

SOME REMARKS ON THE *MUWASHSHAḤĀT* OF ABRAHAM IBN EZRA

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Abraham ibn Ezra (1092/3-1167) is a younger contemporary of poets of the Hebrew Andalusian school, such as Moshe ibn Ezra (1055-1138) and Yehudah ha-Levi (1074-1141). He was born in Toledo in al-Andalus and lived in Córdoba, but political circumstances obliged him travel in North Africa and Europe. Known as a scientist, Abraham ibn Ezra was also a traveller. He is known to have visited Morocco, Italy (Rome), Provence and even England (London). His poems are often addressed either to patrons or to colleagues. The *muwashshahāt* written by his predecessor in the genre, Moshe ibn Ezra, were mainly love poems (which Moshe ibn Ezra was to renounce later in his life as “a youthful sin”¹). They were not necessarily addressed to a patron or a friend, as is the case with Abraham ibn Ezra, and this is a notable difference in the latter’s strophic poetry.²

The *muwashshahāt* of Abraham ibn Ezra were published on several occasions, but have not been published in their totality. The interpretation of these poems differs according to the editors, namely Egers (Berlin 1886), Rosin (Breslau/Wrocław 1885-1984), Kahana (Warsaw 1894), Stern (1959) and Levin (1985). Weinberger (1997) and Schirmann (1956) also published some *muwashshahāt* in their anthologies. Masha Itzhaki is currently engaged on a full edition of the poems of Abraham ibn Ezra.³

Compared with the poetic language of Moshe ibn Ezra, the language of Abraham ibn Ezra gives a forced impression. It sometimes happens that he invents antiquated verbs, as in the poem “*ekh yishlayu / qirbay be-lib/bi asher/ke-yam yehmayu*”. This is the first line of a nostalgic love poem on the theme of separated lovers.

In what follows we shall examine a number of formal and thematic innovations in the *muwashshahāt* of Abraham ibn Ezra. We start here with the transcription of some representative *muwashshahāt*, followed by a translation, accompanied by my comments, before or after the stanzas:

Abraham ibn Ezra Poem No. 190⁴

[--- // A --v- / -v- / v--- // A]

0. *ekh yishlayu // qirbay be-lib/bi asher / ke-yam yehmayu //*

0. How they will find consolation
These inner feelings which howl in my heart like a sea?

[--v- / -v-- // bbb]

1. re'ay qehu / na-be-yadi //
yib'ar kemo / esh kebedi //
'al nud şebi / hen yedidi //
mar yibkayu // 'enay ke-tal yizzelu / we-lo yidmayu //

1. My friends, take my hand
Now that my liver burns like a fire
Because of the departure of the gracious fawn who is my love
My eyes cry bitter tears:
They flow like dew and do not remain quiet.

2. maṭṭa' aha/bim we-'ofer //
bo niqbeşu / hen we-shefer //
nafshi pedut / lo-we-kofer //
bo yirbayu // kol mahala/lay we-lo / [be-khen] yikhlayu //

2. A meadow of love and a fawn,
It is there that grace and beauty meet.
May my soul be a guarantee for him and a redemption,
For him all my praises grow
And never become exhausted.

3. şror mor u-mib/ħar 'ofarim //
zikro ke-ner/d u-kefarim //
yod'awe mik- / kol 'abarim //
lu ye'tayu // li-mşo le-şir/rim şori / be-et yeħlayu //

3. He is my bundle of myrrh, my choice of fawns,
His name is like nard and camphor.
Those who know him, of all countries,
Come to him
To find a balsam for their illnesses when they are in pain.

4. ma nifle'a/tah ahbato //
li et re'u/ti demuto //
hodo ke-she/mesh be-şeto //
lu yeħzayu // yorde she'ol / to'oro / we-yofyo ħayu //

4. What a marvellous thing it is to love him
For me since I saw his stature!
His splendour is like the sun at its rising.
If those who go down to the kingdom of death could see
His beauty, they would live.

5. efdeh be-naf/shi le-ya'lah //
tehmeh be-qol / mar [ke-kailah] //
lad-dod asher / nad we-galah //
ered be-ya/gon she'ola //

[--- / A ---// A

--v- / (.) -v- / v--- // A]

gar ke faryu /, com bibrayu, //
esht al-ħabīb / (ash-)shaber bor / el murerayu //

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5. With my heart I will be a guarantee for the gazelle
Who shouts with the bitter voice of a bride
Towards her beloved who went from there to live in a foreign land
I will go down with sadness into the kingdom of death:
What shall I do, how shall I live?
This lover, you must know, for him I am about to die.

In the introduction the poet refers to himself in the first person as suffering from burning pain. Then follows the first stanza, in which the poet relates his unhappy love affair with a gracious fawn, speaking of his departure and offering the antithesis of the burning fire in his heart and the water of his tears.

The second stanza speaks in praise of the cherished fawn, the familiar formula of “guarantee” being employed here to underline his beauty.

In the third and fourth stanzas, the description of the qualities of the beloved continues.

In the fifth stanza, the poet compares his heart with a gazelle, a young woman who deplores the fact that her beloved has left her. This woman expresses herself in Christian language in the refrain-exit or *kharja*. The first word of the stanza being illegible in the manuscript, I have made the conjecture “*efdeh be-nafshi le ya ‘lah*”, in other words “With my soul I will be a ransom for a gazelle (i.e. for its beauty)”.

Rosin had the reading *anud* “I am agitated in my heart”, but in the manuscript he found something unreadable like “*le’aṭ*” which was metrically impossible: Stern’s translation is apparently based upon this “*le’aṭ*” (see 2 Samuel 18: 5), for he translates: “Be tender, my soul”. In the the third line Rosin had “*le-dodah asher nad we-galah*”; however, *le-dodah* does not fit metrically. Therefore the verse had to be corrected “*lad-dod asher nad we-galah*”.

The structure of the strophes is as follows: the *simt* (refrain part) is composed of a short verse with metre --- and rhyme A; plus a long verse with metre -v-- / v- / v--- with the same rhyme A. The *aghṣān* (“branches” = main part of the stanza) have three lines with the two feet --v- / -v-- // ending with a rhyme b. Thus the whole rhyme scheme of the poem can be seen as Aabbb Aacc Aaddd Aaeeee Aafff AA. What is noticeable in this poem is the anomaly of the fifth strophe, which deviates from the regular pattern:

5. efdeh be-naf/shi le-ya‘lah //
tehmeh be-qol / mar [ke-kallah] //
lad-dod asher / nad we-galah //
ered be-ya/gon she’ola //
gar ke faryu / com bibrayu, //
esht al-ḥabīb/ (ash)-shaber bor / el murerayu //

This suggests the following metre and rhyme:

--v- / -v-- // f
 --v- / -v-- // f
 --v- / -v-- // f
 --v- / -v-- // f
 ---- / A / ---- // A
 --v- / -v- / v---- // B

After having looked at the text (in which, for metrical analysis we have postulated possible poetic licences in the Hebrew), we see how an extra line has been inserted and how the last two lines, the lines of the Romance *kharja*, are too long. How are we to deal with this last strophe, which has a supernumerary line in the *ghuṣn* and two over-long lines in the *kharja*? This passage has proved hard to explain for everyone who has tried to deal with it. Perhaps Abraham wanted to make a formal innovation by inserting extra verses and extra feet.

Stern was struck by the puzzling nature of the *kharja*, and suggested that they are possibly two variant readings which were later conflated. But he saw no solution of the problem for as long as our knowledge of the poem is based on a single manuscript. Others follow Stern in his opinion that here we have a text with errors.⁵ My opinion is that it is very possible that Abraham ibn Ezra deliberately intended an innovation.

Abraham ibn Ezra Poem No. 191

Abraham ibn Ezra also wrote *muwashshahāt* for friends and patrons. The poem sent to Isaac is interesting for the fact that it contains Arabic sentences not only in the refrain, but also in the other stanzas. In this poem Abraham ibn Ezra expresses his grief at being separated from Isaac. Stern found similarities between this poem and a *zajal* (vernacular Arabic strophic poem) by Ibn Quzmān (d. 1160). According to Stern, this poem – as also poem no. 188 – appears to belong to a manifold “family”. In his first articles he identifies three members of that family: poems by Ibn Baqī (d. 1145), Ibn Quzmān and Abraham ibn Ezra, which have all the same rhyme and the same metres.⁶

The introductory stanza mixes Hebrew and Arabic, as the transliteration into Latin letters shows; I have here rendered the Arabic text in italics:⁷

[-v-- / -v- // A --v- / --- / -v- // B
 --v- / -v- / --v- / -v- // B]

0. min-nedud a/mon be-heq // misrah ye* /'abequ //
 'ammi tela'ot *wa-lā/kinna-humu-s/-sabaqu* //

0. Because of the departure of him who was educated in the centre of power,
 Calamities come over me continuously and they gain the race.

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[--v- / -v- / --v- / -v- // c]

1. nadad u-sab/'ah nedu/dim 'enay* / aharaw //
gam kabetah / mib-bekhot / mifqad yeme / zohoraw //
shemesh le-ro/'aw we-khen / shemesh li-m*/shaharaw //
hah lebab 'a/zab be-fiq // perud yin*/natequ //
ḥuṭaw wa-mith/la janā'hi l-ṭayri [in] / yakhfiqul //

1. He gave me up and the sleep left my eyes.
My eyes became weak by complaining about the absence of his everyday
light.
He is the sun for those which look at him, he is the sun for those who
seek his door.
Oh heart! It went along [with him] in the pains of separation,
Its ties are torn and it flutters away like the wing of a bird.

2. day li be-ṣib/'ot zeman / membr asher / pashetu //
bazu kebo/di we-din/ 'awel bi * / shafetu //
al ta'amen/ bo we-ta/pukhaw we-lo / shaqetu //
akh lekha yom / yaḥaliq // lashon we-im / matequ //
millaw ghadan / fa-yjurru* / saḥman bihi / tarshuqu //

2. I suffered much because of the armies of rebellious Time
Which dispersed and ruined my glory, and made an unjust judgement
against me.
You do not trust Time, because its rebellions will never cease:
One day it speaks to you with a smooth language, expressed in soft
words,
And the following day it launches against you its pointed arrows.

3. akhen Yesa/ḥeq gebir / 'ammo we-ot / haz-zeman //
yated le-ḥokh/mot tequ/'ot be-maqom / ne'eman //
shebbo mero/rim asher / esba' metu/qim ke-man //
yom asher ka/zab afiq // ṣedeq we-im / na'tequ //
memay we-yab/shu faqad / aḏhā bi-hi / yafhaqu //

3. Isaac is the lord of his people and a wonder of his time.
He is an ankle to which one hung wisdom in the sure place.
The bitterness which fills me has become sweet like manna.
On the day when the river of justice fails, when its waters dry up and
are removed,
He makes water flow in abundance.

4. degel ḥaṣa/dim me'as/sef at le-khol / maḥanot /
ḥokhmaḥ wa-se/khel u-bin / u-b-qirbe-kha / shokenot //
kí min-ne'u/rim le-kha / nose'ot kemo / omenot //
al tiheyu / yoge'im le-riq // sharim we-hit'appequ //
hādḥā 'l-ladhī / 'ālamu -l- / 'ulā bi-hi / yashriqu //

4. Standard of the graces, it is you who piles up for all the camps
 Wisdom, ingeniousness and intelligence which remain in your heart;
 Because it is they which raised you as of your youth.
 Princes, do not tire in vain, and cease your vain efforts:
 It is by him that the world of the highest virtues is bright.

5. efdeh be-naf/shi šebi/yat hen asher / aḥarah //
 yom shub dela/tim asher / hi shaleḥah / ya'arah //
 reḡam we-lo / maše'ah / šid asher* / sibberah //
al-ghazāl shaq/qa-l-harīq / wa-l-salāliq / tarḥaqu //
mā ḥuzni il/lā ḥurrin / yurādī lam / yulḥaqu //

5. My heart is the guarantee of this gracious gazelle which was sad the day
 When his hunter returned from his hunt with empty hands,
 Without having found the target which he hoped for:
 The fawn divided the extreme field in two,⁸
 And the hounds were running fast.
 My only sorrow is that the noble target could not be caught!

In the introduction the poet tells of the painful consequences of the departure of a high-placed friend. Then follows the first stanza, which expresses the pain of the “I” person.

In the second stanza the poet speaks of Time – in other words Destiny – as being rebel, capricious and inconstant.

The third and fourth stanzas speak in praise of Isaac, the lord of his people.

In the fifth stanza, the poet compares the pain which he feels at the departure of his Master with the sorrow of a girl whose beloved went away from her.

As regards metre and rhyme, we identify the following metres and rhyme in the *simt*:

-v- / -v- // A --v- / -- // B /
 --v- / -v- / --v- / -v- // B /

The *ghuṣn* has three lines with the following metre:

--v- / -v- / --v- / -v- c /

Let us now look at how the Arabic and the Hebrew fit together in the metre:

The line “‘ammi tela’ot *wa-lākinna-humu-s-sabaqu* /” ought to have the metre:

--v- / -v- / --v- / -v- // B /

‘ammi tela’ot *wa-lā / kinna-humu-s /-sabaqu //*

but has in fact the third foot differently, namely -vv- instead of --v-, and in the fourth foot we find vv- instead of -v-.

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Likewise we see in the line “Ḥutaw wa-mith / la janā/hi t-tayri [in] / yakhfīqu l’” the following metre: --v- / vv- / --v? / -v-. Here one long syllable is missing in the third foot. Perhaps we have to add an extra syllable [in]?

And in

“millaw ghadan/ fa- yjurrū* / sahman bihi / tarshuqu l’”

--v- / --v / --v- / -v-

the word *fa-* which is in the original text, does not fit metrically. Even when substituted with *fa-yarmi** it is not the regular metrical pattern -v-.

And “memaḡ we-yab / shu faqad / adhā bi-hi / yafhaqu l’” has the following metre:

--v- / -v- / --v- / -v- /

and is regular.

Then follows a *simt* with a totally Arabic line:

hādihā ‘l-ladhī / ‘alamu -l / - ‘ulā bi-hi / yashriqu //

Which is correctly according to the metre :

--v- / vv- / --v- / -v-

which has in the second foot a short syllable.

The *kharja* should have the following metre:

-v-- / -v- A / --v- / -v- / B

--v- / -v- / --v- / -v- // B

but in fact has:

-v-- / -v- A / --v- / -v- / B

---- / --- / v--- / -v- // B

al-ghazāl shaq/qa-l-harīq / wa-l-salāliq / tarhaqu //

mā ḡuzni il/lā ḡurrin / yurādī lam / yulhaqu //

Which corresponds to a passage in a famous *muwashshah* by Ibn Baqī, as quoted in Ibn Quzman’s *zajal* no. 15.⁹

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Another *muwashshah*¹⁰ occupies a middle ground between love poem and laudatory poem. Although dedicated to Barukh ibn Jaw,¹¹ the poem contains motifs that are characteristic of love poetry. For example, in the introduction one finds the critics who do not understand the pain of the poet caused by the departure of his friend, and the first stanza speaks about the thinness of the lover and his premature grey hair and his eyes without sleep. The remainder

of the poem is a description of the moral qualities of his friend. In the third stanza the term “Days” corresponds to the words “Time” or “Fate” which crop up in other poems.

0. ba'ale ri/bi, she'u-na / mim-meribah / u-telunah //
ki nedod do/di sama-ni / mib-beli le/bab u-binah //

0. O men who reproach me with quarrels and complaints, please stop;
Because the departure of my friend left me without heart and reason.

1. rahame a/nush gam nekh'ah / wa-ḥamolu / 'al ma'ṣabo //
qal- we-khi-m'aṭ / ka-'of yid'eh / miy-yegon se/bah zaraqah bo //
dal, 'ade ki / lo yera'eh / me-ḥoli he/mes lebab //
ki perida/to hilbinah a/sa'rah 'ad / lo hizqinah //
wa-t-teṣawwuh / 'al ishoni / li-heyot mo'es be-shenah //

1. Have pity on a man who suffers and be tolerant towards his distress;
Hardly sick of grief, grey hair jumped on him as quickly as a bird.
He became so thin that you can hardly see him any more because of the
disease which melted his heart.
Because his departure turned his hair white although he had not reached
old age yet,
And ordered his eyes to refuse to sleep.

2. kaletah naf/shi la-re'a / na'amu li-m/'od shebahaw //
ne'eman ha/dal ha-re'a / matequ do/daw le-ehaw //
akh lebab / yiqare'a / et zekhor man / 'amme shiraw //
yom asher na/sa' u-fanah / tahaneh 'a/law 'ananah //
hah le-ferud / hinḥile-ni / naḥalat ya/gon u-mginna //

2. My heart is consumed for a friend whose praises were precious.
Faithful friend, free of all evils, whose love is sweet for his friends!
But my heart is torn when I think of the gallantry of his poems.
The day when he left and went away, a cloud was placed in front of him.
Alas, it is a separation which left me a heritage of grief and pain!

3. wa-'ale khol / zot, lu yamim / yiheyu mash/limim itti //
erkebah mid/bar we-yammim / la-ḥazoto / terem moti //
u-fene ṣa/rim we-qamim / yippelu me/-ḥomdan oti //
lu yehi eber ke-yonah / li a'ufah / wa-eskonah //
'ad asher a/simah 'eni / 'al ṣebi maḥ / pir lebanah //

3. At least, if the Days wanted to make peace with me,
I would like to traverse the deserts and the seas to see him before I die.
Then the faces of my enemies would be covered with the shame of jealousy.
If I had wings like the dove, I would fly and would not stop
Until I could fix my gaze on a fawn that shames the sun with its radiance.

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4. dod yeda'tiw / mil-le-fanim / hoq ahabim / lo yeshanneh //
nehemad ba/rukh miḅ-banim / zeh shemo, ki / lo akhanneh //
yaqerah li / mip-peninim / ahabati / bo we-hinneḅ //
li leqaḅti-hu le-manah / miy-yeqar a/res we-honah //
ki ke-eḅad / me-'en sheni / hu beli 'e/rekh u-tmunah //

4. It is a lover whom I knew a long time and with whom I would not
like to change our bond of love.

Barukh is covered with praises among men; he is his name and I do
not need another.

My love for him is more precious to me than pearls,
And here I took it as a gift coming from the treasure and opulence
coming from the ground,

Because as the unique God, without pareil, he has neither measure
nor form.

5. el asher nis/sa we-ne'lam // wa-Casadaw / yodun piyyot //
shobebah ba/nim li-gbulam // u-khe-qedem / yaḅad li-hyot //
'ad le-shorer / k-ime 'olam // u-khe-shanim / qadmoniyyot //
wa-balawnā / wa-btalaynā // wāsh yaqūlu n-/nāsu fi-nā //
qum bi-nā yā / nūru 'ayni // nag'alu sh/-shakk yaqīnā //

5. O God who is the Highest and the hidden one, towards whom
mouths utter praise for his goodness,

Bring back the best of your people to their promised land, and let them
remain together like in former times

So that one can sing like now and in the past:

“We are consumed by sorrow and in deep distress, what says the people to us?
Let us leave, O light of my heart, let us change the doubt into
certainty!”

The exit-refrain of the fifth stanza is written in classical Arabic. In the Hebrew part of the stanza, the poet asks Barukh to bring the Jewish people of the diasporas back to the Promised Land. The Arabic part is a general expression of distress which one can regard as a typical motif of love poetry.

In Weinberger's view,¹² in the fifth stanza Abraham ibn Ezra departs from some of the usual conventions: one thus regularly finds characteristic expressions such as “it says”, “she says”. Stern identified the same *kharja* in the poetry of the contemporary poet Ibn Baqī.¹³ As for Israel Levin, he notices that the vernacular Arabic which appears in this *kharja* was “strongly erotic”. According to him, here he is making satirical use of this form.¹⁴

As far as the metre is concerned:

The refrain has the metre -v-- / --v- // repeated four times, with the rhyme scheme AABA.

The main part of the poem has the metre -v-- / --v- // -v-- / -v-- // repeated three times with the internal rhyme scheme cd, although we have cases in which the second foot of the first or second hemistich has / ---- /. Sometimes we have to make poetic licences in words. For instance: *li-heyot* instead of *li-hyot*; *zarqah* instead of *zareqah*; *u-fene* instead of *u-fne*; *yiheyu*, instead of *yihyu*, *ne'lam* instead of *ne'elam* and *u-khe-qedem* instead of *u-kh-qedem*.

In this poem it becomes particularly clear how Abraham ibn Ezra consciously sticks to the metre and the rhyme scheme.

If we compare the poetry of Abraham ibn Ezra with the works of his predecessors, we find that in the poetry of predecessors such as Moshe ibn Ezra and Yehudah ha-Levi the topic of love is more amply represented. Abraham ibn Ezra wrote only one real love poem, and the usual topics of the beloved who takes part in a wine drinking session are not mentioned there. Instead, the topic of the love is practically always related to praises directed to friends and to patrons. The beloved person gradually evolves into an important authority whose praises are sung by Abraham ibn Ezra.

Abraham ibn Ezra gives up a certain number of topics and motifs which were connected with the traditional repertory of motifs. He does not completely abandon the tradition and remains faithful to the formal structures of Arab poets such as Ibn Baqī and Ibn Quzmān. He also continues to be broadly subject to the influence of Yehudah ha-Levi, the greatest poet of the Spanish Hebrew school. As regards the connection between Abraham ibn Ezra and Yehudah ha-Levi (1074-1141), Moshe ibn Ezra in his *Muḥāḍarah* [Hebrew Poetics] offers a brief comment that: "both were born in Toledo. They then lived in Cordoba. In poetry they reached the highest level."¹⁵

The difference between Abraham Ibn Ezra and his predecessors is also what distinguishes court poetry from that of an itinerant poet. Abraham travelled in North Africa, in Italy and in other areas of Europe and was relatively detached from the Andalusian circles of his time. The poetry of Abraham Ibn Ezra is almost completely unaware of the principal topics of courtly poetry, which consist of love and wine motifs which were characteristic of the preceding generations. The erotic theme appears in his poetry in a completely different way: it is not a poetry which deals with the eternal beauty of a woman without mercy.¹⁶ He uses the topic of love principally as an introduction to a laudatory genre, in most cases structured as strophic poetry.

The formal differences with his predecessors are that the poet, although in many ways remaining faithful to the traditional metres, has tried some experiments in the fifth strophe of one of his poems, which he made larger than the other ones, as we see in one of the poems discussed above. The language of Abraham ibn Ezra is also slightly different from his predecessors, as we saw in archaic words and rhyme such as *yishlayu* in one of the poems

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above. Also the beginning line and its peculiar rhyme of the above mentioned poem *min-nedud amon be-heq misrah ye 'abequ* struck me as fairly unusual.

NOTES

1. Moshe ibn Ezra, *Muhadarah*, 38b.
2. Guigui 2000; Lewin 1969.
3. Itzhaki 1999 and Itzhaki 2000.
4. Egers 1886, p. 84 [no. 190]; Rosin 1885-91, pp. 110-11 [no. 68]; Stern 1959, pp. 372-4. The form “qirbay” instead of “qerebay” [Rosin] in the opening verse is determined by metrical requirements.
5. See also Corriente 1994 and Saenz Badillos.
6. Stern 1957, pp. 374-5.
7. Rosin 1886-91, pp. 111-13 [no. 69]; Egers 1886, pp. 84-5 [no. 191]; Stern 1959, pp. 374-5; Almladh 1998.
8. Corriente 1984, 1996 no. 15; interpretation *khariq* instead of *hariq* “fire”; see also Sosin.
9. Stern 1974, pp. 175-7.
10. Egers 1886, pp. 85-6 [no. 192]; Rosin 1886-1891, pp. 113-15 [no. 70]; Stern 1959, pp. 375-7; Weinberger 1997, pp. 81-5.
11. For ‘Ibn Jaw’ see Ibn Da’ud, [ed.] Cohen 1967 indices.
12. Weinberger 1997, p. 85.
13. Stern 1959, p. 376.
14. Levin 1985, p. 116.
15. Moshe ibn Ezra, *Muhadarah*, 38b.
16. Yitzhaki 2000, p. 59.

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APPENDIX

Abraham ibn Ezra: Poem No. 190

איך ישליו
קרבי בלבי אשר כים יהמיו

רעי קחו נא בידי
יבער כמו אש כבדי
על נוד צבי תן ידידי
מר יבכיו
עיני כטל יזלו ולא ידמיו

מטע אהבים ועפר
בו נקבצו חן ושפר
נפשי פדות לו וכפר
בו ירביו
כל מהללי ולא [בכן] יכליו

צרור מור ומבחר עפרים
זכרו כנרד וכפרים
יודעיו מכל עברים
לו יאתיו
למצא לצירים צרי בעת יחליו

מה נפלאתה אהבתו
לי עת ראותי דמותו
הודו כשמש בצאתו
לו יחזיו
יורדי שאול תארו ויפיו חיו

אפדה בנפשי ליעלה
תהמה בקול מר ככלה
לדוד אשר נד וגלה
ארד ביגון שאולה
גאר כפרי כם בבראיו
אשת אלחביב אשבאר בורי למרריו

Arie Schippers

Abraham ibn Ezra: Poem No. 191

מנדוד אמין בחיק
משרה יאבקי
עמי תלאות ולכנהם אלסבק

נדד ושבעה נדודים עיני אחריו
גם כבתה מבכת מפקד ימי זהריו
שמש לרואיו וכן שמש למשחריו
הה לבב עזב בפיק
פרוד ינתקו
הוטיו ומתל גנאה אלטיר יכפק

די לי בצבאות זמן ממר אשר פשטו
בזו כבודי ודין עול בי שבטו
אל תאמן בו ותהפוכיו [ו] לא שקטו
אך לך יום יחליק
לשון ואם מתקו
מליו גדא פיגר סהמא בה תרשק

אכן יצחק גביר עמו ואות הזמן
יתד לחכמות תקועות [ב] מקום נאמן
שבו מרורים אשר אשבע מתוקים כמן
יום אשר כזב אפיק
צדק ואם נעתקו
מימי ויבשו פקד אצחי בה יפהק

דגל חסדים מאסף את לכל מחנות
חכמה ושכל ובין ובקרבך שוכנות
כי מנערים לך נושאות כמו אומנות
אל תהיו יוגעים לריק
שרים והתאפקו
הדא אלדי עאלם אלעלא בה ישרק

אפדה בנפשי צבית חן אשר אחרה
יום שוב דלתי [ם] אשר היא שלחה יערה
ריקם ולא מצאה ציד אשר שברה
אלגזאל שק אלחריק
ואלסלאק תרהק
מה חזוני אלא חר יראדא לם ילחק

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בעלי ריבי, שעו נא ממריבה ותלונה
כי נדוד דודי שמני מבלי לבב ובינה

רחמו אנוש ונכאה וחמלו על מעצבו
קל-וכמעט כעוף ידאה מיגון שיבה זרקה בו
דל, עדי כי לא יראה מחלי המס לבבו
כי פרידתו הלבונה שעה עד לא הזקינה
ותצוה על אישוני להיות מואס בשנה

כלתה נפשי לרע נעמו למאד שבחיו
נאמן חדל הרע מתקו דודיו לאחיו
אך לבבי יקרע עת זכור מנעמי שיריו
יום אשר נסע ופנה תחנה עליו עבנה
הה לפרוד הנחילני נחלת יגון ומגנה

ועלי כל זאת, לוא ימים יהיו משלימים אתי-
ארכבה מדבר וימים לחזותו טרם מותי
ופני צרים וקמים יפלו מחמדם אותי
לו יהי אבר כיונה לי אעופה ואשכנה
עד אשר אשימה עיני על צבי מחפיר לבנה

דוד ידעתיו מלפנים חק אהבים לא ישנה
נחמד ברוך מבנים זה שמו, בי לא אכנה
יקרה לי מפנינים אהבתי בו, והנה
לי לקחתיהו למנה מיקר ארץ והונה-
כי כאחד מאין שני הוא בלי ערך ותמונה

אל אשר נשה ונעלם וחשדיו יודון פיות
שובבה בנים לגבולם ובקדם יחד להיות
עד לשורר כימי עולם וכשנים קדמוניות
ובלאונה ואבתלינה ואיש יקול אלגאס פינה
קום בנא יא נור עיני נגעל אלשך יקינא

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