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This book consists of nine studies on Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Poetics, which were originally papers at two conferences held at Tel-Aviv University in 1983, and 1984. The participants of the conferences tried to find the answer to problems in medieval Arabic Poetics such as the sequence of poetic lines and the unity of the poem, especially after studies that recently had been published, such as Geert Jan van Gelder's book Beyond the Line, in 1982 (E.J. Brill, Leiden). "How systematic were medieval Arab poeticians, rhetoricians and commentators (on Koran, poetry, etc.) in discerning relationships between the different parts of a literary text? And what was the terminology devised by them in these pursuits?" (p. 9).

The collection of articles has been divided into two parts: the first part is entitled Elements of Medieval Poetics; the second part, Prosody and the Structure of Poetic Texts. In the first part Andras Hamori deals with "Some Schemes of Reading in al-Marzüqi, Al-Iskafi, and Fakhr Al-Din al-Rāzi", discussing some instances of al-Marzüqi's comment on the poems of Abu Tamamm's Ḥamāsah-anthology, confronting his ideas with some Koranic analysis by al-Iskafi and al-Rāzi. It is a reaction to van Gelder's statement about the non-relevance of the commentators' application of badi' schemata to the Koran, because "in much of it it was not the study of poetry that led the way, but Koranic studies aided by speculative theology, aided in turn by logical and philosophical studies. (Beyond the Line, 165)". Yet Hamori demonstrates some overlapping on certain points in the two fields. He investigates in his comment on certain Ḥamāsah fragments, the occurrence of "Sequence and Direction", and "Relations between non-contiguous Elements" in the cases of amplification and irony. The article by George Kanazi discusses the literary theory of Abu Hilāl al-'Askari, arguing that the Kitāb al-Ṣanā'a'tayn originally was called Kitāb Ṣan'at al-Kalam, and that in the mind of the author Rhetorical and Poetical devices in prose and poetry belonged to one and the same science, the san'ah. The article by Matityahu Peled is devoted to the concept of literary influence in Classical Arabic criticism. Here the distinction of lafz (utterance, form) and ma'na (meaning, theme) is important in the writings of the Arabic theorists while Abd al-Qadir al-Jurjani also uses the term sanāh (image, conceit). Khalil Athamina investigates the history of the term lafz; with reference to Arabic poetry. Joseph Sudan deals with the history and evaluation of certain poetic themes, such as Maidens' Hair and Starry Skys, basing himself on, until then unpublished, manuscripts such as al-Sari' al-Raffa's al-Muhbiiba wa-l-Mahbiib and al-Raghib al-Isha'ani's Majma' al-balaghah. The problematics of ma'na and lafz is also discussed here.

The second part of the book is entitled "Prosody and the Structure of Poetic Texts" and contains four articles: David Semah's "Poetry and Audience According to Medieval Arab poeticians", Albert Arazi's "Métrique et Langage Poétique", David Gil's "The Muwaššah"; and Jacqueline Genot-Bismuth's "La révélation prosodique d'Immanuel de Rome". In his article, David Semah pays attention to problems such as the poetician's position, the poet and his audience, parallel patterns, and the rupture of symmetry. Albert Arazi's article with the subtitle "The case of Khalīf al-Kātib and the muwaššah poets" deals with the appreciation of metre and rhythm. In the Jāhiliyyah, poets seem to have recited their poems with an extremely fast rhythm compared with to-days customs of recital. Dealing with Hāzim al-Qartajanni's theory about the relationship between long and short metres and certain poetic genres, he comes to the conclusion that Q's thesis is partly true — only for the long metres. The increasing use of short metres in Abbasid times, often called a "revolution", has less significance than people always thought. In his article, David Gil approaches the
Jacqueline Bismuth investigates the influence of the Italian *dolce stil novo* poets, such as Dante Alighieri, in contrast with that of the Arabic and Hebrew Andalusian tradition, on the Medieval Italo-Hebrew poet Immanuel of Rome (1270-1328). This poet was well versed in composing Hebrew poetry in the Andalusian manner, as well as Hebrew sonnets with Italian *endecasillabi*. He participated in the Italian poetic climate, and also wrote sonnets in Italian.

All in all, the book is a very useful and rewarding study of Arabic poetics. The subtitle “Studies in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Poetics” is somewhat misleading, since only the last article deals with Medieval Hebrew literature.

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Arie Schippers

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Hebrew Andalusian secular poetry appears from the tenth century onwards as a new phenomenon in Hebrew literature. Literature until then was confined to religious topics. The “emancipation” of Hebrew literature in Muslim Spain (al-Andalus) was largely due to the positions certain Jews then occupied, which made the community rich and prosperous, also intellectually.

Under Muslim rule the Jewish community of Spain had many possibilities for development, because of its special social position in that diaspora: the Jews had established themselves on the Iberian peninsula as early as the first century. They were there before the arrival of the Visigoths at the end of the fifth century, and when the Visigoths became hostile towards them, they saw the Arabs as their liberators when they (the Arabs) conquered the majority of the Iberian peninsula in 711. According to historical sources they even helped the Arabs in their conquest. Furthermore, the Jews were to be found in all walks of life, landowners, merchants, artisans, and labourers; from the highest to the lowest classes. They had their own cities, such as Lucena and Granada. In wealthy Muslim Spain, Jewish science and culture were greatly stimulated, thanks to Jewish functionaries at the courts of Muslim kings. Under the influence of Arabic grammar, Hebrew grammatical studies flourished, although Hebrew had already disappeared as a spoken language in the second century CE, and in Spain first Romance, later vernacular Arabic, had taken its place. The focus of Hebrew grammatical studies was on the Classical Hebrew of the Holy Writ. Secular Hebrew Andalusian poetry came into being under the influence of the study of Hebrew grammar following the methods of the Arab grammarians. This study was much encouraged by the famous Meacones and Cordoban vizier, Hasday ibn Shaprut (ca. 910-970).

The study of the Biblical Hebrew inspired the Hebrew poets to use that language for their new forms of secular poetry. They used Arabic metres and themes. The first poets of the new Hebrew Andalusian school made use of poetry as a means of correspondence in courtly circles and among friends. One of the first poets, who made a living out of poetry, by travelling around and singing the praise of Jewish viziers and Maecenases, was the poet Ibn Khallûn (ca. 970-ca. 1020). The Hebrew Andalusian poets wanted to demonstrate that Classical Hebrew had the same possibilities as Classical Arabic for writing secular poetry. The Golden Age of Hebrew Andalusian poetry did not last very long. It started under the caliphate in the tenth century, and reached its peak during the period of the party kings in the eleventh century, when Muslim Spain was divided into several Muslim kingdoms lead by ethnic Arabs/Berbers, Slavs, or Negroes. The eleventh century had a rich cultural life at the courts, whose inhabitants competed with each other in wine drinking and poetry parties. Hebrew Andalusian poetry took over the main themes of Arabic poetry such as poetry dedicated to wine, love, nature descriptions, war descriptions and praise of the patron or king. Among the themes were also elegiac themes around Death and Perdition.

After the twelfth century, not only did Hebrew Andalusian poetry decline, but also its model. Arabic poetry just does not develop as much as in earlier times. However, as far as Hebrew Andalusian poetry is concerned, this decay is sometimes denied, because in later ages, poets like Todros Abul-'Áfiyah (1247-after 1298), and a metrical theorist-poet Sa'adyah Ibn Dannán (d. after 1505) still have a poetic production of high quality, not consisting merely of imitations. But they were exceptions: the successive arrival of the Berber dynasties from Morocco, of The Almoravids and Almohads had been disastrous for the cultural climate, especially for the Jews who fled over the frontier into Christian Spain and Provence, while others made their way to the more tolerant Muslim east (e.g. Egypt). In Provence, Hebrew rhyme-prose in the style of the Arabs continued to flower along with Judeo-Arabic culture. Even in Italy, Hebrew poetry was written according to the principles of the Hebrew Andalusian school. The impact of Hebrew Andalusian poetry was also quite conspicuous even in the Ottoman Empire.

The religious poems (the *piyyûṭim*) in Al-Andalus, and afterwards elsewhere, were also influenced by secular Hebrew Andalusian poetry, especially in their form, metres and rhymes. The importance of the Hebrew Andalusian poetry lies not only in the fact that this poetry is deliberately secular — a fact which probably could exist only in the rich and privileged diaspora on the Iberian peninsula —, it also gives an idea of how Arabic poetry was received in Andalusia1).

The book starts with an introduction about the Jews on the Iberian peninsula and their deteriorating relationship with the Visigoths, with the description of the changes brought about by the Arabo-Islamic conquest; and the impact of arabization which, for the Jews, led to an increasing urbanization. It gives an overview of the several ethnic groups of al-Andalus and the different reigns and periods. It describes the role of the famous Jewish courtiers in promoting Jewish cultural life, such as Hasday ibn Shaprût (d. c.

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