّكِ (21)

4. His first exile in Spain: prosperity and homesickness

Ibn Ḥamdīs left Sicily for Spain in 1078 A.D. after the Normans invaded his country. He went to Seville which had become a paradise for poets not only in Spain but also from North Africa and Sicily. He was received in the court of al-Mu'tamid Ibn 'Abbād who became "the western protector of poets par excellence after the Normans invaded Sicily".⁽²²⁾

Ibn Ḥamdīs enjoyed living in the literary circle of the Abbadid court and participated in the cultural life of Seville.⁽²³⁾ He was fascinated by the Andalusian architecture and wrote much poetry on the subject.⁽²⁴⁾

As a professional poet whose life was spent acquiring technical expertise, Ibn Ḥamdīs composed much in the genre of the panegyric: madīḥ, e.g.

بالله يا سَمُرَاتِ الحَيِّ هلْ مَنَجَعَتْ	في ظلِّ أغصانك الغزلانُ عن سهرِي
وهلْ يراجعُ وكرأُ فيك مُغْتَرِبُ	عَزَّتْ جناحيه أشراكُ من القَدَرِ
ففيك قلبي* ولو أسطعُ من وَلَهْ	طارَتْ إليك بجسمي لمحةُ البصرِ
قُولِي لِمَنزَلَةِ الشوقِ التي نَقَلْتِ	عنها الليالي إلى دار النوى أثري
نِلْتُ المُنَى بآبِ عِبَادٍ فَقَبِدْتِ	عن البدورِ التي لي فيك بالبيدَرِ
حَطَّطْتُ إليه حُدَاةُ العيسِ أَرْحَلُنَا	فالعزمُ صِفَرٌ بمثواه من السفرِ
كان ابتدائي إليه عاطلاً فغدا	منه يحلكني الأمانِي حالي الخبرِ (25)

His success and prosperity in Seville did not allow Ibn Ḥamdīs to forget his country and he remained faithful to Sicily. He followed the news coming from there about the political and military events of that time.⁽²⁶⁾ In some of his poems, he displays his feelings for his country, joyful or sad, in accordance with his reaction to current events in Sicily.

In 1072, after the fall of Palermo, the whole of the Northern coast of Sicily was in Norman hands, but the Muslim resistance did not stop. The hero of the Muslim resistance in the south was Ibn ‘Abbād al-Ṣiqilī (Banervert, according to the European chroniclers).⁽²⁷⁾ Ibn Ḥamdīs found in Ibn ‘Abbād and his resistance the hope and the aspiration of returning to his country and wrote some poems expressing his love and yearning for his country, praising the bravery of his people and the heroism of Ibn ‘Abbād, e.g.

والله أرضي التي لم تزل كناسَ الظباءِ وغيلَ الأسود
 فمن شادنٍ بابليّ الجفونِ نفورِ الوصالِ أنيسِ الصدود
 يدبرُ الهوى منه طرفٌ كليلٌ يَفْلُ ذلاقةَ طرقي الحديد
 ومن قنورِ شائكِ البرُتنينِ له لبدةٌ سرِدَت من حديد
 بصولٌ بمثلِ لسانِ الشواظِ فيولِغُهُ في نجيعِ الوريد
 زبانيةٌ خلِقُوا للحروبِ يشبُّونَ نيرانها بالوقود
 ماعيرُهُم مُرهفاتٌ بُنينَ لحدِّ الجماجمِ من عهدِ هود
 همُ المخرجونَ خبايا الجسومِ إذا ضَرَبُوا بخبايا الغمود
 هم المائلون على الحاقدين صلورَ رماحهم بالحقود

نُيُومٌ مَطَالِعُهَا فِي الْقَنَاسِ وَلَكِنْ مَغَارِبُهَا فِي الْكَبُودِ
نَخْطَ الْخَوَافِرُ مِنْ جُرْدِهِمْ مَحَارِبَ مَبْثُوثَةٍ فِي الصَّعِيدِ
نَخَرَتْ رُؤُوسُ الْعَدَى فِي الْوَغَى لَهَا سُجْدًا ، يَا لَهُ مِنْ سَجُودِ (28)

In another poem, Ibn Ḥamdīs expresses his gratefulness to the Zirid, Tamīm, who sent an expeditionary force to Sicily which raided Nicorta in Calabria and made a landing near Mazara:

وَكَمْ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ صَادَقَ الْبَأْسَ مُسْكَرٍ إِذَا كَرَّ فِي الْإِقْدَامِ لَا فِي الْعَوَاقِبِ
لَهُ حِمْلَةٌ عَنْ فَتَكْتِينَ انْفِرَاجُهَا كَفَتَكِكَ مِنْ وَجْهَيْنِ شَاهَ الْمَلَاعِبِ
إِذَا مَا غَزَوْا فِي الرُّومِ كَانَ دُخُولُهُمْ بِطُونَ الْخَلَايَا فِي مُتُونِ السَّلَاحِ
يَمُوتُونَ مَوْتَ الْعِزِّ فِي حَوْمَةِ الْوَغَى إِذَا مَاتَ أَهْلُ الْجَبَنِ بَيْنَ الْكَوَاعِبِ
حَشَتُوا مِنْ عَجَاجَاتِ الْجِهَادِ وَسَائِدًا تُعَدُّهُمْ لَمْ فِي اللَّاتِحِنِ تَحْتَ الْمَنَاقِبِ
فَغَارُوا أَفُولَ الشَّهْبِ فِي حُفْرِ الْبَلَى وَأَبْقُوا عَلَى الدُّنْيَا سَوَادَ الْغِيَابِ
أَلَا فِي ضَمَانٍ اللَّهُ دَارَ بِنُطُوسٍ وَدَرَّتْ عَلَيْهَا مُعْصِرَاتُ الْمَوَاضِبِ
أَمَثَلُهَا فِي خَاطِرِي كُلِّ سَاعَةٍ وَأَمْرِي لَهَا قَطَرُ الدَّمْعِ السَّوَاقِبِ
أَحْنُ حَنِينِ النِّيبِ لِلْمَوْطَنِ الَّذِي مَغْنَانِي غَوَانِيهِ إِلَيْهِ جَوَازِبِي
وَمَنْ سَارَ عَنْ أَرْضٍ ثَوَى قَلْبُهُ بِهَا تَمَنَّى لَهُ بِالْجَسْمِ أَوْبَةً آيِبِ (29)

When the Christian armies under Alfonso were defeated by al-Mu^tamid and his Almoravid allies in the battle of al-Zallāqa, Ibn Ḥamdīs wrote two poems in which he celebrated the Muslim victory, e.g.

ليهيئ بني الإسلام أن أبت سالماً وغادرت أنف الكفر بالذل راغماً
 كشفت كرباً عن قلوب كأنما وصغت عليهما من هواك خواتماً
 صبرت لحر الطعن والضرب ذائداً عن الدين واستصغرت فيه العظاماً
 تفتحت في صدر رحيب بحيث لا يلاقيك فيه القرن إلا مصادماً
 رحمتك من وقع الصوارم والقنا فكان لنا في حفظك الله راحماً
 وكم شجة في حر وجهك لم ينزل لك الحسن منها بالشجاعة واسماً
 أحببت المدي لما دعاك لينصره وجردت عزماً إذ تنقلت صارماً
 يحش تثير الجرد فيه قساطلاً تريك بها وجه الغزاة قاتماً
 إذا برقت فيه الأسنة خيلتها كواكب تجلو في السكاك غماماً
 غدت خلفه وحش العراء عواسلاً ومن فوقه طير الهواء حواماً
 كأن عقاب الجو همزت خوفاً حواليك منه للوغى وقوادماً
 كأن زعيم الروم وبلى لنفسه أثار عليه منك لئلاً ضارماً (30)

Here, the poet drew upon an historical incident to stimulate expression in the panegyric genre, madīḥ, and in war poetry, ḥamāsa.

5. His second exile in North Africa: despair and grief

The year 1091 marked a watershed in Ibn Ḥamdīs's life when he lost his patron and protector, al-Mu'tamid of Seville who was deposed and exiled to Aghmāt in Morocco. Ibn Ḥamdīs remained faithful to al-Mu'tamid and visited him in prison, lamenting his fate in some sensitive poems. In one of these poems, Ibn Ḥamdīs replied in the same rhyme and metre to a nostalgic poem sent to him by Ibn 'Abbād during his first year of activity in Aghmāt (see above, p. 64):

A fortune that is wont to stumble often brought
you honour, and a time in which you succoured
us has done you wrong.

The white blades have been sheathed in their
scabbards such that from having ceased to
strike they seem like women, though they
are masculine.

Our affairs run counter to the decrees (of Fate),
while Fate is at times just to man and at
times unjust.

Do you despair of a day that will be the opposite
of its eve, while the bright, shining (stars)
still go around amid the signs of the zodiac?

Lords may well behave arrogantly after obscurity,
while after an eclipse full moons may emerge.

If you are restricted to the abode you dwell in,
(even) the lion is (sometimes) restricted though
he is a crusher (of his prey).

It ennobles all captives that it should be said:

"Muhammad is a stranger, captive in the lands
of the West."

Brave men sighed because of its manacles in its
captivity, and some of them are broken by
misfortune in it,

While you were shrouded in a wall from among its
prisons by the spears; indeed, prisons are tombs
Until the present no full grown camels on whom
a rider gallops at dawn have ever alarmed the
night-flying sandgrouse,

Nor has a generous man ever rejoiced at the wealth
that a poor man puts into his hands.

You have protected God's religion with the best
of protections as though you were its heart,
and it the thought.

And when you advanced with largesse in your hands,
and Radwā and Thabīr were shaken because of you,
I raised my tongue for the sake of the approaching
Resurrection - lo, look at those mountains
flying hither and thither.

جَرَى بِلَهْ جَدُّ بِالْكَرَامِ عَنْوَرُ	وَجَارَ زَمَانُ كُنْتُ فِيهِ تُجِيرُ
لَقَدْ أَصْبَحَتْ يَمِينُ الطَّبَافِي غُمُودَهَا	إِنَّا لَنَشْرِكُ الضَّرْبَ وَهِيَ دُكُورُ
نَجِيهِ خِلَافًا لِلْأَسُورِ أُنُورُنَا	وَيَعْدِلُ دَعْوَى فِي الْوَرَى وَيَجُورُ
أَتَبَلَّسُ فِي بِلْمِ بِنَائِضِ أَمْسُهُ	وَزَهْرُ الدَّرَارِي فِي الْبُرُوجِ تَدُورُ
وَقَدْ تَنَفَّخِي السَّادَاتُ مَعْدُ خُمُودِهَا	وَتَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْكُفُوفِ بُدُورُ
لَيْنَ كُنْتُ مَقْصُورًا يَدَايَ عَمَرَتَهَا	فَقَدْ يُقَصِّرُ الضَّرْعَامُ وَهُوَ مَقْصُورُ
أَغَرَّ الْأَسَارَى أَنْ يُقَالَ مُحَمَّدُ	غَرِيبٌ بِأَرْضِ الْمَغْرِبِينَ أَسِيرُ

تَنَافَسَ مِنْ أَغْلَالِهَا فِي يَكَاكِهَا وَبُقِصَ مِنْهَا بِالْمَصَابِ دُكُورُ
 وَكُنْتُ مَسْجِي بِالطُّبَا مِنْ سُجُونِهَا بِسُورِهَا إِنَّ الشُّجُونَ قُبُورُ
 إِلَى الْيَوْمِ لَمْ تَذَعَرْ قَطَا اللَّيْلِ فُرَجْ يُغِيرُ بِهَا عِنْدَ الْعَبَاحِ مُغِيرُ
 وَلَا رَاحَ نَادٍ بِالْمَكَارِمِ لِلْمِغْنَى بِقَلْبِهِ فِي الرَّاحَتَيْنِ قَفِيرُ
 لَعْدَ صُنْتِ دِينَ الثُّغْرِ خَيْرَ مَبَانِي كَأَنَّكَ قَلْبُ فَيْهٍ وَهُوَ صَمِيرُ
 وَلَمَّا رَحَلْتُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ فِي أَكْفِيكُمْ وَقَلِيلَ رَحْوَى مِنْكُمْ وَتَجِيرُ
 رَفَعْتُ لِسَانِي بِالْغِيَامِ قَدْ أَنتَ أَلَا مَا نَظَرُوا هَذِي الْجِبَالِ تَسِيرُ (31)

In the same year of 1091, Noto, the last Muslim Sicilian city, surrendered and the Norman conquest of Sicily was complete after thirty years of resistance.⁽³²⁾ His hopes of return to the country vanished and a spirit of despair and grief dominated not only his life but also his poetry:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَرْضِي حُرَّةٌ لَا تَسْنِيهَا بَعِزْمٍ يَعُدُّ السَّيْرَ ضَرْبَةً لَا زَبْ
 وَلَكِنْ أَرْضِي كَيْفَ لِي بِفَكَكَاكِهَا مِنَ الْأَسْرِ فِي أَيْدِي الْعُلُوجِ الْغَوَاصِبِ
 لَنْ ظَفَرْتُ تِلْكَ الْكِلَابَ بِأَكْلِهَا فَبَعْدَ سَكُونِ الْعُرُوقِ الضَّوَارِبِ
 أَلَا فِي ضَمَانِ اللَّهِ دَارَ بِنُوطَسٍ وَدَرَّتْ عَلَيْهَا مُعْصِرَاتُ الْمَوَاضِبِ
 أَمْتَلُهَا فِي خَاطِرِي كُلِّ سَاعَةٍ وَأَمْرِي لَهَا قَطَرُ الدَّمْعِ السَّوَاطِبِ
 أَحْنُ حَنِينَ النِّيبِ لِلْمَوْطِنِ الَّذِي مَغْنَانِي غَوَانِيهِ إِلَيْهِ جَوَازِبِي
 وَمَنْ سَارَ عَنْ أَرْضٍ ثَوَى قَلْبُهُ بِهَا تَمَنَّى لَهُ بِالْجَسْمِ أَوْبَةَ آيِبِ (33)

In another poem, he shows his love for his country, his pride in his people and his lamentation for the state of his homeland in Norman hands:

صقلية كادَ الزمانُ بلادها وكانت على أهلِ الزمانِ محاربا
 فكم أعينِ بالخوفِ أمست سواها وكانت بطيبِ الأمنِ منهم نواحيا
 أرى بَلَدِي قد سامَهُ الرومُ ذلةً وكان بقومي عزهُ متفاسيا
 وكانت بلادُ الكفرِ تلبسُ خوْفَهُ فأضحى لذلكِ الخوفِ منهُنّ لايسا
 عدمتُ أسوداً منهمُ عَرَبِيَّةً ترى بين أيديها العلوجُ فرائسا
 فلم ترَ عيني مثلَهُمْ في كتيبةٍ مضاربَ أبطالِ الحروبِ مدّاعِسا (34)

Ibn Hamdis left Seville for Ifrīqiyya (Tunisia) to begin his second exile. He spent more than forty years moving from one city to another, from Aghmāt in Morocco to al-Mahdiyya in Tunisia, to Sfax and to Bijāya. He stayed in al-Mahdiyya for a while in the court of the Zirids. Ibn Ḥamdīs was in Tunisia when Roger II sent an expedition against Mahdiyya and Dinās commanded by George of Antioch in 1123. The Norman fleet was damaged by a storm and the expedition was unsuccessful. It was a moment of exultation for Ibn Ḥamdīs to enjoy the defeat of the Normans who occupied his homeland.⁽³⁵⁾ He wrote a long poem on this occasion praising the last Zirid, Ḥassan ‘Alī b. Yaḥyā and expressing his joy at that exploit:

أبى الله إلا أن يكون لكَ النَّصْرُ وأن يَهْدِمَ الإيمانُ ما شاده الكفرُ
 وأن يُرْجَعَ الأعلاجُ بعدَ علاجها خزايا على آثارها الذلّ والقهر
 ليهنك فتحُ أولغِ السيفِ فيهمُ ولاح بوجه الدين من ذكره بشر
 يستعِدُّ كساكَ اللهُ منه مهابةً وإشراقَ نور منه تَقْتَبِسُ الزُّهر
 ودون مَرَامِ الرومِ فيما سَمَوْا له قلائدُ أعناقٍ هي القُضْبُ البتر

وخطيئةٌ تخطّ منهم حيازماً وأحداقها زرقٌ وأجسادها حُمُر
 إذا أشرعت للطننِ سرتِ كأنما يُشكُّ بها في كلِّ سابقةٍ نَحُرُ
 أشبهها بالقطرِ يُبدي تالفاً بأطرافِ أغصانٍ يحاصرها غُدرُ
 وسُحبٌ بأجوافِ الكنائنِ أودعت شأبيها نبلٌ من الزنج لا قطر
 وخيلٌ ترى خيلَ العلوج، مضافةً إليها، حميراً لا التي نَج القفرُ (36)

Here, again, the poet draws upon a historical incident to stimulate expressions in his major poetic theme, al-ḥanīn ilā al-waṭan.

However, grief and sorrow seemed to dominate and haunt Ibn Ḥamdīs's life and poetry in his exile in Africa. Lamentation became the principle theme of his poetry in this period of his life. He lamented his father in touching verses in which he poured out his grief, desperation and impotence in exile⁽³⁷⁾:

أتاني بدارِ النوى نعيهُ فيا روعةَ السمع بالداهية
 فحمرَ ما ابيضَ من عبّرتي وبَيَضَ لِمَتِي الداجية
 بدارِ اغترابٍ كأنّ الحياةَ لذكر الغريب بها ناسيه
 فمثلتُ في خلدي شخصهُ وقربتُ تربته القاصيه
 ونُحْتُ كئُلى على ماجدٍ ولا مُسعدٍ لي سوى القاصيه
 قديمُ تراثِ العلي سيّدٌ على النجمِ خطّته ساميه
 مضى بالرجاحة من حليمه فما سبّرَ الهضبةَ الراسيه ؟
 وما أنسَ لا أنسَ يومَ الفراق وأسرارُ أعيننا فاشيه

ومرّت لتوديعيّنا ساعة بلؤلؤ أدمعينا حاله
ولي بالوقوف على جمرها وإنضاجه قدّم حافيه
ورحّت إلى غربة مرة وراح إلى غربة ساجيه
وقدّ أودعتني آراؤه نجوماً طوالها هاديه
سمعت مقالة شيعي النصيح وأرضي عن أرضه نائيه

He also wrote a number of lament poems on the deaths of his daughter, his wife and his beloved Jāriya, who lost her life at sea, e.g.

يَهْدِمُ دَارَ الْحَيَاةِ بَانِيهَا فَأَيَّ حَيٍّ مُخَلَّدٍ فِيهَا
وإن تَرَدَّتْ من قبلنا أُمّ" فهي نفوس" رُدَّتْ عوارِيا
أما تَرَاهَا كَأَنَّهَا أَجَمٌ" أَسْوَدُهَا بَيْنَا دَوَاهِيهَا
إنْ سَالَمَتْ وَهِيَ لَا تَسَالَمْنَا أَيْامُنَا ، حَارَبَتْ لِيَالِيهَا
وَأَوْحَشَتْنَا مِنْ فِرَاقِ مُؤْنِسَةٍ بِمِثْنِي ذِكْرُهَا وَبِحْيَاهَا
أَذْكُرُهَا وَالدَّمْعُ تَسْبِقُنِي كَأَنِّي لَلْأَسَى أَجَارِيهَا
يَا بَحْرُ أَرَخَصْتَ غَيْرَ مَكْرَثٍ مَنْ كُنْتُ لَا لِلْبَيْعِ أَغْلِيهَا
جَوْهَرَةٌ كَانَ خَاطِرِي صَدَفًا لَهَا أَقِيهَا بِهِ وَأَحْمِيهَا
أَبْتَهَا فِي حَشَاكَ مُغْرَقَةً وَبْتُ فِي سَاحِلِكَ أَبْكِيهَا (38)

After a long life, full of love and war, joy and grief at home and in exile, Ibn Ḥamdīs died and was buried away from his country, in Bijāya in Tunisia at the age of eighty in 1133 A.D. (39)

6. The themes of exile and nostalgia: ghurba wa ḥanīn

Exile played the most important role in Ibn Ḥamdīs's life where he spent sixty years away from his homeland. His poetical production was so influenced by exile that it became a framework for his life and his poetry.

It is interesting to note that the widespread use of the pattern-root of the word, ghurba (exile): ightirab, mughtarib, tagharub, gharib, which permeates most of his poems, e.g.

وهمك هم مرتقب أموراً تسبحُ
قرأت وحدي على دهري غرائبه
على غرائبها اغتراباً
فما أعاشر قوماً غيّر مغرب
غريب ديار قال في وطني : حبي

كم غريب حنت اليه غريبه
كانك لم تقنع لنفسك بغريبة
وكتيب شجاء شجو كئيبه
إذا لم أنقب في بلاد المغارب
ألفت اغترابي عنه حتى تكاثرت
وقالت غرابيب درجن ببينه
سيستدرج الأعوام وهو غريب
عن مغانيه غراب فاغترب
غربتني واحتنكت سنّ الأدب
طففت في الأفاق حتى اكتهلته
واغترب وارج المنى كم من فتى
ما لي أطيل عن الديار تغرباً
معدم نال المنى بعد اغتراب
أفبالتغرب كان طالع مولدي
هو ابن بلادي كاغترابي اغترابه
كلانا عن الأوطان أزعه الدهر
اني دفعت الى هواك وغريبة
هتفت بها العزمات والأسفار
أراني غريباً قد بكيت غريبة
كلانا مشوق للمواطن والأهل
لقد أركبتني غربة البين غربة
الى اليوم عن رسم الحمى بي ترسم
واياك يوماً أن تجرب غريبة
فلن يستجيز العقل تجربة السّم

وها هي الا غربة مستمرة أرى الشيخ فيها بعد سن غلام
 وما شيب الانسان مثل تغرب يمر عليه اليوم منه كعام
 ورحت الى غربة مرة وراح الى غربة ساجيه
 بدار اغتراب كان الحياة لذكر الغريب بها ناسيه
 طال التغرب في بلاد خصت بوخامة المرعى وطرق المشرب (40)

It can be said that Ibn Hamdīs was one of the first poets to use exile extensively in his imagery as well as a poetic theme combined with nostalgia. Exile and nostalgia became for Ibn Hamdis a productive poetic theme and one of the clearest characteristics of his poetry. It is worth noticing that the themes of exile and nostalgia appear not only in those poems devoted to praising or lamenting his country but also throughout all his subject matter: love-songs, wine and war poems, laments and nature poetry. His mind and his poetry were haunted by the happy memories he had of his lost paradise, Sicily, e.g.

وراءك يا بحر لي جنة لبست النعيم بها لا الشقاء
 فإن كنت أخرجت من جنة فإني أحدث أخبارها
 بلد أعارته الحمامة طوقها وكساه حلة ريشه الطاووس (41)

It is worth pointing out that most of the Arab critics consider the Andalusian and Sicilian poetry as merely a pale imitation of the Arabic poetry in the East. They believe that the Andalusian and the Sicilian poets were kept within the bounds of the traditionalism of the East. (42)

Ibn Ḥamdīs, as a Sicilian poet, was highly influenced by by the jāhilī and Abbasid poetry. But the question is, to what extent was he influenced; and what aspects of his poetry were affected most?

The study shows that Ibn Ḥamdīs's poetry was, as said, highly influenced by the jāhilī and the Abbasid poetry in several of its aspects. This influence can be seen in the multi-theme poem, where the poet deals with more than one subject in the same poem, starting with the nasīb, then moving on to the riḥla, then to the fakhr, and ending his poem with the panegyric genre to praise his patron.⁽⁴³⁾

The second trace of the Eastern sources in Ibn Ḥamdīs's poetry may be illustrated in those poems written with the same rhyme and metre as the celebrated jāhilī and Abbasid poets, which the Arab critics call mu'āraḍa. Ibn Ḥamdīs wrote a poem describing a giraffe using the rhyme and metre of the celebrated "lāmiyya" of Imru' al-Qays which begins with:

وَلَيْلٍ كَمَوْجِ الْبَحْرِ أَرْخَى سُدُولَهُ عَلَى بَأْنَوَاعِ الْهَمُومِ لِيَبْتَلِي

Ibn Ḥamdīs opens his poem:

وَنُويِّتُهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مِنْهَا خَلَائِقُ مَتَى مَا تَرَقَّى الْعَيْنُ فِيهَا تَسَهَّلُ (44)

At the end of his poem, he mentions Imru' al-Qays by name, citing a hemistich of his poem:

وَكَمْ مَنشَدٍ قَوْلَ امْرِئِ الْقَيْسِ جَوَّهَا وَأَفَاطِمَ مَهْلًا بَعْضَ هَذَا التَّدَلُّ (45)

He also composed poems using the rhyme and metre of some celebrated poems of the Abbasid poets, al-Ma'arrī and Abū Tammām.⁽⁴⁶⁾ It can be said that Ibn Ḥamdīs was fond of that kind of poetry, in which he could show his appreciation of other poets and could also show his poetic skills. One more example, from Andalusian poetry, can be found in a love poem written with the same rhyme and metre as a poem of the Andalusian poet Ibn Hānī⁽⁴⁷⁾.

Another sign of the Oriental tradition is exhibited in the imagery of Ibn Ḥamdīs's poetry which mostly derived from the desert and the Eastern environment, e.g.

رَكِبْتُ النُّوَى فِي رَحْلِ كُلِّ نَجِيَّةٍ تَوَاصِلُ أَسَابِي بِقَطْعِ السَّبَابِ
فَسَلَّصْتُ حَنَاهُنَّ الْهَزَالَ كَأَنَّهَا حَيَاتٌ تَبْعُ فِي أَكْفٍ جَوَازِبِ
إِذَا وَرَدَتْ مِنْ زُرْقَةِ الْمَاءِ أَعْيُنًا وَقَفْنَ عَلَى أَرْجَائِهَا كَالْحَوَاجِبِ
بِصَادِقِ عَزْمٍ فِي الْأَمَانِي يُحِلَّتِي عَلَى أَمَلٍ مِنْ هِمَّةِ النَّفْسِ كَاذِبِ (48)

The most important trace of the Eastern tradition in Ibn Ḥamdīs's poetry can be clearly seen in the emphatic and essential use of the aṭlāl motifs. The study shows that the aṭlāl, to Ibn Ḥamdīs, was not only a traditional theme but also a productive and prolific poetic subject in which he found a very close link to his independent genre: al-ḥanīn ilā al-waṭan.

The aṭlāl motifs do not occupy only the openings of his poems but also prevail throughout, e.g.

أيا جَزَعِي بالدار إذ عنَّ لي الجَزَعُ وقاد حِمَامِي من حَمَائِمِهِ السَّجْعُ
وعاودَني فيها رِدَاعِي ولم أَشِمْ ترائبَ عَوَادٍ يَضْمَتُهَا الرَّدْعُ
وقفتُ بها والنفسُ من كلِّ مقلعةٍ تذوبُ بنارٍ في الضلوعِ لها لذعُ
مُطِيلًا مُطِيلَ النَّوْحِ لو أنَّ دِمْنَةً مُطِيلًا عفت آياتُها فكأنَّما
حكى الربعُ منها بالصدى إذ سألتُها كلاميَ حتى قيل هل يَمْنَحُ الربعُ
تخط مع المحل الجنوب بمحوها سطورَ البلى فيها وتعجبها المِسْعُ
ولم يبق إلا ملعبٌ يبعث الأسي ويدعو الفتى منه إلى الشوق ما يدعو
ومجموعةٌ جمع الثلاث ولم تَزِدْ عليه صوالي النار أوجهها سفح
لبسنَ حدادِ الثكل وهي مقيمةٌ على مَيِّتِ نارٍ لا يفارقها فَجْعُ
ومضروبةٌ بين الرسوم وما جَسَّتْ عقاب النوى من هامها الضرب والتلع
ومحلوكٌ ما فكَّ زيجاً ولا له بِسِرِّ قضاء النجم علمٌ ولا طبع
أبان لنا عن بَيِّنَاتِ فَلَسانِهِ علينا له قَطْعٌ أتيح له القطع
إذا لم تكن للحي داراً فما لها إذا وقف المشتاق فيها جرى الدمع
ليالي عودي يكتسي وَرَقَ الصبا وإذ أنا إلفٌ للجأذر لا سَمِيعُ (49)

In the middle of the poem:

فورقاءُ لم تَأْرُقْ بحزنٍ جفونُها وبليلةٌ لم يدِرِ منها الأسي بال
وأذكرتني عَصْرَ الشَّبابِ الذي مضى لِبُرْدِي فيه بالتَّعَمِّ إسهال
ونضرةٌ عيشٍ كان همِّي جامداً به حيث تَبْرِي في الزجاجة سيال
ودارٍ غدونا عن حماها ولم نَرْحُ ونحن إليها بالعزائم قُفَّال
بها كنتُ طفلاً في ترعرع شِرتي أَلْعَبُ أيام الصِّبا وهي أطفال (50)

At the end of the poem, to evoke sympathy and nostalgia for his country and his people:

ألا حَبَّذا تلك الديارُ أوَاهلاً ويا حَبَّذا منها رسومُ وأطلال
ويا حَبَّذا منها تنسمُ نفحةً تؤدِّيهِ أسحارُ إلينا وأصال
ويا حَبَّذا الأحياءُ منهمُ وحَبَّذا مفاصلُ منهمُ في القبورِ وأوصال
ويا حَبَّذا ما بينهمُ طولُ نومةٍ تُنبِّهُنِي منها إلى الحشرِ أهوال (51)

The modern critic, S. Nawfal, claims that Ibn Ḥamdīs was a mere imitator. He wrote good poems, but they had no individual style and conformed completely to Eastern poetry.⁽⁵²⁾ Most of the critics, mediaeval and modern, reject this opinion and believe that the Sicilian environment was the most effective element in Ibn Ḥamdīs's poetry. It ranks as original work in the history of Arabic poetry.⁽⁵³⁾ The Andalusian mediaeval critic, Ibn Bassām, declares that "he is a skilful poet in regenerating the new motifs and displays them in beautiful words. He dives into the depth of the sea of the vocabulary (diction) to select its most valuable pearls."⁽⁵⁴⁾ Another mediaeval critic, Ibn Sa'īd, in his celebrated book, al-Mughrib fī ḥulā al-Maghrib, regards Ibn Ḥamdīs as the greatest Sicilian poet and the best poet in selecting the poetic motifs and he ranks him amongst the highest class of the Arab poets.⁽⁵⁵⁾ A. Ḍayf and M. Khafājī also consider Ibn Ḥamdīs as one of the greatest poets not only among the Sicilian and the Andalusian poets but also among the entire ranks of the great

Arab poets in the Jāhiliyya and the Abbasid times. He exceeded all Arab poets in the attempt to achieve the "realism" in Arabic poetry by expressing his feelings of joy or suffering towards the surroundings and by showing a great deal of thematic observation.⁽⁵⁶⁾

To summarize, this chapter has been an attempt to show how the notions of exile and nostalgia play an essential role in the poetry of Ibn Ḥamdīs. To set the stage the first two sections provided the historical background of Sicily, the land of the poet that constitutes the subject matter of his poetry, under Islamic rule and later under the occupation of the Normans. It is this conquest that represents the border line between the life of pleasure and amusement discussed in the third section, and the beginning of a feeling of homesickness and nostalgia, first in Spain and later in North Africa, discussed in sections four and five. In the final section, an attempt was made to show how the poetical production of Ibn Ḥamdīs was greatly influenced by the themes of exile and nostalgia to the extent that they became a framework for both his life and his poetry.

In the next part of this thesis we will see to what extent the essential aspects of exile and nostalgia poetry in the Arabic literary tradition have influenced Hispano-Hebrew poetry.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. Al-Baladhūrī, Fuṭūḥ al-Buldān, p. 35
2. Nicholson, p. 441
3. Aziz Ahmad, A History of Islamic Sicily (Edinburgh, 1975), p. 7
4. S.F. Mahmūd, A Short History of Islam (Oxford, 1960), p. 207
5. Aziz Ahmad, A History of Islamic Sicily, p. 21
6. Ibid., p. 32
7. S.F. Mahmūd, A Short History of Islam, p. 207
8. Iḥsān 'Abbās, al-'Arab fī Ṣiqiliyya (Cairo, 1959), p. 129
9. Mahmūd, p. 207
10. A. Ahmad, p. 46
11. Ibid., p. 47
12. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān
13. Mahmūd, p. 207
14. I. 'Abbās, al-'Arab fī Ṣiqiliyya, p. 300ff.
15. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, p. 17
16. Fawzī Sa'īd 'Isā, al-Shi'r al-'Arabī fī Ṣiqiliyya (Cairo, 1979), p. 378
17. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, p. 193, trans., Monroe, p. 14
18. M. Amari, Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia, vol. 2 (Firenze, 1858), p. 528
19. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, p. 413
20. Ibid., p. 486
21. Ibid., p. 23
22. Monroe, p. 24
23. Ibid., p. 20
24. Ibid., p. 26
25. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, p. 206
26. Amari, Storia dei Musulmani di Sicilia, p. 528
27. Ibid., p. 527, also I. 'Abbās, al-'Arab fī Ṣiqiliyya, p. 129
28. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, p. 115
29. Ibid., pp. 32-33
30. Ibid., p. 425
31. Ibid., pp. 268-269, trans., Monroe, p. 203
32. A. Ahmad, p. 53

33. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, pp. 31-33
34. For a complete analysis of the poem, see Part III.
35. A. Ahmad, p. 65
36. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, pp. 252-253
37. Ibid., p. 523
38. Ibid., p. 517
39. Amari, p. 529, Ihsān 'Abbās, al-'Arab, p. 240, Dīwān, p. 16, Ibn Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A'yan (Cairo, 1948), vol. 2, p. 383
40. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, pp. 14, 17, 22, 26, 28, 30, 38, 49, 65, 185, 260, 366, 408, 417, 432, 523, 438
41. Ibid., pp. 4, 155, 183
42. Ibn Bassām, Dhakhīra, vol. 2, p. 2, Shawqī Dayf, al-Fann wa Madhāhibuhu fī 'l-Shi'r al-'Arabī, p. 436, A. Haykal, al-Adab al-Andalusi, p. 98, I. 'Abbās, al-'Arab, pp. 306-310
43. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, pp. 307-310
44. Ibid., p. 380
45. Ibid., p. 382
46. Ibid., pp. 149, 354
47. Ibid., p. 206
48. Ibid., pp. 29-30
49. Ibid., pp. 307-308
50. Ibid., p. 357
51. Ibid., p. 359
52. Sayid Nawfal, Shi'r al-Ṭabī'a fī al-Adab al-'Arabī, p. 269
53. F.S. 'Isā, al-Shi'r al-'Arabī fī Ṣiqiliyya, p. 385, Aḥmad Tawfiq al-Madani, al-Muslimūn fī Jazīrat Ṣiqiliyya, p. 217
54. Ibn Bassām, Dhakhīra, vol. 4, p. 115
55. Ibn Sa'īd, al-Mughrib fī Ḥulā al-Maghrib, p. 354
56. Ahmad Dayf, Balāghat al-'Arab fī al-Andalus, pp. 140-141, M.A. Khafaji, Qisṣat al-Adab fī al-Andalus (Beirut, 1962), p. 359

P A R T T W O

Exile and Nostalgia in Hebrew Poetry

Chapter One: The Concept of Homeland
 in the Bible

Chapter Two: Exile and Redemption in Hebrew
 Poetry in al-Andalus

Chapter Three: Exile and Redemption in ha-Levi's
 Poetry

C h a p t e r O n e

The Concept of the Homeland in the Bible

- (1) Covenant and the Promised Land
 - (a) Conditioned or nonconditioned covenant
 - (b) Abraham and the Promised Land
 - (c) Jacob and the Covenant
 - (d) The Covenant with Moses (Sinai)
 - (e) The Covenant with David (Jerusalem)
 - (f) Covenant and family
- (2) Exile: Galūt (sin and expiation)
- (3) Sanctuary (regional affinities)

1. Covenant and the Promised Land

A covenant was a type of contract between God and the people through which people earned God's relationship and protection by keeping the law.

The nineteenth century scholar Julius Wellhausen surmised that the covenant between Israel and Yahweh meant that Israel was literally the son of God and somehow physically shared the divine nature. Then the prophets developed a sense of covenant suitable for a higher religion, namely the idea that union with God is not a matter of natural relationship or magical rite but of morality. Israel is the special friend, the covenant partner of God, because and only as long as it keeps His law.⁽¹⁾

Another scholar, Joachim Begrich, interpreted the covenant as a legal union which was established by a simple act of will on the part of the more powerful party. This would be represented by the type of contract we find in the Old Testament between God and Abraham or God and David.⁽²⁾

On the other hand it has been argued that the covenant was the basic concept around which the Bible revolved, and was a mutually exclusive pact into which God and Israel, as equal partners, voluntarily entered. Neither party coerced the other. In this altogether legal contract, the party of the first part, God, promised on oath to protect and promote Israel without limit, so long as Israel remained faithful to Him, and Israel, the party of the second part, in the knowledge that God is omnipotent and reliable, undertook to

worship Him alone. The pact was based on the principle of reward for loyalty, punishment for disloyalty.⁽³⁾

A theological topic upon which the covenant concept has been asked to cast light is the problem of human freedom and responsibility. God does not force Himself and His covenant on the people. Rather, He presents them with a choice and persuades them to accept freely a special relation to Himself. The people are asked, never compelled, to enter into the relationship.⁽⁴⁾

(a) Conditioned or Nonconditioned Covenant

It is a simple fact that there are many different forms of covenant and these different forms imply different meanings. The problem is in assuming that all covenants in the Old Testament are of one kind, the treaty form: then anything which seems to be related to that form is treated as covenant.

W.R. Roehrs assumes that all covenants in the Old Testament between God and Israel are of the same sort, that God is always the single active partner who grants the covenant, and that the covenant is the treaty form.⁽⁵⁾

Some scholars believe that the unconditional covenant was the normal pure form of covenant. Begrich, for instance, thinks that God simply promises His special protection and a special union between the human party and Himself without any conditions or demands upon the subordinate party and

without any expression of a willing acceptance on the side of that party.⁽⁶⁾

L. Kohler thinks that the characteristic phrase, karat brīt (to cut a covenant) indicates a covenant between equals, while the form karat brīt l/ 'im indicates a covenant granted by a superior. Another common phrase, heqīm brīt (to fulfil a covenant) is used for making a covenant with God because He is sure to keep it.⁽⁷⁾

W. Schottroff believes that the phrase zakhar brīt implies an appeal to the Divine Overlord simply as the generous giver of a covenant without any reference to Israel's having kept the covenant.

A. Japsen emphasizes that in the primary form of the important covenant, that between God and Israel, it was indeed the superior alone who granted the covenant.

The idea that God alone grants the covenant and the covenant is essentially His grace, is probably too restricted. All covenants and all contracts have their conditions. They must be defined somehow or other. These definitions are their conditions or stipulations which may often be assumed, circumstances simply so well known in a culture that they need not be stated explicitly.⁽⁸⁾

George Mendenhall supposes that the very unity of the Israelite people and its relationship with God was founded on covenant, and this covenant was in its original form a purely religious affair. As in all agreements or covenants between persons there was implied or expressed a condition

which is really a description of the sort of relationship into which they were entering and which appeared as law: Yahweh, the sovereign, has commanded his covenanted people, his vassals, in absolute terms. This law has, as the Old Testament constantly asserts, an essentially religious sanction: it is the result of a religious relationship between Israel and its God.⁽⁹⁾

The backbone of covenantal theology was the belief that God had made certain promises to his chosen people. These could not be rescinded. They would definitely be fulfilled only if the covenanters met His requirements. The Beatitudes in the Gospel assured the covenanters that God would fulfil His promises if His people did as the suffering servant in the Babylonian captivity.⁽¹⁰⁾

The commandments are conditional, that is, only if they are observed can the land be received and possessed. According to Deuteronomy, under the terms of the covenant entered into at Sinai, Israel, if it disobeys the commandments, can be expelled from the land: its occupancy of the land had a "legal" basis.⁽¹¹⁾

(b) Abraham and the Promised Land

In the original promise to Abraham the content of the promise consists of progeny, blessing and a land.

The land promised to Abraham has been promised to Israel as a whole, and the promise found its fulfilment, both in

the covenant at Horeb and in the conquest under Joshua.⁽¹²⁾ According to Joshua 23:3f the conquest gave Yahweh the land for the sake of Israel according to His promise. But Israel does not own the land: disobedience of the commandments of Yahweh, through intermarriage with the inhabitants of the land, would inexorably incur the withdrawal of Yahweh's support and the loss of the land.⁽¹³⁾

The theologian U. Devescovi finds three essentials in the first special covenant, that with Abraham: the promises of freedom, of a special relation to God, and of possession of Canaan. He believes that these are fulfilled in the Exodus, the Sinai covenant, and the progress towards and conquest of Canaan as told in the Heptateuch. Thus law and felicity are the fulfilment of grace, not vice versa.⁽¹⁴⁾

G. Von Rad believes that the promise of the land was proclaimed ever anew, even after its fulfilment, as a future benefit of God's redemptive action.⁽¹⁵⁾

(c) Jacob and Covenant

From Jacob the historical tribes were descended; Jacob would possess the land, and the blessing which he had already received from Isaac would become active in his seed. It was the covenant with his forefathers which was transferred to Jacob in Bethel.⁽¹⁶⁾

Some critics believe that the implications of Gen. 15:4ff, i.e. that the land which Abraham possessed at that

time was to be handed on to his son, are creations of a later period, the exile, when Israel felt that its possession of the land was in jeopardy. She accordingly sought to bolster her claims to the land by recourse to a supposedly ancient divine promise to Abraham.⁽¹⁷⁾

(d) The Covenant with Moses (Sinai)

Famine in Canaan compelled Jacob and his family to descend into Egypt, where they settled as shepherds and became numerous. They left Egypt, and led by Moses, they passed the Mount of Sinai, where they made a covenant with God.

The covenant between God and Israel described in the Sinai narrative was a covenant based upon some sort of blood and sacrificial rite, or in another version (Exodus 24:11), a covenant meal uniting Yahweh and the people, through which a quasi-familial relation was set up between the two. Covenant meal, sacrifice, and especially the overpowering experience of the theophany presented in the cult were certainly elements connected with and integral to the covenant.

The God who appears in Sinai, a God in cultic circumstances, is such that His mere appearance founds the relationship between Him and the people and supplies sufficient grounds for the demands he puts upon them.⁽¹⁸⁾

C. Schedl assumes that the Sinai covenant was a vassal treaty in form. This is what is supposed to have introduced the concept of conditioned blessing and curses into Israelite history. If Israel keeps the covenant it will be blessed; if not, it will be cursed. And it is precisely the function of the prophets to warn Israel when it is in danger of breaking the covenant, to condemn it when it has broken the covenant, and to encourage it to keep to the covenant.(19)

Walter Eichrodt finds the Sinai covenant to be basically the only essential covenant doctrine in the Old Testament. He also recognizes that the covenant, as a gift of God, could be withdrawn and perhaps would be if Israel failed in its duty to the covenant.(20)

Another scholar, D.N. Freedman, considers the Sinai covenant to be conditional, and presented as being based on the promise to the patriarchs. Thus grace comes first, it is a condition for the law rather than a consequence earned through the law.(21)

In a study of tradition concerning the events at Sinai, the author adduces the correspondence between the Decalogue and the Hittite treaty form. He recognizes that there are many lacunae in these correspondences, for instance, the Decalogue lacks the essential curse and blessing formula of the treaties. He claims that the apodictic form of the Decalogue implies curse and blessing, and so equivalently

the document has this form. The Decalogue, with its designation of Yahweh as the god of the Exodus, is thus ancient and essentially part of the Sinai complex.⁽²²⁾

(e) The Covenant with David (Jerusalem)

The Israelites seem to have felt that the covenant had to be reaffirmed when an important change in relationship occurred. There is evidence of this when Joshua was about to die (Josh. 23), and when Samuel instituted the monarchy (1Sam. 12).

This reaffirmation of the covenant seems not to have been required at every change, whether of ruler or of something else. It has been suggested that such reaffirmation was required in Israel only when a dynasty changed. Thus the covenant between god, king and people was reaffirmed when the Davidic Joash succeeded the usurper Athaliah.⁽²³⁾

The importance of the royal covenant precisely as divine covenant is best illustrated by the problem of the restoration, the return from Exile which followed the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. The restored community was confronted with the problem of its continuing existence even though it knew from the words of the prophets and from the actuation of the curses connected with the Deuteronomic covenant that the covenant had been broken. This had to mean the end of the covenant as such. This flowed from the very nature of the relationship described in the covenant form.

It was conditioned on fidelity, prophetic word and historical experience, proving that the condition no longer obtained, that the covenant must be at an end. And yet the people of God remained and Israel was still there. This theological problem found its answer in an appeal to the promissory and absolute covenant which had been given to David's line and to the patriarchs (Deut. 4:31). This covenant was not formulated in terms of stipulation with attendant curses and blessing depending upon the keeping of the stipulations. This was a kind of covenant which was simply a promise of God and was valid despite anything Israel might do. Thus the form of the Davidic covenant was not only acceptable: it became the backbone of a theological structure which explains the continuity of Israel, a theological structure which is elaborated in later books of the Bible. (24)

The permanence of the Davidic covenant as described in the basic statement of it is not dependent upon the fidelity of the Davidids: on the contrary, the promise of Nathan says explicitly that even though the king is faithless, his position will be assured. This is the direct opposite of the case in the formal treaty. It is true that in Ps. 132 there is an apparently conditional statement of the Davidic covenant: if the Davidids are faithful, they will reign for ever over Israel. However, even here we have but this one element of the covenant form, and it is covenant with the Zion Cult.

This is a covenant which is granted David and his line in view of the cult that they have instituted in Jerusalem.
(25)

D.N. Freedman finds that the actual presentation of the covenant with the patriarchs has been affected by the different form of the Sinai covenant. Still, the patriarchal covenant is basically one of promise. God commits himself to the family of Abraham. This promissory covenant is presented in the Old Testament as following upon signal acts of obedience, whether the covenant in question be that with the patriarchs or with David, but it cannot be said to be earned.

In any event, the continuation of such a covenant is not dependent upon the obedience of the human party, it remains pure grace on God's part. It cannot be broken, and when necessary it can be renewed. In fact it needs periodic renewal in any case, just as with ordinary treaties between civil states.⁽²⁶⁾

(f) Covenant and Family

There are important analogies other than the one with treaty, which are used to elucidate the relationship between Yahweh and his people: the marriage analogy and the father-son analogy.

The prophet Hosea introduced and developed the marriage analogy. Israel is the unfaithful wife of Yahweh, but Yahweh

will not abandon her for ever. After a period of chastisement she will be restored to her favoured position.

The prophet Jeremiah carried on the image of the husband-wife relationship between Yahweh and Israel. Yahweh is described as acting as husband towards Israel (Jer. 31:32).

Marriage, like covenant, is a species of contractual relationship. The Torah is part of the marriage contract. By obedience to Yahweh's Torah, Jews must be worthy of their bride - the promised land.(27)

The father-son relationship is also a basic analogy for the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. It is not, of course, a contractual relationship in nature, but it is a contractual idea of such an adoptive sense of the father-son relationship, and as a matter of fact, the father-son relationship in the Old Testament is described in terms which are identical with those that describe the covenant-love relationship between Yahweh and His people in the Deuteronomic theology.(28)

2. Exile: Galūt (sin and expiation)

The word galūt embraces a spectrum of facts and ideas that have found expression in Jewish history: political servitude and dispersion, sin and repentance, and atonement. (29) Although the northern tribes were exiled to Assyria in the eighth century, it is the sixth century Jews in Babylon that provide the central image of exile for the Bible. The exiled Jews were not oppressed, abused or imprisoned. But

they were displaced, alienated from the place which had given them identity and security.⁽³⁰⁾

E.J. Bickerman believes that the Diaspora saved Judaism from physical extirpation and spiritual inbreeding. Palestine united the dispersed members of the nation and gave them a sense of oneness. He also thinks that the Jewish Diaspora continued to consider Jerusalem as the metropolis, turned to the Holy Land for guidance, and in turn, determined the destiny of its inhabitants.⁽³¹⁾

In the spring of 538 B.C. the Persian monarch Cyrus issued a royal rescript granting permission to the Jews to return to Palestine and rebuild the Temple.⁽³²⁾

It appears that the Jews who lived in Babylon for a length of time tended to become detached from Palestine: they chose not to return when that was possible. Later, the Jews of the Diaspora on the whole refused to participate in the war against Rome in A.D. 66-70. A form of religious association appropriate to an existence outside Palestine, the Synagogue, had already almost certainly emerged in the Babylonian exile and developed throughout the period to supply Jews with a rallying point other than the temple in Jerusalem.⁽³³⁾

The exile is for the Bible the sharpest point of discontinuity, when none of the old traditions or conventional institutions any longer seemed valid or trustworthy. Exile without land or even a prospect of land was Israel's nadir, when every promise seemed void. This event of land-

lessness evoked rage and anger (Ps. 137), but also yearning and pathos (Lam. 1:2,3,6,7).⁽³⁴⁾

The sense of exile was expressed by the feeling of alienation in the countries of the Diaspora, the yearning for the past, and persistent questioning of the causes, meaning and purpose of exile. It became a phenomenon which demanded explanation and interpretation.

Jewish prophets shared a single view, considering exile as a punishment for the sins of Jewish people. For Jeremiah exile was the fulfilment of the purpose of God: the exiles were blessed in their disaster. And those who lived in the land were the "evil figs" (Jer. 24:5f).⁽³⁵⁾

The prophet Ezekiel looked upon Nebuchadnezzar as the instrument of God to chasten His people. The Jewish people were at present, as it were, in the grave, but the dry bones would be filled with life, and the revived nation would rise from its sepulchre.⁽³⁶⁾

The extremely long duration of the galūt after the fall of Jerusalem was explained as necessary to compensate not only for the multiplicity of Israel's sins, but the neglect of the Sabbatical years.⁽³⁷⁾

The exiles were cast out precisely as a punishment for their sins. But since their humiliation among the nations was desecration of Yahweh's holy name, He would again reverse their fate. He would remove their uncleanness and soften their hardened hearts, and the people would be restored (Ezek. 36.39).

Israel had not fulfilled the righteousness that Yahweh demanded, her history was a series of sins, and the sins could be gathered under one head: disobedience, rebellion against Yahweh.⁽³⁸⁾

When the people had been humiliated and scattered, it was to learn that "I am Yahweh" (Ezek. 6:7;7:4;12:5;33:29).

Like the other prophets, Deutero-Isaiah regards exile as a punishment for the sins of the people imposed by Yahweh because they did not keep His law (Is. 42:24;43:27; 47:6;50:1f). But the sin had been doubly paid for (40:2), and the prophet depicts how Babylon would fall, and the liberated people return to the expectant Zion. It is Yahweh who would wipe out the sins and bring home His people. For the sake of His name and His honour Yahweh would restore His people (Is. 48:9,11;52:5f).⁽³⁹⁾

The sages expressed different views: "God scattered Israel among the nations for the sole end that proselytes should wax numerous among them"⁽⁴⁰⁾; such was the justification of the Diaspora made by Rabbi Eleazer of Modim (A.D. 120-140). It may be noted that this view made separation from the land a not unmitigated evil.⁽⁴¹⁾

R. Eleazer also said: "The Holy One, blessed be He, did not exile Israel among the nations save in order that proselytes might join them."

R. Oshaia said: "The Holy One, blessed be He, showed righteousness unto Israel by scattering them among the nations."⁽⁴²⁾

R. Hiyya said that God exiled Israel because he knew that she was unable to endure the cruel decrees of Edom.⁽⁴³⁾

R. Judah, the son of R. Hiyya, also said that exile atones for half of men's sins.

R. Johanan believed that exile atones for everything.⁽⁴⁴⁾

3. Sanctuary (regional affinities)

Jerusalem became the centre of the life of Jewry from the post-exilic period, and all the hopes of the Jews gathered in that city. Jerusalem achieved that status not only because of geographical conditions but also due to religious and historical considerations.⁽⁴⁵⁾

After he had consolidated his rule over Palestine, David moved from Hebron to Jerusalem and changed the name of the "fortress of Zion" to "city of David".⁽⁴⁶⁾

In the reign of David, Jerusalem became a political and religious centre of Palestine, especially after receiving the Ark of the covenant. The sanctuary of the Ark was a symbol of the Federation of the tribes, the spiritual centre of all Israel.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Through the Ark, the religious and historical traditions of the Jewish people were preserved and grafted onto Jerusalem.⁽⁴⁸⁾

In the reign of Solomon, the Temple was built to

become a fit abode for Yahweh's glory, and that increased the religious significance of Jerusalem within which it was built. Von Rad characterized the concept of the Ark as a "theology of presence" so that the transfer of the Divine Presence to the Temple of Solomon was logical.⁽⁴⁹⁾

Since then, Jerusalem has occupied a prominent position in the history of the Jews. It was no coincidence that "Zion" came to be synonymous with Greater Jerusalem and the poetic appellation for the city, whereas the name "city of David" came to refer only to the Hill of Jerusalem (Is. 10: 32).⁽⁵⁰⁾

The pre-exilic prophets had linked Jerusalem to the dynasty of David, but after the destruction of the first temple in 586 B.C. they preferred to call it the city of Yahweh and referred to it as Zion.⁽⁵¹⁾

With the division of the kingdom, the status of Jerusalem had begun to decline and ceased to be the centre of political and economic life of the Jews.

The increasing importance which the royal Temple of Jerusalem acquired through the ages as the dwelling-place of Yahweh, made the blow all the more painful, when it was destroyed by the Babylonians. When the kingdom and the Temple had fallen, the Jews had lost the centre around which they were to rally. Yahweh on Mount Zion had no temple, while the other sanctuaries prospered.⁽⁵²⁾

This event was traumatic for the Jewish people because they had thought that the city of Yahweh was inviolable, and

the prophets did not wholly endorse it (Is. 17:12,14;29:1-8; Ps. 46,48,76). Lamentations make this clear:

"The kings of the earth did not believe, or any of the inhabitants of the world, that foe or enemy could enter the gates of Jerusalem."(4:12)

The lament centres entirely round Zion, which stood desolate. Priests and elders perished, no one helped (1,19), palaces and fortresses were destroyed (2,2:5,8f). But the deepest anguish was felt at the desecration of the Temple. Strangers invaded it, the enemy murdered priests and prophets and made a voice in the sanctuary as in a cult assembly (1,10;2,7.20.22). Mount Zion had been destroyed, and yet Yahweh sat forever on His throne. His association with Zion was broken, therefore He must bring back His people (5:18-21).⁽⁵³⁾

A powerful expression of the pain and grief is given in the words of Psalm 137:1-6):

By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept
when we remembered Zion.
If I forget you, O Jerusalem
may my right hand forget its skill
if I do not consider Jerusalem
my highest joy.

In spite of the destruction of the Temple and the disappearance of the Ark, Jerusalem remained its religious centre, and that could be because the prophets envisaged the whole of Jerusalem as the throne of Yahweh. Yahweh's

presence had become independent of the Temple, and its name would be "Yahweh is there".(54)

The prophets of exile expressed the hope of redemption and the new Jerusalem (Ezek. 43:1-5; Deut.-Is. 40:1-2;52:8). Jerusalem would be greatly enlarged and exceedingly beautiful (Deut.-Is. 49:19ff;54:1-3;60:13-18). Zechariah was assured that Yahweh "would again choose Jerusalem" (2:12).

They believed that it remained the place of salvation, that it was built for eternity and would be purified as at the beginning. It would be renewed in glory and become the centre of the earth. After it had fallen in A.D. 70, even then the hope for a new Jerusalem persisted.(55)

Jerusalem had been connected with Mt. Sinai in Is. 2:1-5; Ps. 68:15-17; it had become the place of the highest mountain (Ezek. 20:40;40:2).

Zion in Jewish tradition is considered as the mountain of God and His dwelling place. Yahweh had chosen Zion as the place of His resting, but Zion was also the place of the throne of His anointed. Yahweh had taken up His abode on Zion, the mountain of God, "the joy of the earth".(56)

There was a belief that Jerusalem was transformed and idealized and not any longer limited to the land. This point is especially put across by the section in Is. 60-62 in which hope for Jerusalem had reached its highest.

The city had become a transcendental entity, "mystic, wonderful", so that the earthly Jerusalem was taken up into a heavenly image of eternal abode.(57)

To recapitulate, this chapter has tried to investigate the origin of the concept of the homeland in the Biblical sources. It was shown how the ideas of the covenant and the promised land, which are fundamental to the Judaic beliefs, together determine and define the concept of the homeland for the Jews. These ideas also give the Jews a strong feeling of hope, which borders on certainty, that, whatever the nature of the circumstances that might estrange them from the promised land for some time, they will eventually regain it because it is bound to them by a divine decree that is the covenant. This is a key notion that will prove useful for us to understand the poetry of ha-Levi studied in the third chapter of this part of the thesis. The chapter has also tried to shed some light on the notion of "exile" in the Bible. Exile in the Jewish tradition was seen as a form of expiation of a sin. This idea, as well as that of Zion as a sanctuary, also contributes a good deal to a better understanding of Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus in general, and that of ha-Levi in particular.

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C h a p t e r T w o

Exile and Redemption in Hebrew Poetry in al-Andalus

- (1) Jews and Poetry in al-Andalus
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1. Jews and Poetry in al-Andalus

In the attempt to interpret the Hebrew poets and their poetry I may be guided by Goethe's advice that "to understand the poet you must enter the poet's land", and "to understand the poetical art you must enter poetry's land".⁽¹⁾

Using this argument it is possible to make a detailed explanation and interpretation of both the Hebrew poets and the work they produced.

(a) The Jews before the Arab conquest of Spain

For years and years, the Jewish community, prior to the Muslim conquest of Spain in the eighth century, had suffered a spiritual decline. Their persecution, through such acts as forced baptism, and the unsettled conditions they suffered, including confiscation of their property, led them into a continuing spiral of spiritual deterioration.⁽²⁾ They were declared slaves and thrown out of their homes and scattered all over the Spanish cities. They were not allowed to exercise Jewish rites. In addition, Jewish children were taken from their parents and brought up in Christian homes.⁽³⁾

However, it was an historic world event that led to the rekindling and awakening of the Jewish spirit and the subsequent development of all Jewish civilization. This resurrection of the spirit from deep somnolence can be attributed to contact with Islam.⁽⁴⁾

In the eighth century, the Arabs invaded and conquered Spain, liberating the Jews from their oppression and slavery.

Arabic civilization brought knowledge and spread light over the whole territory of al-Andalus. In this "very fair weather" Jewish culture flourished and Jews were attracted to Arab culture.⁽⁵⁾ Cities such as Cordoba, Malaga, Toledo and Saragossa became centres of Jewish learning. So great was the amelioration of the Jewish spirit that the Spanish Jews became the spiritual focus of world Jewry.⁽⁶⁾

The influence of, and fascination with, Arabic culture was very apparent in the newly emerging way of Jewish life. Politically, economically and socially, through religion and art, Muslim ideas and ideals had a profound effect on the Jews.⁽⁷⁾

(b) The Jews under the Caliphal rule

The Jews became part of the subject population when the peninsula was organized under the caliphal regime.⁽⁸⁾ The Jewish population was concentrated in the cities of Granada, Lucena, Seville and Tarragona and in some cases, entire villages.⁽⁹⁾

The caliphal court of Cordoba attracted and patronized poets and philosophers, men of letters and scientists. The Jews responded quickly and threw themselves into the Arab

culture, drawing from it the inspiration to revive their own culture.⁽¹⁰⁾

The process of reviving Jewish culture in al-Andalus started with the Hebrew language, when the Jews imitated the Arabs' strong devotion to their language and revived Hebrew, which had until then been reserved for religious and theological writings.⁽¹¹⁾ The appeal of the Arabic language attracted the Jews of al-Andalus and they spoke and wrote Arabic as fluently as their Arab fellow-citizens.⁽¹²⁾ They were also influenced by Arab cultural values, such as considering their poetry to be their greatest cultural heritage. The Jews assimilated these values to such an extent that the Jewish poet and critic, Moses Ibn Ezra, declared:

"Because the Arab tribes excelled in their eloquence and rhetoric, they were able to extend their dominion over many languages and to overcome many nations, forcing them to accept their suzerainty."⁽¹³⁾

It was under this influence that Jewish grammarians improved the Hebrew language in their writings.⁽¹⁴⁾ As the power of the old Babylonian schools declined, the Hebrew language in Spain witnessed a renaissance in scholarship and poetry.⁽¹⁵⁾

The Jews were impressed by the proliferation and quality of Arabic poetry in Spain, and they reacted creatively, to give voice to secular poetry of nature and love, and wine poems in Arabic metres.⁽¹⁶⁾

The beginning of this renewal of Jewish life and culture in al-Andalus was marked by the rise of the physician and statesman, Hasday b. Shaprut (905-75 A.D.), who served as physician and adviser in the court of the Caliphs Abd al-Rahmān III and al-Ḥakam II (961-76 A.d.)⁽¹⁷⁾ Hasday became the secular head of the Andalusian Jewish society. He was a patron of the arts and science and attracted to his court Jewish scientists, poets and philologists, such as Menahem b. Saruq and Dunash b. Labrat. The latter was the first poet to compose Hebrew poetry employing Arabic metres.⁽¹⁸⁾

The Arabic metrical measures were used by the Jewish poets not only for secular poems but also for the sacred. It may be said that the Spanish epoch marked the first occasion since the Song of Songs when secular poems appeared as part of Hebrew poetry.⁽¹⁹⁾

Remarkably, Jewish writers of the nineteenth century, such as Heinrich Heine, call the Spanish period - from the ninth until the end of the twelfth century - "The Golden Age of Hebrew Literature", a notion borrowed from classical literary history. They were impressed by the rich and original literature in Hebrew composed by the Andalusian Jewish poets. The Andalusian Hebrew Golden Age owes its character and importance to the prosperity of Arab culture in al-Andalus.⁽²⁰⁾

Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus reached its peak not only in respect of rhyme and metre but also in new themes and poetic forms.⁽²¹⁾ Now Jewish poets in Spain were trained in Arabic forms of poetry and Arabic was their native language.

However, whilst many of their themes and much of their imagery were indeed Arabic, the enormous enthusiasm generated created highly effective images and a whole new dimension in the Hebrew works they produced. (22)

A literary study of Hebrew poetry in Spain, the secular in particular, reveals that not only did the Jewish poets adopt the Arabic techniques of prosody, but they also used much of the same subject matter. They wrote love songs, they composed wine poems describing the feasts held in the gardens of Spain, where wine, women and singing were mentioned. They praised wealthy patrons, fellow poets and even themselves. In their poems they expressed such ideas as the feeling for beauty in nature, their sorrow at the departure of friends for distant lands, and the death of loved ones. They also wrote about their journeys, travelling from city to city, and their moves from their birthplaces.

At the time of Hasday Ibn Shaprut, the prosperity and expression of Jewish poets was such that "they opened the way for a later generation to acquire the important means of melody and free and full prosody they had newly developed." (23)

In spite of the division of Spain into many states of the so-called Mulūk 'l-Jawā'if, cultural life did not decline. On the contrary, cultural life flourished during this period (1009-1090). (24) The Jews were offered an extraordinary opportunity for government service and there appeared a distinguished class of Jewish courtiers. They included physicians, purveyors and clerks, as well as high-

ranking administrators like Yequtiel b. Ḥassān (d. 1039) in Saragossa and Abraham b. Muhajir (d. ca. 1100) in Seville.⁽²⁵⁾

2. The Jewish Poets and the Golden Age of Hebrew Poetry

(a) Samuel ha-Nagid: success and power

The highest-ranking Jewish courtier in all of Spain was Samuel ben Joseph ibn Naghrela. He was appointed vizir in the Berber kingdom of Granada under King Ḥabbūs and his son, Bādīs after him. Samuel held this position for more than three decades until his death in 1056.⁽²⁶⁾ He was known as the Nagid - a term comparable to the Arabic "Ra'īs al-Yahūd" and used to designate the leader of the Jewish community, recognized by the Muslim authorities.⁽²⁷⁾ He was representative of the Andalusian Jewish courtier.

According to the Jewish historian of the twelfth century, Abraham Ibn Daud, Samuel ha-Nagid was the model Jew and ideal leader.⁽²⁸⁾ He was a soldier and politician, Talmudic scholar and a patron of the arts, and was himself one of the greatest masters of medieval Hebrew poetry.⁽²⁹⁾ He was considered the pioneer of the golden Age of the Andalusian Hebrew poetry, where his voice reverberated in its history. In this respect Abraham Ibn Daud said, "The Jewish poets began to chirp in the days of Hasday Ibn Shaprut, but in the time of Samuel, their voices rang loud."⁽³⁰⁾

The Jewish historians claimed that Samuel ha-Nagid wore four crowns: the crown of Torah, the crown of high station, the crown of Levitical descent, and the crown of good deeds. (31)

Samuel ha-Nagid was a pioneer in using a greater variety of metric forms in his poetry than any of the Andalusian Jewish poets, even Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Judah ha-Levi and Moses Ibn Ezra.⁽³²⁾ He used as many as fifty-seven different metres in his poems and was the first Jewish poet to employ the muwashshahāt.⁽³³⁾

He handled the Hebrew language in his poems with great skill and his style was pure and strong.⁽³⁴⁾ He extended the range of poetic themes to include for the first time in post-biblical Jewish literature the description of military campaigns, ḥamāsa poetry, as well as the epic forms.⁽³⁵⁾ He also wrote on various other subjects: love, wine, elegies, friendship and religion. He preferred to chart new directions in Hebrew poetry than to adhere to the traditional sacred genres.⁽³⁶⁾ In the following lines, for example, he wrote a khamriyya referring to the aṭlāl theme:

Upon the tents of Arab princes now in ruins
the clouds poured out showers of water,
And the winds, fathers to thunder, swayed them,
and the rains, sisters of lightning, raised grasses
around them
After the storm, friends drank toasts there,
light wine in golden goblets,

Until they knew not how to distinguish
between the light of day and the dark ruins.

אֶהְלִי בֵּת נְשִׂיא עֶרְבֵי הַחֲרָבִים - / יֵצְקוּ בָּם בְּנֵי נְשִׂאִים רְבִיבִים,
וְהִנֵּעוּם אֲבוֹת רְעָמִים וְאַחִיּוֹת / הַבְּרָקִים וְהַעֲלוּ בָּם עֲשָׂקִים.
אֶחָדִי יֵצְקוּ לָךְ שָׁם אֲהוּבִים / מִי וְהוּבִים בְּחוּף גְּבִיעֵי וְהָבִים,
(37) עַד אֲשֶׁר אֵין בָּךְ תְּבוּנָה לְהַבְדִּיל / בֵּין מְאוֹרֵיהֶם וּמַחֲשָׁבֵי עֶרְבִים.

In the history of Hebrew literature, Samuel ha-Nagid was the first writer to set into Hebrew poetry the human episodes of his personal life.⁽³⁸⁾ It may be said that the poetry of Samuel ha-Nagid could be interpreted as a personal memoir in which he tells about his early life and his ambitious dreams, the divine promises made to him, the hardships he endures and the wonders he observes.⁽³⁹⁾

His poems constantly expose clarity of thought, fine expressions and wise sayings. They are weighted with allusions and lack depth of feeling.⁽⁴⁰⁾ He wrote a poem in his youth on leaving his native city, Cordoba, expressing his anger at his friends who thought he left Cordoba in pursuit of riches. He explained his move as a search for wisdom, not money. The style of the poem is strong and it bristles with good expressions and wise thoughts, but lacks love and nostalgic feelings for his native city where he was born and spent his youth:

The soul is far from its desires and the spirit
is refused its requests.

The body is fat and satisfied and vigorous but
its precious spirit is left unfulfilled.

And a humble man walks upon the earth but his
thoughts are spread upon the heavens.

For what help is his flesh to the voluptuary
even his goods when his soul is afflicted
I have friends who cause me distress; they
do not do good; they are great of body
but their minds are lacking.

They think that I have departed and turned from rest
to wandering in order to increase my wealth

Seeing that my head grows with hair dishevelled and
my eyes are encircled with the paint of night.

Yet my friends do not know the secret of my heart,
moreover my companions do not speak with wisdom,

And like an animal of cloven hoof their souls
do not know or understand

Can one restrain himself whose soul is pure
and who like the moon labours to rise?

Can one remain still until with her wings,
he girds her loins like a man strengthening
a tent-cloth;

Until he achieves and his feats are made known,
and he continues to increase in reputation like the sea?

As God lives and as the servants of the Lord flourish,
even I will keep the promise,

I will climb the rock with my feet and descend
into the pit that is stuck in the depths

And I will sew together one lip of the desert with
another and I will split the sea with every
swimming sail.

I will roam until I ascend and reach the heights that
 are known unto eternity
 And my enemies will be in terror of me but my
 friends I will save;
 free men will be faithful to me even as I to them
 My spirit hold fast to friends even as it
 avoids my accusers.
 And for you whose essence is a garden bed planted
 by a river of love from full affection is
 A friendship, nurtured from youth like a seal
 set in a signet ring
 Graven like the gravings of gold upon the windowpane
 that was cut into the threshold of the Temple
 May God be with you according to your love
 and may your devoted soul be delivered from distress,
 And may the redeeming Lord send you salvation
 until the sun and moon are no more.

וְשָׁמָּה מֵאֲשֶׁר תִּתְּאוּ גְדוּעָה, / וְנִפְשׁ מֵאֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁאַל מְנוּעָה,
 וְנוֹף שָׁמֶן וְשִׁבְעַת וְדִשָּׁן - / וְנִפְשׁוּ הַכְּבוֹדָה לֹא שִׁבְעָה,
 וְאִישׁ עָנוּ מִהֶלֶךְ עַל אֲדָמָה - / וּמִחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ עָלַי שִׁחַק שְׂרוּעָה,
 וְמָה יוֹעִיל לֹאִישׁ בְּשֶׁר בְּשָׂרוֹ / וְטוֹבָתוֹ - וְהִנֵּפֶשׁ בְּרָעָה?
 5 וְיֵשׁ רַעִים מְרַעִים לֹא מְסִיבִים, / גְּדוּלֵי נוֹף וְזִמְתָם גְּרוּעָה,
 יִדְמוּ כִי לְהוֹסִיף הוּא אֲנִי סָר / וְנִנְעָתְק מִחֲנִיָּה אֶל גְּסִיעָה,
 וְאִם רֹאשִׁי בְּצִיצִית רֹאשׁ פְּרוּעָה, / וּבִתְ-עֵץ בְּפוּךְ לַיִל קְרוּעָה -
 וְלֹא יִדְעוּ מְרַעִי סוּד לְבָבִי, / אֲכַל לֹא דִבְרוּ רַעִי בְּדָעָה,
 וְנִפְשָׁם מִבְּלִי הַכֹּר וְהַכִּין / כִּנְפֶשׁ הַבְּהֵמָה הַשְּׂסוּעָה!
 10 הִיִּתְאַפֵּק אֲשֶׁר נִפְשׁוּ לְבָנָה / וְכָל־בָּנָה לְהִתְנַשֵּׂא יִנְעָה?
 וְשִׁקְס, עַד אֲשֶׁר יֵאוּר בְּמִתְנִי / כִּנְפִיָּה, כְּאִישׁ אוֹזֵר יִרְיעָה,
 וְעַד יִפְעַל וְשִׁמְעוּ פְּעָלָיו, / וְיוֹסִיף עוֹד כִּים עַל הַשְּׂמוּעָה?
 בְּחִי הָאֵל וְחִי עַבְדִּי אֱלֹהִים / - וְכִמּוֹנִי יְהִי שׁוֹמֵר שְׂבוּעָה -
 בְּרִגְלֵי אֶעֱלֶה סֹלַע, וְאֶרְדּ / אֵלַי פֶּחַת בְּמַעֲמָקִים תִּקְוָעָה,
 15 וְאֶתְפַּר אֶת שְׂפַת מִדְּבָר בְּמִדְּבָר, / וְאֶקְרַע־ם וְכָל שׁוֹחָה קְלוּעָה.

וְאֵשׁוּט עַד אֲשֶׁר אָרוֹם וְאֶעֱלֶה / אֵלַי שִׁיאָה, תְּהִי לְעַד יְדוּעָה!
 וְתִמְצָא לְצָרִי בִּי חֶרֶדָה, / וְתִמְצָא לְדוּדִי בִּי תְשׁוּעָה,
 וְאַרְצֵעַ אֶת בְּנֵי חָרִים בְּאֵזֶן, / וְלִי אֵזֶן לְמוֹדְעֵי רְצוּעָה,
 וְלִי נֶפֶשׁ לְרַעִים מַחֲזִיקָה, / וְלִי נֶפֶשׁ לְמַשְׁטֵינִים מְנוּעָה!
 20 וְלִךְ תּוֹכָה עֲרוּגָה מִן יְדִידוֹת / מְלָאָה, עַל נֶהֱרַ אֶהֱב נְטוּעָה,
 יְדִידוֹת הַשְׁמִירָה מְנוּעָרִים, / כַּחֲתֻמָּת בְּטַבְעֵת קְבוּעָה,
 מִפְתַּחַת כְּפִתוּחֵי יֶרֶקֶרֶק / עָלַי שְׁמֶשֶׁה בְּסֶף הַיָּכָל קְרוּעָה!
 יְהִי לִךְ יָהּ כְּאַהֲבָתְךָ, וְנִפְשֶׁךָ / אֲשֶׁר אֶהֱב תְּהִי מִצֵּר פְּדוּעָה
 וְיִשְׁלַח אֶל לְמוֹשְׁעוֹת לֶךְ עַד / בְּלִי שְׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ יְשׁוּעָה! (41)

The lack of nostalgia for his country can also be observed on the very few occasions he mentions Spain in his poems, e.g.

וְתָם זָכַר עֲמֶלְק מִסְפָּרָד,	וְסָף חִילָם, וּמִמְלַכְתָּם נְיוּרָה!
וְאֵין עוֹמֵד בְּאַסְפִּמְיָא לְגִגְדָם	לְהִמְרוּתָם, וְאֵין מוֹעֵל מַעְלִים.
וְהָיוּ שָׁם עֲנִיִּים מְנוֹסִיכֵי	סְפָרָד עִם גְּדוּדֵי הַצִּמְרִי,
הֵלֹא אֵין בְּכָל אֵי סְפָרָד אֲשֶׁר לֹא	עוֹרָם - וְנִחְנוּ עֲלֵיהֶם עֲוִוִּרִים!
שְׁמָעָה, אֲשֶׁר אֶרְצוּ סְפָרָד, אֶף	יָצָא שְׁמוֹ הַטּוֹב בְּכִנְיָרָה,
וְכָל הַנִּקְרָאִים בְּשִׁמְךָ בְּמוֹרָח	וּבְסְפָרָד מְלָכִים יַעֲצִימוֹם, (42)

(b) Solomon Ibn Gabirol: loneliness and alienation

Solomon Ibn Gabirol was one of the great poets of the "golden era" of Spain. The Jewish poet of the nineteenth century, Heinrich Heine, described him as "a nightingale singing in the darkness of the Gothic medieval night".⁽⁴³⁾

He was born in Malaga, some time around the end of 1021 and the beginning of 1022.⁽⁴⁴⁾ He was left an orphan early in life and remained in Malaga only for his childhood. His literary activity began early on. Some of his poems were written at the age of sixteen. These early poems show a

great command of the Hebrew language, maturity of thought and profound depth of emotion, e.g.

לֹא הִיְתָה נִפְשִׁי מַעֲט שׁוֹאֵלֶת, / לֹא הִיְתָה לִיל יוֹם עוֹמֶלֶת.
 אֵיךְ אֶעֱלֶה, רְעִי, וּבִמָּה אֶעֱלֶץ? / הֲאֵם אֶיֶּחֶל? נִמְשָׁכָה תוֹחֶלֶת!
 הֵן מִדְּרֹשׁ חֻכְמָה בְּשָׂרִי נֹאכֵל - / וּבִשָּׂר אַחֲרִים אֶהֱבֶה אוֹכֵלֶת.
 לֹא אֶמְצָאָה סִכְלוֹת מַעֲט? כִּי אֵין לָךְ / מִכָּה אֲנוּשָׁה תַעֲרֹף אוֹלֶת!
 5 עַל כֵּן מֵאֵד אֵינֶנּוּ וְלֹא אֶרְף מַעֲט, / לֹא מִצָּאָה יָדִי כְבוֹד קֹהֶלֶת.
 אֶפְשֵׁט לְבוּשׁ תִּבְלָה, וְהִדְעַת - לְבוּשׁ / אוֹר לְבָשָׁה אוֹ כִּסְתָה בְתִכְלָת.
 כִּי מֵאֶסָּה נִפְשִׁי, כָּאֵלֹו נוֹאֶשָׁה / לִי מִמִּצָּא כְבוֹד וְהִיא נוֹחֶלֶת.
 דִּלְתִּי יְנוּגִים פִּתְחָה אֵלַי, הִכִּי / דִּלְתִּי שְׁשׁוּנִים אַחֲרִי נוֹעֶלֶת.
 מֶה לְאֲנָשִׁים יֹאמְרוּ "אֵיךְ תִּאָּהֵב / כְּבוֹד אֲשֶׁר יִמַּל כְּרֹאשׁ שִׁבְלֶת?
 10 הֵן כִּי תִבְקֹשׁ מַעֲלוֹת שֶׁנִּכְבְּרוּ - / בְּדָמִי בְּנִי יוֹם חֶרֶבָה נִנְאֶלֶת!
 אִמְרוּ לְמוֹכִיחִי - וּמִנִּי יִחַשׁוּ, / כִּי שְׁמִעָה אֲזִי דְבַר בֶּן - פֶּלֶת.
 אִם הָאֲדָמָה לֹא תִשְׁיַמְנִי לְרֹאשׁ - / אֵין הָאֲדָמָה אֶהֱבֶה מִסְכָּלֶת.
 לֹא יִדְעָה מֵאֲתָמוֹל רוּם מַעֲלוֹת / נִפְשִׁי - לְרִגְלִי הִיְתָה נוֹפֶלֶת!
 עַל הַיִּקָּר אֶחָמֵל, וְהָאֵל יַעֲנֶה / נִפְשׁ אֲשֶׁר עַל הַיִּקָּר חוֹמֶלֶת.
 15 אוֹלֵי אֱלֹהִים שָׁם בְּפִי דְבַר כְּמוֹ / אֲבֵן יִקְרָה - וְתִהְיֶה נִחֶלֶת.
 כִּשִּׁיר אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁר, וְיִרַח אֶף אֲנוּשׁ / מִבֵּין אֲמָרֵי חֶלְבָּנָה וְשִׁחֶלֶת.
 לֹא כִצְרִי הִזָּה בְּבֵית לוֹט יִדְעוּ / אֲנִשִּׁי סְדוּם - הִתְדַּפְּקוּ עַל דָּלֶת! (45)

He speaks of himself as a child, "grieved, without mother or father, inexperienced, lonely and poor, alone without a brother and without friends".

נִקְבֵּר - אֲבָל לֹא בְּמִדְבָּר, / כִּי אִם בְּבֵיתִי אֲרוּנִי!
 נִכְאָב, בְּלִי אִם וְלֹא אָב, / צָעִיר וְיָחִיד וְעָנִי,
 15 נִפְרָד בְּלִי אָח, וְאֵין לִי / רֵעַ לְבַד רַעֲיוֹנִי.
 אֶמְסֹךְ בְּדָמִי דָמָעִי, / אֶמְזֹג דָּמָעִי בְּיִנִּי,
 אֶצְמָא לְרֵעַ וְאֶכְלֶה / טָרֶם כָּלוֹת צִמְאוֹנִי -
 כָּאֵלֹו שִׁחָקִים וְחִילִם / בֵּין תַּאֲוָתִי וּבִינִי!
 נִחָשֵׁב כְּמוֹ גֵּר וְתוֹשֵׁב / יוֹשֵׁב בְּשִׁבְתִּי יַעֲנִי
 20 בֵּין כָּל פִּתְלָלִתִּי וְסִכְלִי - / לְבוֹ כָּלִב הַחֲכָמִי.
 זֶה יִשְׁקָךְ רֹאשׁ פִּתְנִים, / זֶה יַחֲלִיק רֹאשׁ וְיִנִּי,
 יָשִׁים אֲרִבּוֹ בְּקִרְבּוֹ, / יֹאמֶר לָךְ: "בִּי אֲדוֹנִי."
 עַם - נִמְאָסוּ לִי אֲבוֹתָם / מִהִיּוֹת כָּלִבִּים לְצִאֲנִי,
 לֹא יֹאדִימוּ פְּנֵיהֶם - / כִּי אִם צָבָעוּם בְּעִנִּי!

זֶה הֵם כְּעִנְקִים בְּעֵינֵם - / הֵם כְּחִנְכִּים בְּעֵינֵי!
 בְּשָׂאת מְשָׁלִי יְרִיבֹן / עָמִי כְּמוֹ עִם יוֹנִי:
 "דְּבַר שְׁפֹת-עַם וְנִשְׁמַע, / כִּי זֶה לְשׁוֹן אֲשָׁקְלוֹנִי!"
 עָתָה אֲדַקֵּם כְּמוֹ טִיט, / כִּי קִלְשׁוֹנִי לְטוֹנִי. (46)

These early experiences may be seen as the seeds from which grew the poet's sombre and bitter feelings which later found expression in his poems.

Ibn Gabirol spent most of his life in Saragossa which was then an important centre of Jewish culture. During this period he wrote various panegyrics on a prominent man by the name of Yekutiel Ibn Hassan who befriended him and became his patron.⁽⁴⁷⁾

After the death of his patron, Ibn Gabirol's life was embittered and filled with suffering. Once more he fell prey to a deep melancholy which is reflected in the poems he wrote at that time, e.g.

מֶה לִּי, יְחִידָה, תִּשְׁכִּי / דּוּמָם כְּמֶלֶךְ בְּשָׁכְנִי,
 כְּנֶפֶס רַגְלִים תִּאֲסָפִי / וְכִנְף יְעֻגִים תִּסְחָבִי
 כְּמֶה לְבָבְךָ יֵאָבֵל, / כְּמֶה דְּמָעוֹת תִּשְׁאַבִּי
 דְּבִקְתָּ בֵּיתִי עַד אֲשֶׁר / קָבַר בְּתוֹכוֹ תַּחְצִבִי.
 5 דְּמִי, יְחִידָתִי, לֵאל, / דְּמִי וְאֵל תַּעֲצָבִי,
 עֲמָדִי וְצָפִי עַד אֲשֶׁר / יִשְׁקִיף וְיֵרָא יוֹשְׁבִי!
 סִגְרִי דְלִתְךָ בְּעֵדֶךָ, / עַד יַעֲבֹר-וַעֲסֵם חֲבִי.
 יִקַּל בְּעֵינֶיךָ מָאד, / אִם תִּצְמָאֵי אוֹ תִרְעָבִי,
 יִרְבֵּ שְׁכָרְךָ עַד מָאד / וּבְאַחֲרִיתְךָ תִּיטָבִי.
 10 הַנְּזִירִי מֵאַחֲרִי / תִּבֵּל וְאֵל תִּתְעַרְבִי!
 מֶה לִּי, אֲדָמָה בּוֹגְדָה, / תִּתְהַלֵּכִי וְתִסּוּבִבִי

נִפְשִׁי בִּיפְיֶךָ מֵאַסָּה - / לְשׁוֹא עָלִי תַעֲנִבִי,
 אֵל תִּתְּנִי, כִּי מִתְּחַרַּת / תִּקְחִי אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנִדְבִי!
 שׁוֹבִי, יְחִידָתִי, לֵאל, / שׁוֹבִי וְלִבְךָ שׁוֹבִבִי,

15 הַתַּחֲנִי אֵלַי, וְגַם / דְּמָעָה לִפְנֵי שְׂאֵבִי,
 אוֹלֵי יֵצוּ וְיִשְׁלַחַךְ / מְבוֹר, אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ תִשְׁכְּבִי,
 מִבֵּין אֲנָשִׁים בּוֹעֲרִים / שֶׁתִּשְׁנְאִי וְתִתְעַבֵּי.
 אִם תִּכְתְּבִי – לֹא יִדְעוּ / אִם תִּמְחֶקֶי אוֹ תִכְתְּבִי,
 אִם תִּאמְרִי – לֹא יִדְעוּ / אִם תִּצְדֶּקֶי אוֹ תִכְזְּבִי!
 20 יוֹם תִּצְאִי מֵהֶם – תִּגִּי / תוֹדָה וְזִבְחָה קִרְבִּי,
 יוֹם תִּצְאִי לִרְאוֹת אֲנוֹס, / אֹז כְּאֲנוֹשׁ תִּתְחַשְּׁבִי.
 קוֹמִי, עֲנִיָּה סַעְרָה, / קוֹמִי וְגַם הִתְנַצְּבִי.
 קוֹמִי וְגוֹרִי בְּאֲשֶׁר / תִּיגְדְּעִי, תִּנְקְבִי.
 קוֹמִי וְשִׁכְחִי אֵב וְאִם, / צוֹרֶךְ לְכַדּוֹ אֶהְיֶי.
 25 קוֹמִי וְרוֹצִי אַחֲרָיו, / קָלָה כְּנֹשֶׁר אוֹ צָבִי. (48)

Because of his worldly inclinations and philosophically heterodox expressions he became alienated from his people.⁽⁴⁹⁾ The Jewish poet and critic, his contemporary Moses Ibn Ezra, says of him, "Although he was a philosopher as far as his intellectual attainments were concerned, yet his anger always got the better of his understanding. He was unable to control his temper and was easily led to ridicule great men and subject them to contempt in his writings."⁽⁵⁰⁾

On leaving Saragossa he wrote a poem expressing his feelings of loneliness and alienation and his anger towards his enemies:

נִחַר בְּקִרְאֵי גְרוּנִי, / דְּבַק לְחֻכֵּי לְטוֹנִי,
 הָיָה לְבָבִי סִחְרָחַר / מֵרַב כְּאֵבִי וְאוֹנִי,
 גָּדַל יְעוֹנִי וְחָדַל / מִתַּת תְּנוּמָה לְעֵינִי.
 כְּמָה אֵיחָל וְכְמָה / יִבְעַר כְּמוֹ אֵשׁ תְּרוּנוֹי
 5 אֵל מִי אֲדַבֵּר וְאָעִיד / וְלִמִּי אֶסְפֹּר יְעוֹנִי?
 לוֹ יֵשׁ מִנְחָם, מִרְחָם / עָלַי יִיאָחֵז יְמִינִי,
 אֲשַׁפֵּךְ לְבָבִי לִפְנֵיו, / אֶגִּיד קִצָּה עֲצָבוֹנִי:
 אוֹלֵי, בְּזִכְרִי יִגּוֹנִי / אֲשַׁקֵּט מְעַט מִשְׁאוּנִי.
 שׂוֹאֵל שְׁלוֹמִי, קִרְבִּי נָא. / וְשִׁמְעֵה כְּמוֹ יָם הַיְּבוֹנִי!

10 אם יש לבבך כְּשֶׁמִיר - / יִרְךָ לְרֹב דְּרָאוּנִי.
 אֵיךְ תִּחְשַׁב כִּי אֲנִי חַי / עַל דַּעְתְּךָ וְאַבּוֹנִי?
 הַמַּעַט הַיּוֹתֵי בְּתוֹךְ עָם / יִחְשַׁב שְׂמָאלוֹ יִמְנִי? (51)

In 1045, before he left Saragossa, he wrote two works in Arabic on the "Improvement of the Moral Qualities" and the other, a collection of Proverbs under the name "The Choice of Pearls". (52)

After leaving Saragossa, Ibn Gabirol wandered about until he found another patron in Granada, the poet and vizir Samuel ha-Nagid.

When his new patron died, Ibn Gabirol left Granada and wandered in the peninsula until his death in Valencia before he had reached his fortieth year. (53)

In respect of his death, it is worth referring to the legend which ascribes Ibn Gabirol's death to the envy of a Muslim poet. The latter murdered Ibn Gabirol and buried him under a fig tree. The tree immediately began to blossom and yield the most luscious fruit. This phenomenon led to an investigation which resulted in the discovery of the crime and the punishment of the criminal. The legend reflects the popular admiration and respect of the poetic production of Ibn Gabirol. (54)

Ibn Gabirol was a theologian, grammarian, philosopher and poet. He ranks in the highest class of the Hebrew poets. He surpassed his contemporaries in both quality and quantity. (55) Moses Ibn Ezra in his Arabic book al-Muḥāḍara wa'l-Mudhākara says of him:

"Younger though he was than his contemporaries, he surpassed them in the art of expression, although, in a general way, they were distinguished for their language which was choice and full of sweetness. While they may have differed in the order of merit, they all ranked alike for the beauty of their style and charm of expression. But Abū Ayyūb was an accomplished author and an eloquent writer who made himself master of that which poetry considers its aim. He attained the end in view and reached the goal. In his writings he used the finest figures of speech, imitating the modern Arabic poets. He was called the Knight of Style and the Master of Verse because of the polish of his style, the fluency of his expression and the charm of the subjects which he treated. All eyes were directed to him and everyone pointed to him with admiration. It was he who first opened the door of prosody to Jewish poets, and those who entered after him on the same road made their fabric from his material ... In his poetry he embodied ideas which were based upon the laws of the Torah and were in harmony with tradition."(56)

Ibn Gabirol was the first to excel in using the Arabic models to the extent that some of his poems may be regarded as Arabic poems in the Hebrew language.(57)

The art of Hebrew poetry reached its perfection in the hands of Ibn Gabirol who can be regarded as the founder of a new school.(58)

The Jewish critic, Judah al-Ḥarizi, placed him above all his contemporaries. He says:

"Before the Song of Solomon, the Small-all great poets in our estimation fall. Since the cradle of Hebrew speech-none did ever his station reach. With unusual gifts dowered-he above his generation towered. Though dubbed small, he surpassed them all. He alone to Parnassus' pinnacle did ascend-the wisdom of the Muses to comprehend. Art claimed him as her first-born-and with a scarlet thread did his arm adorn. All the poets that before him sang-like the wind upon the void their voices rang. None like him has since arrived-no matter how much they may have strived. He is the master of them all-and they in his footsteps fall. The Lord anointed him his nation's King of Songs-and his verse is the Song of Songs. Even great poets find it hard-to grasp the meaning of this bard. For his style is too profound-its depth none can sound."(59)

In his secular poetry, Ibn Gabirol was a representative of contemporary Arab trends. His poetry is filled with the spirit of classical and recent Arabic poetry.(60) Ibn Gabirol was highly influenced by the pessimism and the pride of the blind poet, Abū'l- 'Alā' al-Ma'arri.(61)

His secular poetry is for the most part of a personal nature where he employs it as a means of higher self-expression.(62)

Ibn Gabirol wrote on various subjects: love, wine, self-praise (fakhr), and description (wasf). He used most of the Arabic motifs in his poems as well as the Arabic images, which added a new dimension of depth. (63)

He wrote some long poems in the genre of wasf (description), describing the natural landscape of Spain. These poems are filled with the spirit of their Arabic models, employing the entire apparatus of the Arabic playful description of nature, e.g.

I am that man who bound his belt; its tightening
shall suffer, till my pledge redeemed, no lightening,

The one whose heart is frightened by his heartbeat,
whose soul rejects its in-the-flesh-abiding.

Since boyhood wisdom choosing, Time would choose him
for sevenfold affliction's furnace-testing.

Fell Time uprooted, hewed all his plantations,
and breached his walled enclosure, razed his building.

Behold, my friend, were he not scorched by hardship,
a captive of the Hours', Days', Daughters', offspring,

He would have climbed the pinnacles of virtue
and wisdom, bared the highest stores of knowing.

Be sure, unless a man has worn his flesh, consumed it,
he never shall unveil the secrets' shrouding.

But yesterday I bought a mite of knowledge,
yet Time rose early, asked full price, unheeding.

It may today refuse its mule to saddle,
yet all my days for knowledge I ride seeking.

This heart will ne'er be weaker than its portion,
fulfills its vow, protects its pledge from crumbling.

I feared, my friend, what things might come upon me.
is not the very thing man fears ensuing?

'Twas night time and the firmament clean-handed,
therein the moon, a pure heart, splendour casting.

And Moon led me on passage of knowledge,
and taught me thought-begetting, guiding-faring.

In fear of mischance then I pitied moonlight,
much like a father for his firstborn feeling.

Then Wind sent forth against him sails of cloud-cloth,
upon Moon's face a mask of ashes spreading.

As if he were impelled by lust for a downpour
the Wind pressed hard the clouds and set them weeping.

The sky was filled with blackness and the Moon was
as one in death, the clouds his shrouds and tombing.

As once the Arameans wept for Balaam,
thus for the Moon the sky clouds fell to crying.

The Night put on her armour, darkness, pierced by
the javelin which the Thunder hurled: swift Lightning.

As Lightning whirred through space it seemed as if he
about the stricken Night made mock in dancing,

The Sky then turning bat-like, wings unfurling,
has routed heaven's ravens by her glancing.

And Lightning barred my quest for God: heart's pleasure
he tied like wine-hose, top and bottom bottling;

My heart he fettered with a rope of darkness,
bestirred himself, a knight his castle leaving.

I'll wait no more, my friend, and hope for Moon that
I saw into the heart of darkness turning.

Because the Clouds bear no grudge against my soul, they
deny to me, I think, Sky Lantern's shining.

When Moon unveiled his face I gazed, exulting,
as does a servant at his lord's addressing.

As one embattled, with his spear drawn, who then
in rushing throws and senses he is stumbling,

Behold, thus fares a man beset by mischance
although his shrine he raise in Hesper's dwelling.

אֲנִי הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר שָׁנָס אֲזוּרוֹ / וְלֹא יָרָף עַדִּי יָקוּם אֶסְרוֹ,
אֲשֶׁר נִבְהַל לִבּוֹ מִלִּבּוֹ / וְנִפְשׁוּ מֵאֶסֶה לְשָׁכֵן בְּשָׁרוֹ,
וּבִחָר בְּתַבּוּנָה מְנַעֲרִיו - / וְאִם כּוֹר הַזֶּמֶן שָׁבַע בְּחָרוֹ
הַהֶרֶס כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יִבְנֶה, וְהִתֵּשׁ / אֲשֶׁר יִטַּע, וְיִפְרֹץ אֶת גִּדְּרוֹ.
5 וְנָשׁ - לוֹלִי אֲשֶׁר תִּיקַד תְּלֵאָה / וְיִלֵּד מִבְּנוֹת יָמִים סָגוּר -
לְקַצֵּר מַעֲלוֹת תְּכֵמָה וּמוֹסָר / וּמוֹסָד אוֹצְרוֹת שְׁכָל - תִּקְרוֹ.
וְדַע כִּי לֹא יִגְלֶה עַד יִכְלֶה / צְפוּנֵי תַעֲלוּמוֹת אִישׁ שְׁאָרוֹ,
וְקִנִּיתִי תְּמוּל שִׁמְץ תַּבּוּנָה - / וְהַשְׂכִּים הַזֶּמֶן לְדָרֵשׁ מִחִירוֹ.
וְעוֹדִי - אֶרְכָּבָה לְדָרֵשׁ תַּבּוּנָה, / וְאִם לֹא יִחַבֵּשׁ הַיּוֹם תְּמוּרוֹ,
10 וְלֹא יִחַלֵּשׁ לִבִּי מִזְמַי / אֲכַל יָקִים אֶסְרוֹ, כֹּל הַפָּרוֹ.
וְגִרְתִּי, מִיָּדַעִי, אֲשֶׁר בָּא - / וְלֹא יָבוֹא לְאִישׁ בְּלִתִּי מְעוּרוֹ.
בָּעֵת לוֹנִי, וְהִשְׁחַק נְקִי-כַף, / וְהִסְהַר טָהֵר-לֵב וּכְרוֹ,

נִהְיֵי עָלַי אֶרְחִי תְּבוּעוֹת / וְהוֹרֵנִי בְּאוֹר נֶהֱג וְהָרוּ,
 וְחִמְלֵתִי, בְּפִתְחֵי מַתְּלָאוֹת, / עָלַי אוֹרוֹ כְּאֵב עַל בֶּן-בְּכוֹרוֹ.
 15 וְרוּחַ שְׁלֵחָה בּוֹ מִפְּרִשֵׁי עָב / וּפְרִשׁ עַל פָּנַי סִהַר אֶפְרוֹ,
 כְּאֵלּוֹ אֵתָהּ יָרִים וְשָׁמַיִם / וְתִשְׁעֵן לְעָב עַד כִּי תִקְרוּ.
 וְשִׁחַק הַעֲטָה קִדְרוֹת, וְסִהַר / כְּאֵלּוֹ מֵת, וְהִעָנָן קִבְּרוֹ.
 וּבָכוּ אַחֲרָיו עֲבֵי שְׁחָקִים / בְּכוֹת, כְּבָכוֹת אֶרֶם עַל בֶּן-בְּעוֹרוֹ.
 וְלִבִּשׁ לִילָה שְׁרִיזֵן אֶפְלָה / וְרַעַם בַּחֲנִית בִּרְק דְּקָרוֹ,
 20 וְהִבְרֵק עָלַי שִׁחַק מְעוֹפֵף / כְּאֵלּוֹ הוּא מִשְׁחַק עַל דְּבָרוֹ,
 אֲשֶׁר פָּרִשׁ כְּנָפָיו בְּעֵטְלָף / וְעָפוּ עוֹרְבֵי הַשָּׁף בְּסוֹרוֹ.
 וְסָגַר מַחְשְׁבוֹתַי אֵל, וְחִפֵּץ / לִבִּי מִשְׁנֵי כָּנִים אֶסְרוֹ,
 וְאָסַר בְּעֵבוֹת חֲשָׁךְ לִבִּי - / וְהִתְעוֹרַר כְּגִבּוֹר מִמְּצוֹרוֹ.
 וּבַל אוֹחִיל, יְדִידִי, נֶאֱקָנָה / לְאוֹר סִהַר, אֲסוֹן חֲשָׁךְ הַמִּירוֹ,
 25 כְּאֵלּוֹ קִנְאוֹ עָבִים לְנַפְשִׁי, / וְעַל כֵּן מָנְעוּ מִנִּי מְאוֹרוֹ.
 וְאֲשַׁקִּיף עֵת יָגַל פָּנָיו, וְאֶגִּיל / כְּגִיל עֶבֶד אֲשֶׁר אָדוֹן וְזָכְרוֹ.
 בְּהִלָּהֶם אֲנִשׁ יִפֹּת חֲנִיתוֹ, / וְעֵת יְרוּץ אֲנִי יִמְעַד אֲשִׁירוֹ -
 וְכֵן אֵישׁ יִדְבֹּקוֹ אוֹתוֹ תְּלָאוֹת, / וְלוֹ יָשִׁים בְּבֵית נֶהֱג דְּבִירוֹ! (64)

The poem can be divided into two sections: the first section belongs, in accordance with the Arabic tradition, to the genre of fakhr (self-praise) where the poet expressed his strong sentiment and lamented over his misfortune; and the second section is concerned with a description of a storm-ravaged night, imposed upon the traditional Arabic theme of wasf (description of nature). The style, the technique and the imagery employed in the poem are derived from Arabic descriptions of nature. (65)

In spite of the fact that Ibn Gabirol was born, brought up and died in the land of Spain, we fail to experience through the great quantity of his secular poems, impregnated with feelings of loneliness and alienation, an expression of nostalgic sentiment or feeling of hanīn for his native city or his country, as we have seen in the Arabic poetry of al-Andalus.

(c) Moses Ibn Ezra: love and nostalgia

In Moses Ibn Ezra we are exposed to a different side of the Jewish poet. Here we have demonstrated, for the first time, a poet composing verse concerned with the theme of ḥanīn and nostalgia, exhibiting the poet's yearning and longing for his Spanish native city.

Moses Ibn Ezra was born in Granada in 1070, member of a cultured, aristocratic and wealthy family. He learned the Bible, the Talmud, and Rabbinic studies as well as the Hebrew and Arabic languages. He led a good life in Granada and enjoyed the beauty and the nature of Spain and its feminine attractions.⁽⁶⁶⁾

He devoted the great part of his Dīwān to secular poetry where he wrote on various subjects: love, friendship, elegies, wine and description.⁽⁶⁷⁾ In his poems he evokes the colours of the Andalusian natural landscape, the vineyards and the charm of Spanish women.⁽⁶⁸⁾ He describes Spring in the Spanish fields:

The garden dons a coat of many hues;
 the mead a broidered carpet hath unrolled;
 The woods are brave in chequered mantles - now
 a wondrous scene may every eye behold:
 The newborn flowers acclaim the newborn Spring,
 and forth to meet his coming, gaily throng;
 High, at their head, on sovereign throne is borne
 The rose - the flowrets' queen - queen of my song.
 From prisoning leaves she bursts, and casts aside

her captive garb, in royal robes to shine.

I drink to her, nor heaven forgive the wretch -
if such there be - who spares his choicest wine.

כְּתוּנֹת פָּסִים / לְבֹשׁ הֵגֵן / וְכִסּוֹת רִקְמָה / מִדֵּי דִשָּׁאוֹ.
וּמַעֲיִל תִּשְׁבֶּץ / עֶסֶה כָּל עֵץ / וּלְכֹל עֵץ / הִרְאָה פִּלְאוֹ.
כָּל צִיץ חָדָשׁ / לְזִמְן חָדָשׁ / יֵצֵא שׁוֹחֵק / לְקִרְאָת בּוֹאוֹ -
אֶף לְפָנֵיהֶם / שׁוֹשֵׁן עֶבֶר, / מִלֶּךָ, כִּי עַל / הוֹרֵם כִּסְאוֹ.
יֵצֵא מִבֵּין / מִשְׁמֵר עָלָיו / נִשְׁנָה אֶת / בְּגָדֵי כִלְאוֹ.
מִי לֹא יִשְׁתָּה / יֵינוּ עָלָיו - / הָאִישׁ הַהוּא / יֵצֵא חֲטָאוֹ! (69)

Moses Ibn Ezra's life and poetry were greatly influenced by an unfortunate love affair. In his early years he fell in love with his niece, who, though she loved him, could not persuade her father to consent to the marriage.⁽⁷⁰⁾ He was broken-hearted and depressed and wrote some poems expressing his disappointment and his bitterness towards his brothers and friends:

שֵׂא אֶת שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ לְאֶחִים בְּגֵדוֹ, / כִּי מִתְלַף יִתְמַחֲמָהּ יוֹנֵינוּ,
וְקִרָא בְּאֻזְנֵיהֶם הַנוֹאוֹת קִצְרוֹ / מִהֶם דְּבָרֵינוּ וְעֲנֵינוּ,
תִּצַּר אֲדָמָה מִנְּשֵׂא אוֹתָם - וְאֶף / אֶרְכִּי סִפְרֵנוּ וְגִלּוֹנֵנוּ!
נִלְטַש לְרַע מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם עֵין חֲרוֹר - / נִנוּ, וְתִמִּיד נִחְרַק שְׁנֵינוּ:
מַעֲשִׂים אֲשֶׁר לֹא נַעֲשׂוּ מִיּוֹם הָיִיתָ / תִּבְלֵ, לְשִׁמְעֵם צָלְלוּ אֻנֵּינוּ,
אֶךְ עִם אֲנוּשׁ לֹא נִזְכְּרָה זֹאת בְּזִמְנָךְ, / כִּי עִם לִבְכּוֹנוּ נִרְעִינוּ.
נִשְׁכֵּן בְּבוֹר קִצְפוֹ - וְהִמָּה יַחֲסוּ / תַּחַת כְּנָף טוֹבוֹ וְיִתְלוּנוּ,
יִתְלַחֲשׁוּ אִישִׁים "מִיָּנִים עֲתִיקָה / חִיל!" וְאַרְצָה יִפְּלוּ פָּנֵינוּ. (71)

After the failure of his love, Moses Ibn Ezra became dominated by a spirit of gloom and he reflected despondently upon life and its vicissitudes.⁽⁷²⁾ Shortly afterwards, he left Granada and wandered about for several years. On leaving his native city, he wrote a poem expressing his

feelings of love and nostalgia for both his beloved and his city:

אחר ימי השחרות פנו / כצל וצרו צעדי שני,
קרא נדוד: השאנו, קומה! / ולשאנו צללו אנו.
קמתי בלב רגז ויצאתי / תועה, ולא לעונו בני.
היו מקור חיי – ואיך אחיה / בלחם ואין אתי מאור עיני?
נחה זמן אותי אלי ארץ / בה נבהלו רעי ורעיוני:
עם לעגי שפה ועמקי פה, / משור פניהם נפלו פני –
עד כי אלהים לי דרור יקרא / מהם להמלט בעור שני. (73)

Ibn Ezra stayed for a while in the Christian town of Castile, where he found himself in a foreign land with a different culture and away from both his beloved and his native city. He wrote a number of poems exhibiting his feelings of alienation, e.g.

יום הנדוד המר והנמק / אותי בין התאנה השכיר,
אשב משומם בין פראים, אין / דורש לנפשי בם ולא מזכיר.
לשמאל אני קורא – ואין עונה, / אפנה עלי ימין – ואין מכיר!
העת אשר אצל עלי לבי / בימי נדודי את ימי חרפי,
יתעו מזמנתי ורעיוני / יבהלו עלי ושרעפי –
וזמן, אשר היה כבן עובד / אותי, ואת כל מעשיו על פי,
עמי בני אמי – אשר פיהם / היה דבש חכי ומר אפי,
רעי סביבותי – אשר נתנו / ספי ידידותם אלי ספי,
עת יאזינו לי מתי סודי / ויחלו כטל לאמרי פי, –
עד אנפנו בי תולדות ימים / חנם, וכבד על זמן אכפי!
עיני לנפשי עוללה כזאת / או אם חטאי עם קשי ערפי?
חגי לאכל נהפכו יחד, / קינים וקול מספד – מקום תפי.
לא אחזה מכל כבוד ביתי / מאיש ועד אשה לבד גפי,
נדו מידעי – וכחותם / המה עלי לבי ועל כפי.
היו מאור עיני – ואיך אראה / בלחם וחשכו כוכבי נשפי?
מעי – אני אוהיל, ומה יועיל, / אחי, חרות על הזמן אפי?
נפשי יהי שובה – ואיך אלון / על מות מידעי ותם כספי? (74)

In a poem sent to one of his loyal friends in Granada, Ibn Ezra expressed his nostalgic feelings in exile and his yearning for his native-city and his friends:

If I forget them, may my hand forget
its cunning - if, from them apart,
one thought of joy can enter my heart.

Oh, if indeed the Lord would me restore
to beautiful Granada-land, my paths
would be the paths of pleasantness once more;

For in that land my life was very sweet -
a kindly Fate laid homage at my feet,
and deep I quaffed at Friendship's fount; as now

I fain would quaff the waters of Senir,
whose snow-fed current bears the swimmer high
when Eden's streams run scant and sluggishly

Though hope be long deferred, though heart be
faint, on God I wait,
unto Whose mercy there is no restraint -

And Whose decree
can break the shackles and unbar the gate,
and set the prisoner of exile free.

תשכח ימיני אם-שכחתימו ואם / בלתי פנייהם אתאברה לשמח
 אם-עוד ישיבני אלהים אל-הדר / רמון הרבי וצלחו צלח
 ובמי שגיר ארנה אשר צחו ביום / נחלי ערנים נדלחו דלח
 ארץ אשר-בה נעמו חי ומי / לחי וכן לי נשטחו שטח
 אותיל מעט לאל ואין מעצור קרא / לחרור אסיר פרוד ולפקח קוח. (75)

However, the dream of return could never be fulfilled. He heard the news of the tragic death of his beloved and was deeply affected by her sudden and early demise.⁽⁷⁶⁾ He wrote some touching elegies to her memory, e.g.

אמת, תאוות אנוש מים עמקים / וחפצם מן ידי עיש תלויות -
 והרוחות לחפצם נושבות על / פני ים לא עלי חפץ אניות.
 ודורש מזמן להיות כחמר / ביד חפצו - כדורש מת להתיות,
 וממים קדח אש, והוציא / טרפה מגרוני האריות.
 ואיך יאמנו אלשי - והנה / המוני דברותיהם רמיות?
 ואיכה יעשו פרי ויגאו / ערבים מבלי מים בציות?
 שקט, כי כל ימי עולם חברים / במעשיהם והלילות אהיות:
 והחיים והמות - חלקים, / והעשר והחסר - מניות. (77)

The tragic love story of Ibn Ezra deeply affected his poetry and covered it with a melancholy tone not only in his elegies but also in his poems on wine and joy.⁽⁷⁸⁾ Ibn Ezra remained in Castile for the rest of his life, yearning for the physical and intellectual environment of his birth-place.⁽⁷⁹⁾

3. God, Exile and Redemption in Hebrew Sacred Poetry

The Jewish critic S.J. Rappaport characterized Spanish sacred poetry by saying, "The Sephardi sacred poetry is the medium of expression for the soul of the individual Jew."⁽⁸⁰⁾

Although the Hebrew sacred poetry of the Spanish period had the Bible as its antecedent, it is not the direct descendant of Biblical poetry. The form of sacred poetry was the consequence of many factors. An important component was the emerging shape and phenomenon of Jewish liturgy. Other relevant factors include the production of Aggada and the renewed interest in the Bible and its language.⁽⁸¹⁾

Under the captivating and inspiring Arabic culture, the newly emancipated Jews indulged in their refreshing licence. The Hebrew language, previously reserved for divine services and theological writings, was revised and revitalised to give a dynamic rendering of secular poetry.⁽⁸²⁾

The Jewish poets found themselves in conflict, their religious aspirations against their sensual desires. However, both aspects are portrayed in their poems and later the conflict itself is expressed in their writings.⁽⁸³⁾

Sacred poetry in Spain exhibits many forms which are included under the name of piyyūt.

The Spanish period appeared to restore to both the Hebrew nation and the individual the dignity of a new decisive confrontation with God.

Ibn Gabirol found this atmosphere ideal for the expression of ubiquitous philosophical ideas.⁽⁸⁴⁾ In one of his poems, Ibn Gabirol wrote:

Though there is - while exile lasts - to God no
sacrifice
To her [his beloved] I will proffer sacrifices and
offering

Foreswearing one's life and religion is an Arabic stylistic device. Here, however, juxtaposed as it is with the exile of the Jews and the destruction of the Temple, the poet's declaration that he wishes to replace the sacrifice in the holiest shrine in Jerusalem by a sacrifice on the altar of the beloved, is quite striking and typical of an eleventh century renaissance personality.⁽⁸⁵⁾

Arabic poetry permeated the entire life of Muslim Spain. However it was its formal metre, rather than its wealth of specific motifs, that moulded the new religious poetry of the Jews.⁽⁸⁶⁾ It could be argued that the new poetry enriched the Bible, rather than the converse.

We can divide the sacred poetry in Spain into two classes:

(a) Piyyūt: such as hymns of praise, doxologies wherein God is glorified in philosophical terms, and otherwise religious lyrics where man pours forth his heart before his Maker, as well as historical epics eulogizing God's miraculous wonders in Jewish history.

(b) Seliḥot: Penitential prayers which include all kinds of poems, plaintive as well as devotional. Within this category we find the Qīnot, elegies for the day of the commemoration of the destruction of the Temple, the ninth of Ab, or other solemn feasts in Jewish history.⁽⁸⁸⁾

The two main themes constantly written about in Jewish sacred poetry in Spain are God and exile. Traditionally, the Jews wrote of their sufferings as a nation and the intolerable conditions of exile they were subjected to. Many of their sacred poems contained expressive detailing of their long suffering and eternal cry for redemption.

Samuel ha-Nagid wrote three works imitating the three Biblical books of Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.⁽⁸⁹⁾ In one of these poems, he laments Zion, saying:

Shake yourself free, shake yourself free
and be apprised that the day of redemption is nigh
Your mourning time is ended and your anguish
has been removed, healing now exists for you.
Rise up, you who are tossed about and reeling
and repay those who have made you stagger.
Now he is visible who in a vision was foretold
that like a lion he shall stand.
Zion, like a withered tree
will henceforth give fruit.
They will be abashed who once put you to shame
and no longer will call you: 'The rebellious people'.

הַתְנוּעָרִי, הַתְנוּעָרִי, / וּבְיוֹם פְּדוּת הַתְּבַכְרִי!
 שְׁלֹמוֹ יָמֵי אֲבִלָּהּ, וְסָר / צִלָּהּ, וְנִמְצָא לָךְ צָרִי.
 קוּמִי, שְׂכוּרָה סֶעֱרָה, / וּמִשְׁכְּרִיךְ שְׂכָרִי.
 עֲתָה אֲשֶׁר נִרְאָה "וְלֹא / עֲתָה" יְהִי קֶם כְּאַרִי.
 5 צִיּוֹן, אֲשֶׁר הָיְתָה לְעֵץ / יָבֵשׁ, תְּהִי עוֹשֶׂה פְּרִי,
 בּוֹשׁוּ מִבְּיַשְׁיָהּ, וְעוֹד / לֹא יִקְרָאוּ לָךְ: עִם מָרִי. (90)

Samuel ha-Nagid skilfully managed to combine the new poetic secular genre, ḥamāsa, and the traditional sacred theme, lament for Zion:

My heart is hot within me and my eyes are crying
 for I long for Hammat and Meph'at
 And to see the assembly from Siryon moving and
 resting as they bring with songs to Moriah
 bundles of spikenard.

Even the caravan of Lebanon on 'Ariel with a voice of
 melody scattering crumbs of myrrh and cassia like
 a sower.

In the days when the young lads of Zion will be at
 home, like the bright and shining sun on garden beds
 of spices

They shall gaze upon the singing maidens with
 looks of love on eyes painted with the colour
 of God's work

And the daughters did not disgrace their fathers
 with sin and the sons did not commit obscenities for
 faults.

I yearn for the prince's daughter who, in the
 nut-garden placed her fawn by a lily to be gathered
 and planted.

Behold the roaring lions who occupy it and
prevent her from entering therein.

She was ruined by the hands of strangers who stripped
the open flowers, the wreaths and the knobs from the
city in the beautiful region.

On seeing with my heart's eye my Holy of Holies
a devastated heap and the foundation stone swallowed
up among the rocks.

With terror in my eyes I cried bitterly and roared with
an angry heart as if it had been pierced by the spear
of the foe.

O God will You forever raise up the daughter of Edom
who dwells above the stars while Zion's daughter lies
sunken in the depths of the sea?

Are you not angry that the daughter of Judah is naked
while the sister of 'Uz has bracelets and rings?

Arise like a lion from his thicket or a tiger from
his hills and lift Your outstretched and well-known
hand,

And heap Your arrows upon Bozrah and make Teman who
is full of Your wide fury drink the bitter cup.

לְבָבִי בְקֶרְבִּי חָם וְעֵינַי מִדְמָעַת,
לְמַעַן אֲנִי נִכְסֵף לְחֶמֶת וּמִיפָעַת,
וְלִרְאוֹת עֵדֶת שְׁרִיזִן מְבִיאָה לְמוֹרָהָ
בְּשִׁירִים צְרוּרוֹת גִּידִי, חֹנֶה וְנוֹסֶעַת,
וְאַרְחֶת לְבָנוֹן עַל אֲרִיָּאל בְּקוֹל וְמָרָה
תַּפְזֹר כְּתִיתִי מֵרֶ וְקָדָה כְּזוֹרֶעַת.
יְמֵי נַעֲרֵי צִיּוֹן בְּצִיּוֹן כְּשֶׁמֶשׁ עַל
עֲרוּגוֹת בְּשָׁמִיָּה מְהֵלָה וּמוֹפָעַת,

יְשׁוּרוּן אֵלֵי שְׁרוֹת יְשׁוּרוֹן בְּאִשׁוֹן חֵן
 10 לְעֵין בְּפוֹךְ מִמַּעֲשֵׂה אֵל מְלַרְעַת,
 וְלֹא נִבְּלוּ בְּנוֹת בְּדָפִי אֲבוֹתֵיהֶם,
 וְלֹא פָּעְלוּ בָּנִים וְכָלָה וּמִגְרַעַת.
 וְאַתָּא לְבַת-נָדִיב בְּגַת אָנוּ שָׁמָּה
 עֲפָרִים עָלַי שׁוֹשֵׁן לְלֶקֶט וְלִטְעַת
 15 וְהִנֵּה אֲרִיּוֹת יִשְׁאַגּוּ שָׁם, מְנַעוּהָ
 אֲזִי מַעֲבֵר אוֹתָהּ וּמִבּוֹא וּמִגַּעַת
 הָרוֹסֶת יְדֵי זָרִים אֲשֶׁר חִלְצוּ מִקִּיר
 יִפָּה נוֹף פְּטוּרֵי צִיץ וְלוֹיוֹת וּמִקְלָעַת.
 בְּשׁוּרֵי בָּעֵין לְבִי דְּבִירֵי מְעִי מִפֶּלַח
 20 וְאַבֵּן שְׁתֵּיָהּ בֵּין אֲבָנִים מְבֻלָּעַת -
 אֲמַרְר בָּעֵין חֶרֶד וְאֵהִים בְּלֵב זַעַף

כִּאלוֹ חֲנִית אוֹיֵב לְכַבִּי מִבְּקָעַת.
 אֱלֹהִים, הִלְעֵד תַּעֲלֶה בַת אֲדוֹם, תְּדוּר
 עָלַי עֵשׂ - וּבַת צִיּוֹן בְּלֵב יָם מְשַׁקְעַת?
 25 הֲלֹא תֵּאָנֵף כִּי בַת יְהוּדָה עֲרָמָה מִן
 כְּסוֹת - וְאַחֹת עוֹץ בַּעֲלַת חָח וְטַבַּעַת?
 עֲלֶה כְּאֲרִי מִסְּכּוֹ אוֹ כְּנֹמֶר מִן
 הָרָרִיו וְהָרִים יָד נְטוּיָה וְנֹדַעַת
 וְהִסְפֶּה חֲצָצִיד בְּבִצְרָה וְהִשְׁקָה כּוֹס
 30 לְתִימָן מְלֵאָה מִחֲמַתְךָ וְשׁוֹרְעַת (91)

Also, Ibn Gabirol, in his religious poems, displayed a wide acquaintance with Jewish learning and was known as the composer of the finest prayers and hymns for the synagogue.⁽⁹²⁾ His best hymn is the "Royal Crown" which excels in the beauty of its diction and the depth of its thought.⁽⁹³⁾

In these religious poems, Ibn Gabirol expressed the anguish of the human soul defiled by the sinfulness of the body and the yearning for the reunion with God, e.g.

My soul shall declare to Thee Thou art her former and
shall Thee as her maker, O God, testify, at Thy word
'Be, O Soul' did she take on existence,
And from naught didst Thou draw her as light from
the eye.

Of Thee she shall own and affirm, hand uplifted,
'twas Thou that didst breathe her in me and as due
For that work she shall pour out her thanks and bear
witness that to me she was given Thy bidding to do.
She serves Thee as handmaid while yet in the body,
and the day she returns to the land whence she came,
In Thee will she dwell, for in Thee is her being,
doth she rise, doth she sit, Thou art with her the same.
She was Thine when unborn ere the day of her breathing,
with wisdom and knowledge by Thee she was fed,
And to Thee for her ordinance looks, and subsistence,
indebted to Thee for her water and bread.

Her gaze is to Thee, and in Thee is her hoping when like
like novice in child-birth she cries in fright.

O take her torn heart as a sacrifice offered, and her
ribs lacerated for fiery rite.

To Thee let her pour out her tears as drink off'ring,
let the breath of her sighing as incense-cloud be,
At her gate and her doorway she watches with prayer,
she is burning like flame with her passion for Thee
She must ever approach Thee as servant his master,
or as handmaiden looks to her mistress's eye,
She must spread out her palms in request and petition
and turn herself humbly to Thee in her cry

For call Thee she must, nor endure to be silent,
like a bird in the net her one hope is in flight,
In the depth of the night she must rise and keep vigil,
for her work is Thy works to declare and recite.
For Thee she must pine and of Thee make entreaty,
her hand must be clean and as stainless her thought.
Her breach do Thou heal, be her hope and her helper,
when she draws nigh redeem her, her sin count as naught.
Behold her affliction, and hark to her weeping,
in the sphere of the soul she with Thee is alone,
Repay and restore her, attend to her anguish,
when her sobs and her tears her backslidings bemoan.
Bemock, O Almighty, the foes that bemock her,
avenge with due vengeance her insults and shame,
In her stress be a rock of support 'gainst her foeman,
nor yield up the child Thou to manhood didst frame.
No enemy came, whose reproach could be borne with,
No cruel one hunted her down in her track,
'Twas the friends of her household betrayed her -
her passions - 'twas her comrade who bloodily stabbed
in the back.
I am ever seeking my body's best welfare,
yet it in return would my spirit undo.
Ah, truly the fruit of the tree in its root is, the
proverb "Like mother, like daughter" is true.

לך נפשי תספר כי יצרתה
 ותמיד כי בנך אל פועלתה
 לך בדבר יהי אז נמצאה היא
 ומאין כאור עין משכנתה
 לך תאמין וגם תודה ביומין
 ותמיד כי בקרבי את נפתתה
 לך תודה על ירעבדות בערות
 אמת כי לעשות חפצך שלחתה
 לך אמה בעודה באדמה
 ויום תשוב לך באשר נתתה
 לך עצמה ואמה הוא מקומה
 ואה עמה בכל מקומה ושבתה
 לך מעת היתה עד היותה
 ומפיה תבנתה ודעתה
 לך תדרש דבר חקיה ושפחה
 לך תודה על רמימה ופחה

 לך תחיל ביום תועק ותחיל
 ברב צרה כמבכירה בלחתה
 לך תקריב קרב לבה בקרבן
 וצלעותיו עצי אש מערכתה
 לך תשפך דמעה בגסר
 ואחתה מקום עשן קשרתה
 לך תיקר בלב ביקוד ותשקר
 בקול שיהיה על רפתתה ודלתה
 לך תקרב כמו עבד למול רב

 וכשפחה תצפה אל זבחתה
 לך תבך ותפרש בך למול סף
 ותתהפך ותשתפך בגעתה
 לך תהמה ולא תרמה ותדמה
 לצפור קוטה לטור ברשתה
 לך תקום תצות לילה ותשטר
 לספר מלאכותיה מלאכתה
 לך תכלה ופגיה תחלה
 בבר בפה ותקיון ממשכתה
 רפא שברה ביה שברה ועזרה
 קרא ישעה מזה פשעה בגשתה

ראה ענה שמע בקולך יה
 במקום בלתיך אין שם ובלתי
 גמול תשיב וזה תושב ותקשיב
 לשונותה ודמעותה בדרתה
 לעג שדי לצרים לענו לה
 נקם נקמת בלתיה ובשונה
 הנה מצר לצור מבצר במצר
 ואל מסגר ויחידה שגורלה
 ולא אויב וחרפה ותשא
 ולא אכזר וצודה בלתיה
 אכל אנשי שלומה בגדו בה
 ודמה ותמסרה על חברתה
 אני כל עת אבקש אחשלוכם
 ותמה בקשו נפשי לקחתה
 ואמנם כי פרי העץ בשרשו
 ותקשל אמת באם בבתה.

(94)

Ibn Gabirol wrote poems for all the festival services, the special Shabbath services and the Rashūt. His themes are dominated by God and his glorification.⁽⁹⁵⁾

In addition to his poems on God and his glory Ibn Gabirol wrote many poems on the suffering of the Jewish people in exile and their redemption, e.g.

The despoiled and dispersed Thou shalt gather to Zion
 Restoring the slaves who were sold without fee,
 And the priests to their ritual robes, while the scion
 Of families ruling shall once more be free
 To carol, high god, his thanks giving to Thee.

To the heathen a banner to raise thou wilt hasten,
 Thou shalt strengthen and gird up the loins that we
 trust,

And the suppliants whom Thy dispersal did chasten
 Thou wilt raise as of yore from captivity's dust,

The breastplate of righteousness clothing the just.
 My impudent foe seeks my life-faith to sever,
 To my face he enquires how long yet wilt thou wait,
 But I am afflicted, not cast off for ever,
 For my God is the help of the low in estate,
 Protecting the poor as He humbles the great.
 His heritage shall to the exile be given,
 And a strong hand the sick and the punished replace.
 The abased and abandoned, by every fang riven,
 Shall their freshness renew by the patriarch's grace.
 And the strangers be scorched like a tropical place.

שְׂדֵדִים נְדֻדִים לְצִיּוֹן תִּקְבֹּץ
 מְבוֹרִים בְּלֹא הוֹן תִּשׁוּבָב לְמַרְבֵּץ
 הָשֵׁב עֲבוֹדָת לְבוּשֵׁי תִשְׁבֵּץ
 תִּרְעַע שְׁמַעַת מִשְׁפָּחוֹת יַעֲבֹץ
 לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְזַמֵּר לְשִׁמְךָ עֲלִיוֹן.

לְנוֹרֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת תִּחְיֶה שְׁאֵת נֶם
 יִגֹּן תִּנְבֵּר וּמִתְנַיִי תִשְׁנֶם
 עֲתִירֵי תֵאֱסֹף וּפִזִּי תִכְנֶם
 תִּחְדַּשׁ נֶאֱלֶה בְּטֶאֱמָם וְחֶנֶם
 צְדִיק לֹכֵשׁ צְדָקָה בְּשָׂרִיוֹן.

מִשְׁנֵאֵי יִרְבֵּר עֲזוֹת בְּפָנַי
 מִבְּקֶשׁ לְאַבֵּד תִּחְלֹת אִמּוֹנִי
 יִרְיִבִּי עַד אֵן תִּחְלִיל לְעֵינֵי
 עֲנִיתִיו כִּי לֹא חֲנַח לְעוֹלָם ה'
 מַעַח לְדָל מַעַח לְאַבְיוֹן

הָשֵׁב נְרוּשָׁה לְנִחְלֹת יִרְשָׁה
 וּפְקוּדֵי אֲנוּשָׁה בִּיר צָר עֲנוּשָׁה
 אֲכֹלָה בְּכִל־פֶּה נְתוּצָה וְנִטְוָשָׁה
 וְחֲדַשׁ צְדָקָת אֲבוֹת שְׁלִשָּׁה

תָּרִים תִּכְנִיעַ כְּחוֹרֵב בְּצִיּוֹן. (96)

Although Ibn Gabirol forcefully spoke for the plight of the Jewish nation, his own personal anguish and loneliness was so poignant that he could not help but express it in his poems. (97)

Here is a poem in which Ibn Gabirol seems to embody the suffering of both the Jewish nation and the lament of an individual:

Six years were decreed of a slave to wait
when his freedom he sought at his master's hand
But the years of my bondage lack term or date,
it is hard, O my Master, to understand.
Why, Sire, should a hand-maid's son bear sway,
and me with affliction and anguish task?
There cometh no answer, howe'er I pray,
in despite that each day for reply I ask.
what word at the last wilt thou say, my King?
an Thou findest no ransom, O Lord, take me
Take me for Thy people as offering,
I will serve Thee for ever and ne'er go free.

שש שנים נקדשו לעבד, עבד פרות רוצה
ושני עבודתי אין סוף ואין קצוה
למה אהי מלכי עבד לבן אמה
ובניד יליד בית מצוק וצר מוצא
מיום ליום אחיל לא אשקעה דבר
מהמענה אתי מלכי ומהתקצוה
הנה לקחתי אם אין פרות עמר
אהיה לך עבד עולם ולא אצא. (98)

It is surprising to find that the expression of nostalgia and the feelings of yearning are exhibited and

illustrated in his religious poetry and not directed to Spain, his country and his fathers' land, but to Zion and the land of Israel, e.g.

God:

Though bereaved and in mourning, why sit thus in tears?
Shall thy spirit surrender its hopes to its fears?
Though the end has been long and no light yet appears,
Hope on, hapless one, a while longer.

I will send thee an angel My path to prepare,
On the brow of Mount Zion thy King to declare,
The Lord ever regnant shall reign again there,
Thy King, O proclaim, comes to Zion.

Israel:

How long, O my God, shall I wait Thee in vain?
How long shall Thy people in exile remain?
Shall the sheep ever shorn never utter their pain
But dumbly through all go on waiting?

God:

Have faith, hapless one, I will pardon and free,
Not always shalt thou be abhorrent to Me,
But be Mine e'en as I shall return unto thee,
'Tis yet but a little space longer.

Israel:

How long till the turn of my fate shall draw near,
How long ere the sealed and the closed be made clear,
And the palace of strangers a roof shall appear?

God:

Hope on for a shelter and refuge.
 With healing shall yet thy entreaties be graced,
 As when Caphtor was crushed shalt thou triumph re-taste,
 And the flowers cast off shall re-bloom in the waste,
 Hope on but a little space longer.

Israel:

My people of yore 'neath one people was drowned,
 But from Egypt or Babel deliverance found,
 But now we are hopelessly compassed around
 By four birds of prey grim and speckled.
 They have eaten my flesh, yet to leave me are loath.

God:

The Rock you must trust to remember His oath,
 Your lover that went shall return to His troth,
 Hope on, hapless one, a whit longer.

הַקִּבִּיָּה

כֹּלֵה אֲכֹלָה לְמֶה תִּבְדִּי
 הַנּוֹאֵשׁ לְכֶךְ מֵאֲשֶׁר תִּחַכִּי

בִּסֶּט יִשְׂרָאֵל

קֶצֶךְ נִמְשָׁךְ וְאַרְךְ תִּשְׁכִּי.

הַקִּבִּיָּה

הַזֹּחִילִי עֲגִיָּה עוֹד־מַעֵט, כִּי
 אֲשַׁלַּח מִלְאָכִי לַפְּנוֹת דְּרָכִי
 וְעַל הַר צִיּוֹן אֲסוּד מִלְכִּי
 בֹאֲיָבָא מִבֶּשֶׁר לַפְּנוֹת שְׂבִילִךְ
 אֲמָרוּ לַצִּיּוֹן יְיָ מִלֶּךְ
 הִנֵּה מִלְכֶּךָ עוֹד: בֹּאֲלֶךָ.

בגסת ישראל

לאל, אלי, בטה איהל
ועדאן תמשוך גלות החל
ובני רחל גוחים ברחל
ואני בקלזאת תמיד איהל.

הקב"ה

הוחילי עניה לפודה ומוחל
כי לא לעולם בך אני בוחל
עוד מעט והיית לי ואני לך.

בגסת ישראל

מתי יקרב ויגיע התור
סתום וחתום מתי תפתור
ארמון נרים מתי תסתור?

הקב"ה

הוחילי עניה למחסה ומסתור
כי עוד יש לך מרפא ומעתור
וידום כפתור כיום אי כפתור
וניצח במצמד צ"ח אשר נשלך.

בגסת ישראל

המוני לפנים באחת נטבע
מנוף ובכל בקרוב נתבע
היות אני, עוד קצוץ נטבע
נקבצו עלי סלקיות ארבע
ואכל בשרי ועוד לא נשבע.

הקב"ה

הוחילי עניה לצור אשר נשבע
כי בא יבא דוד אשר הלך+ (99)

Moses Ibn Ezra also used his poems, hymns and songs of praise as a vehicle to depict his suffering soul and the refuge he found in religion and through his contact

with God⁽¹⁰⁰⁾, e.g.

מִפְּנֵי פַחַד אֲדֹנָי / לְבַשְׁתִּי סוּת אֵימִים.
הִקְצִינוּ רַעֲיוֹנִי - / וְאִישׁוֹנֵי גִרָּדִים,
וְלִקּוֹל קוֹרָא פָּנִי / נָפְלוּ וְהֵם נִכְלָמִים:
נִצָּב לְרִיב אֲדֹנָי / וְעוֹמֵד לְדִין עַמִּים!

שִׁנְעֵתִי וְחִלְתִּי / מֵאִמַּת הַקּוֹרָא,
וְעֵתִי עֵת שְׁמַעְתִּי / מִי הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה?
כִּי מִרְדֵּתִי וְנִדְתִּי - / וְאִיךָ יִתְאַפֵּק מוֹרָה?
בְּזָכְרִי כִּי שָׁכַחְתִּי / יוֹם לְמִשְׁפָּט אֶקְרָא -
בְּעֵינֵי נַחְלֵי קְדוּמִים, / וּמַעֲיֵי נַחְלֵי רִתְמִים!

הִנֵּדַע אִישׁ מִצְעָדָיו / כָּל יְמֵי הִבְלוּ חֲשׁוּבִים?
וְהַבֵּן כִּי מִעֲבָדָיו / בָּעֵט בְּרוּל גִּכְתָּכִים?
כִּי שׁוֹפְטִיו וּמַעֲדָיו / לַעֲדֵי עַד נִצָּבִים,
יוֹם יִבְגְּדוּ בּוֹ יוֹלְדָיו / וַיִּכְחָשׁוּ בּוֹ אוֹהֲבִים,
שָׁבַע רָגֹז קִצֵּר יָמִים - / הֵם בְּעֵינֵי כַּחֲלוּמִים.

אֲנוּשׁ הֶכֶל וּמַחֲשָׁבוֹתָיו, / כָּל יָמָיו כָּצֵל עוֹבֵר,
כְּעוֹף יֶהֱיוּ שְׁנוֹתָיו / יְסוּפֹן מִבְּלֵי אֶבֶר,

כִּי כָל אֲשֶׁר בְּאוֹצְרוֹתָיו / בְּאֶפֶס יָד יִשְׁבֵּר,
אֲבָל יֶשֶׁר מִפְּעֻלּוֹתָיו / יִלְוֶהוּ לְקֶבֶר -

וְאִזּוֹ אֵל מִכֶּסֶּם זְעֵמִים / יָשׁוּב לְכֶסֶּא רַחֲמִים. (101)

He also wrote some poems on the traditional religious themes of exile and redemption and expressed the cry of the Jews and their suffering, e.g.

יֹנֵת אֱלֹם רַחוּמִים / מִעַל קִנְיָה נְתוּשָׁה -
כְּאַבְהָה הָיָה נִצָּח / וּמִכְּתָהּ אֲנוּשָׁה.
כְּצִפּוֹר בְּפֶחַ יוֹקְשָׁה / תַּחֲמָהּ, וְנִפְשָׁה יִבְשָׁה
מִקְצֵר רוּחַ וּמַעֲבֹדָה קִשָּׁה.

מִטַּע עוֹלָם נִטְעָה / לְאַרְוֹת יוֹם יוֹם פְּרִיָּה
וְזֶרַע מֵרִי זֶרַע / לְקִצֵּר תְּבוּאָת מְרִיָּה,
וַיַּעַן מוֹסֵר פְּרָעָה - / עָרֶם הִצַּנ גִּיָּה
וּמִלְבוּשׁ עֲדָנָה קִרְעָה / וְתַתְּנִיצַל אֶת עֲדָיָה,
וְדַמְעָתָה עַל לְחִיָּה / כְּנוֹזְלִים עַל יִבְשָׁה.

10 שְׁקַעְתִּי וְשִׁוְעַתִּי / מְבוֹר אֵין בּוֹ מִיָּם,
 וְקִרְאָתִי וְנִשְׁאָתִי / לִכְבֹּ אֶל כְּפִיָּם,
 וְסִפְקָתִי וְדַפְקָתִי / עַל שְׁעָרֵי שָׁמַיִם.
 לוֹ יִקְשִׁיב אִמְרָתִי / בּוֹרָא גִיב שְׁפָתַיִם –
 וְאִז תִּרְא אוֹיְבִי / וּתְכַסֶּה בּוֹשָׁה!

15 הִבֵּט כִּי לְכָל מְסָלָה / אֲבִיט – וְאֵין לִי מִכִּיר,
 וְצַר אוֹתִי חֶלָה / וְחֻצִּי בְדָמֵי הַשְּׂכִיר.
 זְכָרָה בְּרִית כְּבִתְחֻלָּה, / כִּי אֵין בְּלִתֵּךְ מִזְכִּיר,
 וְאַל נָא שִׁכַּר הַפְּעֻלָּה / תֵּאָחֵר הַטֹּאת שְׂכִיר –
 הִנֵּה כִּי לֶךְ הַנֶּאֱלָה / וּלְךָ הִירָשָׁה! (102)

In summary, this chapter has been an attempt to study the general characteristics of Hebrew poetry in Spain. We saw in the first section the nature and the extent of the influence of Arab culture on the life and works of the Andalusian Jews. This influence was prominent in the domains of politics and economics, science and literature, and in particular in the field of poetry.

The second section tried to show how the influence of Arabic tradition was manifested in individual representative works. The works were found to reflect the flourishing of the Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus and the success of the Jewish poets in using the Arabic techniques. The works also tried to reflect how the themes of exile and nostalgia were employed and what location (position) was occupied by Spain in the Hispano-Hebrew poetry.

The third section attempted to shed light on the influence of the sacred vision on the Jewish poets and their expression of the traditional Jewish themes, God, exile and redemption.

Notes to Chapter Two

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 53. The death of Ibn Gabirol is discussed in Bargebuhr, The Alhambra, pp. 7-9,24-25, and in H. Shirmann, Ha-Shira, vol. 1, p. 178, and in M. Waxman, vol. 1, p. 219
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 62. Ibid., p. 44

63. Ibid., p. 75
64. Ibn Gabirol, Dīwān, pp. 211-214, trans., Bargebuhr, pp. 265-267
65. For a complete analysis of the poem, see The Alhambra, pp. 267-312
66. Shirmann, vol. 2, p. 362
67. M. Waxman, vol. 1, p. 225
68. I. Zinberg, A History of Jewish Literature, p. 65
69. Shirmann, p. 371, trans., S. Solis-Cohen, An Anthology of Medieval Hebrew Literature, ed. A.E. Millgram, pp. 45-46
70. Ibid., p. 363
71. Ibid., p. 383
72. Waxman, p. 225
73. Shirmann, p. 379
74. Ibid., pp. 381-382, trans., S. Solis-Cohen, p. 45
75. Moses Ibn Ezra, Dīwān, Vol. 1, p. 67
76. A.E. Millgram, An Anthology of Medieval Hebrew Literature, p. 346
77. Shirmann, p. 402
78. Millgram, p. 346
79. D. Goldstein, p. 103
80. Waxman, vol. 1, p. 207
81. Ibid., p. 203
82. Bargebuhr, p. 54
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88. Jacob J. Petuchowski, Theology and Poetry: Studies in Mediaeval Piyyūt (London, 1978)
89. Shirmann, vol. 1, p. 76
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92. Bargebuhr, p. 36
93. Margolis, p. 319
94. Ibn Gabirol, Dīwān, pp. 528-531, trans., Davidson, pp. 3-5
95. Kravitz, p. 246

96. Ibn Gabirol, Dīwān, pp. 360-361, trans., Davidson, pp. 20-21
97. Kravitz, p. 246
98. Ibn Gabirol, Dīwān, p. 471, trans., Davidson, p. 12
99. Ibid., pp. 362-363, trans., Davidson, pp. 22-24
100. Waxman, vol. 1, p. 225
101. Shirmann, pp. 409-410
102. Avraham bar Yosef, Mi-Shirat Ymei ha-Beinayim (Tel-Aviv, 1980), p. 136

C h a p t e r T h r e e

Exile and Redemption in the Poetry of

Judah Ha-Levi

1. His life in Christian and Muslim Spain
2. His secular poetry: pleasure and harmony
3. His religious poetry: God and exile
4. His national poetry: Zion and redemption

1. His Life in Christian and Muslim Spain

Judah b. Samuel ha-Levi was born before 1075 in Tudela, a Christian area of Castile in Spain.⁽¹⁾ He came from an educated and wealthy family and received his Jewish education in the school of the famous Talmudist, Isaac Alfasi, in Lucena where he was befriended by Moses Ibn Ezra.⁽²⁾ He also studied medicine and Greek philosophy.⁽³⁾

However, he left for Muslim Spain with the intention of eventually studying at the large Jewish centre in Granada to further his accomplishments in Hebrew and Arabic.⁽⁴⁾

Ha-Levi spent the great part of his life in Cordoba where he participated in a poetry contest in the style of the Arab poets.⁽⁵⁾

For much of his life, ha-Levi wandered between the various cities of Muslim Spain, during which time his fame spread both in Spain, and in North Africa and Egypt; the latter occurring on account of his links with the Jewish communities in these countries.⁽⁶⁾

His personal experience in Christian and Muslim Spain, and his philosophical views concerning the meaning of Diaspora and the path to redemption, culminated in his decision to emigrate to the Holy City of Jerusalem. Though discouraged by his friends and relatives, ha-Levi, at the age of 55, left his homeland planning a pilgrimage to Palestine and set sail to Egypt.⁽⁷⁾ He stopped at Alexandria and was urged by the Jewish community to remain with them. This and other factors, such as Egyptian

civilization, the friendly atmosphere, and the honour and admiration accorded to him, encouraged him to extend his stay in Egypt, where he remained for six months.⁽⁸⁾ It is not known what happened to him after that. The evidence of the elegies written in Egypt and the Genizah letters which mention his death suggest that he died and was buried only six months after arriving in Egypt.⁽⁹⁾ However, Jewish legend relates that he reached Jerusalem and that while kneeling at the gates of the city, reciting his "Ode to Zion", he was killed by an Arab horseman.⁽¹⁰⁾ It seems that this legend was created to celebrate the value and the importance of the poet in Jewish history.

2. His secular poetry: pleasure and harmony

Regarding Judah ha-Levi's literary legacy, it is fair to say that the peak of Spanish Hebrew poetry was reached in his works.⁽¹¹⁾ He excelled in all the media of his art. His poetic corpus of secular and sacred works consists of over a thousand compositions which attest to a lyrical expression of secular and religious themes. He wrote about love and wine, and the joys of life as well as its reverses.

As a poet, ha-Levi achieved fame at an early age, as Moses Ibn Ezra declares:

"How can a boy so young in years
Bear such a weight of wisdom sage?"⁽¹³⁾

As a secular poet, he expressed a cheerful view of life

and this contentment and harmony are reflected in his poetry⁽¹⁴⁾, e.g.

Thou who, amid the trees of Eden, art a flowering
myrtle tree,

And amid the stars of heaven, art the bright Orion,
God hath sent to thee a cluster of pure myrrh
Of His own work, not the perfumer's skill.

The dove from whom, that day she nested in the myrtle
tree,

The myrtle stole her fragrance and gave forth perfume -
Ask not, while with her, for the sun to rise;
She asketh not, with thee, for the rising of the moon.

את בין עציר עדן הדס פרך
ובקובי שחק בסיל ורח
שלח לך האל צורה מסרדרור
ממעשיו לא מעשה רחם
יותה אשר יום קנה בין הדס
נגב הדס ריחה נתן ריח
אלה שאלה עמה עלות שמש כס
לא שאלה עמך עלות ירח: (15)

Much of ha-Levi's secular poetry was devoted to love-poems. The themes, the motifs and the imagery of these poems are derived from Arabic poetry, such as the yearning and travails of the lover, the cruelty of the beloved who delights in mocking her victims, her countenance shining from the darkness of a stormy night and her glances, e.g.

Wherefore, O fair one, dost withhold thy messengers
From the lover whose frame is filled with the pains of

thee?

Knowest thou not that thy lover awaiteth
nothing from fate

But to hear the voice of thy greeting?

If parting be decreed for the two of us,
Stand yet a little while I gaze upon thy face.

I know not if my heart be held within my frame
Or if it goeth forth upon thy wanderings.

By the life of love, remember the days of thy
longing, as I - I remember the nights of thy delight
As thine image passeth into my dream

So let me pass, I entreat thee, into thy dreams.

Between me and thee roar the waves of a sea of tears
And I cannot pass over unto thee.

But O if thy steps should draw nigh to cross -
Then would its waters be divided at the touch of
thy foot.

מהלך צביה תמנעי ציריך
מדוד צלעיו מלאו ציריך
לא תדעי כראין לדודך מן
בלתי שמע קול שלמותיך
אם הפרידה על שנינו נקורה
עמדי מעט עראחה פניך
לא אדעה אם בין צלעי נעצר
לבי ואם ילך למסעך
חי אהבה וקרי ימי חשקך כמו
אזכר אני לילות השוקותיך
כאשר דמותך בחלומי יעבר
כן אעברה נא בחלמותיך
בתי ובינך ים דמעות יחמו
נליו ולאדאובל עבר אליך
אך לו פעם יך לעברו קורבי
אז נבקעו מימי לכה רגליך (16)

It was in Cordoba that ha-Levi wrote the majority of

his secular poems dealing with eulogy and friendship. His numerous wedding odes and poems of amity bear witness to the host of friends he possessed.⁽¹⁷⁾ He wrote for his famous contemporaries: poets, philosophers and religious scholars, such as Moses Ibn Ezra, Judah Ibn Ghayat, Joseph Ibn Migash and Isaaq Ibn al-Yatom.⁽¹⁸⁾

In honour of the latter, ha-Levi wrote a poem describing the garden, the wine, and the party of friends in a fine and artistic opening. The eulogy itself is unusually pedestrian and tends to extreme exaggeration, e.g.

Earth, like a little child, was sucking
 But yesterday the rains of winter, with a cloud for nurse;
 Or she was a bride prisoned by the winter,
 Whose soul was yearning for the times of love.
 She longed for the wooing-time until the summer came,
 And then the longing heart was healed.
 With raiment of golden terraces and broidered
 Work of linen, she is like a maiden
 Delighting, revelling in her fair attire;
 Each day she maketh changes in her broideries
 And apportioneth apparel unto all about her.
 From day to day she changeth the colours of her plants
 From hue of pearl to sard and emerald.
 White is she now and green, and now she is red;
 She is like a fair one kissing her beloved.
 So beautiful are her flowers that meseemeth
 She hath robbed the very stars on high.

ארץ כִּלְדָּה הִיְתָה יוֹנָקָה
 וְשָׁמִי סָתוּ אֶתְמוֹל וְעַב מִיִּנְקָה
 אוֹ הִיְתָה כָּלָה כְּלוּאָה בְּסָתוּ
 נִפְשָׁהּ לַעֲתוֹת אֶהְבָּה שׁוֹקֶקֶת
 חֲשָׁקָה לַעֲת דִּידִים צָרִי נָנֵעַ וְסֹן
 מִיָּץ וְבוֹ נִרְפָּא לִבָּב חֲשָׁקָה
 בְּלִבוֹשׁ צְרוּנָה פֶּזֶז וְנִרְקָמֶת שֶׁשׁ כֶּבֶת
 מִתְעַנָּה בְּלִבוֹשׁ וּמִתְפַּנֶּקֶת
 בְּלִיּוֹם חֲלִיפּוֹת הִרְקָמוֹת מִחֲלִיף
 וּלְכִלְסֵי בִיבִיָּה בְּסוֹת חֲלָקָה
 מִיּוֹם לִיּוֹם עֵינַי צְמָחִים מִחֲפָדָּה
 עֵין דֶּר לַעֲיִן אֶדָם וְעֵין בְּרָקָה
 מִלְּבִין וְחֹרִיק עַתָּה וְגַם עַתָּה אֲדָרִים
 מִמְּשִׁיל צְבִיָּה אֶהְבָּה נִשְׁקָה
 יָפוּ פִּרְחִיהָ מֵאֹד עַד אֶחָשׁוּב
 כִּי בּוֹכְבִּירָאֵל הִיְתָה עֲשָׂקָה (19)

In one of his poems, written to Moses Ibn Ezra, ha-Levi expressed his suffering at the parting and his longing for his friend who was exiled in Christian Spain:

We know thee, O separation, from the days of youth,
 And the river of weeping - that ancient river
 Shall we strive with fate, that hath not sinned,
 And with days, though days bear no iniquity?
 They run in circles, in a right course,
 And naught is perverse nor crooked in the Heights -
 Can this be a new thing, since naught in the world is
 new,
 And since her laws are inscribed by the finger of God?
 And how shall her words change, since they all
 Are sealed by the ring on the right hand of the Most High?
 And every cause is re-found in the circuit,
 And every new thing hath been already many times;

And man is united but to be parted again,
 To bring forth out of one nation many nations
 For had not the sons of man been divided from of old,
 Then would the earth not be filled with peoples.

יִדְעוּךָ נָדָד מִיָּמֵי עֲלֻמִּים
 וְנַחֵל הַבְּכִי נַחֵל קְרוּמִים
 הָרַב עִם הַזֶּמֶן עַל־לֹא חֲטָאָה
 וְעַם־יָמִים וְאִין עוֹן לְיָמִים
 פְּלָכִים הֵם בְּקִרְצָדֶק יְרוּצוֹן
 וְאִין נִפְתָּל וְעַקֵּשׁ בְּמְרוּמִים.
 הִנֵּה חֲדָשׁ וְאִין תִּבְלַח חֲדָשָׁה
 וְחִקְיָה בְּאַצְבָּע אֵל רְשׁוּמִים
 וְאִיד יִשְׁנו דְּבָרִיהָ וְכָלָם
 בְּטַבְעַת יָמִין עֲלִיוֹן חֲתוּמִים
 וְכִלְסָבָה מְצוּאָה בְּמַסְבָּה
 וְכִלְחָדָשׁ כְּבֵר הִיָּה פְעָמִים
 וְלֹא חָבַר אֲנוּשׁ כִּי אִם־לְפָרֵד
 לְהוֹצִיא מִלֵּאָם אֶחָד לְאָמִים
 וְלֹלֵא נִפְרְדוּ מֵאֵז בְּנִי־אִישׁ
 אִנִּי לֹא־כִלְאָה אֶרֶץ עֲהָמִים (20)

His poetry also exhibits a deep and keen sense of appreciation of the beauty of nature⁽²¹⁾, e.g.

Let my beloved come into his garden
 and prepare his table and his seat
 To feed in the gardens.

The glorious flowers of the garden of his delight -
 on these shall he set his eyes,

To gather lilies;
 And shall eat the hidden fruits,
 the new and old.

My beloved, turn in to me,
to my porch and my temples;

To feed in the gardens.

Show thyself in my tents,
among the beds of mine aloe trees.

To gather lilies

Behold, for thee, breasts of pomegranates
given for a gift

My beloved is mine and I am his
when I knock at the habitation of his temple;

To feed in the gardens.

וְכִין מִסְבּוֹ וְכִין אֲבֵן דֹּדִי לִנְנוֹ
 לְרַעוֹת בְּנִינִים
 הוֹד פָּרְחֵי נֶן עֲדָנוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם יָמֵן עֵינוֹ
 לְלֶקֶט שׁוֹשְׁנִים
 וְאַרְבֶּה מְגֵדִים צְפוּנִים חֲרָשִׁים נִם יִשְׁנִים:
 דֹּדִי סוּרָה אֵלַי לְאוֹלָמִי וְהִכְלִי
 לְרַעוֹת בְּנִינִים
 הִרְאָה בְּאֵהָלַי בִּינוֹת עֲרוֹגוֹת אֵהָלַי
 לְלֶקֶט שׁוֹשְׁנִים
 הוֹאֵלֶךְ שְׂדֵי רִמּוֹנִים מִתְּנֶה נְתוּנִים:
 לִי דֹדִי וְאֵנִי לוֹ בְּרִפְקִי נִתְּנָה הִכְלֹ
 לְרַעוֹת בְּנִינִים
 (22)

3. His religious poetry: God and exile

For a short time ha-Levi played with the secular muse, but as the years passed it was the religious spirit that became prevalent in his ideas and writings. His longing for the Holy City of Jerusalem, and his lament of the fate of his people in exile, are two of the most characteristic elements of his work, not only in his poetry, but also in his philosophical book, entitled, Kitāb al-radd wa'l dalīl fī'l-dīn 'l-dhalīl ("The Book of Argument and Proof of the Despised Faith"), which was written in Arabic. It is more commonly known as Sefer ha-Khazari ("The Book of the Kazari").⁽²³⁾ It was translated from Arabic into Hebrew in the twelfth century by Judah b. Tibbon. The Kazari is one of ha-Levi's most important works and was translated into English, Latin, Spanish, French and Italian. It came to be known as the book of the Kazari because it is composed in the form of a dialogue between a Jewish scholar (ha-Hever) and the King of the Khazars, who had converted to Judaism in the eighth century.⁽²⁴⁾

Judah ha-Levi devoted all his talents to the service of religious themes: God and Jewish people in exile. His poetry was devoted almost exclusively to the exalted themes of God and Zion.⁽²⁵⁾

In his religious poems, he expressed God's praises with love and unbounded zeal. He exulted in the Torah and enriched the liturgy of the synagogue with so many hymns, e.g.

Who is this of beauteous countenance that showeth like
the sun,

That before men of renown covereth not her fairness?

Pure unto the foster-Father who hath taken her to
Himself for a daughter,

She is a joy for ever that groweth not old.

Before kings she speaketh - she is not ashamed;

She campeth also in the innermost heart of the wise.

Praising herself, she saith: "Verily my Creator

Acquired me before all else, with His right hand."

To the sons of God she calleth, what time she hath
prepared

A table of savoury food and hath made a feast:

"By me are royal dainties given

By me the tongue of all the dumb singeth glowing words;

By me the just of heart decree justice;

By me the eye of men in darkness seeth light;

By me the soul that seeketh for my face findeth sweetness,

By me she cleareth every crookedness from her path."

מי זאת הדר פנים בשמש נלטה
יפיה פני אנשי יקר לא כסתה
ברה לאמן שלקחה לו לבת
עדנה עד עדר לה אשר לא בלטה
לפני מלכים וברה לא נבלה
גם חור קנור לב החקמים חננה
מתהללה לאמר באמנם יצרי
אתי בטרם כל ימינו קננה
לבני אלהים קראה עת ערכה
שלחן במטעמים ולחם עשתה
בי מעדני המלכים נתנו
בי כל לשון אלם בצחות ענתה.

בִּי חֲמִקוּ צֶדֶק בְּלִבָּם צֶדֶקוֹ
 בִּי עֵין מְתִי חֲשָׁד מְאוּרִים רְאֵתָהּ
 בִּי נִצְמָה נֶפֶשׁ לִפְנֵי שְׁחָרָה
 בִּי כָל-עֲקָלָלוֹת נְחִיכָה פְּנִיָּה (26)

In the poems of ha-Levi the intimate religious lyrics and sentiments display a unique character. God, the Jewish people, and the trembling heart of the individual, all these are merged in the creative activity of the poet into a harmonious trinity.⁽²⁷⁾ This revelation of unity is characterized in the following lines:

The singer's reply to one who reproved him for his
 longing to go to the Land of Israel
 Thy words are compounded of sweet-smelling myrrh
 And gathered from the rock of the mountains of spice,
 And unto thee and the house of thy fathers belong
 precious virtues
 Whereunto praises fail to attain.
 Thou comest to meet me with sweet speeches,
 But within them lie men in wait bearing swords -
 Words wherein stinging bees lurk,
 A honeycomb prickly with thorns.
 If the peace of Jerusalem is not to be sought
 While yet with the blind and the halt she is filled,
 For the sake of the House of our God let us seek
 Her peace, or for the sake of friends and of brothers,
 And if it be according to your words, see, there is sin
 Upon all those who bend towards her and bow down

And sin upon those sires who dwelt in her as strangers
And purchased there vaults for their dead.

דְּכָרֶיךָ בְּמִזְרַח עֵבֶר רְקֻמִּים
וּמִצְרֵי הַבְּרִי הַמִּזְרָח לְקָחִים
וְלֶךְ וּלְבֵית אֲבֹתֶיךָ חֲסִדוֹת
אֲשֶׁר יִלְאוּ לְהַשִּׁינָם שְׂבָחִים
פְּנִשְׁתָּנִי בְּמִדְבָּרִים עֲרָבִים
בְּתוֹכָם אֲרָבִים נִשְׁאֵי שְׁלָחִים
דְּבָרִים אֲרָבוּ תוֹכָם דְּבָרִים
וְחוּד יַעֲרֵת דְּבֶשׁ קוֹצִים בְּסוּחִים
וְאִם בִּי־לֹא שְׁלוֹם שְׁלָם יִבְקֶשׁ
בְּעוֹדָה מִלֵּאָה עוֹרִים וּפְסָחִים
לְמַעַן בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִבְקֶשׁ
שְׁלוֹמָה אוֹ בְּעֵד רַעִים וְאֲחִים
וְאִם כִּדְּהוּא כְּדְּבָרֶיךָ רְאוּ חֲטָא
עָלֵי כָל־כְּרָעִים נִגְדָה וְשָׁחִים
וְחֲטָא הוֹרִים שְׂכָנוֹתָ כְּגָרִים
וְקִנּוּ שָׁם לְמַתִּיָּהִם צְרִיחִים (28)

Ha-Levi's clever combination of stylistic aspects of Spanish-Arabic poetry and ancient Hebrew produced works of great quality. His poems resounded with Job's lament, the cries of Lamentations, the Psalmist and the bitter complaints of Jeremiah.

By relating his personal experience, and through the use of imagery and stories drawn from ancient sources, Judah ha-Levi sensitively exposed the emotions of suffering and the vision of redemption, e.g.

Thou who knowest our sorrows, and bindest up our wounds,
Turn again our tens of thousands to the land of our abodes.
There shall we offer our obligations, our vows, our
freewill offerings,

There shall we make before Thee the offerings due to Thee.
The faithful recall today the wonders of olden time;
The children groan, for other lords beside Thee are their
their masters.

Where is God's covenant to the fathers, where His
former mercies,

When He spake from the heaven of His dwelling, unto us,
face to face,

When he gave into the hand of the faithful envoy the
two tablets of stone?

And where are all His marvels which our fathers have
told us?

How long have we drunken our fill of bitterness, and
hoped for Thy salvation?

How many seasons were we sick with longing, but
entreated none but Thee,

And watched for the light of morning, but were covered
with thick darkness?

ומחבש לעצבתינו	ידע מקאבינו
אל-ארץ מושבתינו	שוכה אחר-בבתינו
נדרינו ונדרבתינו	ושם נעלה עלתינו
אח-קרבנות חובתינו:	ושם נעשה לפניך

הפלאים הקרמונים	הזכירו היום אמונים
בעלום וולתך ארנים	ניאנחו הבנים
והסדריו הראשנים	איה ברית-אל לאתנים
עמנו פנים בפנים	בדברו משמי מעונים
את-שני לוחות האבנים	ובתחתו ביד ציר אמונים
ספרדלנו אבתינו:	ואיה כל-נפלאותיו אשר

ולישועתך קוינו	ובכסה מררות רוינו
וולתך לא חלינו	ובכסה ומנים חלינו
ובמחשכים נטמינו	ולאור בקר חבינו

The value of his poems in their dimension of language, imagery, varied style and effect of their sound patterns, rank these poems as among the most outstanding Hebrew poetry of all time, e.g.

How is she that was wholly beautiful disguised to the
 eyes of all flesh -
 Her sun gone down while yet is is day, the desire of her
 eyes removed
 Her Lord hath rebuked her and set her in bonds,
 without king and without prince.
 Hotly have foes pursued her, have wakened against her
 with hatred,
 Have sunk her feet in the mire: she hath lain down in
 sorrow.
 And the lauded city is left waste like the wilderness,
 without sacrifice and without pillar.
 Branches of the terrible ones are gathered to sweep
 her away;
 Her seasons change, her sorrows are changeless.
 Lions have torn her, her griefs are laid bare,
 without Ephod and Terraphim.

Thou, only One, give rest to her, that a remnant may
 be left in her,
 For children are come to the birth, but there is no
 strength to bring forth.
 Be a shield about them in thy mercy, Almighty Ruler.

אֵיכָה כְּלִילַת יִפִּי מִחֲנֻכָּהּ לְעֵין כָּל־בָּשָׂר
 בָּא שְׁמֶשֶׁה בְּעֵד יוֹמָם וּמַחְמֵד עֵינֶיהָ הוֹסֵר
 גָּעַר בָּהּ בַּעֲלָהּ וַיַּחֲנֶה בְּמֶאֱסָר
 אֵין מֶלֶךְ וְאֵין שָׂר:
 דְּלָקוּהָ אוֹיְבִים וַיַּעֲזְבוּהָ עַלֶיהָ אֵיכָה
 הִטְבְּעוּ בְּבֶץ רִגְלֶיהָ וַחֲשָׁבָה לְמַעֲצָבָהּ
 וַהֲעִיר הִהָלָלָה נֹתֶרָה בְּמֶרְבֶּר חֲרָבָה
 אֵין זָבָח וְאֵין מִצְבָּה:
 מִיִּרְי עָרִיצִים לְסִפּוּתָהּ נֶאֱסָפִים
 חָלְפוּ וּמְנִיָּה וַיִּגְוִיָּהּ לֹא נִחַלְפִים
 טָרְפוּהָ לְבָאִים וּמִכְאֲבֶיהָ נֶחֱשָׁפִים
 אֵין אֶפֶס וְתַרְפִּים:

כֹּתֵב

יְחִיד הַנֶּחֱמָס לְהוֹתִיר לָהּ פְּלִיט
 כִּי־בָאוּ בָנִים עַד־מִשְׁבֵּר וְכַח אֵין לְהַפְלִיט
 לְגוֹנוֹן עַל־יָהִם בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ שְׂדֵי הַשְּׁלִיט (30)

Over the next few years several incidents occurred, undermining the security and harmony of the Jewish community in Cordoba. One such incident, sometime between 1110 and 1115, involved a Jew called Ibn Arieah, who was being acclaimed by the Jews as the Messiah.⁽³¹⁾ This brought a swift reaction from the Rabbinic and the Jewish community, they had the would-be Messiah publicly flogged and excommunicated.⁽³²⁾

The failure of the apocalyptic messianism cast many believers into despair and doubt. Ha-Levi's faith was really tested. He questioned his God, that he should punish the Jewish people in allowing them to be martyred and tortured. Where was God's just and merciful nature? To ha-Levi the solution lay in the future. He believed that only through redemption could the Jews gain refuge from the suffering of their past.⁽³⁴⁾ The following lines

exhibit this theme:

The dove Thou hast borne on eagles' wings,
 That hath nested in Thy bosom in the innermost chambers -
 Why hast Thou left her flying about the forests,
 While on every side are spreaders of nets?
 Strangers entice her with other gods,
 But she in secret weepeth for the lord of her youth.
 And Dishan and Dishon speak smoothly to her,
 But she lifteth her eyes to her first husband:-
 Why hast Thou abandoned my soul to the grave -
 While I know there is none beside Thee to redeem?
 Shall she that was undefiled go ever with uncovered
 locks,
 A contempt and appalment to Mizzah and Shammah?
 Lo, the bondwoman's son hath spread terror for me,
 For with hand upraised he shot with the bow

על־כנפי נשרים	יונה נשאמה
בחדרי חדרים	וקנה בחיקך
נודדה ביערים	למה נטשתה
פרשי מכמרים	ומכל עברים
באלהים אחרים	יסיתוה נרים
חבקה לבעל נעורים	והיא במסתרים
יחליק לה לשון	ובדדישן ודישון
לאישה הראשון	ותשא אישון
נפשי לשאול	למה תעזוב
וזלתך לנאול:	ואדעה כי אין
תהי גלוית צמה	הלנצח תמה
למזה ושמה	בזה ושמה
העטני אימה	וברהאמה
קשת רמה (35)	כי ביד רמה

4. His national poetry: Zion and redemption

Judging from ha-Levi's poetry it could be said that most of his sacred poems are of a national character. Zion and redemption of the Jewish people are the most characteristic elements of his poetic compositions. (36)

Ha-Levi devoted a great number of his poems to expressing his deep sadness at seeing the Jewish people suffering in exile, and his yearning for redemption which would be, as he believed, realized by the return to the Holy Land of Palestine. (37)

In spite of the fact that ha-Levi was not the first to write on these traditional themes, it was unusual that he wrote so many poems on these topics in which he showed his poetic talents with great skill.

In his poems, ha-Levi expressed his confused sentiments between love and pain, the dream and the reality, and his divided heart between East and West:

My heart is in the east, and I in the uttermost west -
How can I find savour in food? How shall it be sweet
to me?

How shall I render my vows and my bonds, while yet
Zion lieth beneath the fetter of Edom, and I in Arab
chains?

A light thing would it seem to me to leave all the good
things of Spain -

Seeing how precious in mine eyes it is to behold the
dust of the desolate sanctuary.

לבי במזרח ואנכי בסוף מערב
 איד אטעמא את אש-ראכל ואיד יערב
 איכה אשלם נדרי ואסרי בעוד
 ציון ב'חבל אדום ואני ב'חבל ערב
 יקל בעיני עוב קליטוב ספרד כמו
 יקר בעיני ראות עפרות דביר נהרב: (38)

Zion was the central idea in ha-Levi's mind and, as a romantic poet and deeply religious person, he believed that it was only in Jerusalem that God was near to man, and that his life is defective as long as he is not there.⁽³⁹⁾ The following lines exhibit his yearning for God and Jerusalem:

That day when my soul longed for the place of assembly,
 Yet a dread of departure seized hold of me,
 He, great in counsel, prepared for me ways for setting
 forth,
 And I found His name in my heart a sustainment
 Therefore I bow down to Him at every stage;
 And at every step I thank Him

יום נקספה נפשי לבית הנוער
 ניאחוני לנדרים רער
 קרב נדל-עצה עלילות לנדר
 ואסצאה לשמו בלבי סער
 על-כן אי משמחה אליו בכל
 ססע וארנו עלי בל-צער: (40)

For his poetic spirit, which incorporated the ideal and abstract in plastic and concrete form, the mountains of Judah became the symbol of the most beautiful and exalted, for which his own soul longed:

Peace be to thee, Mount Abarim
 peace be to thee on every side
 Within thee is gathered the chosen of mankind,
 in thee is the chosen of all sepulchres.
 If thou knowest him not, ask thou
 of the Red Sea which was rent apart;
 And ask of the bush and ask of the mount -
 ask of Sinai - they shall return answer unto thee:
 He that faithfully bore the message of God,
 even though no man of words
 God helping, I have vowed an early pilgrimage to thee.

שְׁלוֹם לְךָ הַר הָעֲבָרִים
 שְׁלוֹם לְךָ מְקַלְעֵבָרִים
 בְּךָ נִאֲסַף מִבְּחַר אָנוּשׁ
 וְיִהְיֶה בְּךָ מִבְּחַר קִבְרִים
 אִם-לֹא יִדְעָתָהּ שְׁאֵל
 יִסְמוּךְ אֲשֶׁר נָגַד נְזָרִים
 וְשְׁאֵל סִנָּה וְשְׁאֵל לְהַר
 סִינִי וְשִׁיבוֹד אֶמְרִים
 הַנֶּאֱמָן עַל-יְמֵי לְאֻכּוֹת
 הָאֵל וְהוּא לֹא אִישׁ דְּבָרִים
 אִם הָאֱלֹהִים עֲזָרִי
 עָלִי לְשַׁחֲרֵד נְדָרִים: (41)

Like the prophets of exile, Ezekiel, Isaiah and Jeremiah, ha-Levi believed in the eternity of Israel and the national restoration to the Holy Land.⁽⁴²⁾ He dreamt the vision of going to the sanctuary of God in Jerusalem:

My God, Thy dwelling-places are lovely
 it is in vision and not in dark speeches that Thou
 art near.
 My dream did bring me into the sanctuaries of God,

and I beheld His beautiful services;
 And the burnt-offering and meal-offering and drink-
 offering,
 and round about, heavy clouds of smoke.
 And it was ecstasy to me to hear the Levites' song,
 in their council for the order of services.
 I awoke, and I was yet with Thee, O God,
 and I gave thanks, and it was sweet to thank Thee.

אלהי משכנותיך ידירות
 וקרבתך במראה לא בחירות
 הביאני חלומי מקדשי אל
 ושרתי מלאכותיו החמדות
 והעולה ומנחתה ונסבה
 וסביב תימרות עשן כבודות
 ונעמתי בשמעי שיר לזים
 בסודיהם לסדר העבדות
 הקיצותי ועודי עמך אל
 והודיתי ולך נאה להודות (43)

Finally, ha-Levi determined to realize his dreams and set out for his journey to Jerusalem. On his stormy voyage, while aboard ship, he wrote some poems considered among the loveliest verses of medieval Hebrew poetry.⁽⁴⁴⁾ In these poems, he expressed his yearning for redemption and his rejoicing over its expected realization, e.g.

To Thee my soul turneth in trust or fear,
 'tis to Thee she giveth ever thanks and worship;
 In Thee I rejoice on the day I wander forth and flee,
 and Thee I thank in every flight and wandering -
 Yea, when the ship, to bear me over, spreadeth out
 wings like the wings of a stork,

And when the deep groaneth and roareth beneath me
 as though it had learnt from mine own entrails,
 And maketh the abyss to seethe like a pot, yea turneth
 the sea into a pot of burning ointment;
 And when the ship from Kittim cometh to the sea of the
 Philistines and the Hittites come down to the stronghold;
 And when creatures press upon the ship and sea-monsters
 watch for food.

לך נפשי בטחיה או חרדה
 לך כשתחיה תמיד ומודה
 בך אשמה ביום אגע ואגור
 ולך אודה בכל יעה ויודה
 ובפרש הקפיץ לעבר בי
 כנפים כנפי החסידה
 ועת תהם תהום תחמי ותגהם
 באלו מקרב בי היא למדה
 ותרחיק בסיר את המצולה
 וגם תשים כמרקחה יקודה
 וצים בתים בבואם גם פלשתים
 ותחמים נחמים במצודה
 ותחיות בהרפס לאניות
 ותנינים מצפים לסעודה (45)

These poems also exhibit his pain of parting from his cultural environment and his family, the description of rough sea and the perilous voyage, as well as his longing for Zion. These topics were uncommon in the Hebrew poetry of the time⁽⁴⁶⁾, e.g.

My desire for the living God hath constrained me
 to seek the place of the throne of mine anointed -
 Even so that it hath not suffered me to kiss the
 children of my house, my friends, and my brethren;
 And that I weep not for the orchard which I planted

And watered, and my green shoots that prospered;
 And that I remember not Jehudah and Azariel, my two
 beautiful choice flowers; and Isaac, whom I counted
 as my child,
 Fruit of the sun, best of the growth of my moons;
 and that I have all but forgotten the house of prayer
 In whose place of learning was my rest, and that I
 forget the delights of my Sabbaths,
 The beauty of my Festivals, the glory of my Passovers,
 And have given my glory unto others,
 And forsaken my praise unto graven images.

הַצִּיקְתִּי חֲשׂוֹקֵי לֵאלֹהֵי
 לְשַׁחַר אֶת־מְקוֹם כְּסֹאוֹת כְּשִׁיחֵי
 עָדִי כִּי־לֹא נִטְשָׁתִי לְנֶשֶׁק
 בְּנֵי בֵיתִי וְאֶת־רַעֲי וְאֶחָי
 וְלֹא אֶבְכֶּה עָלַי פֶּרֶדֶס נִטְעָתִי
 וְהִשְׁקִיתִי וְהִצַּלְתִּיחוּ צָמְחֵי
 וְלֹא אֶזְכֹּר יְהוּדָה וְעֹזְרָאֵל
 שְׁנֵי פָרְחֵי יָקָר מִבְּחַר פָּרְחֵי
 וְאֶת־יֶזְעַק אֲשֶׁר כָּבַן חֲשִׁבְתִּי
 יְבוֹל שֶׁמֶשֶׁי וְטוֹב נֶרֶשׁ יָרְחֵי
 וְכִמְעֻט אֲשֶׁכְּחָה בֵּית הַתְּפִלָּה
 אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ בְּמִדְרָשָׁיו מְנוּחֵי
 וְאֲשֶׁכְּחַ תַּעֲנוּנֵי שְׂבָחִתִּי
 וְהִדְרַת מוֹעֲדֵי וְכְבוֹד פָּסְחֵי
 וְאֶתֵּן אֶת־כְּבוֹדִי לְאַחֵרִים
 וְאֶעֱזֹב לְפָסִילִים אֶת־שִׁבְחִי (47)

The ship, he imagines, is bringing him closer to the sanctuary of God. He relates this pilgrimage to God's Holy City in his poetry, begging the waves to take him quickly to his goal:

My God, break not the breakers of the sea, nor
 say Thou to the deep, 'Be dry',
 Until I thank thy mercies, and I thank
 the waves of the west;
 Let them waft me to the place of the yoke of Thy love,
 and bear far from me the Arab yoke.
 And how shall my desires not find fulfilment,
 seeing I trust in Thee, and Thou art pledged to me?

אלהי אל חשבר סשבררים
 ואליחאמר לצולת ים חרבי
 עדי אותה חסדיך ואודה
 לולי ים ורית מערבי
 יקרבו סקום על אהבתך
 ומעלי יסירון על ערבי
 ואיך לא יקמו לי כשאלותי
 וכך אבקש ואמה הוא ערבי: (48)

Cheerful and optimistic sentiments are exhibited in the following lines where he petitions the west wind to speed him swiftly and safely to the Holy City of Jerusalem:

This is thy wind, O perfumed west,
 with spikenard and apple in his wings
 Thou comest forth of the treasuries of the traders
 in spice - thou art not of the treasuries of the wind.
 Thou waftest me on swallow's wings, and proclaimest
 liberty for me;
 like pure myrrh from the bundle of spices thou art
 chosen.
 How must men long for thee, which for thy sake ride
 over the crest of the sea on the back of a plank

Stay not think hand from the ship
 either when day abideth or in the cool breath of the
 night;
 But beat out the deep, and tear the heart of the seas
 and touch the holy mountains, and there shalt thou rest.
 Rebuke thou the east wind which tosseth the sea into
 tempest until he maketh its heart like a seething pot.
 What shall the captive do, in the hand of God, one
 moment held back, and one moment sent forth free?
 Truly the secret of my quest is in the hand of the
 Highest, Who formeth the mountain heights and createth
 the wind.

זֶה רוּחַךְ צָר מֵעַרְב רָקִיעַ
 הַגֶּרֶךְ בְּכַנְפָיו וְהַהֲפֹחַ
 מֵאַוְצְרוֹת הַיָּם כְּלִים מִדְּאָף
 כִּי אֵינֶךָ מֵאַוְצְרוֹת הָרֹחַ
 לְנַפִּי דָרוֹר תִּנְיֶיךָ וְחֻקְרֹאֲלִי דָרוֹר
 וּבְמִרְדָּרוֹר מִתְהַצְרוֹר לְקוֹתֶךָ
 מִהֲנִקְסְפוֹ לָךְ עִם אֲשֶׁר בְּגִלְלֶךָ
 רָכְבוּ בְּגִב הַיָּם עָלֶי נְבִילֹתֶיךָ
 אֶל־נֶא תִרְפֶּה יָדְךָ מִדְּהֶאֱנִי
 כִּי יִתְנֶה הַיּוֹם וְכִי יִפְתָּח
 וְרָקַע תְּהוֹם וְקָרַע לִבָּב יָמִים וְנָע
 אֶל הַבְּרִיקָדֶשׁ וְשֵׁם תִּגְוֶה
 וְנִעֲרַר בְּקָדִים הַמִּסְעֵר יָם עֲדִי
 יָשִׁים לִבָּב הַיָּם כְּסִיר נִמְוֶה
 מִהֲיַעֲשֶׂה אֲסוּר בְּיַד הַצּוֹר אֲשֶׁר
 פָּעַם יְהִי עֲצוֹר וְעַתָּה שְׁלוֹתֶיךָ
 אֵךְ סוֹד שְׁאֵלָתִי בְּיָד מְרוֹם וְהוּא
 יִצָּר מְרוֹם הָרִים וּבְרֵא רֹחַ: (49)

During his stay in Egypt, ha-Levi wrote some poems
 showing his enchantment and fascination with the glory of
 Egyptian civilization, e.g.

Praise, above all cities be unto Egypt
 whither came first the word of God.
 There a chosen vine was planted, whose
 clusters became a peculiar treasure;
 There the envoys of God were born, envoys
 of God, as from bridegroom to bride;
 And there God's glory came down and walked
 in a pillar of fire and cloud, swathed in thick darkness;
 And there the offering of the Lord was made, and the
 blood of the covenant given, and redemption found.
 There stood Moses to supplicate - and verily no
 assembly is like unto this for prayer -
 And Israel is to be, unto Egypt and Assyria,
 a third, and a highway between them.
 Yea, an altar of the Lord hath been in the midst
 of Egypt, to exalt His name above all praise.

למצרים עלי כל־עיר יהיה
 אשר היה דבר־אל שם תחלה
 ושקה נטעה נפן בחורה
 והיו אשכולתיה סגלה
 ושם נולדו שלוחי אל והיו
 שלוחי אל כבין חתן וכלה
 ושם ירד כבוד האל והלך
 בעמוד אש וענן ותחלה
 ושמה נעשה קרבן אדני
 ונמן דם־קריית נהי נא־לה
 ושמה מעמד משה להעמיר
 ואין מעמד כמורה לתפלה
 וישראל למצרים ואשור
 שלישיה ובינותם מסלה
 ומובח לאל היה בחוכה
 לרומם את־שמו עלי־כל־תהלה (50)

Ha-Levi's national poems expressed strong sentiments of his soul as a Jew and made him the national poet of the Hebrew Golden Age.⁽⁵¹⁾ These poems are filled with expressions of contrasting emotions, loneliness, the suffering of the present, a despair for redemption, against the rejoicing in the light and security of the past. These conflicting feelings are vividly portrayed in his poems through the imagery of such figures as a dove seeking her freedom:

The dove, afar, she flieth about the forests;
 she stumbleth, she cannot shake herself free.
 Flying, flitting, fluttering, round about her
 beloved she swirleth, she stormeth.
 She deemed a thousand years would be the limit of her
 set time, but she is ashamed of all whereon she counted.
 Her Beloved who hath afflicted her with long years of
 separation hath poured out her soul to the grave.
 "Lo," she saith, "I will not make mention any more of
 His name;" but it is within her heart like a burning fire.
 Why wilt Thou be as an enemy to her, since she openeth
 wide her mouth for the rain of thy salvation?
 And she maketh her soul believe and despaireth not,
 whether she win honour in His name or whether she be
 brought low.
 Our God shall come and shall not keep silence; all
 round about Him is fire; it stormeth exceedingly.

יִוֵּנָה רְחוּקִים גְּרָדָה יַעֲרָה
 כְּשֶׁלָּה וְלֹא יִכְלָה לְהִתְנַעֲרָה
 הִתְעוֹפֶפֶה, הִתְנַפֶּפֶה, הוֹפֶפֶה
 סָבִיב לְרוּדָה סִחְרָה סַעֲרָה:
 וְתִחַשֵּׁב אֵלָּה לְקֶץ מוֹעֲדָה
 אֵךְ חִפְרָה מְכַל אֲשֶׁר שַׁעֲרָה:
 וְרוּדָה אֲשֶׁר עֲנָה בְּאֶרֶץ נָדָד
 שָׁנִים, וְנִפְשָׁה אֶל שְׂאוֹל הָעֶרְבָה:
 הֵן אֶמְרָה לֹא-אֶזְכְּרָה עוֹד שְׁמוֹ
 וְיִהְיֶה בְּתוֹךְ לְבָבָה כְּאֵשׁ בַּעֲרָה
 לְמָה כְּאוֹיֵב תִּהְיֶה לָּהּ, וְהִיא
 פִּיהָ לְמִלְקוֹשׁ וְשַׁעֲדָה פִּעֲרָה
 וְתִמְאֵין נִפְשָׁה וְלֹא נוֹאֶשָׁה
 אִם-יִכְבְּרָה בְּשִׁמּוֹ וְאִם-צָעֲרָה
 יָבֹא אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵינוּ יִחַרֵּשׁ
 עַל כָּל-סָבִיבָיו אֵשׁ מֵאֵד וְשַׁעֲרָה: (52)

Now the powerful longing for the Holy Land, for the incarnate symbol of the lovely and exalted in the world, reached its peak and surged in his celebrated poem, the "Zionide", which to this day is read throughout the Jewish world on the ninth day of Ab, when the Jews mourn the destruction of their Temple. (53)

In this poem ha-Levi expressed his love for his people and the Holy Land of Jerusalem. The holy qualities of the land are specified at length with a lyric feeling which imaginatively transports the poet to places of former revelation, prophecy, monarchy, and to the graves of his forefathers.

As if Jeremiah's Lamentations were coming to life again, ha-Levi laments his fate, expressing his grief and deep sorrow at seeing the Jewish people scattered all over the earth, and the destruction of the Holy City under the

rule of the fanatical Crusaders. Past glories and present lowliness are contrasted.⁽⁵⁴⁾

In Jewish history, ha-Levi is considered to be the greatest of all post-Biblical Hebrew poets. Most Jewish critics, mediaeval and modern, have a very high opinion of him. Moses b. Ezra, his contemporary, proclaimed ha-Levi as "the star from Castille which will illuminate the world". Another contemporary Hebrew critic, Judah al-Harizi, said of him,

"He penetrated into the most hidden vaults of the poetic art, took all the riches away, and nothing can compare with the beauty of his songs. All are his followers and attempt to sing in his manner. His prayers captivate all hearts. His songs refresh like the morning dew and burn like glowing coals."⁽⁵⁵⁾

The Jewish poet, Heinrich Heine, writes,

"He was a great poet, a wondrous pillar of fire, of song and poetry, who went before the homeless people in the darkness of exile."⁽⁵⁶⁾

To summarize, this chapter parallels Chapter Three of Part One in that it has tried to investigate the dominant notions in the poetry of a particular poet who is representative of the general tendency discussed in the previous chapter. We saw how his life in both Christian and Muslim Spain came to shape his way of thinking and writing. His secular poetry seems to have been dominated by pleasure and

a sense of harmony with his life and nature. His religious poetry, however, has been devoted to the service of the traditional themes, God and Jewish people in exile. Finally, his national poetry has been haunted by a nostalgic sentiment for Zion and the redemption of the Jewish people which can be regarded as the most characteristic element of ha-Levi's poetic compositions.

In Part Three of the thesis we will present a specimen analysis of a poem by Ibn Ḥamdīs and another by ha-Levi, which takes into consideration both the linguistic properties of words as well as their content.

Notes to Chapter Three

1. Shirmann, Ha-Shira, vol. 1, p. 426
2. Waxman, vol. 1, p. 229
3. A.E. Millgram, An Anthology, p. 332
4. Judah ha-Levi, Diwān, ed. Hayim Brody (England, 1971), p. 1
5. Shirmann, vol. 1, p. 428
6. Ibid.
7. Stillman, p. 61
8. Margolis, p. 330
9. Shirmann, p. 432
10. Ibid., also M. Waxman, p. 229; Margolis, p. 330
11. Israel Abraham, A Short History of Jewish Literature (London), p. 75
12. Shirmann, p. 425
13. Millgram, p. 332
14. Waxman, p. 230
15. Judah ha-Levi, Diwān, vol. 2, p. 37, trans., Nina Salaman; Selected Poems of Judah Ha-Levi, ed. M. Brody (Philadelphia, 1949), p. 62
16. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 7, trans., Nina Salaman, pp. 46-47
17. Millgram, p. 332
18. Shirmann, p. 426
19. Ha-Levi, Diwān, vol. 1, p. 82, trans., Salaman, p. 72
20. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 154
21. Waxman, p. 230
22. Ha-Levi, Diwān, vol. 2, p. 51, trans., Salaman, p. 64
23. J. Wansbrough, BSOAS, Vol. XLII, 1979, pp. 144-145
 "David H. Baneth (ed.): Kitab al-radd wa'l-dalil fi'l din al-dhalil (al-Kitāb al-Khazari, by Judah ha-Levi", prepared for publication by Haggai Ben Shammai, Jerusalem, 1977
24. T. Carmi, Hebrew Verse (London, 1981), p. 107
25. Zinberg, A History of Jewish Literature, pp. 92-93
26. Ha-Levi, Diwān, vol. 2, p. 304, trans., Salaman, p. 122
27. Zinberg, p. 93
28. Ha-Levi, Diwān, vol. 2, p. 164
29. H. Brody, Selected Poems of Judah-Ha-Levi, trans., Salaman, p. 106
30. Ha-Levi, Diwān, vol. 4, p. 85, trans., Salaman, p. 103

31. Shirmann, pp. 428-429
32. Stillman, p. 60
33. Shirmann, p. 429
34. Stillman, p. 60
35. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, vol. 4, p. 67, trans., Salaman, p. 99
36. Waxman, p. 232
37. D. Goldstein, p. 117
38. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, vol. 2, p. 155, trans., Salaman, p. 2
39. Waxman, p. 232
40. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, vol. 2, p. 167, trans., Salaman, p. 18
41. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 159, trans., Salaman, p. 8
42. Margolis, p. 329
43. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, vol. 2, p. 160, trans., Salaman, p. 22
44. Zinberg, p. 95
45. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, vol. 2, p. 170, trans., Salaman, p. 22
46. T. Carmi, Hebrew Verse, p. 106
47. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, vol. 2, p. 172, trans., Salaman, p. 26
48. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 168
49. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 171
50. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 180
51. N. Kravitz, p. 264
52. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, vol. 4, p. 222, trans., Salaman, p. 118
53. H. Brody, Selected Poems of Judah Ha-Levi, p. xxv
54. For a complete thematical analysis of the poem, see Part III.
55. Shirmann, p. 425
56. Zinberg, p. 103

P A R T I I I

Comparative Literary Study

Chapter One: A Specimen Analysis
 of Ibn Ḥamdīs's
 "The Ode to Sicily"

Chapter Two: A Specimen Analysis
 of ha-Levi's
 "The Ode to Zion"

C h a p t e r O n e

A Specimen Analysis of Ibn Ḥamdīs's

'The Ode to Sicily'

1. Theme: thematic and traditional analysis
2. Structure:
 - (a) metre
 - (b) rhyme
 - (c) phonology
 - (d) morphology
 - (e) syntax
3. Imagery:
 - (a) classical Arabic sources
 - (b) Qur'ānic sources
 - (c) figures: metaphor, simile,
antithesis, parallelism

1. Theme: a thematic and traditional analysis

Ibn Ḥamdīs wrote his qaṣīda when Sicily was in the hands of the Normans. The principle theme of the qaṣīda is nostalgia for his homeland and the literary genre is rithā' wa ḥanīn (lament and nostalgia).

In analyzing the poem in thematic terms there are two major sub-divisions, the lament and nostalgia theme, and the battle descriptions. The main body of the poem is divided into five sections: the first of these, lines 1-5, is concerned with the travel theme; the second, lines 6-10, is a lament over his country; the third, lines 11-15, compares the past glory of his country with its present humiliation, ending with praise for his fellow citizens' bravery which prepares the listener for the battle scene to follow. The fourth section, lines 16-26, is the battle scene; the final section, lines 27-32, reveals the poet's despair and grief for his lost country.

On account of a serious incident we lead the camels,
whose hooves [feet] bear us through the wilderness.

Wild cows in the desert take fright [upon seeing us],
and their [large] eyes remind [us] of the eyes of the
pretty girls [of my country].

You see the virgins whose marvellous beauty takes
many forms

O censurer, let me release my tears, which my patience
cannot restrain any longer

I am a man who seeks refuge in the grief which was 5
evoked in the [depths] of my heart.

I expected my land to be restored to its people, but my
expectations failed, then I despaired.

I consoled myself when I found it [my country] suffering
from a terminal, virulent illness,

And how it was humiliated [when] the hands of the
Christians converted its mosques into churches.

Whenever the monks wish [to pray], they ring the
[church] bells in the morning and evening.

All [types of] medicine have failed to cure [my 10
country's illness = occupation], just as there exists
no person who can repair the rusted sword.

O Sicily, fate betrayed [your] land, after [you] had
been the guardian of the people of the world.

How many eyes became sleepless through fear, after they
had slept deeply during [times of] security.

I saw my country humiliated by the Normans, after the
glory of my people had been esteemed.

The heretical countries used to stand in fear of [my
country] but now my country has become fearful of them.

I lost those Arab lions in whose paws the large wild 15
ass [Normans] lay prey.

I have never seen brave warriors and fighting champions
like them in any army.

You could see [their] shining swords [reflecting] on
the water as a star shines in the dark.

The warriors led the way using the edges of [their]
lances, and the knights' thrusts cut through the necks
[of the Normans]

Never did I think that the heat of the fire could be
diminished when a dry palm leaf was [added to it] in a
scorching climate.*

They [the Muslim fighters] bravely invaded Qaluriyya 20
and killed its soldiers and knights

They opened its locked [gates] with their swords [but]
when they left it was plunged into darkness.

They took captive white veiless girls, whose long hair
resembled burnouses.

They launched naval attacks from time to time [involving]
a sea of troops and waves of fighting knights

And a war-ship catapulted burning oil [balls] whose
dreadful gas assailed all noses

You see them [the war-ships] adorned with red and 25
yellow [flags] like Zanzi brides at a wedding party.

You could see their smoking braziers, as if they were
volcanoes rending the earth's crust.

There is no longer in Qasrinniy a plot where one might
dwell, and the Islamic traces have all become ruins.

* Here the poet uses a complex metaphor, likening the Norman conquerors to worthless chaff, which, instead of inflaming the 'fire' i.e. the powerful land of Sicily, instead causes its power to diminish.

How amazing it is that the devils [the Normans] were able to turn the towers of burning stars into dwelling places.

Syracuse became their stronghold and they gained access to visit the [Christian] sarcophagi in the abbeys.

They walked in the country while its people [= the Muslims] were in their graves. [The Normans] never confronted any of [the country's] fighting heroes.

And if these graves were to be rent asunder brave lions would emerge from the sepulchres.

But when the lion dies, the wolf walks proudly all over the thicket.

لأمرٍ طرِبَ الممّ نُرْجِي المَرَامِ
وَتَدْعُرُ بالبيداءِ عِيناً شَوَارِداً
عَذَارَى تَرَى الحسَنَ البَدِيعَ مُطَابِقاً
أَعَاذَلُ دَعْنِي أَصْلَحِي العَبْرَةَ الَّتِي
فَإِنِّي أَمْرُو آوِي إِلَى الشَّجَنِ الَّذِي 5
لَقَدَرْتُ أَرْضِي أَنْ تَعُودَ لِقَوْمِهَا
وَعَزَيْتُ فِيهَا النَفْسَ لَمَّا رَأَيْتُهَا
وَكَيْفَ وَقَدْ سَيِّمَتْ هَوَاناً وَصَيَّرَتْ
إِذَا شَاءَتِ الرَّهْبَانُ بِالضَّرْبِ أَنْطَقَتْ
لَنْ كَانَ أَعْيَا كُلَّ طَبِّ عِلَاجِهَا 10
صَفْلِيَّةٌ كَادَ الزَّمَانُ بِسِلَاحِهَا
فَكَمَ أَعْيُنٌ بِالْخَوْفِ أَمْسَتْ سَوَاحِرَها
وَتَطْوِي بِنَا أَخْنَفُهُنَّ البَابِنا
تُدَكِّرُ بِالْأَحْدَاقِ عَيْناً أَوَانِنا
لَا تُرَاعِيهَا فِي خَلْقِهِ وَجَانِنا
عَدِمْتُ لَهَا مِنْ أَجْلِ الصَّبْرِ حَابِنا
وَجَدْتُ لَهُ فِي حَبَّةِ التَّلْبِ نَاحِنا
فَسَاءَتْ ظُنُونِي ثُمَّ أَصْبَحْتُ يَانِنا
تَكَابَدُ دَاءٌ قَاتِلُ السَّمِّ نَاحِنا
مَسَاجِدَهَا أَيْدِي النَّصَارَى كَنَانِنا
مَعَ الصَّبْحِ وَالْإِمَاءِ فِيهَا النَوَاقِنا
فَكَمَ جَرَّبَ فِي السِّيفِ أَعْيَا المَدَاوِنا
وَكَانَتْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الزَّمَانِ مَحَارِنا
وَكَانَتْ بِطِيبِ الْأَمْنِ مِنْهُمْ نَوَاعِنا

أرى بِلَدِي قد سَامَهُ الرُّومُ ذَلَّةً
وكان بقومي عِزَّهُ مُتَعَايِسًا
وكانت بِلَادُ الكُفْرِ تَلْبَسُ خَوْفَهُ
فأَضْحَى لَذَاكَ الخُوفِ مِنْهُمْ لَابِسًا
عَدْتُ أَسوداً مِنْهُمْ عَرَبِيَّةً
تَرى بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهَا العُلُوجَ فَرَاثًا
فَلَمْ تَرَ عَيْتِي مِثْلَهُمْ فِي كَتِيبَةٍ
مُضَارِبِ أَبْطَالِ الحُرُوبِ مَدَّاعِيَا
وَيَا رَبَّ بَرَّاقِ النِّصَالِ تَخَالُهُ
مِنَ النَّعْجِ لَيْلًا مُشْرِقَ الشَّهْبِ دَامِيَا
خَلَوْا بَيْنَ أَطْرَافِ الْفَتَا بِكَمَاتِهِ
لَطَعْنَ مِنَ الفُرْسَانِ يَخْلِي القَوَانِسَا
وَمَا خِلْتُ أَنَّ النَّارَ يَبْرُدُ حَرَّهَا
عَلَى سَعْفٍ لَاقَتْهُ فِي التَّيْظِ يَابِسَا
أَمَّا مُلِيتُ غَزْوًا قَتَلَوْرِيَّةً بِهِمُ
وَأَرَدُوا بِطَارِقًا بِهَا وَأَشَاوَسَا
هُمْ فَتَحُوا أَغْلَاقَهَا بِسُيُوفِهِمْ
وَهُمْ تَرَكُوا الْأَنْوَارَ فِيهَا حَنَادَسَا
وَسَاقُوا بِأَيْدِي السَّبْيِ بَيْضًا حَوَاسِرَا
تَخَالُ عَلَيْهِنَ الشُّعُورَ بَرَانِسَا
يَخْرُضُونَ بِحَرٍّ كُلِّ حِينٍ إِلَيْهِمْ
بِيَحْزَنِ يَكُونُ الْمَوْجُ فِيهِ فَوَارِسَا
وَحَرِيَّةً تَرْمِي بِمُحْرِقٍ نَفِطِهَا
فَتَيْفُشْنِي سَعُوطُ الْمَوْتِ فِيهَا الْمَاعِطَسَا
تَرَاهُنَّ فِي حُسْنِ التَّبُودِ وَصُفْرِهَا
كَثَلِ بَنَاتِ الزَّيْجِ زُقَّتْ عَرَائِسَا
إِذَا عَقَنْتَ فِيهَا التَّنَائِيرُ خَلَّتْهَا
تُفْتَحُ لِلْبُرْكَانِ عَنْهَا مَنَافِسَا
أَفِي قَصْرِ بَنِي رُقْعَةٍ يَنْعَمُونَهَا
وَرَسَمٌ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ أَصْبَحَ دَارِسَا
وَمَنْ عَجِبَ أَنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ صَبَّرَتْ
بُرُوجَ النُّجُومِ الْمُحْرِقَاتِ بِجَالِسَا
وَأَضَحَتْ لَهُمْ سَرَقُوسَةٌ دَارَ مِئْبَعَةٍ
يَزُورُونَ بِالْدِيرَيْنِ فِيهَا التَّوَاوِسَا
مَتَشَوُا فِي بِلَادٍ أَهْلُهَا تَحْتَ أَرْضِهَا
وَمَا مَارَسُوا مِنْهُمْ أَبْيَا مُسَارِسَا
وَلَوْ شَقَّقْتَ تِلْكَ الْقُبُورَ لَأَنْهَضَتْ
إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ أَسْدًا عَوَاسَا
وَلَكِنْ رَأَيْتُ الْغِيلَ إِنْ غَابَ لَيْشُهُ
تَبَخَّرَ فِي أَرْجَائِهِ الذُّبُّ مَائِسَا

The study will attempt to discover the relationships between the poetic movements which form the corpus of the poem. The main vision of the poem is the "reversal device" which develops throughout a series of contrasting dualities: past/present, security/fear, illness/cure, guilt/punishment. The view which dominates the poet's mind appears from the very beginning: the first word, li'amrin (on account of a serious incident), prepares the listener for exciting news. He opens by relating his story and the motive which evoked him to write the poem. The poet uses here a nominal sentence where there is no absolute beginning and no absolute end to the movement; this is reflected in the timelessness of the open structure of the first line:

لَأْمُرٍ طَوِيلٍ أَلْهَمَ نَزْجِي الْعَرَامِسَا وَتَطْوِي بِنَا أَخْخَافُهُنَّ الْبَابَا

The phraseology employed in this line is a reference to his deep sorrow which developed not only since his country's occupation, but from the first moment he left it. He emphasizes this meaning by the statement, nuzjī al-'arāmisa (we lead the camels), he returns to the scene of his memories when he departed and travelled with some beduin in the desert of Ifriqiyya, looking forward to making his dreams of fame and wealth come true, and now reckoning himself a failure in exile. Therefore, we find many of his poems haunted by feelings of guilt. Desert travel is a symbol of the poet's life, and the word, al-bayda' embodies the failure and desperation of his life, the meaninglessness and the feeling of guilt. At the same time it refers to his exile, away from his homeland.

In line 2 is developed the contrasting-duality of past/present: tadh^ʿaru/tudhakiru, 'awānisā/shawāridā, al-'amn/al-khawf (to take fright/to remind, pretty girls/wild animals, security/fear). The line begins with the verb, tadh^ʿaru (to take fright) and the following word, bilbayda' (in the desert), emphasizes the frightening atmosphere in exile. Also in line 2, the poet uses the phrase, 'īnan shawāridā (the wild animals), which embodies the state of fear and terror the poet feels. The second half of line 2 begins with the verb tudhakiru (to remind), recalling the happy memories of the past in his country, where peace and beauty exist, employing the phrase, 'īnan 'awānisā (pretty girls), to serve as an expression of yearning for his intimate friends at home.

The poet emphasizes the contrasting-duality of past/present by making a complete parallelism between the two halves of line 2, in sense, sounds and letters (see below, p.260). Further, the desert represents fear, terror and tears, tadh^ʿaru, 'īnan, shawāridā, utliqa al-'abrata (to take fright, wild animals, to shed tears), while the scene of memories in the country represents peace and joy, 'īnan 'awānisā, adhara, al-ḥusn, al-badī' (pretty girls, virgins, the beauty, the splendour).

The thematic analysis reveals the nature of the relationship between the two major structural movements of our poem, which is, as mentioned, a contrasting-dualism relation.

The "past" occupies the main and larger part of the poem, referring to the author's attachment and longing for his country, while the "present" occupies a smaller part of the poet's consciousness, reflecting the fact that he is unhappy and dissatisfied.

The poet, in line 4, employs a nasīb motif when he addresses his censurer, asking to be permitted to release his tears for his lost love:

أَعَاذِلُ دَعْنِي أَطْلِقِ الْعَبْرَةَ الَّتِي عَدِمْتُ لَهَا مِنْ أَجْلِ الصَّبْرِ حَابَا

It is interesting to note that the "place" plays an important role in the poem; it is the backbone of the poem. Having lost his country, the peaceful and secure place, he wanders around searching for somewhere to live, 'awī ilā al-shajan (I seek refuge in my grief); he has no asylum other than his deep grief (l. 5):

فَإِنِّي أَمْرُو آوِي إِلَى الشَّجَرِ الَّذِي وَجَدْتُ لَهُ فِي حَبَّةِ الْقَلْبِ نَاحَا

The following passage, lines 6-10, contains a lament over the country and suffering from exile:

لَقَدَّرْتُ أَرْضِي أَنْ تَعُودَ لِقَوْمِهَا فَسَاءَتْ ظُنُونِي ثُمَّ أَصْبَحْتُ يَانَا
وَعَزَّيْتُ فِيهَا النَّفْسَ لَمَّا رَأَيْتُهَا تَكَابَدُ دَاءٌ قَسَاتِلُ السَّمَاءِ نَاحَا
وَكَيْفَ وَقَدْ سَيِّمَتْ هَوَانًا وَصَبَّرَتْ مَسَاجِدَهَا أَيْدِي النَّصَارَى كَنَاحَا
إِذَا شَاءَتْ الرَّهْبَانُ بِالضَّرْبِ أَنْطَقَتْ مَعَ الصَّبْحِ وَالْإِمَاءِ فِيهَا النَّوَاحَا
لَنْ كَانَ أَعْيَا كُلَّ طَبِّ عَلاَجِهَا فَكَمْ جَرَّبَ فِي السَّيْفِ أَعْيَا الْمَدَاوِي 10

Line 6 summarizes the event upon which the poem is based, the whole story of leaving the country and exile, as follows:

"When I left my country for a trip I expected to return, but my expectation was wrong and I never returned home. Judging from my experience I gained nothing, but I lost my country."

The poet, in line 7, sets out to establish a mood of sorrow and yearning. It begins with a lamentation, wa'zaytu fiḥā 'l-nafs, mourning his homeland which he will never see again, he feels isolated and lonely, using the first person singular. The second half of the line begins with the verb, tukābidu (to suffer), and its object is dā' (illness). We may ask here what is meant by "suffering from illness"; is it the country or himself? And what is that illness; the occupation or exile, or feelings of guilt?

Line 8 begins with a rhetorical interrogative expressing astonishment and remorse, wa kayfa wa qad sīmat hawānan (how, at the same time, it was humiliated) and here again the question arises, who was humiliated, the poet himself or the country, or both, which suggests they merge into one here.

Line 9 refers to the Christian domination over Sicily at that time, and line 10 reflects the state of failure and despair of the poet and Muslim Sicilians.

It is clear that the poem teems with so many words and phrases reflecting a mood of sorrow and grief, despair and depression, e.g.

al-hamm, al-ʿabrata, al-shajan, al-ṣabr, yā'isā,
sā'at, ʿazaytu, tukābid, dā', qātil, al-samm,

hawānan, al-khawf, dhillah, al-qubūr, al-ajdāth

(worry, tears, grief, patience, despair,
worsened, to console, to suffer, illness, killing,
poison, humiliation, fear, submission, graves, tombs).

Line 11 begins with an apostrophe to Sicily by name reflecting the deep nostalgic sentiments of the poet and his yearning for its past glory:

صَفْلِيَّةٌ كَادَ الزَّمَانُ بِلَادَهَا وَكَانَتْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الزَّمَانِ مُحَارِسًا

The poet, in lines 12-15, compares the contrasting state of the past: security and power, with the present state: fear and humiliation:

فَكَمْ أَعْيَنَ بِالْخَوْفِ أُمْسَتْ سَوَاهِرًا وَكَانَتْ بِطَيْبِ الْأَمْنِ مِنْهُمْ نَوَاعِيَا
أَرَى بِلَدِي قَدْ سَامَهُ الرُّومُ ذَلَّةً وَكَانَ بِقَوْمِي عِزُّهُ مُتَقَاعِيَا
وَكَانَتْ بِلَادُ الْكُفْرِ تَلْبَسُ خَوْفَهُ فَأُضْحَى لِدَاكِ الْخَوْفِ مِنْهُمْ لَا بِيَا
عَدَمْتُ أَسْوَدًا مِنْهُمْ عَرَبِيَّةً تَرَى بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهَا الْعُلُوجَ فَرَاثَا 15

In lines 16-26, there is a shift of theme from the nostalgia which is the basic characteristic of the poem to a series of battle descriptions, which are linked together by the fact that all the incidents took place in Sicily:

فَلَمْ تَرَ عَيْتِي مِثْلَهُمْ فِي كَتِيَّةٍ مُضَارِبَ أَبْطَالِ الْحُرُوبِ مَدَاعِيَا
وَيَا رَبَّ بَرَأَقِ النِّصَالِ تَخَالُهُ مِنْ النِّقْعِ لَيْلًا مُشْرِقَ الشَّهْبِ دَامِيَا
خَلُّوا بَيْنَ أَطْرَافِ الْقَنَا بِكَمَايِهِ لَطْعِنٍ مِنَ الْفَرَسَانِ يَنْحِلِي الْقَوَانِيَا

وما خِلْتُ أَنَّ النَّارَ يَبْرُدُ حَرَّهَا عَلَى سَعْفٍ لَاقَتْهُ فِي الْقَيْظِ يَابِسا
 أَمَا مُلِثْتُ غَزْوًا قَلَوْرِيَّةً بِهِمْ وَأَرَدُوا بِطَارِقًا بِهَا وَأَشَاوِسا
 هُمْ فَتَحُوا أَغْسَلَاتِهَا بِسُوفِهِمْ وَهُمْ تَرَكُوا الْأَنْوَارَ فِيهَا حَنَادِسا
 وَسَاقُوا بِأَيْدِي السَّبْيِ بَيْضًا حَوَاسِرًا تَخَالُ عَلَيْهِنَ الشُّعُورَ بِرَانِيسَا
 بِمُخْرُضُونَ بِحَرًّا كُلَّ حِينٍ إِلَيْهِمْ بِبَحْرِ يَكُونُ الْمَوْجُ فِيهِ فَوَارِيسَا
 وَحَرِيَّةً تَرْمِي بِمُحْرِقٍ زِنْطِطِهَا فَيَغْشَى سَعُوطُ الْمَوْتِ فِيهَا الْمَاطِيسَا
 تَرَاهُنَ فِي حُسْرِ اللَّبُودِ وَصُفْرِهَا كَمَثَلِ بَنَاتِ الزَّيْجِ زُفَّتْ عَرَانِيسَا
 إِذَا عَنَّتْ فِيهَا التَّنَائِيرُ خَلَّتَهَا تَفْتَحُ لِلْبُرْكَانِ عَنْهَا مَنَافِيسَا

The poet, in this passage, illustrates the bravery and heroism of his fellow-citizens, the Sicilians, in the battlefield, also recalling the historical events and victories his forefathers had achieved.

According to the technical terms of Arabic stylistics, the appearance of a second theme in the poem could be classified as istiṭrād, digression, and the completion of of the frame could be termed, rujū' (return [to the previous theme, nostalgia and lamentation]).⁽²⁾

This technique, however, as employed in the poem, serves a novel artistic purpose that of contrasting the internal and external happenings within the poet's mind.

In the final part of the poem, lines 27-32, the poet returns to mourning for his country, mentioning its cities which came under the rule of the Normans:

أفي قَضْرِي رُفْعَةً يَغْمُرُونَهَا وَرَسْمٌ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ أَصْبَحَ دَارِهَا
 وَمِنْ عَجَبٍ أَنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ صَيَّرَتْ بَرُوجَ النُّجُومِ الْمَحْرَقَاتِ بِجَالِهَا
 وَأَضْحَتْ لَهُمْ سَرَقُوسَةً دَارَ مِثْنَةٍ يَزُورُونَ بِالْدَّيْرَيْنِ فِيهَا التَّوَاوِصَا
 مَشَوْا فِي بِلَادِ أَهْلِهَا تَحْتَ أَرْضِهَا وَمَا مَارَسُوا مِنْهُمْ أَبْيَا مَسَارِهَا
 وَلَوْ شَقَّقْتَ تِلْكَ الْقُبُورَ لَأَنْهَضْتَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ أَسْدًا عَوَابِهَا
 وَلَكِنْ رَأَيْتُ الْغِيلَ إِنْ غَابَ لَيْشُهُ تَبَخَّرَ فِي أَرْجَائِهِ الذُّبُّ مَائِهَا

30

Line 27 begins with a rhetorical interrogative, which refers to the poet's yearning to live, even in a small plot of his country. He laments not only Sicily but also Islam which had become aṭlāl, so he pauses to weep over its last traces.

Ibn Ḥamdīs complies with tradition by using the aṭlāl motifs and imagery, which emphasizes the link between the aṭlāl and the ḥanīn poetry. He ends the poem by leading the listener to the tragic ending: failure, despair and death.

2. Structure

According to the Arabic tradition metre and rhyme are the criteria for distinguishing poetry from prose. The content of the poem must be set in a formal framework.⁽³⁾

It should be noted that most Arab critics, both Classical and modern, believe that there should be a close connection between content and form. They also believe that the choice of the metre and the rhyme as well as the

rheterical ornamentation is usually dominated by the theme of the poem. They require that the metre and rhyme should be appropriate to the content and the genre of the poem.⁽⁴⁾

(a) Metre

The metre of Ibn Ḥamdis's poem is ṭawīl, one of the finest and the most common in Arabic poetry.⁽⁵⁾ The question to be asked now is whether there is a link between the metre ṭawīl and the theme rithā' wa ḥanīn. In other words, is the poet's choice of metre dominated by the nostalgic theme of the poem? The pattern of the poem's metre is as follows:

لَا مَرَّ / طَوِيلَ الْهَمِّ / نَزَجِي الْعِرَامَسَا // وَتَطْوِي / بِنَا أَخْفَا / فَهْنُ / الْبَسَابَسَا

Henri Fleisch notes that just as derivational patterns in which a long syllable follows a short one are very popular in Arabic poetry, so are the metres whose feet invariably include this pattern, as /fa'ūlun/ and mafa'ilun do in ṭawīl.⁽⁶⁾ I quote a statistical study made by J. Anis indicating that, of a large sample of the classics of Arabic poetry, 34 per cent were in ṭawīl, 19 per cent were in kāmil, 17 per cent were in basīṭ and 12 per cent were in wāfir, leaving only 18 per cent for the remaining eleven Arabic metres.⁽⁷⁾

The Spanish-Arab critic, Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājannī believes

that ṭawīl is a strong and powerful metre. The modern Egyptian critic, Ibrahim Anis declares that the long syllables of ṭawīl allow the poet to pour out his deep feelings in his state of sadness and despair.⁽⁸⁾

We may now turn to Ibn Ḥamdīs's poem to see if there is a link between metre and theme, between ṭawīl and rithā' wa ḥanīn. It is just possible that the link is between the metre and the mood of the poem, for the poet, from the beginning of the poem, sets out a mood of sorrow and yearning for his lost country, which may well have stimulated him to use a metre with long syllables such as ṭawīl to enable him to pour out his emotions and lamentation.

(b) Rhyme

The rhyme of Ibn Ḥamdīs's poem is qāfiya muṭlaqa in which 90 per cent of Arabic poetry was written.⁽⁹⁾ Here again we may try to find out whether this qāfiya muṭlaqa is appropriate to the theme of the poem and whether the two correlate effectively.

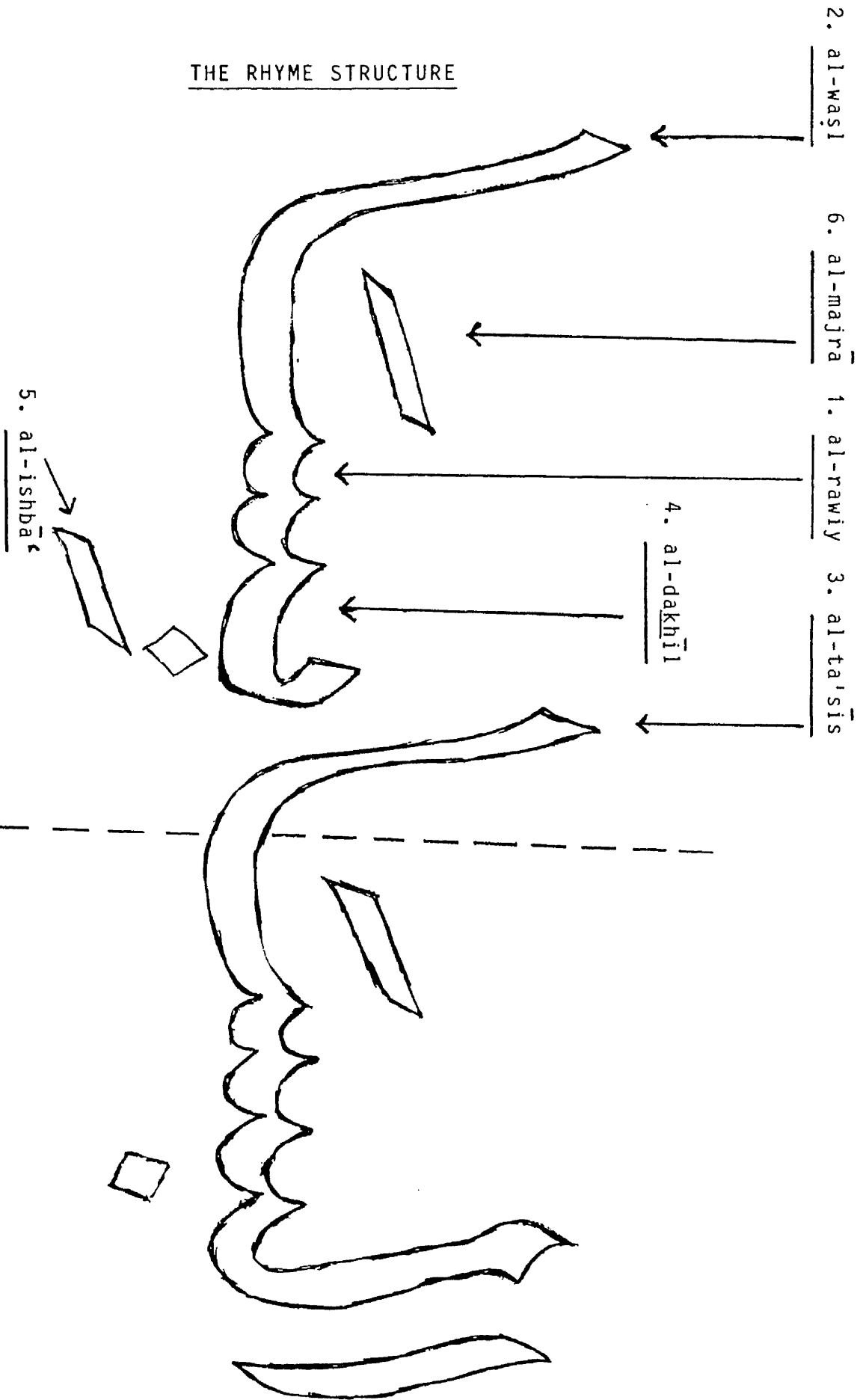
It seems necessary first to describe the structure of the rhyme with all its components of consonants and vowels:

1. al-rawiy is the rhyme letter and the main sound of the whole poem which must occur in each line.
2. al-waṣl is the sound which follows the rhyme letter and is linked with it.

3. al-ta'sīs is the alif preceding the rhyme letter and must be separated from it by another letter. Its name comes from being the basic sound which starts the rhyme structure.
4. al-dakhīl is the letter separating al-ta'sīs and al-rawiy. The poet is allowed to use any letter as dakhīl and it should be vowelled.
5. al-ishbā' is the short vowel of the dakhīl, which is often kasra.
6. al-majrā is the short vowel of al-rawiy al-muṭṭlaq⁽¹⁰⁾

The following diagram illustrates the description of the rhyme structure:

THE RHYME STRUCTURE



A phonological analysis of the poem's rhyme shows that the rhyme letter (al-rawiy) "s" belongs to the sibilants and is a continuant sound as well, which enables the poet to express his sad feeling in a flute-like melody.⁽¹¹⁾ It is worth pointing out that the Abbasid poet al-Buḥturī wrote a poem on a similar theme using the sound s as a rhyme letter, which might indicate the influence of his poem on Ibn Ḥamdīs's use of rhyme and metre in this poem.⁽¹²⁾

Moreover, an impression of the source of the qāfiya of the poem may be gained from the following lines written by the Jāhilī poet, al-ʿAbbās ibn Mirdās in a ḥamāsa poem where we find the same kind of qāfiya muṭlaqa as well as the same structure of rawiy s, waṣl a, ta'sīs a:

سمونا لهم تسع وعشرين ليلة	نحوب من الأعراض قفرا بسابسا
فلم أر مثل الحيّ حيّا مصحبا	ولا مثلنا ، لما التقينا فوارسا
إذا ما شدنا شدة نصبو لها	صدور المذاكي والرماح المداعسا
إذا الخيل جالت عن صريع نكرها	عليهم فما يرجعن الا عوابسا
ولو مات منهم من جرحنا لأصبحت	ضياع ، بأكناف الأراك عرائسا (13)

Ibn Ḥamdīs uses his rhyme with great skill, introducing it often in the middle of the line with a syllable, as mentioned, or a structural figure, such as paranomasia and antithesis (see below, p.260).

Line 1 prepares the listener for the rhyme by the word ʿarāmisā at the end of the first hemistich, which the Arab critics call taṣrīʿ, whereby the first hemistich of the first line of the poem must end with the same rhyme as the second hemistich, to distinguish between the opening line and the rest of the lines of the poem, and to prepare the listener to hear the rhyme at the end of the first line.⁽¹⁴⁾

The following table includes the introductory words of the rhyme of the poem:

Line	The rhyme word	The introductory word
4	<u>ḥābisā</u>	<u>'uṭliq</u>
8	<u>kanā'isā</u>	<u>al-naṣārā</u> , <u>masājidahā</u>
12	<u>nawā'isā</u>	<u>sawāhirā</u>
15	<u>frā'isā</u>	<u>'usūdan</u>
16	<u>madā'isā</u>	<u>'abṭāl al-ḥurūb</u>
17	<u>dāmisā</u>	<u>barrāq</u> , <u>'l-shuḥb</u> , <u>mushriq</u>
18	<u>qawānisā</u>	<u>al-fursān</u>
19	<u>yābisā</u>	<u>al-qayṣ</u>
21	<u>ḥanādisā</u>	<u>al-'anwār</u>
22	<u>barānisā</u>	<u>'l-shu'ūr</u> , <u>ḥawāsirā</u>
25	<u>ʿarā'isā</u>	<u>banāt</u>
30	<u>mumārisā</u>	<u>marasu</u>
31	<u>ʿawābisā</u>	<u>al-qubūr</u> , <u>al-'ajdāth</u>

The study also shows that the rhyme of the poem concludes with a long syllable, "sa" being a prolonged tone, almost plaintive. The frequency of this syllable associates the rhyme with the other syllables of the poem, particularly the poem syllable which occurs frequently throughout the lines (see below, p. 240).

(c) Phonology

The phonological properties of the rhyme letter "s", we said above, belong to the class of sounds known in the linguistic literature as sibilants. The production of these sounds involves a continuous flow of the air stream from the lungs through the vocal cavity⁽¹⁵⁾. Notice that "s", or, rather, its emphatic counterpart in Arabic, is the initial sound of the word Sicily (Ṣiqiliyya). It is also the final sound of the name of the poet Ibn Hamdis. This suggests that the poet and his country, despite the geographical and temporal gap, represent the two sides of a continuum, with the poem itself serving as a bridge. Also, the use of a continuant sound as the rhyme enables the poet to pour out his grief and frustration without hindrance. With the air stream coming from inside, his emotions flow through the mouth and out into the air, thus relieving him of an emotional burden which he has borne since his country fell prey to the Norman conquest. The following table shows the distribution of the "s" sounds in the poem:

THE SOUND 'S'

البسابسا	—	—	—	العرامسا	—	—	—	1
أوانسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
ومجانسا	—	—	—	الحسن	—	—	—	3
حابسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
ناخسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
فبائسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
ناخسا	—	—	—	النفس	—	—	—	7
كنائسا	—	—	—	سيمت	—	—	—	8
النواقسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9
المدأوسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
محارسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
نواعسا	—	—	—	أمست سواهرا	—	—	—	12
مثقاعسا	—	—	—	سامه	—	—	—	13
لابسا	—	—	—	تلبس	—	—	—	14
فرائسا	—	—	—	أسودا	—	—	—	15
مداعسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16
دامسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17
القوانسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18
سبسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19
وأشأوسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
خنادسا	—	—	—	بسيوفهم	—	—	—	21
برانسسا	—	—	—	وساقوا السبي حواسرا	—	—	—	22
فوارسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23
المعاطسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24
عرائسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25
منافسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26
دارسا	—	—	—	ورسم الاسلام	—	—	—	27
مجالسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	28
النواوسا	—	—	—	سرقوسة	—	—	—	29
مارسا	—	—	—	مارسوا	—	—	—	30
عوابسا	—	—	—	أسودا	—	—	—	31
ماثسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	32

On the other hand, the fact that the rhyme letter is followed by the long vowel "a", which in Arabic is represented by an alif, and the fact that the last syllable of each line is an open one, are also significant in a related way. In the pronunciation of the vowel "a" the tongue goes down to the lowest possible point in the mouth so that the vocal cavity is left without obstruction.⁽¹⁶⁾ In addition to that the lower jaw drops considerably and as a result the mouth becomes wide open. All these facts show clearly the desire of the poet to allow free flow to his grief in the form of words. The following table is a representation of the frequency of occurrence of open final syllables in the poem:

FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE OF OPEN FINAL
SYLLABLES THROUGHOUT THE POEM

سا	سا	فا	نا	سا	1
سا	وا	نا	دا	سا	2
سا	جا		واها	سا	3
سا	حا		ها	سا	4
سا	نا			سا	5
سا	پا		سا	سا	6
سا	نا	قا	دا	سا	7
سا	نا	صاری	ها	سا	8
سا	وا	ها	سا	سا	9
سا	پا			سا	10
سا	حا	ما	لی	سا	11
سا	وا		کا	سا	12
سا	قا		کا	سا	13
سا	لا		حی	سا	14
سا	را	ها	ری	سا	15
سا	دا		ضا	سا	16
سا	دا	لا		سا	17
سا	وا	سا		سا	18
سا	پا	لا		سا	19
سا	شا	ها	قا	سا	20
سا	نا	ها	وا	سا	21
سا	را		خا	سا	22
سا	وا			سا	23
سا	عا	ها	شی	سا	24
سا	را		نا	سا	25
سا	نا	ها	کا	سا	26
سا	دا	لا		سا	27
سا	جا	قا		سا	28
سا	وا	ها		سا	29
سا	ما	پا	ما	سا	30
سا	وا	دا	دا	سا	31
سا	ما	جا		سا	32

To what has been mentioned can be added the frequent use of other continuant sounds such as "l" which occurs 121 times. The following line, which contains 7 occurrences, is an example of this frequency:

أَعَاذِلُ دَعْنِي أَطْلِقِ الْعَبْرَةَ الَّتِي عَدِمْتُ لَهَا مِنْ أَجْلِ الصَّبْرِ حَابِئًا

The following table represents the overall distribution of the sound "l":

THE SOUND "L"

اليسابسا	—	—	—	لأمر طويل الهم	1
—	—	—	—	—	2
—	—	—	—	بالبيداء	3
—	—	—	—	الحسن البديع	4
—	—	—	—	أعادل — أطلق العبرة التي	5
—	—	—	—	الشجن الذي	6
—	—	—	—	لقد رت — — — — —	7
—	—	—	—	لقومها	8
—	—	—	—	النفس لها	9
—	—	—	—	—	10
—	—	—	—	الرهبان بالضرب	11
—	—	—	—	لئن — — — — —	12
—	—	—	—	كل — — — — —	13
—	—	—	—	علاجها	14
—	—	—	—	مقلية — — — — —	15
—	—	—	—	الزمان بلادها	16
—	—	—	—	بالخوف — — — — —	17
—	—	—	—	بلدي — — — — —	18
—	—	—	—	الروم ذلة	19
—	—	—	—	بلاد الكفر تلبس —	20
—	—	—	—	—	21
—	—	—	—	—	22
—	—	—	—	لذلك الخوف — لابس	23
—	—	—	—	—	24
—	—	—	—	العلوج — — — — —	25
—	—	—	—	أبطال الحروب — — — — —	26
—	—	—	—	النقع ليلا — — — — —	27
—	—	—	—	الشهب — — — — —	28
—	—	—	—	لطمع — — — — —	29
—	—	—	—	الفرسان يخلو القوانسا	30
—	—	—	—	لاقتة — — — — —	31
—	—	—	—	القيظ — — — — —	32
—	—	—	—	—	33
—	—	—	—	—	34
—	—	—	—	—	35
—	—	—	—	—	36
—	—	—	—	—	37
—	—	—	—	—	38
—	—	—	—	—	39
—	—	—	—	—	40
—	—	—	—	—	41
—	—	—	—	—	42
—	—	—	—	—	43
—	—	—	—	—	44
—	—	—	—	—	45
—	—	—	—	—	46
—	—	—	—	—	47
—	—	—	—	—	48
—	—	—	—	—	49
—	—	—	—	—	50
—	—	—	—	—	51
—	—	—	—	—	52
—	—	—	—	—	53
—	—	—	—	—	54
—	—	—	—	—	55
—	—	—	—	—	56
—	—	—	—	—	57
—	—	—	—	—	58
—	—	—	—	—	59
—	—	—	—	—	60
—	—	—	—	—	61
—	—	—	—	—	62
—	—	—	—	—	63
—	—	—	—	—	64
—	—	—	—	—	65
—	—	—	—	—	66
—	—	—	—	—	67
—	—	—	—	—	68
—	—	—	—	—	69
—	—	—	—	—	70
—	—	—	—	—	71
—	—	—	—	—	72
—	—	—	—	—	73
—	—	—	—	—	74
—	—	—	—	—	75
—	—	—	—	—	76
—	—	—	—	—	77
—	—	—	—	—	78
—	—	—	—	—	79
—	—	—	—	—	80
—	—	—	—	—	81
—	—	—	—	—	82
—	—	—	—	—	83
—	—	—	—	—	84
—	—	—	—	—	85
—	—	—	—	—	86
—	—	—	—	—	87
—	—	—	—	—	88
—	—	—	—	—	89
—	—	—	—	—	90
—	—	—	—	—	91
—	—	—	—	—	92
—	—	—	—	—	93
—	—	—	—	—	94
—	—	—	—	—	95
—	—	—	—	—	96
—	—	—	—	—	97
—	—	—	—	—	98
—	—	—	—	—	99
—	—	—	—	—	100

(d) Morphology

The study of the morphological make-up of some words in the poem shows how the two main axes of opposition in the poem are emphasized. The first axis, which relates the past and its glory to the present and the humiliation associated with it, is highlighted mainly by the use of the two aspectual forms of the verb: perfect and imperfect. The second axis, which relates the country and the people left behind to the poet himself and the desert surrounding him, is manifested by the frequent use of third person and first person pronouns.

The perfect form of a verb denotes that an action or event is completed and therefore belongs to the past. On the other hand, the imperfect form of a verb denotes that an action or event is still in the process of taking place and therefore belongs to the present. Verbs in the perfect form occur 45 times in the poem, more than twice the number of verbs in the imperfect. This predominance shows how the poet's mind is occupied by the past to the extent of becoming obsessed. When he makes reference to the present it is only to show how the past is much more glamorous by comparison. The frequent use of past tense forms is in fact to be expected in poems of lament. The present in this genre of poetry is only auxiliary, evoked solely to bear on the past which is the main concern. Everything that is past is positive, whereas everything that is present is, by comparison, or rather by contrast, negative. The first table below shows the distribution of pronouns in relation

to the tenses of the verbs, and the second tables shows the distribution of verbs in the poem:

	Past tense	Present tense
FIRST PERSON	عدمت ، وجدت ، قدرت ، عزيت ، رأيته ، خلت ، خلته	نرجي ، اطلق ، أرى
THIRD PERSON	أصبح ، أضحى ، كان ، كاد ، غاب ، أعيا ، سامه ، تبخر ، أصبحت ، أضحت أمست ، كانت ، ساءت ، شاعت ، أنطقت أنهضت ، هيرت ، عثنت ، لاقتة ، أردوا ، تركوا ، منحوا ، ساقوا ، مارسوا ، مشوا ، خلوا ، سيمت ، ملئت ، زفت ، شققت	يغشى ، يبرد ، يكون ، تذعر ، تطوى ، تذكر ، تكاد ، ترى ، ترمى ، تفتح ، يخوضون ، يذرون يعمرونها
SECOND PERSON		تخال ، تخاله ، تراهن ، ترى

FREQUENCY AND DISTRIBUTION OF
VERBS THROUGHOUT THE POEM

—	—	—	تطوى	—	ترجى	—	—	1
أوانسا	—	—	تذكر	—	—	—	وتدعر	2
مجانسا	—	—	—	—	—	ترى	—	3
حابسا	—	—	عدمت	—	—	أعاذل دعني أطلق	—	4
ناخسا	—	—	وجدت	—	—	آوى	—	5
أصبحت بئسا	—	—	فسأت	—	—	أن تعود	—	6
ناخسا	—	—	تكابد	—	—	رأيتها	—	7
—	—	—	—	—	—	وسيرت	—	8
—	—	—	—	—	—	شأت	—	9
—	—	—	—	—	—	أنطقت	—	10
أعيا المداوسا	—	—	—	—	—	كان أعيا	—	11
—	—	—	وكانت	—	—	كاد	—	12
—	—	—	وكانت	—	—	أمست سواهرا	—	13
نواعسا	—	—	وكان	—	—	سامه	—	14
مثقاعسا	—	—	فأضحى	—	—	تلبس	—	15
لابسا	—	—	ترى	—	—	—	عدمت	16
فرائسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	فلم تر	17
مداعسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	تخاله	18
دامسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	خلوا	19
—	—	—	يخلص	—	—	—	وماخلت	20
—	—	—	لاقتة	—	—	يبرد	—	21
يابسا	—	—	وأردوا	—	—	ملئت	—	22
أشوا	—	—	—	—	—	فتحوا	—	23
—	—	—	تركوا	—	—	—	وساقوا	24
—	—	—	تخال	—	—	حواسرا	—	25
—	—	—	يكون	—	—	—	يخوضون	26
فوارسا	—	—	—	—	—	—	ترمي	27
—	—	—	فيفشى	—	—	—	تراهن	28
—	—	—	زفت عرائسا	—	—	—	عشت	29
—	—	—	تفتح	—	—	خلتها	—	30
—	—	—	أصبح دارسا	—	—	يعمرونها	—	31
—	—	—	—	—	—	صيرت	—	32
—	—	—	—	—	—	وأضحت	—	33
—	—	—	يزورون	—	—	—	مشوا	34
—	—	—	ومامارسوا	—	—	—	—	35
—	—	—	—	—	—	لأنهضت	—	36
عوابسا	—	—	—	—	—	غاب	—	37
مأسا	—	—	تبخر	—	—	—	—	38

Pronouns are referential expressions which may denote an individual or an entity. The poet makes use of the first person pronoun to refer to himself. This pronoun occurs almost exclusively, with the exception of one instance: nuzjī, in the singular form. The following are some examples of the first person pronoun:

da'ni, uṭliq, 'adimtu, wajadtu, qadartu, 'azaytu.

This implies the isolation and loneliness of the poet away from his conquered country and subdued people. In sharp contrast to this is the use of plural pronouns to refer to the lost country and its inhabitants. Here are some examples:

'amsa-t, kāna-t, khala-w, 'arda-w.

In fact the poet also uses the singular form to refer to his country but it is significant that the majority of them are singular feminine forms. This is a manifestation of the traditional notion of 'mother country' with all its connotations of fertility and richness (= plurality). Separation from it implies automatically barrenness (desert) and isolation, hence the use of "I" by the poet to refer to himself.

It is equally significant that the only instance of the use of the first person plural occurs in the opening line of the poem. It reflects the diachronic contrast between the past and its positive associations, such as plurality, and the dramatic development towards the present and isolation. The following four pages display the distribution of

pronouns in the poem:

A MORPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE FREQUENCY
AND DISTRIBUTION OF PRONOUNS

First person				Second person		
L.	S.	L.	P.	L.	S.	P.
5	فاني	1	نرجسي	3	تري	
6	أرضي	1	بنكا	15	تري	
6	ظنوني			22	تخال	
13	بقومي					
16	عيني					
4	دعني					
4	أطلق					
5	آوى					
13	أرى					
32	رأيت					
4	عدمت					
5	وجدت					
6	قدرت					
6	أصبحت					
7	عزيت					
15	عدمت					
19	خلت					

T h i r d p e r s o n							
L.	S.M.	L.	S.F.	L.	P.M.	L.	P.F.
3	خلقه	3	لأنواعها	12	منهم	1	أخفاهن
5	له	4	لها	15	منهم	14	منهن
13	عزّه	6	لقومها	16	مثلهم	22	عليهن
18	بكلماته	7	فيها	20	بهم	25	تراهن
23	فيه	8	مساجدها	21	هم		
14	خوفه	9	فيها	21	بسيوفهم		
32	ليشه	10	علاجها	21	هم		
32	أرجائه	11	بلادها	23	اليهم		
13	سامه	15	أيديها	29	لهم		
17	تخاله	19	حرها	30	منهم		
19	لاقتنه	20	بها	31	اليهم		
9	كان	21	اغلاقها	18	خلوا		
10	كاد	21	فيها	20	أردوا		
18	يخلي	24	نقطها	21	فتحوا		
19	يبرد	24	فيها	21	تركوا		
23	يكون	25	صفرها	22	ساقوا		
24	يفشى	26	فيها	30	مارسوا		
		26	عنها	23	يخوضون		
		29	فيها	29	يزورون		
		30	أهلها	30	مشوا		
		30	أرضها				
		7	رأيتها				
		26	خلتها				
		27	بعمرونها				
		1	تطوى				
		2	تذعر				
		6	تعود				
		6	ساعت				

(continued)

J.C.

T h i r d p e r s o n							
L.	S.M.	L.	S.F.	L.	P.M.	L.	P.F.
		9	شاءت				
		7	تكايد				
		8	صيرت				
		8	أنطقت				
		11	كانت				
		12	أمت				
		12, 14	وكانت				
		14	تلبس				
		16	تر				
		20	ملئت				
		24	ترمي				
		25	زفت				
		26	عشت				
		26	تفتح				
		29	أضحت				
		31	شقت				
		8	يسيت				

DISTRIBUTION OF PRONOUNS
THROUGHOUT THE POEM

و شطوی بنا آخفاهـن	ترجی	1
تذکر	وتذعر	2
لأنواعها خلفه	تری	3
عدمت لها	دعني أطلق	4
وجدت له	فاني آوى	5
فساءت ظنوني أصبحت	لقدرت أرضى تعود لقومها	6
تكايد	وعزيت فيها رأيتها	7
مساجدها	سيمت وصيرت	8
فيها	شاءت أنطق	9
أعيا	كان أعيا علاجها	10
وكانت	كاد بلادها	11
وكانت منهم	أمست	12
بقومي عزه	أرى بلدي سامه	13
منهن	وكانت تلبس خوفه	14
تری ایدیها	عدمت منهم	15
	تر عيني مثلهم	16
	تخاله	17
يخلي	خلوا بكما	18
لاقتة	خلت يبرد حرها	19
وأردوا بها	ملئت بهم	20
وهم تركوا فيها	هم فتحوأ أغلاقها بسيفهم	21
تخال عليهن	وساقوا	22
يكون فيه	يخوضون اليهم	23
فيفش فيها	ترمي نطفها	24
رفت	تراهن وصفرها	25
تفتح عنها	عشتت فيها خلشها	26
	يعمرونها	27
	صيرت	28
يزورون فيها	وأضحت لهم	29
مارسوا منهم	مشوا أهلها أرضها	30
اليهم	شقت لانهضت	31
تبختر أرجائه	رأيت ليته	32

A morphological analysis shows recurrence of root patterns throughout the poem as follows:

	Lines	
$\sqrt{\text{KHL Y}}$	17,18,19,22,26	تخاله - خلوا - خلت - تخال - خلتها
$\sqrt{\text{R' Y}}$	3,7,13,15,32	ترى - رأيتها - أرى - ترى - رأيت
$\sqrt{\text{FRS}}$	15,18,23	فرائسا - الفرسان - فوارسا
$\sqrt{\text{SBH}}$	6,9,27	أصبحت - الصبح - أصبح
$\sqrt{\text{Y N}}$	2,12,16	عينا - أعين - عينا
$\sqrt{\text{LBS}}$	14	تلبس - لابس
$\sqrt{\text{MRS}}$	30	مارسوا - مارسا
$\sqrt{\text{HRQ}}$	24,28	بمحرق - المحرقات
$\sqrt{\text{SWM}}$	8,13	سيت - سامه
$\sqrt{\text{KWN}}$		كان - كانت - وكان - وكانت - يكون •

(e) Syntax

An analysis of the syntactic structures of the sentences in the poem sheds more light on the two main axes of opposition in the poem so far noticed. The systematic use of certain structural patterns shows how the poet harnesses all the linguistic resources available to him to convey his message in the most economical but nevertheless effective, way.

The axis of time emerges through the frequent use of verbal statements and the rarity of nominal statements. In Arabic grammar nominal sentences are not specified by an independent element other than the imperfect form of the verb. The past tense, however, is specified by the auxiliary kāna, independently from the perfect form of the verb. So all past tense sentences are verbal whereas present tense sentences may be verbal or nominal. From these facts we can conclude that the predominance of verbal sentences in the poem confirms the idea put forward above that the poet is obsessed with the past.

Another syntactic aspect which also highlights the temporal dualism past/present is the use of conditional statements. The following are examples of these statements:

1. 9 إذا شاءت الرّهبانُ بالضربِ أنْطَقَتْ
1. 26 إذا عَشَنْتْ فيها التنايرُ خَلَتْهَا
1. 31 ولو شَقَّقَتْ تلكَ القبورُ لَأَنْهَضَتْ

Conditional statements usually describe hypotheticalal situations, situations which, in the context of the poem,

the poet wishes to have taken place, but in reality could not have. In one way, conditional statements are the means whereby the poet projects the past onto the present, translating his desire and his wish that the glory of the past could be resurrected and restored.

The second axis, which we can refer to as an axis of space since it relates the poet and the desert surrounding him to the best country, the fertility of its land and its people, emerges mainly through the use of rhetorical questions. Here are some examples:

وكيف وقد سيمت هواناً وصيرت
أما ملئت غزواً قتلورية بهم
أفي قصريني رفعة يغمرونها

Rhetorical questions are questions which when asked do not expect answers. The use of this type of question emphasizes the isolation of the poet further. Because he is alone in a vast desert he can only ask questions for which he does not expect answers since there is nobody there to answer them.

The spatial relationship is also manifest in the use of of a stylistic device known in linguistic vocabulary as post posing. This is a grammatical process whereby a constituent of a sentence (subject, object, adjective, etc.) is moved forward in the sentence, usually to the final position. Here are some illustrative examples from the poem:

1	وتطوي بنا أخفافهنّ البسابا
2	وتندعرّ بالبيداء عينا شواردا
2	تذكر بالأحداق عينا أوانيسا
4	عديمت لها من أجمل الصبر حابسا
5	وجدت له في حبة القلب ناخسا
11	وكانت على أهل الزمان محارسا
12	وكانت بطيب الأمن منهم نواعسا
13	وكان بقومي عزه متقاعسا
14	فأضحى لذلك الخوف منهنّ لايسا
15	ترى بين أيديها العلوج فرائسا
26	تفتح للبركان عنها منافسا
29	يزورون بالديرين فيها النواوسا
32	تبخر في أرجائه الذئب مايسا

In my opinion, post posing translates yet another attempt by the poet to project, this time in space, the land of Sicily and all its positive associations, onto the present desert. This projection in space parallels the projection in time discussed above. It seems that the past and present, Sicily and the desert, though held in clear contrast throughout the poem, sometimes merge together, thus reflecting the confusion in the mind of the poet as a result of his bereavement.

3. Imagery

It should be noted that the Andalusian poets inherited the poetic tradition of the East and followed their models, inspired by their imagery and using their tools.⁽¹⁷⁾ Ibn Ḥamdīs was known as Buḥturī al-Andalus (Buḥturī of Spain) because he was highly influenced by the literary style of al-Buḥturī, and in particular his descriptive technique.⁽¹⁸⁾

The study of the poem shows the influence of the Arabic environment and culture on Ibn Ḥamdīs: we can see the intensive accumulation of Arabic cultural signs, starting with the mention of the "desert"; the original home of the Arabs, and the travel by camel which plays an important part of Arab life, and using the rhetorical techniques which represent the base of the Arabic tradition.

(a) Classical Arabic sources

Ibn Ḥamdīs draws his images from various classics of Arabic poetry. I have tried below to provide the sources of imagery for some lines of the poem. Each source is introduced by the name of the poet. The references in the square brackets refer to the line numbers in Ibn Ḥamdīs's poem:

Ṭarafa Ibn al-ʿAbd:⁽¹⁹⁾

[1.1] واني لأمضي الهم عند احتضاره
بعوجاء مرقال تروح وتغتدي

Al-Ḥārith Ibn Ḥiliza:⁽²⁰⁾

[1.1] غير اني قد استعين على الهم
اذا خف بالشوى النجاء

'Imru' al-Qays: (21)

- [1.2] كغزلان رمل في محاريب أقيال وماذا عليه ان ذكرت أو انسا

'Imru' al-Qays: (22)

- [1.4] وهل عند رسم لارس من معول وان شفائي عبرة ان سفحتها

Qays Ibn Zurayh: (23)

- [1.6] اذا النفس رامت خطة لا تنالها وفي اليأس للنفس المريضة راحة

Abū Tammām: (24)

- [1.7] ويرجى شفاء السم والسم قاتل وقد تألف العين الدجى وهو قيدها

Al-Muraqqash al-Akbar: (25)

- [1.9] كما ضربت بعد الهدوء النواقيس وتسمع تزقاء من البوم حولنا

Ibn Hazm: (26)

- [1.9] قبيل قرع النصاري للنواقيس أتتني وهلال الجو مطلع

Al-Mutanabbī: (27)

- [1.10] وأعيا دواء الموت كل طبيب وقد فارق الناس الأحبة قبلنا

Al-Nabigha al-Zubyanī: (28)

- [1.16] بأيديهم بيض رفاق المضارب فهم يتساقون المينة بينهم

Al-Abbās Ibn Mirdās (29)

- [1.16] صدور المذاكى والرماح المداعسا اذا ماشدنا شدة نصولها

Al-Buhturī: (30)

- [1.17] يمشون فيه الا بضوء السيوف مد ليلا على الكماة فمنا

Waddāh Ibn 'Isma'īl: (31)

- [1.17] عوابس يتخذن النقع نيزلا فانك لو رأيت الخيل تعدو

Al-Mutanabbī: (32)

- [1.18] فليس لنا الا بهن لعاب تركنا لأطراف القنا كل شهرة

Al-Rabī^c Ibn Ziyād: (33)

[1.22] من مثله تمسى النساء حواسرا وتقوم معولة مع الأسحار

Abū 'l-'Alā' al-Ma^carrī: (34)

[1.25] ليلتي هذه عروس من الزنج عليها قلائد من جمان

'Imru' al-Qays: (35)

[1.27] وان شغائي عبرة ان سفحتها وهل عند رسم دارس من معول ؟

Al-Buḥturī: (36)

[1.32] حتى يعود الذئب ليثا ضيغما والغصن ساقا والقدرة نيقبا

Al-Mutanabbī: (37)

[1.32] بغيرك رايا عبث الذئباب وغيرك صارما ظلم الضراب

(b) Qur'ānic sources

Apart from classical Arabic poetry, it may be assumed that Ibn Ḥamdīs was also inspired by the verses and images of the Qur'ān, e.g.

1. 4 عَدِمْتُ لَهَا مِنْ أَجْمَلِ الصَّبْرِ حَابَا

70:5 "فاصبر صبرا جميلا"

1. 12 نَكُمْ أَعْيُنٍ بِالْخَوْفِ أَمْنَتْ سَوَاحِرَآ وَكَانَتْ بِطَيْبِ الْأَمْنِ مِنْهُمْ نَوَاعِيَا

4:83 "وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ وَالْخَوْفِ"

24:55 "وَأَيَّدَ لَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا"

1. 13 أَرَى بَلَدِي قَدْ سَامَهُ الرُّومُ ذَلَّةً وَكَانَ بِقَوْمِي عِزُّهُ مُتَنَاعِيَا

27:34 "وَجْعَلُوا أَعْزَةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذَلَّةً"

14:6 "يَسْؤُمُونَكَ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ"

وكانت بلاد الكفر تلبسُ خوفه فأضحى لذلك الحوفِ منهنّ لايسا
24:112 فأذاقها الله لباس الجوع والخوف

ترى بين أيديها العلوج فرائسا
69:7 فتري القوم فيها صرعى

وهم تركوا الأنوارَ فيها حنادسا
2:17 وتركهم في ظلمات

ولو شققَت تلك القبورُ لانهضت إليهم من الأجداثِ أسدا عوايبا
70:43 ليخرجون من الأجداث سراعا
50:44 يوم تشقق الأرض
82:4 وإذا القبور بعثرت

(c) Figures: metaphor, simile, antithesis, parallelism

The study shows that Ibn Ḥamdīs conforms to the traditional Arabic badi', the art concerned with the rhetorical ornament based on word play and alliteration. He pays great attention to the figures in the poem, e.g.

In line 22, there is a metaphor (isti'āra, the most important poetic device and its major feature) where the poet depicts capture as a man holding the captive women with his hands, and the poet emphasizes this image with another one in the same line when he illustrates the women with their very long hair like burnouses:

وساقوا بأيدي السبي بيضاً حواسراً تخالّ عليهنّ الشعور برانسا

Another effective metaphor may be seen in line 7, where the poet portrays his country as suffering from a fatal disease:

وعزّيتُ فيها النفسَ لما رأيتها تكابدُ داءَ قاتلِ السمِّ ناحسا

This image might be differently analyzed as a reference to the poet himself suffering from guilt and exile.

There is a particularly effective simile (tashbīh) in line 25, where the poet compares ships in battle, covered with red and yellow banners, to black brides in a wedding party:

تراهنَ في حميرِ اللّبودِ وصُفْرَها كمثلِ بناتِ الزّوجِ زُفّتْ عرائسا

In this imagery, the poet surprises the listener by shifting suddenly from the image of a battlefield to the joyful and happy atmosphere of a wedding party, which reflects the conflicting image of the unpleasant present and the happy past. This imagery could be drawn from the following line:

غسرى الرياض كأنها عرائس ينقلن في صفراء من حمراء (38)

Ibn Ḥamdīs was constrained by the traditional techniques of the rithā' genre, which often relies on antithesis and parallelism to serve the thematic purpose of the poem, that of contrasting a happy image from the past with the unpleasant state of the present.

Frequently used by Ibn Ḥamdīs in this poem is antithesis (ṭibāq, the ornament which reveals the underlying similarity of apparently conflicting images), e.g.

أطلق / حابسا	الصبح / الأمساء	أُمت / أصبحت
الخوف / الأمن	سواهرا / نواعسا	ذلة / عزه
أسودا / فرائسا	عربية / علوج	مشرق / دامسا
ببرد / حرها	الأنوار / حنادسا	حواسرا / برانسا
فتحوا / أغلاقها	داء / طيب	مساجد / كنائسا

Line two is a successful example of antithesis and parallelism (muqābala) in sound, sense, syntax and imagery:

وَتَذَعْرُ	بالبیداءِ	عیناً	شوارِداً	تُذَكِّرُ	بالأحداقِ	عيناً	أوانِی
watadh'aru	bilbaydā'	'īnan	shawāridā	tudhakinu	bilahḍāq	'īnan	'awānisa
present tense verb	preposition + noun	noun	plural adjective	present tense verb	preposition + noun	noun	plural adjective
4 letters	7 letters	4 letters	6 letters	4 letters	7 letters	4 letters	6 letters

Ibn Ḥamdis employs some more examples of parallel structures emphasizing a contrast of content, e.g.

فكم أعين بالخوف أمست سواهيراً وكانت بطيب الأمن منهم نواعيسا
 وكانت بلاد الكفر تلبس خوفه فأضحى لذلك الخوف منهم لايسا
 هم فتحوا أغلاقها بسيوفهم وهم تركوا الأنوار فيها حنادسا

To summarize, this chapter tried to analyse in detail the theme, the structure of words and constructions frequently used, and the imagery in Ibn Ḥamdis's poem, The Ode to Sicily. The theme of the poem, entitled al-ḥanīn ilā al-waṭan, could be regarded as Ibn Ḥamdis's independent genre which relies mainly on the traditional theme of aṭlāl and its motifs. The study of the structure of words and sentences, on the other hand, revealed a systematic attempt by the poet to make use of mostly linguistic elements that would convey his message clearly and economically, both in form and content. The phonological properties of the rhyme sound and other frequently occurring sounds, as well as the morphological and syntactic properties of constructions all were shown to emphasize the theme of exile and nostalgia suffered by the poet. The imagery also, whether it is derived from classical Arabic sources or Qur'an, was employed to achieve a similar effect on the reader.

Notes to Chapter One

1. Ibn Ḥamdīs, Dīwān, pp. 274-276
2. G.E. Von Grunebaum, A Tenth-century Document of Arabic Literary Theory and Criticism ... al-Baḡillānī 'l-'ajāz al-Qur'ān (Chicago, 1960), pp. 42,45
3. Ibn Rashīq, 'Umda, vol. 1, p. 151, also Shawqī Dayf, al-Fann wa Mazāhibahu fī'l-Shi'r al-'Arabī (Cairo, 1960), p. 158
4. Ḥ. al-Qartājannī, Minhāj al-Bulaghā', pp. 205,266
5. Ibrāhīm Anīs, Musīqā'l-Shi'r (Cairo, 1952), p. 189
6. H. Fleisch, L'arabeclassique, pp. 47-52, quoting, Bateson (Cairo, 1960), p. 322
7. Anīs, p. 189
8. Anīs, p. 175
9. H. Naṣṣār, al-Qāfiya fī al-'Arūḍ wa'l Adab (Cairo, 1980),
10. Ibid.
11. M. Mandūr, Fī al-Mizān al-Jadīd (Cairo, n.d.), p. 236
12. M. Muṣṭafāy, Al-Ramziyya 'ind al-Buḥturī (Algeria, 1981), pp. 340-341, 421, see above, pp. 24-25
13. Al-'Abbās Ibn Mirdās, Dīwān, ed., Y. al-Juburī (Baghdād, 1968), pp. 69-70
14. Qudāma b. Ja'far, Naqd 'l-Shi'r, p. 51
15. J.D. O'Connor, Phonetics (London, 1983), pp. 48, 142
16. Ibid.
17. Aḥmad Dayf, Balāghat al-'Arab fī al-Andalus (Cairo, n.d.), p. 35
18. Muṣṭafāy, p. 428
19. Ṭarafa Ibn al-'Abd, Dīwān, p. 89
20. Al-Ḥārith Ibn Ḥiliza, Dīwān, p. 141
21. Imru' al-Qays, Dīwān, p. 119
22. Alī Aḥmad Adūnīs, Dīwān al-Shi'r al-'Arabī (Beirut, 1964), vol. 1, p. 48
23. Ibid., p. 279
24. Abū Tammām, Dīwān, p. 214
25. Adūnīs, vol. 1, p. 58
26. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 129
27. Al-Mutanabbī, Dīwān (Beirut, n.d.), p. 33
28. Adūnīs, vol. 1, p. 117
29. Al-'Abbās Ibn Mirdās, Dīwān, p. 132

30. Al-Buḥturi, Dīwān, p. 69
31. Abū Tammām, Dīwān al-Ḥamāsa (Baghdād, 1980), p. 181
32. Al-Mutanabbī, Dīwān, p. 55
33. Dīwān al-Ḥamāsa, p. 283
34. Adūnīs, vol. 2, p. 491
35. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 48
36. Al-Buḥturi, Dīwān, p. 75
37. Al-Mutanabbī, Dīwān, p. 39
38. Al-ʿAskari, Dīwān al-Maʿānī, vol. 2, p. 19

C h a p t e r T w o

A Specimen Analysis of Judah Ha-Levi's

"The Ode to Zion"

1. Theme: literary and historical dimensions
2. Meaning: Hebrew application of Arabic
qaṣīda scheme
3. Structure:
 - (a) metre
 - (b) rhyme
 - (c) phonology
 - (d) morphology
 - (e) syntax
4. Imagery:
 - (a) Biblical sources
 - (b) Figures: metaphor,
 simile,
 antithesis,
 parallelism,
 paranomasia

1. Theme: literary and historical dimensions

Jerusalem since the post-exilic period was the centre of the life of Jewry and held a prominent position in Jewish history. Zion, after the destruction of the First Temple, came to be used as a synonym for Jerusalem. In Jewish tradition, Zion is considered as the mount of God and the joy of the earth, and as a symbol of the Jewish homeland.⁽¹⁾ It became the centre of Jewish lamentations, not only in prayers, but also in Hebrew poetry, both sacred and secular.⁽²⁾

Judah ha-Levi was considered to be the national poet in Jewish history. He wrote about thirty-five poems in which Zion was the main focus and they expressed the conflict between love and pain, between the dream and reality.

His writing reached its climax of aspiration in his most famous poem, the 'Zionide', which is read throughout the Jewish world on the ninth of Ab, when they mourn the destruction of the Temple.⁽³⁾ According to the Jewish convention the poem belongs in the realm of national poetry, while in the Arabic tradition, it belongs to the literary genre rithā' wa ḥanīn (lament and nostalgia).

When analyzing the poem in thematic terms there are two major subdivisions, nostalgia and lament theme, and the description and glorification genres.

The main body of the poem is divided into four sections, the first of these, lines 1-4, is concerned with exhibiting the relationship between Zion and the Jewish people in exile, the second, lines 6-18, is an expression of longing and yearning for the Holy City of Jerusalem. The third, lines 19-28, is a lament over Jerusalem, and the final section, lines 29-34, reveals the poet's pride in the glory of Jerusalem and his hope of living there.

Zion! wilt thou not ask if peace be with thy captives
that seek thy peace - that are the remnant of thy
flocks?

From west and east, from north and south - the
greeting "Peace" from far and near, take thou
from every side.

And greeting from the captive of desire, giving his
tears like dew of Hermon, and longing to let them
fall upon thine hills.

To wail for thine affliction I am like the jackals;
but when I dream of the return of thy captivity,
I am a harp for thy songs.

My heart to Bethel and Peniel yearneth sore,
to Mahanaim and to all the places where the pure
ones have met.

5

There the Presence abideth in thee; yea, there
thy Maker opened thy gates to face the gates of
heaven.

And the Lord's glory alone was thy light;
no sun nor moon nor stars were luminants for thee.

I would choose for my soul to pour itself out
within that place where the spirit of God was
outpoured upon thy chosen.

Thou art the house of royalty; thou art the throne
of the Lord, and how do slaves sit now upon thy
princes' thrones?

Would I might be wandering in the places where 10
God was revealed unto thy seers and messengers.

O who will make me wings, that I may fly afar,
and lay the ruins of my cleft heart among my
broken cliffs!

I would fall, with my face upon thine earth and
take delight in thy stones and be tender to thy dust.

Yea, more, when standing by my fathers' tombs
I would marvel, in Hebron, over the chosen of thy
graves.

I would pass into thy forest and thy fruitful field,
and stand within thy Gilead, and wonder at thy mount.

Mount Abarim, and Mount Hor, where are the twain 15
great lights - thy Luminaries, thy Teachers.

The life of souls is the air of thy land, and of
pure myrrh the grains of thy dust, and honey from
the comb thy rivers.

Sweet would it be unto my soul to walk naked and barefoot upon the desolate ruins where thy holiest dwellings were.

In the place of thine Ark where it is hidden and in the place of thy cherubim which abode in thine innermost recesses.

I will cut off and cast away the splendour of my crown of locks, and curse the fate that desecrated in unclean land the heads that bore thy crown.

How shall it be sweet to me to eat and drink while 20
I behold dogs tearing at thy lions' whelps?

Or how can light of day be joyous to mine eyes while yet I see in ravens' beaks torn bodies of thine eagles?

O cup of sorrow! gently! hold a while! already my loins are filled, yea, and my soul, with thy bitterness.

When I remember Oholah I drink thy fury, and I recall Oholibah, and drain thy dregs.

Zion! perfect in beauty! love and grace thou didst bind on thee of olden time; and still the souls of thy companions are bound up with thee.

It is they that rejoice at thy well-being, that are 25
in pain over thy desolation, and that weep over thy ruin.

They that, from the pit of the captive, pant toward thee, worshipping, every one from his own place, toward thy gates.

The flocks of thy multitude, which were exiled and scattered from mount to hill, but have not forgotten thy fold.

Which grasps thy skirts and strengthen themselves to go up and take hold of the boughs of thy palms.

Shinar and Pathros - were they equal unto thee in their greatness? Can they compare their vanity to thy Thummim and thy Urim?

And with whom could they compare thine anointed Kings? 30 and with whom thy prophets? and with whom thy ministrants and thy singers?

He will change, He will wholly sweep away all the realms of idols; thy splendour is for ever, from age to age thy crown.

Thy God hath desired thee for a dwelling-place; and happy is the man whom He chooseth and bringeth near that he may rest within thy courts.

Happy is he that waiteth, that cometh nigh and seeth the rising of thy light, when on him thy dawn shall break.

That he may see the welfare of thy chosen, and rejoice in thy rejoicing, when thou turnest back unto thine olden youth.

1 ציון, הלא תשאלי לשלום אֲסִירֶיךָ,
 דורשי שלומך והם יתר עֲדִירֶיךָ?
 מִיָּם וּמִזֶּרַח וּמִמַּצְפֹּן וּמִיָּמֵן שְׁלוֹם
 רְחוֹק וְקָרוֹב שְׂאִי מִכָּל עֲבָרֶיךָ,
 וּשְׁלוֹם אֲסִיר תְּאוֹנָה, נוֹתֵן דְּמָעָיו כְּטֵל-
 הָרֶמֶן וְנִכְסָף לְרֹדְתָם עַל הָרְרֶיךָ!
 לְבָכוֹת עֲנוּתֶךָ אֲנִי תָנִים, וְעַתָּה אֲחֻלָּם
 שִׁיבַת שְׁבוּתֶךָ - אֲנִי כְּנוֹר לְשִׁירֶיךָ.
 5 לְבִי לְבֵית-אֵל וּלְכִנְיָאֵל מֵאֵד יְהִמָּה
 וּלְמַחְנֵים וְכָל פְּנְעֵי טְהוֹרֶיךָ,
 שֵׁם הַשְּׂכִינָה שְׁכֵנָה לָךְ, וְהַיֹּצֵרֶךָ
 פֶּתַח לְמוֹל שְׁעָרֵי שְׁחָק שְׁעָרֶיךָ,
 וְכְבוֹד אֲדֹנִי לְכַד הִיָּה מְאוֹרֶךָ, וְאֵין
 שֶׁמֶשׁ וְסֶהָר וְכוֹכָבִים מְאִירֶיךָ.
 אֲבָחַר לְנַפְשִׁי לְהִשְׁתַּפֵּךְ בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר
 רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים שְׁפוּכָה עַל בְּחִירֶיךָ.
 אֶת בֵּית מְלוֹכָה וְאֶת כֶּסֶף אֲדֹנִי, וְאֵיךְ
 יֵשְׁבוּ עֲבָדִים עָלַי כְּסֹאוֹת נְבִירֶיךָ?
 10 מִי יִתְּנִי מְשׁוּטָט בְּמָקוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר
 נִגְלוּ אֱלֹהִים לְחֹנֹף וְצִירֶיךָ!
 מִי יַעֲשֶׂה לִּי כִנְפִים וְאֶרְחִיק נֶדֶד,
 אֲנִיד לְבַתְרִי לְבָבִי בֵּין בְּתָרֶיךָ!
 אֶפְלֵ לְאַפִּי עָלֵי אֶרֶץ וְאֶרֶץ אֶבֶר-
 נֶדֶד מֵאֵד וְאַחֲזִיג אֶת עֲפָרֶיךָ,
 אֵף כִּי בַעֲמָדֵי עָלִי קִבְרוֹת אֲבוֹתִי וְאֲשֶׁר-
 תוֹמָם בְּחִבְרוֹן עָלִי כִבְהַר קִבְרֶיךָ!
 אֶעֱבֹר בְּיַעֲרֶךָ וּבְרִמְלֶךְךָ וְאֶעֱמֵד בְּגִל-
 עֲדָה וְאֶשְׁתַּמְּמָה אֵל הַר עֲבָרֶיךָ,
 15 הַר הַעֲבָרִים וְהַר הַהָר, אֲשֶׁר שֵׁם שְׁנֵי
 אוֹרִים גְּדוֹלִים מְאִירֶיךָ וּמְוִרֶיךָ.
 חֲזִי נִשְׁמוֹת - אֲנִיר אֶרֶץ, וּמִמָּר-דְּרוֹר
 אֲבָקֶת עֲפָרֶךָ, וְנִפְתַּת צִיף - וְהִרֶיךָ!
 יִנְעַם לְנַפְשִׁי הֵלֶךְ עָרֶם וְיִחַף עָלִי
 חֲרָבוֹת שְׁמָמָה אֲשֶׁר הִיוּ דְּבִירֶיךָ,
 בְּמָקוֹם אֲרוֹנֶךָ אֲשֶׁר נָצַח, וּבְמָקוֹם כְּרוֹן-
 בִּיךָ אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְנוּ חֲדָרֵי חֲדָרֶיךָ!
 אֲנִי וְאֶשְׁלִיךְ כָּאֵר נֹרִי וְאֶקֶב וְכֵן
 חֲלַל בְּאֶרֶץ סִמְמָה אֵה נִירֶיךָ -
 20 אֵיךְ יַעֲרֹב לִי אֶחָל וְלִשְׁתוֹת בַּעַת אֶחָזָה,
 כִּי יִסְתַּחֲבוּ הַכְּלָבִים אֶת כְּפִירֶיךָ?

או איך מאור יום יהי מהזק לעיני בעוד
 אראה בפי עורבים פגרי ושריף?
 כוס היגונים, לאט! הרפי מעט, כי כבר
 מלאו כסלי ונפש מחרורף.
 עת אזכרה אהלה - אשתה חמתה, ואון-
 כר אהליבה - ואמצה את שמרף!
 ציון כלילת יפי, אהבה וסון תקשרי
 מאו, ובך נקשרו נפשות חבריך -
 הם השמחים לשלונתך והכואבים
 על עוממותך ובוכים על שברך.
 מבור שבי סואפים גדרך ומשתחנים
 איש ממקומו אלי נכח שערך,
 עדרי המונף, אשר גלו והתפזרו
 מהר לגבעה ולא שכחו גדרך,
 המתחזקים בשולך ומתאמצים
 לעלות ולאהז בסנסני תמרך.
 שנער ופתרוס הנער כוף בגדלם, ואם
 הבלם ידמו לתמרך ואורך?
 אל מי ידמו משיחך ואל מי נבי-
 איך ואל מי לויך ושריך?
 ישנה תחלה כליל כל ממלכות האליל -
 חסגך לעולם, לדור ודור גורך.
 און למושב אליהך, ואשרי אנש
 יבחר יקרב וישכן בחצריך!
 אשרי מחכה ויגיע ויראה עלות
 אורך ויבקעו עליו שחרך.
 לראות בטובת בחירך ולעלו בהך-
 חמך בשובך אלי קרבת ועורך!
 (4)

25

30

34

We will attempt to discover the relationships between
 the poetic movements which form the corpus of the poem.
 The main thematic movement is the dialogue between you/I
 (we) which develops throughout a number of contrasting
 motifs, e.g.

exile/redemption, dream/reality.

The vision which dominates the poet's theme appears from the very beginning of the first line, [Zion, ... your captivity]. The poet opens his poem by addressing Zion as a beloved, begging her for more care and concern for the captives in exile. The words "the remnant of your flocks" in line 1, refers to the humble situation of the Jews in exile, emphasizing the meaning of scattering in line 2 by mentioning the four compass points.

The view of captives and captivity dominates the poet's mind and forms the backbone of his poem, e.g. "will you not ask if peace be with your captives" (line 1), "the captive of desire" (line 3), emphasizing the same meaning in line 4 with the word "captivity":

- | | |
|--|---|
| צִיּוֹן, הֲלֹא תִשְׁאַלִי לְשָׁלוֹם אֲסִירֶיךָ, | 1 |
| דּוֹרְשֵׁי שְׁלוֹמֶךָ וְהֵם יִתֵּר עַדְרֶיךָ? | |
| מִיָּם וּמִזָּרֶחַ וּמִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּמֵן שְׁלוֹם | 2 |
| רְחוֹק וְקָרוֹב שְׂאֵי מְכַל עֲבָרֶיךָ, | |
| וְשָׁלוֹם אֲסִיר תִּצְוֶה, נוֹתֵן דְּמָעִי כְּטֵל- | 3 |
| תְּרִמּוֹן וְנִכְסֶף לְרִדְתָּם עַל הָרְרֶיךָ! | |
| לְבָכוֹת עֲנוּתֶךָ אֲנִי תָנִים, וְעַתָּה אֲחִלֵּם | 4 |
| שִׁבְתְּ שְׁבוּתֶךָ - אֲנִי כְּנוֹר לְשִׁירֶיךָ. | |

The dialogue between you/I (we) starts from the first line and continues to the end of the poem, stressing the existence of "you" - that is to say, "Zion" - by ending his rhyme with the second person pronoun (for the rhyme structure, see below, p.289).

In the first two lines, we find the dialogue occurs between you/we, where the poet speaks on behalf of the

Jewish people and all the words are plural.

In the next part, lines 3-23, the dialogue becomes you/I, where the poet expresses his yearning and contrasting emotions, loneliness, the suffering of the present, a hope for redemption, against the rejoicing in the light and security of the past.

In line 4 is developed a contrasting dualism of exile/return (redemption) and dream/reality. He cries like a jackal for its suffering, and sings like a harp when he dreams of the return of the captives.

The poet starts the line with the infinitive "to wail", and the following word, "your affliction" emphasizes the meaning of suffering in exile. The poet uses the word "jackal" which is in the Bible a symbol of destruction, grief and loneliness (Micah 1.8, Job 30.29). He also uses the verb "to dream" in the same line, reflecting his hope and desire to visit the Holy City of Jerusalem.

The poet, in the following passage, lines 5-18, expresses his love and yearning for the Holy Land of Palestine, imagining his pilgrimage and visits to its Holy places:

לְבִי לְבֵית־יְהוָה וּלְפְנֵי־אֵל מֵאֵר יְהוָה	5
וּלְמַחְנֵיכִי וְכָל פְּנֵי טְהוֹרֶיךָ	
שֵׁם הַשְׁכִּינָה שְׁכֵנָה לְךָ יְהוָה יִצְרָח	6
פָּתַח לְמוֹל שַׁעַר־יְשׁוּעָה שַׁעַר־יְדִיד	
וְקִבּוּד אֲדֹנָי לְכָד הָיָה מֵאֲוִירָךְ וְאֵין	7
שָׁמַשׁ וְסִהָר וְכֹכָבִים מֵאִירֶיךָ	
אֲבָחָר לְנַפְשִׁי לְהִשְׁתַּפֵּךְ בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר	8

רוח אלהים שפוכה על-בְּחִירְךָ	
אַתָּה בֵּית מְלוּכָה וְאַתָּה כְּסֵא אֲדֹנָי וְאַם	9
יֵשְׁבוּ עֲבָדִים עָלֶיךָ כְּסֹאוֹת וּבִירְךָ	
מִרְיָתַי מְשֻׁטָּט בְּמִקְוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר	10
נָגְלוּ אֱלֹהִים לְחֻנּוֹךְ וְצִירְךָ	
מִי יַעֲשֶׂה לִי כְנָפַיִם וְאֶרְחִיק נֶדֶר	11
אֲנִיד לְבַחְרִי לְבָבִי בֵּין בַּחֲרֶיךָ	
אֶפֶל לְאַפִּי עָלֶיךָ אֶרְצֶךָ וְאֶרְצָה אִתְּךָ	12
נֵיד מֵאֵד וְאַחֲנֶנּוּ אֶת־עַפְרֶיךָ	
אֶף כִּרְבַּעַמְדִּי עָלֶיךָ קְבֻרוֹת אֲבֹתַי וְאַשֶׁר	13
חֹמֶם בְּחֶבְרוֹן עָלֶיךָ מִבְּחֹר קִבְרֶיךָ	
אֶעֱבֹר בִּיָּעֶרְךָ וּבְרִמְלֶךְךָ וְאֶעֱמֵד בְּגִלְךָ	14
עֶדְךָ וְאַשְׁתַּמֶּמָּה אֶל־יָדְךָ עֲבָדֶיךָ	
הֵרֶקֶת הַעֲבָדִים וְהֵרֶקֶת אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם שְׁנֵי	15
אוֹרִים נִדְלָלִים מֵאִירְךָ וּמִנִּירְךָ	
כִּי־נִשְׁמֹת אֲנִיר אֶרְצֶךָ וּמִקְרֶדְךָ	16
אֲבָקָת עֶפְרָךְ וְנִפְתַּח צִוְּךָ וְהִרְךָ	
יִנָּעַם לְנַפְשִׁי הַלֵּךְ עִרְם וְיִסָּף עָלַי	17
חֲרָבוֹת שְׁמֵמָה אֲשֶׁר־הָיוּ דְבִירְךָ	
בְּמִקְוֹם אֶרְוֹנְךָ אֲשֶׁר־נָגְנוּ וּבְמִקְוֹם קִרְר	18
בֵּיד אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְנוּ חֲדָרֵי חֲדָרְךָ	

In line 6 the poet refers to the belief that the gates of Zion face the gates of heaven as mentioned in his celebrated work, al-Kitāb al-Khazarī⁽⁵⁾. In line 9, he addresses Zion, referring to it as the abode of God and the place of the throne of His anointed (see above, p. 131). In the same line, the poet uses the word ʿavadim (slaves), referring to the rule of the Christians (the Crusaders) over Palestine at that time. He adapts the biblical verse, Gen. 27.37.

Line 10 may refer to the fact that ha-Levi wrote his poem before starting his pilgrimage, while he was still in Spain. He begins the line by expressing his desire to wander around the Holy places of Palestine. He emphasizes the same meaning in line 11, expressing his wish to be given wings to fly to Jerusalem. In this line he exhibits skilfully his attachment to the Holy City by associating the ruins of his heart with the ruins of Jerusalem, using the word beter in the plural for both of them, which could reveal the Arabic influence on ha-Levi's poem (see below, p.277).

In the following passage, lines 12-18, he demonstrates the qualities of the Holy Land, designating places of revelation, prophecy, monarchy and the graves of his forefathers, e.g. Hebron, Gil^{ad}, and Mount Abarim and Mount Hor (where the prophet Moses and his brother Aaron are buried, according to the Bible (Deut. 32:49,50)).

In the next passage, lines 19-28, as if Jeremiah's lamentations were being revived, the poet laments his fate, expressing his grief and deep sorrow at seeing the Jewish people scattered all over the world, and the destruction of the Holy City under the rule of the Crusaders. Past glories and present lowliness are contrasted:

אָגוּ וְאַשְׁלִיךְ פֶּאֶר נְרִי וְאַקֵּב וָמֶן	19
חֲלַל בְּאַרְצָךְ טַמְאָה אֶת־זִנְיֶיךָ	
אֵיךְ יַעֲרֹב לִי אֶחָל וְשָׁחוֹת בְּעַת אֲחִנּוּהָ	20
כִּי יִסְחָבוּ הַקְּלָבִים אֶת־כִּפְיֶיךָ	
אִם אֵיךְ מְאוּרָה יוֹם יִהְיֶה מְחֹק לְעֵצִי בְּעוֹד	21
אֶרְאֶה בְּפִי עֲרָבִים פְּנֵי נִשְׁרֵיךְ	

כוס היגונים לאט הרפי מעט כי כבר	22
מלאו כסלי ונפשי ממרוך:ך	
עת אוקרה אהלה אשמה חמטך ואן	23
כר אהליבה ואמצה את-שמך:ך	
ציון בלילת יפי אהבה וחו תקשך	24
מאן וכך נקשרו נפשות חכך:ך	
הם השמחים לשלוחך והכאבים	25
על-שמחותך ובבים על-שכך:ך	
מבור שבי שאפים נגדך ומשתחנים	26
איש ממקומו אל-תכח שעך:ך	
עדרי המונך אשר גלו והחפזו	27
מהר לנבצה ולא שקחו גדרך	
המחזיקים בשולך ומתאמצים	28
לעלות ולאחו בקסני חמרך	

In lines 20-21, the poet refers to the Jewish people under the rule of the Christians and the Arabs in Palestine and Spain (Jer. 15:3).

In line 23, the poet returns to the scene of Jewish history, lamenting the collapse of the Jewish kingdom and the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem (Ezek. 23:4, Isa. 51:17).

The poet, in lines 24-28, addresses Zion expressing his nostalgic feelings and the deep attachment of the Jews in exile, emphasizing his belief that there is no secure place for Jewish people except the land of Palestine.

In the final passage of the poem, lines 29-34, ha-Levi exhibits his pride in the glorious Holy City and expresses

the happiness of the hope for redemption, and blesses those who will be fortunate enough to see the dawn of redemption:

שְׁנֵעַר וּפְתָרוֹס הַיַּעֲרֵכוֹד בְּגִדְלָם וְאִם	29
הַבִּלְם יִדְמוּ לְחַמִּיד וְאוֹרִיד	
אֱלִימִי יִדְמוּ מִשִּׁחִיד וְאֱלִימִי נָבִיר	30
אִיד וְאֱלִימִי לְוִיִּד וְשָׁרִיד	
יִשְׁנֶה וְיִחַלֵּף כְּלִיל כְּלִימָמְלָכוֹת הָאֱלִיל	31
חֲסִיד לְעוֹלָם לְדוֹר וְדוֹר נִזְרִיד	
אִנִּיד לְמוֹשֵׁב אֱלִיִּיד וְאִשְׁרִי אִנִּישׁ	32
יִבְחַר וְקִרֵּב וְיִשְׁכֹּן בְּחִצְרִיד	
אִשְׁרִי מִחֲבֵה וְיִנְיֵעַ וְיִרְאֶה עֲלוֹת	33
אוֹרִיד וְיִבְקָעוּ עָלָיו שְׁחִיד	
לְרִאוֹת בְּטוֹבַת בְּחִירִיד וְלַעֲלוֹ בְּשִׁמִּי	34
חֵתִיד בְּשׁוֹבֵד אֱלִי קִרְמַת נְעוֹרִיד:	

In line 29, he uses the word Shin'ār, referring to Baghdād as the cultural centre of the Muslim world and the word Patros is used to denote Byzantium, representing the power of the Christian world and both of them as the great powers in the middle ages.

In lines 30-34, the poet concludes with quiet lines negating the present and dreaming of the future and the happy ending of redemption and the perfect life in Zion.

2. Meaning: Hebrew application of the Arabic qasīda scheme

In this section the study aims to isolate the factors that characterise ha-Levi's Ode to Zion. The study also aims at assembling sufficient evidence to make it possible to assert that ha-Levi's poem is a good example of Hebrew

application of the Arabic qaṣīda scheme in theme and structure, to the extent that it could be termed an Arabic poem in Hebrew language.

For the purpose of exploring to what degree ha-Levi's poem remains in the orbit of Arabic poetic themes, aṭlāl, rithā', and fakhr, and how far his Hebrew symbolism transcends these, I digress to investigate Arabic poetry and to discover in it the poet's models and masters. Confronted with these, the specific intent and talent of any poet may appear more clearly, and, by contrast, general differences between Hebrew and Arabic poetry may be observed.

According to Arabic tradition, the qaṣīda should be set in a particular structural scheme whereby the poet introduces the qaṣīda with the aṭlāl theme. In this section he mentions the deserted dwelling-places and the traces of habitation. Then he weeps and complains, addressing the desolate encampment. He asks his companions to pause at the diyar of his beloved, or his people, in order to recall the happier time he spent there. The poet moves on to the nasīb section, bemoaning the anguish of separation from his beloved and blaming fate for his misfortune and the destruction of the habitat (instead of God). Then he enters the main genre of the qaṣīda which is often panegyric (madīḥ), ending it with a glorification theme (fakhr). (For the aṭlāl and nasīb motifs, see above, pp. 7-8).

I will now examine ha-Levi's Ode to Zion to see to what degree it remains in the compass of the Arabic qaṣīda scheme.

It can be said that ha-Levi's poem belongs as much to the contemporary genre of rithā' al-mamālik wa'l-mudun (lament over countries and cities) as to the genre of fakhr (glorification).

In analyzing the poem in thematic terms, there are three subdivisions: the aṭlāl section, the rithā' section and the fakhr theme. I will now deal with the structural scheme of the Ode to Zion and see how the poet uses the Arabic genres of aṭlāl, rithā' and fakhr, concentrating mainly on the theme of aṭlāl.

Ha-Levi starts the poem with a prelude of ḥanīn and nostalgia, employing the majority of the aṭlāl motifs and deriving his inspiration from the Arabic poetry.

As a specimen of these aṭlāl poems, showing what the Hebrew poet inherited from Arabic poetry, I quote some lines by 'Abīd b. al-Abras (d. 555 A.D.) who was a senior contemporary of almost all the Mu'allaqāt poets. His people and their dwelling-places were attacked by King Ḥujr, 'Imru al-Qays's father, who pillaged their settlements and expelled them from their homeland. 'Abīd devoted much of his poetry to lamenting the terrible losses which his tribe and his fair country had suffered. Weeping over the aṭlāl and its residents became the main topic of his poetry, e.g.

Dost thou weep for a vanisht abode, over traces of
tents outworn? - and is weeping for love-longing the
business of one like me?

These were their camps when the tribe was gathered
all together: now are they a wilderness, save for
wildings in an empty land.

No voices stir there now but the uncouth sound of
the wild, the cries of the male and female ostriches,
dusky herds.

Yea, if Ghabra' al-Khubaybah has become desolate, and
and gained in exchange for our folk other dwellers
not equal to those,

Yet time was I looked upon the whole kin dwelling
there in content and happiness: but what is the
passing of days but change on change?

After the children of Amr, my kinsfolk and my
brethren, can I hope for smoothness of life? nay,
life is a leader-astray.

But although they have gone, and departed on their
way - never will I forget them all my life long,
or cease to mourn.

Will ye two not stay for a moment today, before we
part - before long distance, and cares, and
variance have sundered us

To await ladies borne on camels that travel between
Tabala and the high land of al-Khall, with the
followers training after them?

When I saw the two leaders of the caravan hasten briskly along, a pang seized my breast that they should depart with a heart so light.

أَمِنْ مَتَزِلٍ عَافٍ وَمِنْ رَسْمٍ أَطْلَالٍ بَكَيْتَ؟ وَهَلْ يَبْكِي مَنِ انْتَرَقَ أَمْثَالِي؟
 ديارُهُمْ إِذْ هُمْ جَمِيعٌ فَأَصْبَحَتْ بِسَابِيسَ إِلَّا الْوَحْشَ فِي الْبَادِ الْخَالِي
 قَلِيلًا بِهَا الْأَصْوَاتُ إِلَّا عَوَازِفَا وَإِلَّا عَرَارًا مِنْ غِيَاهِبِ آجَالِ
 فَإِنْ تَكُ غَبْرَاءُ الْحُبَيْبَةِ أَصْبَحَتْ خَلَتْ مِنْهُمْ وَاسْتَبَدَّتْ غَيْرَ أَبْدَالِ
 فَقَدِ مَا أَرَى الْحَيَّ الْجَمِيعَ بَغِيْطَةً بِهَا وَاللَّيَالَى لَا تَدُومُ عَلَى حَالِ
 أَبْعَدَ بَنِي عَمِّي وَرَهْطِي وَإِخْوَتِي أَرْجَى لَيَانَ الْعَيْشِ ضَلَا بِتَضْلَالِ
 فَلَسْتُ وَإِنْ أَضْحَوْا مَضَوْا سَبِيلَهُمْ بِنَاسِهِمْ طُولَ الْحَيَاةِ وَلَا سَالِي
 إِلَّا تَقِفَانِ الْيَوْمَ قَبْلَ تَفَرُّقٍ وَتَأْيِي بَعِيدٍ وَاخْتِلَافٍ وَأَشْغَالِ
 إِلَى ظُعْنٍ يَسْلُكُنَ بَيْنَ تَبَالِهِ وَبَيْنَ أَعَالَى الْحَلِّ لَاحِقَةِ النَّثَالِ
 فَلَمَّا رَأَيْتُ الْخَادِيَتَيْنِ تَكَمَّشَا نَدِمْتُ عَلَى أَنْ يَذْهَبَا نَاعِمِي بِالِ (6)

This poem is concerned with sentimental longings not only for departed loved ones but also with the deserted dwellings and memories of his people who once lived there. It exhibits 'Abīd's mastery and charm of phrase which preserved many of his nasīb pieces.

In lines 1-7, the poet describes the deserted dwelling-places, then moves on in line 8, assuming that another parting is impending, and exhorts his two companions to await a group of ladies who are journeying by (9-10).

I will now turn to ha-Levi's poem, to see how much he was influenced by the aṭlāl motifs of the Jāhili poets. The first passage, lines 1-4, is concerned with the general

imports of aṭlāl poetry: pausing at the diyār, addressing and greeting the diyār, and weeping over the diyār.

The poet, in the first line, is addressing the diyār of Zion and questioning it about his people in exile, but he receives no reply to his question:

גִּיּוֹן הָלֹא תִשָּׂאֵלִי לְשָׁלוֹם אֶסְרִיךְ
דְּרִשִּׁי שְׁלוֹמֶךָ וְהֵם יִתֵּר, עֲבָרִיךְ

Line 2 is concerned with the second motif of the aṭlāl, greeting the diyār:

כִּים וְסִנְחָה וּמִצֵּסֶן (חִיָּסֶן) שְׁלוֹם
רְחוֹק וְקָרֹב יֵשֵׁי סִבֵּל, עֲבָרִיךְ

In this line the poet expresses not only his own greeting but also that of his people, thus imitating the Jāhili poet, in that he asks his friends to join him and share in his weeping over the aṭlāl. Line 3 is very formal, using the standard image of the poet in a mood of grief and yearning, weeping over the aṭlāl. The poet complies with aṭlāl tradition by comparing his tears to the dew:

וְשָׁלוֹם אֶסִּיר תִּמְאָה נֹתֵן דְּמַעֲיוֹ דְּטָלִי-
חֶרְמוֹן וְנִקְסָף לְרִדְתָּם עַל-עֲבָרִיךְ

Line 4 emphasizes the mood of grief and yearning with another image drawn from the Bible (Micah. 1:8; Ps. 126:1; and Gen. 3:127).

לְכֹכּוֹת עֲנֻתְךָ אֲנִי תָנִים נֶעַח אֶחָלֵם
שִׁיבַת שְׁבוּתְךָ אֲנִי כְּגֹר לְשִׁירִיךְ

This contrasts the image of the sad present (the ruins or aṭlāl of the Holy City) and the happy dream of the future when the captives return. It is interesting to note that the image of the aṭlāl in the Jāhili poetry was always a contrast between the sad present and the happy past. Here, however, we see Judah ha-Levi skilfully using this motif and adding a dream of the future.

In the following passage (lines 5-18), the poet introduces further aṭlāl motifs.

Just as the Jāhili poets would describe the diyār and designate its site, so ha-Levi, following his masters, describes the diyār of Jerusalem and designates its site, expressing also his love and yearning for the Holy places. Its qualities are evoked at length with a lyrical feeling which imaginatively transplants the poet to places of former revelation, prophecy and monarchy, e.g. lines 5-6, 9-10:

- | | |
|--|----|
| לְבִי לְבִית־אֵל וְלַמְּנוּחַ מֵאֵד יְהִמָּה | 5 |
| וְלַמְּחֻנִּים וְכָל מְנַעֵי מְהוֹרֵךְ | |
| שֵׁם הַשְׂכִּינָה שְׂכֻנָּה לָךְ וְהַיְצָרֵךְ | 6 |
| מִתַּח לְמֹל שְׁעַר־שַׁחַק שְׁעָרֶיךָ | |
| אַתָּה בֵּית מְלוּכָה וְאַתָּה בְּשֵׁם אֱדֹנֵי וְאַם | 9 |
| יָשְׁבוּ עַדְרִים אֵלַי בְּקִאוֹת וּבִירֵךְ | |
| מִי־תַנְי מְשֻׁמֵּט בְּמִקְוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר | 10 |
| נָגְלוּ אֱלֹהִים לְחַוִּיךָ וְצִירֵךְ | |

In line 13 he mentions his pausing at the graves of his forefathers, which complies with the aṭlāl motif:

אַף כִּי־בָעָמְרִי אֵלַי קְבֻרוֹת אַבְתִּי וְאֲשֶׁר
חֹמֶם בְּקְבֻרוֹן אֵלַי מְבַחֵר מְבַרֵךְ

In lines 14-18, again, the poet designates the site of the Holy places, expressing his yearning and love for them, e.g.

Line 14 אָעבר בײַערד וברמלך וואָער בײַ
 עֲרֹד וְאַשְׁחֻמְמָה אֶל־יֵהָר עֲבָרֶיךָ
 עֲרֹד וְאַשְׁחֻמְמָה אֶל־יֵהָר עֲבָרֶיךָ
 Line 18 בְּמָקוֹם אֲרֻנְךָ אֲשֶׁר נִגְנָו וּבְמָקוֹם דָּרַר
 בֵּיךְ אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְנוּ חֲדָרֶיךָ חֲדָרֶיךָ

The reminiscence of the past forms the heart of aṯlāl poetry, where all poets pause at the diyār, recalling the happy times of the past, and feeling sad on account of these memories.

Ha-Levi employs this motif in the same sense in line 23, where he remembers the past glory of his people:

עַתָּה אֲנִיכֶרָה אֶהְלֵה אֶשְׁמָה חֲמָתְךָ וְאֵין
 כִּרְ אֶהְלִיכָה וְאֶמְצָה אֶת־שְׁמֶיךָ

In lines 19-28 he moves on to the rithā' theme, lamenting his fate and expressing his deep grief at seeing the Jewish people scattered all over the world, and bemoaning the destruction of the Holy City of Jerusalem. In line 19, the poet employs the standard device of blaming fate for misfortune, rather than God, and for the destruction of his beloved's habitat:

אָגוּ וְאַשְׁלִיךְ פֶּאָר גִּזְרֵי וְאֶקֶב וְזָן
 חֲלִיל בְּאֶרֶץ סִמְאָה אֶת גִּזְרֶיךָ -

In line 22, he complies with the Arabic tradition by addressing the cup of sorrow, and comparing himself in a mood of grief and yearning to a drunken man:

כּוֹס הַיְּגוֹנִים לֹאטְ הַרְפֵּי מַעַט בִּי דָּבָר
 סָלֹאוּ כִסְלִי וְנַפְשִׁי מִמְּרוֹךְךָ

Judah ha-Levi, like Ibn Ḥamdīs, was constrained by the traditional techniques of the rithā' genre, which relies often on parallelism and antithesis to serve the thematic purpose of the poem, that of contrasting a happy image of the past and an unpleasant state in the present, e.g.:

אֵיךְ יִעָרֵב לִי אֶכְל וְשָׂתוֹת בְּעַת אֲחֵנוּה	20
כִּי יִסְתָּכְבוּ הַקְּלָבִים אֶת־קִשְׁיִיךְ	
וְאֵיךְ מְאֹד יוֹם יִהְיֶה מְחֹק לְעֵינֵי בְּעוֹד	21
אֲרָאָה בְּמִי עָרְבִים פְּגִי וְשָׂרִיךְ	

Another example can be seen in line 25, a contrasting image of rejoicing and weeping, well-being and ruin:

הֵם הַשְׂמֵחִים לְשִׁלּוֹתָךְ וְהַכְּאֵבִים
עַל־שִׁמְמוֹתָךְ וּבָכִים עַל־שִׁבְרִיךְ

The poet begins line 24 with an apostrophe to Zion, using the standard image of addressing a beloved in Arabic poetry:

אֵינִי כְּלִילַת יָפִי, אֲהַבָּהּ וְחֵן חֲקִשְׁרִי
מֵאֶז, וּבָךְ נִקְשְׁרוּ גִפְשׁוֹת חֲבֵרֶיךָ –

Line 27 is formalised and the poet repeats what he said at the beginning of the poem:

מִהֵר לְגִבְעָה וְלֹא שָׁכְחוּ גִדְרֶיךָ
עֲרֵרִי הַמִּגְדָּלִים וְהַיְיִלִּים
מִהֵר לְגִבְעָה וְלֹא שָׁכְחוּ גִדְרֶיךָ

Here again, the Arabic influence is very evident, where ha-Levi conforms to the Arabic tradition when the Jāhili poet would show his pride in his tribe and his people. Ha-Levi devotes the last part of the poem to the genre of fakhr, which is the favourite theme of the Arab poet.⁽⁷⁾ He shows his pride in the glorious past of Jerusalem and boasts of

the Jewish prophets, the religious tribe of the Levites and the Holiness of Jerusalem. Then he expresses his hope and aspiration for redemption:

- | | |
|---|----|
| שִׁנְעָר וּפְתָרוֹס הַיַּעֲרָכוֹף בְּגִדְלָם, וְאִם | 29 |
| הַבָּלָם יִדְמוּ לְחֶמֶץ וְאוֹרֵיךְ? | |
| אֶל מִי יִדְמוּ מְשִׁיחֶיךָ וְאֵל מִי נְבִי־ | 30 |
| אֵיךְ וְאֵל מִי לְנֹחֶיךָ וְשָׂרֶיךָ? | |
| לְשִׁנְהַתְּחַלֵּף כָּלִיל כָּל מַמְלָכוֹת הָאֵלִיל - | 31 |
| חֲסִנְךָ לְעוֹלָם, לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִרְיָךְ. | |

All these examples prove, in my view, that there was heavy borrowing on the part of Judah ha-Levi, mainly from the poetry of the Jāhiliyya. He may have seen the aṭlāl poetry as a symbol of the ruins and destruction of the Holy City of Jerusalem, like the Jāhili poet, when he found in aṭlāl poetry an outlet for expressing his feelings and yearning for his lost love and abandoned homeland.

Both poets, the Jāhili and the Hebrew, looked for peace and a settled life, through the aṭlāl. Thus, ha-Levi was highly influenced not only by Arabic culture but also by the nature of the life of the Jāhili poets.

The evidence assembled above makes it possible to assert that ha-Levi's poem is a good example of the Hebrew application of the Arabic qaṣīda scheme in the use of genres in the order of the Arabic tradition, beginning with the aṭlāl, then shifting to the rithā' theme, and ending his poem with the formalized theme, the fakhr.

The next section of this study will examine the formal structure of the poem and its linguistic features, to see

how much ha-Levi was influenced by Arabic poetry and how skilfully he employed the Arabic techniques.

3. Structure

It seems necessary before we examine the poetic structure of ha-Levi's poem, to survey the earlier development of post-Biblical Hebrew poetry from the Talmudic period to the Babylonian schools. In the Talmudic age, Hebrew poetry was composed to give expression to worship and showed a wide variety of forms such as: the Berachot, the Hosha^cnot and the Middot. One of the early forms of poetry in the Talmudic age consists of series of strophes with the recurring terms ma and af.⁽⁸⁾ The alphabetic acrostic was used by the anonymous composer who flourished between the Talmudic age and the poet Jose b. Jose b. Jose, who was one of the first poets of the new age, along with two other Palestinian poets, Yannai and Qalir. The poetry of the new age showed some traces of the earlier creativity. The poets signed their names and occasionally even their places of origin in the acrostic, and began to follow consistent rhyme patterns.⁽⁹⁾ The Babylonian school flourished with the rise of Saadia Gaon (882-942) who was the first to use themes of philosophy and theology as subject matter in Hebrew poetry.⁽¹⁰⁾

Thus, the adaptation of the Hebrew language to the Arabic use of quantitative metre and monorhyme had a remarkable effect on

Hebrew poetry. The professional Jewish poets employing the Arabic forms and principles of metre, had for the first time a framework on which to construct their poetics.⁽¹¹⁾ It can be said that Andalusian Hebrew poetry is closer to Arabic poetry than to Biblical poetry, not only in form but also in content.⁽¹²⁾

(a) Metre

Andalusian Hebrew poetry was based on a quantitative principle in which two elements forming a Hebrew syllable, the tenu^ʿa (movement) = (—) yated (peg) = (v) or sheva mobile and its ḥaṭaf derivations, were used in a rich variety of metric combinations. The long poem was called qaṣīda (shīrah), consisting of lines, called bayit, each line being divided into two metrically equivalent hemistiches, the ḍarb (delet) and the ʿarūd (soger)⁽¹³⁾.

However, there were about fourteen types of Arabic metrical structure applied to Hebrew poetry, including:

ṭawīl, madīd, basīt, kāmil, sarī^ʿ, wāfir, hajaz,
khafīf, mutaqārib, kāmel, munsariḥ, mujtath,
mutadārik and rajaz⁽¹⁴⁾.

The metre of ha-Levi's poem is basīt, in Hebrew called mitpashet, one of the most common metres in Arabic as well as Hebrew poetry.⁽¹⁵⁾ The following is the pattern of the basīt with its two basic feet which alternate as follows:

— — — — — — — — — — // — — — — — — — — — —
דורש שלומך והם/יתר עזריך // ציון הלא/תשאלי/לשלום אסריך.

Here again, the question may be asked, should the metre of the poem be appropriate to its theme? In other words, is there a link between the metre basīṭ and the nostalgic theme of ha-Levi's poem? The study shows that the mood of the poem sets a tone of nostalgia and attachment to Zion, which stimulated ha-Levi, like Ibn Ḥamdīs, to use a metre with long syllables such as basīṭ to enable him to pour out his emotions and lamentations.

(b) Rhyme

According to the Arabic tradition, metre and rhyme, as mentioned above, are the main criteria of the poetry. They make up the basic formal features of the poem, which should be carefully rhymed and have one unchangeable rhyme throughout. (16)

In his poem, unlike Ibn Ḥamdīs, Judah ha-Levi uses qāfiya muqayyada: rayikh. He conforms to the strict rules of rhyme techniques laid down by Arab critics. (17) He adheres throughout the poem not only to the rhyme letter kh but also to the preceding letter r and vowel yi.

Moreover, just as the Arabs employed the technique of taṣrīʿ in their qaṣīdas, again like Ibn Ḥamdīs, ha-Levi uses this technique in the poem.

A phonological analysis shows that the rhyme letter occurs 89 times throughout the poem along with the sound r,

which is a part of the rhyme structure. This occurs 118 times, which exhibits the poet's skilful use of the Arabic poetic technique, not only through the frequency of the rhyme letter, but also through introducing the rhyme often in the middle of the line with a syllable or a structural figure such as paranomasia and antithesis (see below, p. 316).

The following table contains a list of the words used by the poet to introduce the rhyme of the poem:

	The rhyme	The introducing words
4	לשיריה	כנור
6	שעריה	שערי שחק
7	מאיריה	מאורה, שמש, סהר, כוכבים
8	בחיריה	אבחר
9	גביריה	אדוני, עבדים
10	ציריה	חוזיה
11	בתריה	לבתרי
12	עפריה	ארצך, אבניה
13	קבריה	קברות
14	עבריה	אעבור, אשתוממה
15	מוריה	מאיריה
16	נהריה	ארצך, עפריה
18	חדריה	שכנו חדרי
19	נזיריה	נזרי
20	כפיריה	הכלבים
21	נשריה	עורבים
28	תמריה	סנסני
32	בחצריה	לשכון

The study also shows that the rhyme associates other syllables of the poem, particularly the closed syllable which occurs frequently throughout the lines, e.g.

30	לויָהּ	28	בשולִיָּהּ	10	לחוזִיָּהּ
32	אלהִיָּהּ	29	לְתַמִּיָּהּ	12	אבִּנִיָּהּ
34	בחִירִיָּהּ	30	מִשִּׁיחִיָּהּ	15	מֵאִירִיָּהּ
		30	נְבִיאִיָּהּ	18	כְּרוּבִיָּהּ

The frequency and distribution of the rhyme letter along with all words ending with the sound kh, are as follows:

THE SOUND KH

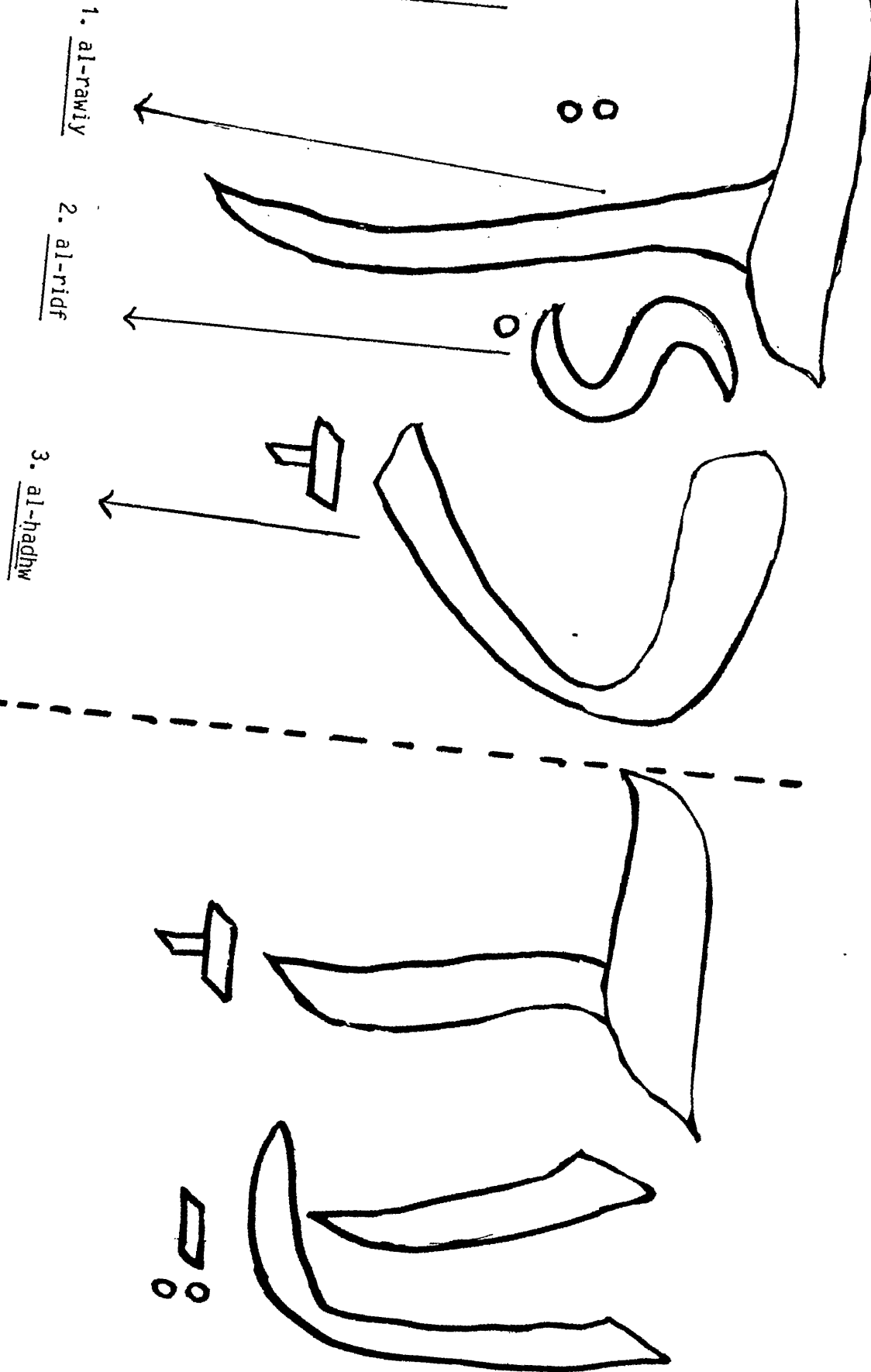
עדריה	-	-	-	-	אסיריה	-	-	-	-	1
עבריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
הרריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-לשיריה	שבותה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
טהוריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
שעריה	-	-	-	-	לה	-	-	-	-	6
מאיריה	-	-	-	-	מאורק	-	-	-	-	7
בחירה	-	-	-	-	להשתפק	-	-	-	-	8
-גביריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
לצירה	לחזיה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
בתריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
עפריה	-	-	-	ניק	ארצה	-	-	-	-	12
קבריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
עבריה	-	-	-	עדה	ביערק	וכרמלק	-	בגל	-	14
ומוריה	מאיריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
נהריה	-	-	-	עפרק	-	-	-	-	-	16
דבריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
חדריה	-	-	-	ביק	כרו	-	-	-	-	18
נזירה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
כפירה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
נשריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
ממרווריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
שמריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
חכריה	-	-	-	ובק	-	-	-	-	-	24
שבריה	-	-	-	שממוהק	ובכיס	-	-	-	-	25
שעריה	-	-	-	נכח	-	-	-	-	-	26
גדריה	-	-	-	שכחו	-	-	-	-	-	27
תמריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
ואוריה	-	-	-	לתמיה	-	-	-	-	-	29
ושריה	-	-	-	איה	-	-	-	-	-	30
נזריה	-	-	-	חסנה	-	-	-	-	-	31
בחצריה	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
שחריה	-	-	-	אורק	-	-	-	-	-	33
נעוריה	-	-	-	חתק	בשובק	-	-	-	-	34
				בשמ	-	-	-	-	-	

It could be said that ha-Levi uses qāfiya muqayyada in the poem "Zionide" because it is appropriate to the Hebrew grammatical principle. In addition, he may have written his poem for a melodious purpose as was popular in Abbasid poetry poetry, in order to have a wide appeal.

The following diagram illustrates the rhyme structure and its components as follows:

1. al-rawiy, the rhyme letter on which the poem is based, and which must not be changed from the first line to the last;
2. al-ridf, one of the weak letters which should precede the rhyme letter when the rhyme is qāfiya muqayyada;
3. al-hadhw, the vowel of the letter preceding al-ridf.

THE RHYME STRUCTURE



(c) Phonology

A phonological analysis of the most frequent sounds in the poem reveals that ha-Levi, like Ibn Ḥamdis, makes extensive use of continuant sounds, notably kh, r, l, sh, etc. The pronunciation of continuant sounds involves a continuous flow of air. This fact, as already suggested with reference to Ibn Ḥamdīs, helps the poet pour out his emotions freely.

The same functional value can be attributed to the frequent use of continuant sounds by ha-Levi, given that both poems have more or less the same thematic content, namely the lamenting of a lost land. The rhyme sound, for example, which is usually the pivot sound in the poem, is kh, a fricative, just like s in Ibn Ḥamdis's poem. This sound occurs 89 times. Other frequent sounds with similar properties include: r, 118 times; l, 99 times; sh, 70 times. The following tables exhibit the distribution of each of the above-mentioned sounds in detail:

THE SOUND R

דורש - - עדריה	אסיריה - - - -	1
רחוק וקרוב - - עבריה	ומזרח - - - -	2
חרמון - לרדתם - הרריה	אסיר - - - -	3
לשיריה - - - -	- - - - -	4
טהוריה - - - -	- - - - -	5
שעריה - - - -	והיוצורה - - - -	6
מאיריה - - - -	מאורה - - - -	7
רוח - - - - בחיריה	אבחר - - - - אשר	8
גביריה - - - -	- - - - -	9
וציריה - - - -	אשר - - - - -	10
לבתרי - - - - בתריה	וארחיק - - - -	11
עפריה - - - -	ארצך וארצה - - - -	12
בחברון - מבחר קבריה	קברות - - - -	13
הר - - - - עבריה	אעבר ביערה וכרמלה - - - -	14
אורים - מאיריה ומוריה	הר העברים והר ההראשר - - - -	15
עפרה - - - - נהריה	אזיר ארצה וממר - דרר	16
חרבות - אשר - דבריה	ערם - - - -	17
בית אשר - חדרי חדריה	ארונה אשר - - - -	18
בארץ - - - - נזיריה	פאר נזרי - - - -	19
כפיריה - - - -	יערב - - - -	20
אראה עורבים פגרי נשריה	מאור - - - -	21
ממרויה - - - -	הרפי כבר - - - -	22
כר - - - - שמריה	אזכרה - - - - ואזכ	23
נקשרו - - - - חבריה	תקשרי - - - -	24
שבריה - - - -	- - - - -	25
שעריה - - - -	מבר - - - -	26
גדליה - - - - מהר	עדרי אשר - - - - והתפזרו	27
תמריה - - - -	- - - - -	28
ואוריה - - - -	שנער ופתרס היערכוה - - - -	29
ושריה - - - -	- - - - -	30
לדור ודור - - - - נזריה	- - - - -	31
יבחר יקרב - - - - כחצריה	ואשרי - - - -	32
אורה - - - - שחריה	אשרי - - - - ויראה	33
נעוריה - - - -	לראות בחיריה - - - -	34

THE SOUND L

- שלומך - - -	- הלא תשאל לטלום -	1
- - - מכל -	- - - שלום -	2
- לרדתם על -	ושלום - - - כטל	3
- לשיריך - - -	לבכות - - - אחלום	4
- ולמחנים וכל -	לבי לבית אל ולפניאל -	5
- למול - - -	- - - לך -	6
- - - -	- לבד - - -	7
- אלהים - על -	- לנפשי להשתפק -	8
- עלי - - -	- מלוכה - - -	9
- נגלו אלהים לחוזיך -	- - - -	10
- לבתרי לבבי - -	- - - לי -	11
- - - -	אפל לאפי עלי -	12
- עלי - - -	- עלי - - -	13
עדך - אל -	- וכרמלק - בגל	14
גדולום - -	- - - -	15
- - - -	- - - -	16
- - - -	לנפשי הלק - עלי	17
- - - -	- - - -	18
- חלל - - -	- ואשליך - -	19
- הכלבים - -	- ליאכל - -	20
- - - -	לעיני - - -	21
מלאו כסלי - -	- - - -	22
- אהליבה - -	- אהלה - -	23
- - - -	- כלילת - -	24
על - - על	- לשלותך -	25
- אלי - -	- - - -	26
- לגבעה ולא -	- גלו - -	27
- לעלות ולאחוז -	- בשוליה -	28
- הבלם לתמיה -	- בגדלם -	29
- ואל - לויך -	- אל - - ואל -	30
- לעולם לדור -	- ויחלף כליל כל ממלכות האליל	31
- - - -	- למושב אלהיך -	32
- עליך - -	- עלות - -	33
- אלי - -	לראות - - ולעלז	34

THE SOUND SH

דורשי שלום - - -	- תשאלו שלום - -	1
- - - - -	- - - שלום - -	2
- - - - -	ושלום - - - - -	3
שיבת שבות - - לשיריה	- - - - -	4
- - - - -	- - - - -	5
שערי שחם שעריה	שם השכינה שכנה - -	6
שמש - - -	- - - - -	7
- שפוכה - -	לנפשי להשתפך - אשר	8
ישבו - - - -	- - - - -	9
- - - - -	משוטט - אשר	10
- - - - -	- - - - -	11
- - - - -	- - - - -	12
תומם - - - -	- ואש - - - - -	13
ואשתוממה - -	- - - - -	14
- - - - -	אשר שם שני - - -	15
- - - - -	נשמות - - - -	16
שממה אשר - -	למפשי - - - -	17
אשר שכנו - -	אשר - - - -	18
- - - - -	ואשליה - - - -	19
- - - - -	ואשתות - - - -	20
נשריה - - - -	- - - - -	21
נפשי - - - -	- - - - -	22
שמריה - - - -	אשתה - - - -	23
נקשרו נפשות - -	תקשרי - - - -	24
שממות - - שבריה	לשלותה - - - -	25
איש - - - -	שבי שאפים - ומשתחווים	26
שכחו - - - -	אשר - - - -	27
- - - - -	בשוליה - - - -	28
- - - - -	שנער - - - -	29
ושריה - - - -	משיחיה - - - -	30
- - - - -	ישנה - - - -	31
וישכון - - - -	למושב : ואשרי אנוש	32
שחריה - - - -	אשרי - - - -	33
בשובה - - - -	- - - - -	34

(d) Morphology

It is one of the prominent aspects of the present poem that the morphological structure of words, whether they are nouns, verbs or participles, is very revealing of the overall structure of the poem and the various axes of opposition on which it operates.

To start with, the fact that the rhyme letter is a pronominal bound morpheme which in all cases refers to Zion establishes from an early stage the main axis of the poem which relates Zion, the addressee, and the poet, the addresser. The bound morpheme kh is a second person singular possessive pronoun just like your in English. However, while your is a free morpheme, in the sense that it can stand on its own as a meaningful unit, kh is a bound morpheme that has to be attached (bound) to another morpheme. The morphological dependence of kh reflects the dependence of Zion on the presence of Jews. Zion can only have a meaningful existence if all the Jews of the world can have easy access to it. The obligatory morphological attachment of kh reflects the historical and spiritual attachment of Zion to the Jews.

The isolation of Zion is brought into focus in the first two lines by the use of the plural form to refer to the Jews, as opposed to the singular form to refer to Zion. The poet identifies himself with all Jews all over the world, thus implying that his yearning, expressed in the following lines by an explicit use of first person singular forms, is in fact the yearning of a substantial group of

ill-fated Jews scattered throughout the world. At the same time, the use of the first person singular forms in lines 3-23 conveys to some extent a feeling of isolation on the part of the poet, away from the beloved Zion. The general feeling that emerges seems to be that separated from each other, both Zion and the Jews, either individually or collectively, lead incomplete lives. A relationship of complementarity, hence dependence, between Zion and the Jews is therefore stressed further.

The distribution and frequency of the pronouns throughout the poem allow us to follow the development of the relationship between singular and plural, first person and second person as well as third person. The following tables show this distribution:

[illegible]

THE SECOND PERSON PRONOUN

עזריק	-	-	-	-	ציון - תשאל - אסיריק	1
עבריק	-	שאי	-	-	- - - -	2
הרריק	-	-	-	-	- - - -	3
לשיריק	-	-	שנותק	-	- ענותק - - -	4
טהוריק	-	-	-	-	- - - -	5
שעריק	-	-	-	-	לך והיוצק	6
מאיריק	-	-	-	-	מאורק - - -	7
בחיריק	-	-	-	-	להשתפק - - -	8
גביריק	-	-	-	-	את - ואת - -	9
וציריק	לחזיק	-	-	-	- - - -	10
בתריק	-	-	-	-	- - - -	11
עפריק	-	-	ניק	-	אב - ארצק - -	12
קבריק	-	-	-	-	- - - -	13
עבריק	-	-	עדק	-	ביערק וכרמלק - בגל -	14
ומוריק	מאיריק	-	-	-	- - - -	15
נהריק	-	-	עפרק	-	- ארצק - -	16
דביריק	-	-	-	-	- הלק - - -	17
חדריק	-	-	ביק	-	כרו - ארונק - -	18
נזיריק	-	-	-	-	- ואשליק - - -	19
כפיריק	-	-	-	-	- איך - אכל - -	20
נשדיק	-	-	-	-	- איך - - -	21
ממוריק	-	-	-	-	- - - -	22
שמריק	-	-	-	-	- חמתק - - -	23
חבריק	-	-	ובק	-	ציון - תקשדי - -	24
שממותק ובכים-שבריק	-	-	-	-	- לשלותק - -	25
נכח שעריק	-	-	-	-	- שבי - נגדק - -	26
שכח גודריק	-	-	-	-	- המונק - - -	27
תמריק	-	-	-	-	- בשוליק - -	28
לתמיק ואוריק	-	-	-	-	- היערכוק - -	29
ליויק ושדיק	-	-	איך	-	- משיחיק - -	30
נזריק	-	-	חסנק	-	- ממלכות - -	31
בחצריק	-	-	-	-	- אורק - אלהיק - -	32
שחריק	-	-	אורק	-	- - - -	33
נעוריק	-	-	חתק בשובק	-	- בחיריק - בשם -	34

Another prominent morphological aspect is the frequent use of the imperfect form as well as other derived forms conveying the present or the (near) future. Starting from line 3 the poet indulges in a series of descriptions of what he would do once united with his longed-for Zion. In doing this, he makes use of linguistic forms which convey the (near) future without including conditional particles. This technique is effective in conveying a strong feeling of confidence and certainty that the time of reunion is not far away. The axis of time in this poem looks towards the future, unlike that in Ibn Ḥamdis's poem which looks backwards to the past. The optimism of ha-Levi emanates from a strong religious basis in the form of the divine promise to the Jews that they are to return to the promised land, which constitutes one of the basic tenets of Judaism (see above, p.116).

This is not to say that the past in this poem does not play any role whatsoever. In fact, past events are invoked on many occasions to bear out the glory of Zion. These invocations make the poet all the more eager to be reunited with Zion, so the past is only important inasmuch as it strengthens the poet's hope for a meeting in the future.

Here, I give some tables showing the frequency of verbs throughout the poem:

FREQUENCY AND DISTRIBUTION OF VERBS

First person		Second person		Third person			
L.	S.	L.	S.	L.	S.	L.	P.
4	אחלם	1	תשאלני	5	יהמה	20	יסחבו
8	אבחר	2	שאי	10	יתנני	29	ידמו
11	ארחיק	24	תקשרי	11	יעשה	29	יערכוה
11	אניד	26	שבי	20	יערב	33	יבקעו
12	אחונן			17	ינעם	9	ישבו
12	אפול			21	יהי	17	היו
12	ארצה			31	ישנה	18	שכנו
13	אסתומם			31	יחלף	22	מלאו
14	אסתוממה			32	ישכון	27	גלו
14	אעבור			32	יקרב	27	שכחו
14	אעמוד			32	יבחר		
19	אגז			33	יגיע		
19	אקב			33	יראה		
20	אחזה			6	פתח		
21	אראה			7	היה		
21	אזכר			32	אוך		
19	אשליך						
23	אזכרה						
23	אמצה						
23	אשתה						

A morphological analysis shows recurrence of root patterns as follows:

$\sqrt{\text{SWB}}$	Lines	
	4, 4, 34, 26	
$\sqrt{\text{SKN}}$	7, 7, 18, 32	השכינה, שכנה, שכנו, ישכון
$\sqrt{\text{WR}}$	21, 33, 7, 7, 1, 15, 29	מאור, אור, מאור, מאיר, אורים, אור
$\sqrt{\text{BHR}}$	8, 13, 32, 34	אבחר, מכחר, יבחר, בחיר
$\sqrt{\text{SWMM}}$	13, 14, 25, 17	אשתומם, אשתוממה, שוממות, שממה
$\sqrt{\text{SPK}}$	8	להשתפק, שפוכה
$\sqrt{\text{BR}}$	2, 14, 15	עבריה, אעבר, העברים
$\sqrt{\text{HZH}}$	10, 20	חזיק, אחזה
$\sqrt{\text{NDD}}$	11	אניד, נדד
$\sqrt{\text{STH}}$	23, 30	אשתה, שתות
$\sqrt{\text{QSR}}$	24	תקשרי, נקשר
$\sqrt{\text{QRB}}$	2, 32	קרב, יקרב
$\sqrt{\text{R'H}}$	21, 33, 34	אראה, יראה, לראות

	Lines	
GLH	10,27	נגלר, גלר
RHQ	2,11	רחוק, ארחיק
SMH	25,34	השמחים, לשמחתך
Y ^u SB	9,32	ישבו, מושב
ZKR	23	אזכר, אזכרה
QBR	13	קברות, קבריה
BKH	4,25	לככות, בוכים
MLK	9,31	מלוכה, ממלכות
BTR	11	בתרי, בתריה
MD	13,14	בעמדי, אעמד
GDL	15,29	גדולים, גדלם
HYH	12,17,21	היה, היר, יהי

(e) Syntax

The syntactic structure of the sentences of the poem sheds further light on the temporal axis discussed in the previous section. Earlier in this work it was mentioned that nominal sentences, that is sentences that do not have a verb in the Arabic language, in fact in all Semitic languages, usually describe events that take place in the present. In addition, nominal sentences can be made to refer to a (near) future by making use of certain participial forms. The following table exhibits the frequency and distribution of the participles throughout the poem:

In the present poem nominal sentences are used with a degree of frequency that is revealing of the aspirations of the poet. Given that the main temporal axis in the poem is directed towards the future, the use of nominal sentences instead of verbal sentences is to be expected. The poet projects himself onto the future to describe events that are conditional upon his reunion with Zion, that is, things he will do when the long-awaited time of meeting arrives.

Another important syntactic aspect is the use of rhetorical questions. Since throughout the poem, the poet is addressing Zion, the type of questions he is likely to ask are those which do not require answers; that is to say, rhetorical questions. Moreover, rhetorical questions help to bring to the foreground the feelings of isolation and emptiness that the poet is suffering away from Zion. Here is a list of the rhetorical questions in the poem:

Line	The rhetorical questions
1	ציון הלא תשאלני
9	ואיך ישבו עבדים
10	מי יתנני משרוטט
11	מי יעשה לי כנפים
20	איך יערכ לי אכל
21	איך מאור יום יהי מתוק
29	היערכוך בגדלם
29	ואם הכלם ידמו
30	אל מי ידמו משיחיה
30	ואל מי נביאיה

4. Imagery

It should be noted that imagery is considered to be the main characteristic of Biblical poetry. It could be said that the imagery of the Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus, in the main, was inspired and drawn from the images and figures in the Bible.⁽¹⁹⁾

The study of ha-Levi's poem shows that he relied mainly on the adoption of Biblical material and drew most of his imagery from its verses.

(a) Biblical sources

Line 2, Deut. 3/27	מִים וּמִזְרַח וּמִצָּפוֹן וְתִמְנָן שְׁלוֹם עֲלֶיהָ וְרֹאשׁ הַפִּסְקָה וְשֵׁא עֵינֶיהָ יָמֶה וְצִפְנָה וְתִמְנָנָה וּמִזְרַחָהּ
Line 3, Ps. 133/3	וְשִׁלֹּם אֶסִּיר תֵּאֱמָר נֹתֵן דָּמָעָיו כְּטֶל־הָרֶמֶן כְּטֶל־הָרֶמֶן שִׁירָה עַל־הַרְבֵּי צִיּוֹן כִּי שָׁם צִיּוֹן יִדְוָה אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה הַזֶּה עַד־הָעוֹלָם
Line 4, Micah 1/8	לְבָכּוֹת עֲנוּתָהּ אֲנִי תָנִים, עַל־וֹאֵל אֶסְפָּדָה וְאֵלֶיָּהּ אֵילָכָה שִׁילָל וְעָרֹם אֶעֱשֶׂה מִסְפָּד בְּתוֹמִים וְאֶבֶל בְּבָנוֹת יַעֲנָה
Line 4, Ps. 126/1	וַעַת אֶחָלִים שִׁיבַת שְׁבוּתָהּ - אֲנִי כְנוּר לְשִׁירֶיהָ. שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלֹת בְּשׁוּב דָּוִד אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל צִיּוֹן הָיְתָה בְּחִלְמִים
Line 5, Gen. 32/2	וְכָל פָּנָעִי טָהוֹרֶיךָ וְהַעֲלֶה הַלֵּךְ לְדַרְכִּי וְהַפְּנֵעֵרְבוּ מִלֶּאכֶי אֱלֹהִים
Line 7, Jes. 60/19	וְשִׁעֲבֶדְךָ תְּהַלֵּךְ: לֹא־תִהְיֶה־לְךָ עוֹד הַשָּׁמֶשׁ לְאוֹר יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה הַיָּרֵחַ לְאוֹר לַיְלָה וְהַיָּהוֹן לְךָ וְהַיָּהוֹן לְךָ לְאוֹר עוֹלָם
Line 8, Job. 30/16	אֶבְסֵר לְנַפְשִׁי לְהִשְׁתַּפֵּד וְעִתָּה עָלַי הַשְׁתַּפֵּד נַפְשִׁי יֶאֱחָזֵנִי וּמִרְעֵנִי

Line 9 Jer. 3/17	וְאַתָּה דָּסָא אֶרְנִי כַעֲת הָהוּא יִקְרָאוּ לִירוּשָׁלַם כְּסָא דְדָוִד
Line 10, Gen. 35/7	מִרְחֲנֵי קְשׁוּטָם בְּקֻסְמוֹת אֲשֶׁר כִּי שָׁם נָגְלוּ אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים בְּבִרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי אֲחֵינוּ
Line 11, Prov. 23/5	מִי יַעֲשֶׂה לִי כְנָפִים וְאֶרְחִיק נֹדֶד כִּי עֲשֶׂה יַעֲשֶׂה לִּי כְנָפִים כְּנֶשֶׁר וְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
Line 11, Cant. 2:17	אֲנִי לְבַתְּכִי לְדָבִי בֵּין בַּחֲרִיף לְעֶסֶר הָאֱלִים עַל־דֶּבֶר כְּתֹר
Line 12, Ps. 102/15	וְאַרְצָה אֲבִי נִיד סָאָר וְאַחֲנִי אֶת־עֲקָרִיךָ כִּי־רָצוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ אֶת־אֲבִנֶיךָ וְאֶת־עֲפָרָה יִדְגְּנוּ
Line 13, Neh. 2/5	בְּעֶמְרִי עָלִי סִבְרוֹת אֲבָמִי אֶל־עֵיר קִבְרוֹת אֲבָתִי וְאֲבִנֶיךָ
Line 14, Jes. 10/18	אֲעֹבֵר בִּיַּעֲרֶךָ וּבְכַרְמֶלֶךָ וּבְכֹבֵד יַעֲרֹ וּבְכַרְמֶלֶךָ
Line 16, Exod. 30/23	וּמִמֶּרְדִּירוֹ אֲבָקָת עֲסָרֶךָ וְאֶתֶּה קֹחַלֶךָ בְּשָׂמִים רֹאשׁ מֶרְדִּירוֹךָ
Line 17, Jes. 20/2	וְנָעַם לְנַפְשִׁי הַלֵּךְ עִרֹם וְיִסְחָף וְנִצְלָה תִּחְלָץ מִעַל רִגְלֶךָ נַעֲשֶׂה כֹן הַלֵּךְ עִרֹם וְיִסְחָף
Line 19, Ps. 89/40	אֲנִי וְאֶשְׁלִיךְ סָאָר נֹרִי וְאֶרְחֵה בְּרִית עֲבָדֶךָ חֲלָלָהּ לְאַרְצֵי נֹרִי
Line 21, Eccl. 11/7	אִי־אֵיךְ סָאָר יֹם יְהִי סְחֹק לְעֵינֵי וּמִתֵּחַן הָאֹדֶר וְטוֹב לְעֵינַיִם לִרְאוֹת אֶת־הַשָּׁמַשׁ
Line 22, Ps. 38/8	סָלֹא כְּסָלִי וְנַפְשִׁי מִמֶּרְדִּירוֹךָ כִּי־בְסָלִי מָלְאִי נִקְלָה
Line 24, I Sam. 18/1	וּבְךָ נִקְשְׁרוּ נַפְשׁוֹת חֲבֵרֶיךָ וְהָיוּ כְּבָלָתִי לְדָבָר אֶל־שָׂאֵל וְנַפְשִׁי יִתְּנֶנּוּ וְקִשְׁרוּ בְּנַפְשִׁי וְהָיוּ יְמֵי יְהִיָּהּ בְּנַפְשִׁי

Line 26,
Zeph. 2/11

ושפתחנים איש ממקומו
ושפתחורלו איש ממקומו כל אי דגים

Line 28,
Cant. Cant. 7/9

לעלות ולאחזו בסנסני המריד
אמרתי אעלה בתמר אחזה בסנסניו

Line 29,
Deut. 33/8

לחמיר ואוריד
וללך אמר חמיר ואוריד לאיש חסידך אשר נסיתו
במקסה תריבדו עלי מי קריבה

Line 31,
Jes. 2/18

ישנה ויחלף כליל כל-ממלכות האליל
האלילים כליל חלף

Line 32,
Ps. 132/13

אנך למושב אליהך
קרבתך ודעה בצנן אזה למושב לו

Line 32,
Ps. 65/5

ואשרי אנוש יבחר יקרב וישכן בחצריך!
אשרי תבחר ותקרב ישכן חצריך

Line 33,
Dan. 12/12

אשרי מחכה וניע
אשרי המחכה וניע לזמים אלה שלש מאות שלשים וחמשה

Line 34,
Ps. 106/5

לראות בטובת בחיריך ולעלו בשמחך
לראות בטובת בחיריך לשמח בשמחת נגיד להתהלל עם גחלתך

Line 34,
Ezek. 16/55

בשובך אלי בקרמת געוריד:
ואחיתך סרם ובטחיה תשכן לקדמתן ושמרת ובטחיה תשכן
לקדמתן ואח ובטחיה תשכינה לקדמתן: ולוא היתה

(b) Figures: metaphor, simile, antithesis, parallelism,
paranomasia

Hebrew poetry in Muslim Spain, influenced by Arabic tradition, attached great importance to its formal features and to the figures and the manner in which they were integrated in the poem. In the work Kitāb al-Muḥāḍara

wa'l-Mudhākara, Moses ibn Ezra declared that a poem without ornaments was not a poem, and the more ornaments a poem contained, the better it would sound. (20)

The study proves that the imagery in ha-Levi's poem was based on the skilful use of the Biblical text. This can be seen in the first line where the poet employs a metaphor (isti'āra), the most important poetic device and its chief distinguishing feature according to the Arab critics, portraying the Jewish people as scattered sheep looking for their shepherd (Jer. 13:7, Exod. 10:5).

צִיּוֹן, הֲלֹא תִשָּׂאֵלִי לְשָׁלוֹם אֲסִירֶיךָ, דּוֹרְשֵׁי שְׁלוֹמְךָ וְהֵם יִתֵּר עֲדֶיךָ?

Another image may be seen in line 4, where the poet pictures himself as a jackal, wailing at the affliction of Zion. This image is inspired by the Bible, where the jackal is a symbol of destruction, grief and loneliness (Micah. 1:8).

לְבָכוֹת עֲנוּתְךָ אֲנִי תָנִים, וְעַתָּה אֶחָלֵם שִׁיבָת שְׁבוּתְךָ – אֲנִי כְנוּר לְשִׁירֶיךָ.

The poet emphasizes this metaphor with another in the same line, where he portrays himself in a contrasting image as a harp for the songs of Zion, dreaming of the return of the captives. This image is also Biblical (Ps. 126:1).

In line 20, the poet employs one more image illustrating dogs tearing a lions' whelps, referring to Jerusalem under the rule of the Christians at that time, deriving the image from the Biblical context (Jer. 3:15,16).

אֵיךְ יַעֲרֹב לִי אֶכֶל וְשָׂחוֹת בְּעֵת אֶהְיֶה, כִּי יִסְתָּבּוּ הַקְּלָבִים אֶת כְּפִירֶיךָ?

Ha-Levi, as mentioned, relied mainly on the Biblical context to derive his imagery, but the study also shows that he drew some of his poetic devices from Arabic poetry. This can be illustrated in the simile (tashbīh) in line 3 where the poet expresses his nostalgic feeling for Zion by shedding tears, comparing them to the dew, imitating the Arab poets in weeping over the aṭlāl (see above, p. 282).

ושלום אסיר מאוה, נותן דמעי כטל - הרמז תכסך לרדתם על הררך;

Like Ibn Hamdis, ha-Levi conforms to the traditional techniques of the rithā' theme, employing the Arabic poetic devices of antithesis (muṭābaqa) and parallelism (muqābala), e.g.

4	כנור / תנים	2	רחוק / קרוב
29	הבלם / גדלם	25	השמים / הכואבים

Here again, ha-Levi, exactly like Ibn Ḥamdīs (see above, p. 260), employs an effective example of antithesis and parallelism in one line (4), stressing the underlying similarity of the contrasting images:

לככות ענותך אני תנים ועת אהלם
שיבת שבותך אני כנור לשירך

Another example is line 25, exhibiting the contrasting images of being happy for its peace and being in pain for its ruin:

הם השמים לשלוחך והכואבים
על שוממותך ובוכים על שברך.

Ha-Levi employs another Arabic poetic device, paranomasia (mujānasa), which is based on the juxtaposition of words with a similar sound but a different meaning. He seems to be fond of this rhetorical ornament, using it often with its various forms throughout, e.g.

In line 6, the poet introduces his rhyme with a paranomasia using skilfully the frequency of the sound sh which occurs six times, and the rhyme letter which occurs five times in the line:

שם השכינה שְכֵנָה לָךְ, וְהִיוָצֵרְךָ פָתַח לְמוֹל שְׁעָרֵי שְׁחָק שְׁעָרֶיךָ,

Another example is to be found in line 18:

בְּמָקוֹם אֲרוֹנְךָ אֲשֶׁר נָנִינוּ, וּבְמָקוֹם כְּרוֹ" בֵּיךְ אֲשֶׁר שְׁכָנוּ חֲדָרֵי חֲדָרֶיךָ!

The following is a list of all forms of paranomasia employed by the poet throughout the poem:

Line	
4,5,11	לִבְכוֹת, לְבֵית, לְבִתְרִי, לְבָכִי, לְבָד
12	אֶרְצָה, אֶרְצָךְ
12	אֶפֶל, אֶפִּי
14	אֶעֱמַד, אֶעֱבֹר
29	גְּדִלָם, הַכֶּלֶם
31	כִּלְיָל, הָאֵלִיל
5,20	כָּל, אֲכַל
22	לֹאֵט, מַעֵט
2,32,13	קֶרֶב, יִקְרַב, קִבְרִיךְ
18,27	חֲדָרִי, עֲדָרִי, גִּדְרִיךְ
9,20,12	בֵּית, כַּעַת, אֵת
22,21,24	הֶרְפִּי, בִּפִּי, יִפִּי
16,22	מִמֶּר, מִמְרוֹרֶיךְ
14,15,20,21	אֶעֱבֹר, הָעוֹרְבוֹם, יֵעֲרַב, עוֹבְרִים
13,17	מִבְחָר, חֲבֵרוֹן, חֲבֵרוֹת
4,30,21	שִׁירֶיךָ, שִׁירִי, נִשְׁאִיר

In summary, this chapter parallels the previous chapter in that it has been an attempt to analyze in detail the theme, the meaning, the structure of words and the imagery in ha-Levi's poem The Ode to Zion.

The first section tried to shed light on the theme of the poem where Zion is the focus of the poet's feelings and their expression. The study showed that the essential part of the poet's vision is the lamenting of the fate of Jews and the Holy City of Jerusalem which has a highly symbolic function in the history of Judaism.

In the second section the study aimed to assemble enough evidence to show that ha-Levi's poem is a good example of Hebrew application of the Arabic qaṣīda scheme in form and content. The third section is an attempt to demonstrate that the poet explores various linguistic aspects such as the phonological properties of the rhyme letter and other sounds, and the internal structure of words and sentences, to get across the feeling of frustration resulting from the situation of the Jews, and the hope that they will be reunited with Zion.

The same can be said about the use of imagery for aesthetic value. His images seem to derive from two main sources: the Bible and the Arabic poetry.

Notes to Chapter Two

1. See Part Two, Chapter One of this thesis, pp. 130-133.
2. Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1971), Vol. 16, p. 1032
3. Abraham Bar Yosef, Mi-Shirat ymei ha-Beinayim (Tel-Aviv, 1980), p. 155
4. Ha-Levi, Dīwān, Vol. 2, pp. 155-158, trans., Nina Salaman, pp. 3-7
5. Bar Yosef, p. 159
6. 'Abid b. al-Abras, Dīwān, ed. Ḥusain Naṣṣār (Cairo, 1957), pp. 112-113, trans., Sir Charles Lyall (Cambridge, 1913), pp. 40-41
7. Bargebuhr, p. 269
8. Ezra Fleisher, Shirat ha-Qodesh ha-Ivrit bi- ymei ha-Beinayim (Jerusalem, 1975), pp. 41-46, also, see Weinberg, Jewish Prince in Muslim Spain, p. 9
9. T. Carmi, Hebrew Verse, p. 15
10. Weinberg, p. 11
11. Goldstein, The Jewish Poets of Spain, p. 19
12. Yosef Dana, Ha-Po'ṭiqaḥ shel-ha-Shira ha-Ivrit: Sfarad bi-Yemei ha-Beinayim (Tel-Aviv, 1982), p. xii
13. Dan Pagis, Hidush u-Masoret be-Shirat ha-Hol ha-Ivrit: Sfarad we-Italyah (Jerusalem, 1976), p. 105ff
14. David Yellin, Torat ha-Shira ha-Sfaradit (Jerusalem, 1972), p. 52, also, see Weinberg, p. 12
15. I. Anis, Musīqā al-Shīr, p. 189
16. Ibn Rashīq, Umda, Vol. 1, p. 151
17. Ḥ. Naṣṣār, al-Qāfiya, p. 45
18. Anis, p. 258
19. Dan Pagis, Hidush u-Masoret be-Shirat ha-Hol ha-Ivrit, pp. 70-77
20. Dan Pagis, Shirat ha-Hol we-Torat ha-Shir le-Mosheh Even Ezra u-Vnei-Doro (Jerusalem, 1970)

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