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The Approach towards Fate and Divine Revelation in Martial Poetry

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Abstract
This study aims to shed light on the influence of the Arab Hamas poetry on the war poetry of Shmuel Hanagid. Despite the influence in terms of structure and content, there are differences regarding victory in battle. The attitude of love for God and faith in Him as a contributing factor to victory in Hanagid's poetry, compared to fate as a decisive object in battle in the Arab poet. The research constitutes another pillar in the discourse because it concerns Fate and the love of God, themes prominent in abstinence poetry. The image of Fate is at the heart of Samuel Hanagid's (993-1056) martial poetry. He attributed his victories in war to Heaven and to the fate that was pre-ordained by God. Fate and faith in God are the principle cause for victory according to his martial poems. These poems reflect his religious views. Samuel Hanagid differed from Abu Tammām (788–846) in his view and also in the function he fulfilled. Here I wish to point out an interesting finding that has not been discussed in research. Samuel Hanagid was a general, who headed an army and conducted battles on site, experienced the dangers of war personally, and his victories are attributed to God because he believed with deep faith that God determines fate. While the poet Abu Tammām wrote his Hamasa poetry far from the battlefield, without any danger to his life, describes the battles and the heroism in general descriptions, and attributes military victory to the army and the soldiers, and, of course, to the king, who is praised highly in the poem. Analyzing examples from the poetry of both poets allows us to draw conclusions regarding the rest of martial poems, and to identify clearly the poets' differing views of Fate and its influence on human beings.
Key Words: Fate, faith in God, *Ḥamāsa* poetry, martial poems, Divine Revelation, Hanagid, Abu Tammām
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1. Perceptions and beliefs in the martial poems

This article is a comparative study of two major poets who wrote martial poems. Samuel Hanagid, born in Cordoba (993-1056), was a military man and wrote martial poems under the influence of the Arabic *Ḥamāsa* poetry (songs of heroism),[1] mainly that of the Abbassid poet Abu Tammām (788-846). I shall focus on characteristics of martial poems and *Ḥamāsa* poems, addressing the question: How are the Arab ideas of martial poems reflected in Hanagid's poetry? Likewise, I would like to examine how Samuel Hanagid was able to maintain his Jewish identity while incorporating ideas and motifs from Arabic poetry and Islamic culture that were prevalent in Spain, and also to evaluate the influence of the Arabic language on these poems of Hanagid.

Samuel Hanagid perceived his victories as a result of fate. Fate in Arabic is called "*al-dahr*" (الدهر). According to Islam, fate, meaning "Time" is under God's control, and according to the tradition the Prophet Muhammad said: "Do not curse time (*al-dahr*) because I am the Time" (لا تسبوا الدهر فأنا الدهر).
Samuel Hanagid tried in some of his poems to reconcile between the concept of Time-Fate and that of faith in God that recognizes the arbitrary control of Time, but asserts that God controls it. (Tobi 1997: 22-24) The repeated declaration that God controls Time is also found in the work of other poets (Elizur 1994: 4). For example, Moses Ibn Ezra declared "that it [Time] bequeaths by the mouth of God and enriches" (Ibn Ezra 1935: 81, 84, l. 21), and Judah Halevy, in a poem addressed to Ibn Ezra, says, that one should not quarrel with Time or complain about the world because they are in God's hands:

> He who quarrels with Time that did not sin / and with days – but days have no iniquity (Halevy 1946: 101, 154, 3-10).

The sense that complaints about Time are inappropriate because everything is in the hands of Heaven is expressed well in the poem "Time for men will clink a cup and determine" (Hanagid 1985: 41, 143-145).

[1] This was a new genre of poetry that was not a part of Hebrew poetry in Spain, and Samuel Hanagid is the only Jewish poet of the period who wrote martial poems. *Hamasa* poems describe wars and battles that broke out mainly between the Arab tribes in the Arabian Peninsula.

The notably religious character of these poems is most striking: The earth/the world are no more than messengers commanded by God to punish the wicked and reward the righteous.

Readers of the poetry of the Hebrew poets of the Golden Age in Spain may find themselves bewildered in the face of different existential positions, sometimes even contradictory ones, that are expressed in their poems. In poems by the same poet it is possible to find a well-thought-out religious concept and complete faith on the one hand, and secular, hedonistic remarks, occasionally astonishingly promiscuous, on the other (Zemah and Rozen 1983: 11).

In his martial poems, for example, Hanagid expresses complete confidence in God and total faith in the salvation of His chosen. In contrast with these poems, which are very personal, his philosophical poetry speaks impersonally. This poetry presents a world view of pre-ordination, controlled by total despair, with no possibility of turning to God in supplication for salvation, since His decrees are pre-ordained. Man does not control his fate, his power, his life, or his time. He holds on to the present moment, but even that moment passes. What exists will turn into nothing – so what is the value of life and its pleasures? Nevertheless, in many other poems the poet expresses an explicitly hedonistic view of the world (Zemah and Rozen 1983: 11).

1.1 The poetic structure of the martial poems

Even though the poems of Samuel Hanagid were based on Arabic martial poems, they retained a certain uniqueness as opposed to those poems. His poems do not describe sadness or suffering, but, reinforce faith in God and the faith of the poet in victory and his thanks to God for victory in wars and battles conducted under his command (Mirsky 1992: 118-149).

In his various works, Hanagid described the battles and wars in which he took part by virtue of his position as vizier and viceroy in the years 1038-1055 (Schirmann 1979: 149-157). The complex poetic structure is striking in the martial poems of Samuel Hanagid, but they also contain a number of paradoxes on several levels: First of all, on the religious level – the martial poems that Hanagid wrote include "secular" descriptions of the battlefield along with descriptions of fate and strong faith in a God of salvation. Secondly, on the existential level – he presents the struggle between the tension and intellectual effort and the need to give meaning and to understand the events that are transpiring. Finally, on the stylistic level, the martial poems include realistic sections along with descriptions that are far from realistic (Schirmann 1979: 149-157).

At the beginning of the Diwan of poems of Samuel Hanagid there is a notable section of martial poems. The poems document his experiences in battles between 1038 and 1055, as the viceroy to the King of Granada (Schirmann 1979: 149-189; Schirmann 1986: 209-216; Elizur 2004: 371-397) From the descriptions of the battles it appears that Samuel Hanagid came through them in good health and uninjured, and generally speaking victorious. Except for a few short poems included in this section, the poems are all written in the format of the Qasida, long and complex poems that was customary in Arabic poetry from ancient times. A fine and rich description of the unique journey woven in the martial Qasidas of Samuel Hanagid is found in the words of Haim Schirmann: "The epic element is very strong in the poems, fighting is apparently a clearly secular subject, but Hanagid sings about it as a man of true faith. For him these poems were much more than literary works in which he informed his compatriots about his victories. In his martial poems Hanagid described from time to time the political background of the events and described the reasons for the dispute in great detail. The description of the battles is sometimes exaggerated, using daring images taken from the world of imaginary legends. Hanagid occasionally breaks up his descriptions with proverbs or lyrical passages that attempt to give general meaning to the events. Despite upheavals of fate and even failures, in the end justice is victorious (Schirmann 1995: 232).

The poetry of heroism and war earned a special status already in the Jahiliyyah period and was associated with cries for help – *'Ista'atah*' (استغاثة) (Tarabieh 2016: 55-88). Starting in the Abbassid period this genre took a different direction, sounding cries for help and asking for salvation and aid against the enemy in elegies on cities, and it developed further in Andalusia. The *Hamasa* diwan of Abu Tammām and Abu Alfaraj Aljargarni (d. 1039) comprise the basis for the *Hamasa* and heroic poetry of the Andalusian poets.

In the Arabic *Hamasa* martial poetry fighting is part of the social legal system that restricts the cruelty of battle and justifies it. The warriors express their eagerness to go to battle. In the *Hamasa* poetry it is customary to describe the circumstances that led to war. Usually the enemy is presented as the party guilty for causing the outbreak of fighting, which is described as unavoidable, with the purpose of preserving the honor of the injured tribe, including the duty to take vengeance. In the poetry of Samuel Hanagid war is also described as something

forced on the side of the speaker in the poem, and the need to fight is presented sometimes as done on behalf of the entire Jewish People against its enemies, against whom God is also fighting (Schirmann 1995: 194-196).

In the Arabic *Hamasa* martial poetry the fatalism of the warrior and his joy of going into battle in the face of dangers appears as an ideological element and as praiseworthy behavior (Levin 1995: 50). The heroic fighters acclaim their preference for death over life, but their words come to justify going to war and defending their honor and not as a genuine preference. Their declarations of happiness over going into battle are justified as appropriate behavior, only as opposed to running away from danger, which is regarded as contemptible. Judah Alḥarizi expresses his view of death in war in *Maḥberet* 7 ("About two heroes / fighting like two lion-cubs": 83-88) describing fighters on the battlefield. Descriptions of heroes are in fact widespread in Arabic literature, but they are few in medieval Hebrew literature, albeit known to the Jewish reader from classical martial poetry. In Hebrew literature such descriptions before Alḥarizi may be found only in the poetry of Samuel Hanagid, and are not numerous later on (Levin 1968: 343-367; Schippers 1994: 217-243).

1.1.1 Religious Concepts in martial poetry

The subject of faith and fate is prominent in the martial poetry of Samuel Hanagid, who was a God-fearing man of faith. My choice of his martial poetry is unrelated to what earlier researchers have written about him because it is a representative example of the subject under discussion. I am focusing on a comparative study of the different views that appear in the poetry of Hanagid and that of Abu Tammām, who is not regarded as a part of the religious stream to which Hanagid belongs. I agree with Pagis regarding the choice of martial poems. He claims: It is true, several poems, among them great and famous, belong to both genres. The poem "God of Strength" by Samuel Hanagid is similar in character to the long martial poems of the poet, which are personal, secular poems, even though the national and religious element is prominent in them (Pagis 1970: 24). However, "God of Strength" was intended to be recited in public, in order to commemorate salvation from the danger of destruction. More examples could be added, but those poems, on the border between sacred and secular, are the exceptions that prove the rule in the poetry of the period. The (martial) secular poems of Hanagid have a clearer connection to sacred poetry than the poetry of Moses Ibn Ezra (Pagis 1970: 24-25). In my opinion the same conclusions apply to many secular poems.

The religious view of Samuel Hanagid and his faith in God and belief in fate (Time-*eldahar*-الدهر) differs from that of Abu Tammām. His choice as the representative of *Hamasa*-martial poetry is not by chance, as he is the most famous poet in the genre, who composed an anthology of martial poetry entitled *Sha'ar el-Hamasa* – "The Poet of the Wars."

Fate is viewed as a hidden figure, who is revealed as Time-*eldahar.* Both religions believe deeply that everything that happens is determined by Fate. In monotheistic religions Fate has a great influence on the life of man, as revealed in the war poems and sacred poems of Samuel Hanagid, who held a different view from that of Abu Tammām when writing martial poems. The difference in their approaches will be clarified below.

This research is another pillar in the motif of Fate and love of God that appears in the abstinence poetry. The image of Fate is central to the martial poetry of Samuel Hanagid. He attributes his military victories to Heaven and to the Fate determined by God. The motif of Fate and faith in God are a central factor of victory in his martial poetry. His poetry reflects his religious view. Hanagid differs from Abu Tammām in his view of Fate and the function that it serves. Here I would like to point out an interesting finding that has been overlooked in research. Samuel Hanagid was a general, who led an army and conducted battles in the field, encountered dangers himself, and his victories are attributed to God because he believed deeply in God, who determines Fate. Abu Tammām, on the contrary, composed his *Hamasa*-martial poetry far from the battlefield, without any risk to life and limb, he describes the battles and the acts of heroism in general descriptions and attributes victory to the army, the warriors, and even the king, who receives a section of praise and glorification in his poem. Analysis of examples of the poetry of both poets allows us to draw conclusions regarding the rest of martial poems, and to identify clearly the views of the poets regarding Fate and its impact on the life of man.

1.1.2 Things that are preordained from above – Fate

In the period of the Jahiliya the understanding of Fate-Time was pessimistic. Fate was personified as a destructive figure, a symbol of destruction and a fearsome force that destroys everything it its path. The Arabs tend clearly to total fatalism in presenting Fate. Everything that befalls man is beyond his control, Fate determined his judgment a-priori, and there is no escape from it. Complaints about Fate and opposition to it were common before Islam (Alhussein 2019: 265-290).

The belief in Fate is considered one of the important principles of Islam, and belief in God is connected to belief in Fate and in pre-destination (القضاء والقدر). Fate in Islam is a vague subject that is hard to present and express and involves three principles: God's infinite knowledge, the will of God, and His omnipotence. The belief in Fate in the Jahiliya period took on such a confused dimension that it led to an illogical vision of existence, until the advent of Islam presented a more balanced view and belief that revised this vision and transferred it to the field of true practical belief, clarifying the purpose of existence, and stressing the will and responsibility of man in choosing his Fate (Alhussein 2019: 265-290).

Even though neither Arabic nor Hebrew poems lack fatalistic elements[2] or nihilistic elements,[3] based on pagan concepts from the Jahiliyyah period – Time (Fate) or the Universe – Hebrew poetry in the East took care to refrain from all of these, even though sometimes it used pagan motifs rhetorically (Tobi 1995: 24).

In this research I have referred to the concept of Fate in both cultures, Jewish and Muslim. I shall examine the reflection of the subject of Fate in the poems of Samuel Hanagid and Al-Ma'ari.

Similarly, the motif of Time is common in Hebrew literature as it is in its sister Arabic literature in the genre of abstinence, philosophical poems, and poems of complaint and elegies. The feeling is that Time flows and its influence on human life is certain and unavoidable. This influence occurs in both Hebrew and Arabic literature in the Middle Ages, and primarily in Spain. It is in contrast to the human illusion regarding stability and stagnation, an illusion that arises due to the infinity of nature in its permanent cycles. This concept, expressed in Ecclesiastes, creates an illusion of permanence. The stability of the world and the certainty of its existence in the laws of nature, lead to the thought that also man, who is a part of nature, could exist forever. Since man in his existence in the world is subject to the laws of nature, and he is a part of the universe, he expects that his existence will continue for a long period, together with the infinite cycle of nature, i.e., the cycles of the seasons, nature (withering and regeneration) and working the land (planting and harvesting); or also the chronological cycle of the months of the year, Sabbaths and festivals etc. (Malachi 1993-1994: 111).

There ae some examples from the Arabic, that teach about the parallel and similarity in style regarding Time. 'وأما الزمان فيَرْفع أقواماً ويضع اقواماً وكلّهم يَذُم زمانَه لأنه يُبْلِي جديدَهم ويُفرّق عديدهم ويهْرم صغيرَهم ويهلك كَبيرَهم' ("And regarding Time – it raises people and casts them down, and every one of them will prove that his time will make the new grow old, and dismember the many, and age the young, and bring death to the aged" [Levin 1962: 77]).

In ancient Arabic poetry, one of the central topics is the concept of القدر or القضاء – Time. This pre-occupation reached Arabic poetry in the Islamic period and from there Hebrew poetry. The concept is that Fate is inevitable and cannot be changed.

In Arabic poetry, Fate is usually personified, having sons and daughters and other family members, all of whom impact on man harmfully. One of the expressions of personification that is most common is بنات الزمن, meaning, of course, the ravages of Time. The motif of Fate is common in Arabic poetry, in which not only Time harms man, but also the children of Time - أبناء الزمن – as if Time has children, who also do ill to man. This motif penetrated Hebrew poetry and can be found in many medieval Hebrew poems (Elizur 2004: 184).

1.1.3 Al-Ma'ari's Concept of Fate

Samuel Hanagid's pessimistic poems about Fate are concentrated in his collection *Ben Kohelet.* In some of these poems he merged a pessimistic declaration about the evils of Time (Fate), and a declaration of faith with a clearly religious conclusion. Three inter-related motives can be discerned here: Death, Time (Fate), and the Universe. Hanagid's intention in these poems is to bridge the gap between the view of Time (Fate) and faith in God's rule. He perceives that complaining about time is inappropriate, and everything is in God's hands (Elizur 2004: 172).

Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarī (973-1057) was a poet and philosopher, who lived in Syria in the Abbasid period, which was known for its philosophical, social, and scientific flourishing. Due to a severe childhood illness, he lost his sight. His difficult life influenced his pessimistic view of life and his writing. He had a unique philosophy and

[2] This applies to the belief that man is chained to a pre-ordained order of events in the world, i.e., belief in an absolute Fate that determines one's life.

[3] The philosophical concept that negates all values and traditional institutions and adopts a form of thinking that rejects faith and negates the need for it in order to achieve fulfillment or salvation. Sometimes this concept is identified with pessimistic philosophy, extreme skepticism, and cynicism.

original point of view. His writings are considered classics of poetry and philosophy to this day. He was considered a heretic, and his ideas upset the conservative religious establishment, the *ulama* (العلماء), but it was unable to influence his thinking. His poetry and his ethical teachings found many supporters, who streamed to Maarat al-Numan, where he was born, from all the Muslim lands.

As I pointed out above, al-Maʿarī distinguished between God's rule and Fate; he regarded God as an unfair ruler, who cannot be defeated. Man exists only temporarily in God's book (اللوح المحفوظ), and it is impossible for a man to know or guess what will happen during his lifetime (al-Maʿarī 1961: 315).

وَلا حَياتي فَهَل لي بَعدُ تَخييرُ ما بِاختِياري ميلادي وَلا هَرَمي

'I was not born and have not grown old by my choice, and even my life is not mine to choose'

وَلا إقامَةَ إِلّا عَن يَدَي قَدَرٍ وَلا مَسيرَ إِذا لَم يُقضَ تَسييرُ.

'And there is no place to live except in the hands of Fate, there is no progress unless prescribed from above'

Maʿarī sees that Time (Fate) is not guilty for what happens to people, but people themselves are wicked and guilty: (Maʿarī 1961: 88)

فَما أَذنَبَ الدَهرُ الَّذي أَنتَ لائِمٌ وَلَكِن بَنو حَوّاءَ جاروا وَأَذنَبوا

'Time (Fate) should not be blamed, for the matter, but the children of Eve brought sin and caused harm to themselves'

Both poets show how Fate can constitute the problems in human life. When many people act inappropriately, their Fate can be changed. Both maintain that Fate and the vicissitudes of Time are interrelated and bring life to an ignominious end. In his words Samuel Hanagid shows how Fate, on the one hand, constitutes a problem, mainly towards old age and death, when he says in the poem "Is my comrade of bitter heart" he senses the problem of old age as part of Fate. On the other hand, despite his frustration with Fate, we can discern in Hanagid's view of God and Fate that man will die in justice according to God's judgement. This view conforms to what Tobi writes "the meaning of absolute justice is that God acts with absolute justice towards man, and his fate is in his hands" (Tobi 1997: 197-208).

1.5 The Importance of Belief in God

The view of Fate is oftentimes a product of how a person has grown up and his education. That reveals an essential distinction between the two poets. Samuel Hanagid grew up in a religious home and was raised according to the commandments and beliefs of the Jewish religion. In addition, Hanagid can see the good besides the bad. He clearly regards Fate as a bad thing, negative and bitter. However, he maintains that if one prays enough to God, he can obtain salvation or mercy. The problem of Fate is a motif in Hanagid's poems, but conversely, speaking to God, as a figure who can aid one to overcome the difficulty and danger is very great, and notable in the poem "A Bitter Day of Distress." From his perspective security can arrive from God's word at a time of trouble.

The Jew understands that God has greater power than all the forces of nature. Therefore, he has to know God's will more than his knowledge of nature itself. At the same time, in Greek theology and cosmology the assumption is that everything that occurs in the universe conforms to the logic given to man, in order for him to be able to understand his place in the world and operate in conformity to it. Medieval secular poetry also refers to the cycle of the months of the year, for example, Judah Alḥarizi in his *Taḥkemoni*, Part Five, "When twelve poets sit and raise their voice about each month." The poets, each in turn, praise one month of the year, starting with Nisan until Adar. They include in their poems both the life of every month and its climate, and also describe the activity of wine-drinking together with a girl in the garden. (Nir and Vazuelos 2019: 355-368)

2. The perception of fate in the martial poems of Hanagid

The poems of Samuel Hanagid are similar in content and atmosphere to the Biblical
book for which each collection is named. The subject of Fate is discussed in most of his various kinds of poetry: (Elizur 204: 371)

- *Ben Tehilim* (Son of Psalms), "A bitter day of distress."
- Martial Poems, "God of strength."
- Lamentations, "Is my comrade of bitter heart."
- Poems of *Ben Mishlei* (Son of Proverbs), "Very heavy."
- Poems of *Ben Qohelet* (Son of Ecclesiastes), "Bad time."

Samuel Hanagid expressed his protest against death, which he regarded as immoral and therefore he does not accept it. His advice is to do everything possible in order to escape it, and it should be regarded as inevitable, but not to be accepted. He sees man as having only what he possesses at a given moment- the past and the future do not belong to him. Man is a temporal creature, apparently Time is his, but in fact as soon as a moment has passed

it is no longer his and the future clearly not. It is impossible to learn from the past because it is impossible to know the future. (Hanagid 1981: 169)

אֵלִי, בָּרָאתָ, גַּם תִּבְרָא / עַד-אֵין מָקוֹם וּלְאֵין שָׁעָה.
'My God, you have created and will create / until there is neither place nor time'
יוֹם אֶעְמוֹד בְּיִן אֱלֶה לָדִין - / חוּסָה וֶהְיֵה לִי לִישׁוּעָה!
'One day I shall stand in judgement - / have mercy and grant salvation!'
מָה-אָנִי אוֹ פִּשְׁעִי נֶגֶדְךָ? / אַל תִּקַּחֵנִי בְּפִשְׁיעָה!
'What am I or my transgression against you? / Do not take me as a sinner!'
אִם הֲרַעְתִּי אַל - תָּרַע לִי, / כִּי לֹא תוֹעִיל לָךְ הָרָעָה!)
'If I have done bad, God – do me no bad, / for the bad will not help you!'

The poem "She said: Rejoice" is an example of Hanagid's approach to death. (Hanagid 1993: 169)

אָמְרָה: "שְׂמַח, בַּעֲבוּר הִגִּיעַךְ אֵל אֱלַי / שָׁנִים חֲמִשִּׁים בְּעוֹלָמֵךְ – וְלֹאה יָדְעָה
'She said ""Rejoice, for you have reached God / fifty years in your world –and she did not know'
כִּי אֵין חֲלוּקָה בְּעֵינַי בֵּין יְמוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר / עָבְרוּ, וּבֵינוֹת יְמֵי נֹחַ אֲשֶׁר אֶשְׁמְעָה
'That there is no difference in my eyes between my days / that have passed, and between the days of comfort, which I shall make known'
אֵין לִי בְּעוֹלָם לְבַד שָׁעָה אֲנִי בָהּ, וְהִיא / תַּעְמֹד כְּרֶגַע – וְאַחַר כֵּן כְּעָב נָסְעָה
'I have nothing in the world but the hour that I am in it, and she [my soul] / shall stay a moment – and afterwards vanish like a cloud'

It should be noted that in many of his poems Hanagid deals with the subject of death. In the greater part of them the poet stands in protest against that unclear thing, inhuman and immoral, death. In these poems the poet does not compromise with death, nor does he accept its verdict, whether because of love or because of lack of any alternative. These poems were written from the attitude of cleaving to life, which is a unique experience, to what is here and now, to the material. They express attachment to the living present and refusal to accept instead of it some past or abstract and unknown future, that are not here and now. There fore these poems have a character that a modern reader can only refer to as "existential" (Zemah and Rozen1983: 39). The poem "She said: Rejoice" expresses the despair that comes from the belief that a person has nothing other than his present time alone. The speaker uses the first person and says: My past is no longer part of myself. The past does not add up and increase, like property that mounts up. The past is dead and foreign to me. I am my present, the same material here and now and "there is no difference in my eyes between my days / that have passed, and between the days of comfort, which I shall make known." At the end of the poem the image is one of travel, which was an accepted metaphor for death at that time. Nevertheless, the context of a cloud, standing and traveling, the image of the elusive present as a cloud is a powerful philosophical context. The present is compared to a cloud moving ahead, and we travel behind it. Whoever does not travel with the present remains in the past, i.e. dies. He does not have "the hour that I am in it," which is the unique present. The present, compared to a cloud, moves on in a movement by which we remain in non-existence, i.e., nothingness. All that exists in the world is nothing but expired time. That is how the Mutazila (المعتزلة) school, which was dominant in the time of Samuel Hanagid, perceives Time, particularly in the Ash'aria (الاشعرية) form that sees man as having free choice, but no possibility to create anything, and unable to distinguish been good and evil.

"A Bitter Day of Distress" - יוֹם צַר וּמָצוֹק

"A Bitter Day of Distress" is a very personal poem by Samuel Hanagid, which he wrote in his youth. The poem is based mainly on a prophetic dream that he experienced as a child. (Hanagid1985 [Ben Tehilim]: 3)

It is difficult to classify the poem according to the accepted genres of medieval Hebrew poetry. The position of the speaker, in which he puts himself at the center of the poem and sees himself as a major factor, receiving promises from Heaven, is reminiscent of poems of glorification – a very common form in Arabic poetry, but this is no ordinary glorification: The poet does not praise himself, but he focuses on an external event – a promise and prophecy of rescue and future success stemming from God. The poem addresses God. However, it is not an ordinary poem of prayer, since, as opposed to sacred poetry, it does not praise God, nor does it ask God for anything or thank Him. It is a personal poem that was not written according to any accepted traditional literary form (Elizur 2004: 372).

יוֹם צַר וּמָצוֹק אֲנִי זוֹכֵר בְּשׂוֹרָתְךָ / טוֹב אַתָּה וְצֶדֶק בְּמוֹ פִּיךָ וּבִלְבָבְךָ!
'A bitter day of distress I remember your good tidings / You are good and justice fills your mouth and your heart!'

אֶזְכֹּר בְּשׂוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר הִיא לִי לְנֹחַם בְּבוֹא/ צָרָה, וְאוֹחִיל לִישׁוּעָתְךָ וְשִׁגּוּבָתְךָ׃

'I shall remember your good tiding that comforts me when / distress comes, and I will hope for your salvation and your support.'

תִּשְׁלַח לְעַבְדְּךָ, וְהוּא שׁוֹכֵב בְּעַרְשׂוֹ וְהוּא/ נַעַר, שְׁרָפִים לְבַשְּׂרֵנִי בְּרֹב טוּבְךָ.

'Send to your servant, who lay in his crib and he is a lad / angels to reveal to me your great good.'

יָשְׁבוּ לְנֶגְדִּי, וּמִיכָאֵל אֲזַי שָׂח׃ כֹּה/ אָמַר ד׳, אֲשֶׁר יָרִיב לְךָ רִיבָךְ׃

'They sat opposite me, and Michael spoke: / Thus said the Lord, who will fight for you your fight.'

כִּי תַעֲבֹר יוֹם בְּמֵי צָרָה – אֲנִי אִתְּךָ,/ לֹא יִשְׁטְפוּךָ נְהָרוֹת יוֹם קָרֹב אוֹיְבָךְ,

'When a day of distress will come – I am with you. Rivers will not flood over you when your enemies approach.'

גַּם גַּבְרִיאֵל חֲבֵרוֹ בִּשְּׂרַנִי אֲשֶׁר/ שָׁמַע בְּמֶרְכַּבְתְּךָ עָלַי, וּבִסְבִיבָתְךָ׃

'Gabriel his comrade also informed me what he heard in your chariot and around you about me.'

כִּי תֵלְכָה-לָּךְ בְּמוֹ אֵשׁ – לֹא תִכָּוֶה לָךְ,/ אֹמַר לְלַהַב וְלֹא יִבְעַר לְעוֹלָם בָּךְ.

'When you enter fire, you will not be burned, / I shall say to the flame never to burn you.'

זֹאת הַבְּשׂוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר אֶתְמֹךְ כְּחֶרֶב בְּיָד,/ אֶרְאֶה חֲרָבוֹת וְאֶשָּׁעֵן עָלַי חַרְבָּךְ!

'That is the good tidings on which I rely like the sword in my hand, / I shall see swords, but rely on your sword.' (Hanagid 1985 [Ben Tehilim]: 3)

The poet opens with the motif of Time, focusing on days of crisis and danger "a bitter day of distress." He addresses God: When a day of distress, danger, and hardship comes, I recall your good tidings and your promise and I rely on them. He repeats this idea in the second verse: When distress and danger come, I shall remember the good tidings that you gave me in a prophecy, and these good tidings will comfort me at a time of distress. I shall hope and pray for your salvation and rescue.

The poet addresses God and says to him that in order to transmit to him the good tidings and the prophetic promise on which he relies at a time of distress, he sent me angels while, as a youth, I lay in my bed, to inform me of a prophecy, a vision promised by God and by his grace not they will rescue him, but God himself in his "great good." That is in the language of prayer. The angels, Michael and Gabriel, sat opposite the speaker. The angel Michael opened his words with the good tidings and informed me: God sent – transmitted a promise – a prophecy, that he will fight your rival.

The poet continues, explaining the promise and says: If you are in danger and distress, the rivers of distress will not flood over you. Here he speaks metaphorically. According the Samuel Hanagid, the day your enemy approaches (קָרֵב qerav) is the day of battle (קָרָב qerav) which he experienced frequently due to his position at court.

The poet stresses that the promise came from the angel Gabriel, who was the second bearer of good tidings, and who heard about Samuel in the vicinity of the throne of honor. The continuation of the promise, the prophecy, the good tidings – if you enter fire, metaphorically, enter danger, you will not be burned by it because God in his promise will protect you and the flame will not harm you.

The last verse is a kind of circular repeat that summarizes the good tidings. The poet concludes, saying that it is the good tidings promised to him by angels as cited in the previous verses. He stresses that he relies on this promise like a protective sword, and when he faces swords, weapons, and enemies, in battles and wars, he relies on his trust in God.

2.1 A Study of Two Martial Poems by Samuel Hanagid and Abu Tammām

Samuel Hanagid, the general, wrote many martial poems, and I shall focus on two long poems "God of Strength" (Hanagid 1985: 6) and "In My Heart is Warmth" (Hanagid 1985: 6) which were composed according to the

convention and under the influence of the *Hamasa* poetry of Abu Tammām in his famous poem "The Conquest of Amorium/'Amoriyyah".[4]

The poem "**God of Strength**" (*Elohai 'Oz*), which Samuel Hanagid composed after his victory over the King of Almaria in a narrow mountain pass.

This was one of the first martial poems written by Hanagid. It is written in the form of a Qasida, which is evident in its structure: an opening, a description of the background to the battle, a description of the battle itself, and finally a conclusion giving praise to God. It is spread over 150 verses, clearly alluding to the number of Psalms in the Bible. Within the poem are many features of martial poetry and it is possible to examine Hanagid's martial poems as the "psalms in number" (II, 139).

As mentioned above, one of the characteristics of Samuel Hanagid's martial poetry is his appeal to God. Here one may see how he calls out to "He who answers in time of distress," referring to God. "And all who shout, who call in Your name, in the name of He who answers in time of distress, shouts and calls."

In the framework of the poem, it is possible to see the influence of martial poems that refer to a dual promise expressed throughout the poem. First of all, the narrative of the speaker to his readers about the darkness described in the poem, and the speaker's difficulty to grapple with the event described in the poem, descriptions that are meant to lead to salvation, which he promises to his readers. Secondly, God's promise of protection and aid to Hanagid, when he was young, that accompanies him in all his quests. And an additional promise, that of the speaker on the basis of God's promise to redeem the people (Zinder I, 2007: 160).

The purpose of the three promises in the poem was to illustrate to the readers God's promise to redeem His people on the Day of Redemption. That is to say, the poem is not a martial poem in terms of war, but a poem of the redemption promised to believers in God, that salvation is close, one only has to wait and to continue believing in God by way of using "the benefit" that God promised to Hanagid in his youth, which he describes in the sixth verse of the poem:

לְמַעַן כִּי פְעָלֶיךָ מְרוֹמִים, וְיוֹם תִּגְאַל - גְּאֻלָּתְךָ בְּהִירָה,

"For the sake of your work in Heaven, and the Day of Redemption – your redemption is clear," (verse 2)

וְהַטּוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר לִי, אֵל, עָשִׂיתָה - עָלַי כָּל טוֹב, שָׁמַעְתִּיהוּ, יְתֵרָה.

"And the benefit for me, O God, You have made – all good for me, I have heard, more than enough." (verse 6)

Like in medieval Arabic poetry the effort of Hanagid to implement the conventions of heroic poetry (*Ḥamāsa*), converting them to divine promises and their fulfillment is evident. As in the poetry of heroism, also in martial poems of Hanagid, the readers understand what is happening to the heroic figure, the general or the king chosen by the people to fight for it, who are sung praises for the deeds and strength to overcome their enemies (Sperl 2009: 79-97). But, in the poem "God of Strength" Hanagid praises the figure of the hero and general who fights bitter enemies, in which the general is God and not a human figure, a description that illustrates the heroism of God and His power to defeat enemies, and Samuel Hanagid's deep faith in God and not in the strength of a general or a king (Hanagid 1985: 20; Tobi 2003: 3-26).

אָז לָבַשׁ לְבוּשׁ חֲמָה וְיָצָא / כְּיוֹם פַּרְעֹה וְחֵילוֹ הַצְּלוּחִים

'So he put on a warm clothing and went out / like on the day of Pharaoh and his clear force (verse 66)'

וְנִגְלָה - לֹא בְעַד חַלּוֹן וְסָתֶר / וְהִשְׁגִּיחַ - וְלֹא אַחַר כְּתָלִים

'And was revealed – not through a window and hidden / and watched – and not behind the walls (verse 67)'

וְהִתְעַלָּה עֲלֵי צָרָיו, וְהָיוּ / כְּמֹץ גֹּרֶן, וְנָבְלוּ שָׁם כָּעָלִים...

'And went up on his cities / and they were like chaff on the threshing floor, and they wilted there like leaves… (verse 68)'

The emphasis on God's might and his victory in the poem was meant in fact to describe God's promise to Hanagid, and the loyalty of the King of Granada to Hanagid himself, protecting him from enemies who seek to harm him (Scheindlin 2011: 55-69). That is, God aids Hanagid and sees that he meets with fighters and an army

[4] Amorium, in Arabic: 'Amoriyyah, a city in western Asia Minor (Turkey). The conquest of Amorium was not only a major military disaster and a personal defeat for Theophilos, but also a traumatic event for the Byzantines, and it echoed in later literature.

that protects him as part of the loyalty of Hanagid towards the ruler, and because of the loyalty of the ruler towards Hanagid, God comes in aid and decides the battle.

The stress on the divine promise to save the people is reinforced in the poem mainly after the description of the battle. He departs from the personal matter and goes over to the general subject: how to give thanks to God and pointing out the promise after the description of the battle strengthening Hanagid's faith that after the darkness will come days of light and salvation (Hanagid 1985:14). This idea is based on the Arabic proverb "with hardship will be relief" – an idea expressed in the Quran, when God saved the Prophet Muhammad and his associates in battles at the beginning of Islam (Qur'ān, Surāh-ash-Sharḥ 94: 5).

מְמֻלָּאָה כְּחֻמִּים בַּחֲרִיזָה וְכִזְמִירוֹת תְּהִלִּים בִּסְפִירָה

' Filled like the truth in a string and like the Psalms in number.' (verse 139)

The purpose of the analogy to the Psalms was to strengthen and reinforce the restraint that is needed in time of war and the fear of battles, and the way to succeed in battle is through faith and trust in God by reading Psalms, that describe the battles of King David, and his trust in God in times of darkness.

On this basis, it is possible to understand that the war poem does not describe war between the king and other armies, but between Ibn Abbas and God. And therefore, the result of the war is clear – God is the victor and leads in battle. When Hanagid describes Ibn Abbas as one of the enemies of the People of Israel, fighting with Israel, without knowing that he will lose in the war thanks to a trap that God has lain for him, as He did to the rest of the enemies of Israel:

וְקָם הַצַּר – וְקָם הַצּוּר עָלָיו תָּקוּם, בְּקוּם צוּר, הִיצִירָה

'And when the foe rises up – and the Rock rises against him / and how could the created rise up against the creator? (verse 51)'

The Rock (*zur*), is God, who rises up against the foe (*zar*) – the enemy. However, according to Hanagid, the foe himself is raised by God as a creation of the creator. And therefore, according to Hanagid it is impossible for a creation of the Creator to rise up against God and be able to win in battle against his own Creator.

And after Hanagid explains that the war is between a creation of the Creator and God himself, and therefore, the results of the war are known ahead of time, the poet describes the warriors in the field as being moved and not as moving on their own. The warriors in the poem are drawn into battle and mixed into it so that they seek their own death:

וְקָצוּ הַגִּבָּרִים הַגְּבִירִים/ בְּחַיֵּיהֶם, וְהַמִּיתָה בְּחוּרָה

'And the brave men gave up / on their lives, and preferred death. (verse 66)'

And thus, finally, the speaker leads the reader to his internal feelings and to his "black soul," which he compares to the sun rising in the time of war:

וְהַיּוֹם – יוֹם עֲרָפֶל וַחֲשֵׁכָה, / וְהַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, כְּמוֹ לִבִּי, שְׁחֹרָה

,And the day – a day of fog and darkness, / and the sun, like my heart is black. (verse 57)'

Verses that describe the battles break the boundaries of martial poems and refashion the events and their developmet as timeless, and spaceless. Finally, in the verses describing the fighting itself, the poem gets back on track and uses language that makes it possible to analyze the battles and the antagonists as enemies. As in verse 70:

מְשַׂנְאִים יִשְׁפְּכוּ דָמִים כְּמַיִם בְּיוֹם צַר – וַאֲנִי אֶשְׁפְּכָה עֲתָרָה

'Enemies spill blood like water on a vibrant day – and I pour out a prayer. (verse 70)'

That is to say, the conflict is between the good and the bad, life and death. And after that, Hanagid returns to God's promise to protect both him and Israel.

Folllowing the description of the promise, Hanagid focusses on his prayer to God and his petition for help, while praising and glorifying God for saving him from his enemies:

וְכָל לָשׁוֹן תְּמַלֵּא מַרְנֵנָה / וְגִילָה עַל גְּאֻלָּתִי בְּשִׁירָה

'And every tongue will be full of exultation / and rejoicing over my salvation in song. (verse 141)'

Analyses of the martial poem "God of Strength" describe the artistry in Samuel Hanagid's poetry and emphasize the unique linguistic quality of his battle descriptions that are evidence of the scars that he retained after the war, expressed in his poetry. Regarding this, Elizur points out that the poem does not describe scars that remained in the life of Hanagid, but the reality in which he lived, based on his imagination and his use of both past tense and present tense (Elizur 2004, II : 377-380).

According to Levin, Hanagid's use of biblical motifs together with motifs from Arabic poetry of heroism that describe warriors rushing into battle to death, testify to a certain extent to the foreignness of the poem, and to the division between Arab and Jew and the message of Hanagid regarding faith in God (Levin 1968: 343-355).

In fact, this poem can be analyzed in two ways: First of all, a description of going out to battle and the time of war itself in a totally imaginary manner, including a magical and legendary atmosphere which Hanagid attributes to God (Schirmann 1995:195-196), which is foreign to Jewish motifs in the Middle Ages, and even removed and foreign to Judaism in general, much as they are foreign to Hanagid himself. For example, on one hand the

warriors go out aware that they are going to their death, and on the other hand, Hanagid wants to be saved and turns to God for help, praising and glorifying Him (Elizur 2004: 377).

Another interpretation of this poem, that of Levin, sees it as a description of the scars and difficulties of Samuel Hanagid in the battles, including his identification and belonging to the Jewish People and his use of Jewish motifs and faith in God, who will save his people through the darkness until redemption. For example, his comparison of the blood of those who fall on the battlefield to the blood of sacrifices in the Temple and thanksgiving offerings (Levin 1996: 45).

According to Levin, Samuel Hanagid's return to the battlefields in poetry reflects the soul of the poet and his dependence on Jewish motifs that reinforce the essence of the poem in every verse. Thus, he displays his soul to the reader as one who is faithful to Jewish tradition even in situations of chaos and war. A similar position may be observed in Yitzhaki's interpretation that sees Hanagid's martial poems as representing him as a Jewish poet connected to his Jewish roots, and this despite the numerous verses in the poem that describe battle scenes. (Yitzhaki 1983: 30-40). The battlefield described in the poem bears witness to Samuel Hanagid's lack of order and lack of uniformity, in the end crystallizing to create an ideology based on the war injuries he sustained, and his reliance on God and His salvation were meant, in fact, to heal the battle scars by reinforcing the ways of God and shaping his identity.

The concept of the poem, describing Hanagid's soul and the difficulties with which he struggled at the time of battle until forming his identity and his reliance on God allude to the heroic, Arabic poetry (*Ḥamāsa*), in which a king is described as leading an army in God's war until the divine revelation, which the heroes of the Arabic poetry attain.

The second martial poem, "In My Heart is Warmth," is a lengthy poem of 64 verses, in the form of an Arabic Qasida, divided into four sections: ll. 1-17: an elegy about the exile of the people of Israel and a prayer for redemption, ll. 18-24: self-encouragement to thank God for the victory; ll. 25-58: description of the battle; ll. 59-64: dedication of the poem to God.

בְּלִבִּי חֹם לִמְפְקַד הַנְּעוּרִים, וְעַל הָגְלַת יְהוּדָה – אוּר וְאוּרִים

'In my heart is warmth for the census of youth / and for the exile of Judah – fire and light (l. verse 1)'

וְאָז אָבִיא לְךָ כָלִיל וְאַעַל עָלֵי מִזְבַּחֲךָ אֵילִים וּפָרִים

'And then I shall bring you a burnt offering / and raise on your altar deer and bulls (l. 17)'

In ll. verses 18-24: self-encouragement to give thanks to God:

הֲקִיצֵנִי לְבָבִי מִשְּׁנָתִי בְּעוֹד לַיִל וְלִי דַבֵּר דְּבָרִים

'Wake my heart from my sleep / while it is still night and speak words to me (l. verse 18)'

וְחָבֵשׁ יוֹם קְרָב עַל נִזְרְךָ מִן יְשׁוּעָתוֹ וְעֶזְרָתוֹ נָזְרִים

"And dress for a day of battle on your tiara / from his salvation and his help (verse l.24)"

In ll. 25-28: a description of the battle:

בְּקוּמְךָ אֶל קְרָב רַבִּים וְרוֹמִים, וְעַמִּים מִמְּךָ רַבִּים, וְשָׂרִים

'When you rise to battle many and exalted / and peoples more numerous than you and ministers (l. verse 25)'

לְצוּרִי אֶעֱשֶׂה שִׁיר, יַעֲלֶה עַלבְּנֵי הַשִּׁיר, וְיִהְיֶה שִׁיר לְשִׁירִים

'To my Rock I shall make a song, that will surpass / verses and will be a song of songs (l. verse 58)'

In ll. 59-64 the dedication of the poem to God:

וְיִלְכוּ יוֹנְקוֹתָיו כַּלְּבָנוֹן, וְעַד שְׁנְעָר יְשַׁלַּח קְצִירִים

'His boughs will spread out to Lebanon / and as far as Sinar send out its harvesting (l. verse 59)'

אֲשֶׁר יֵטִיב לְעוֹשֶׂה טוֹב, וְיֵרַע לְכָל עוֹשֶׂה וְכָל דּוֹבֵר שְׁקָרִים

'Who rewards whoever does good and will know / and will know whoever does and all who speak lies (l. verse 64)'

בְּלִבִּי חֹם לִמְפְקַד הַנְּעוּרִים, וְעַל הָגְלַת יְהוּדָה – אוּר וְאוּרִים (ש' 1)
וְאָז אָבִיא לְךָ כָלִיל וְאַעַל עָלֵי מִזְבַּחֲךָ אֵילִים וּפָרִים. (ש' 17)
בשורות 24-18: עידוד עצמי להודות לאל על הניצחון:
הֲקִיצֵנִי לְבָבִי מִשְּׁנָתִי בְּעוֹד לַיִל וְלִי דַבֵּר דְּבָרִים: (ש' 18)
וְחָבֵשׁ יוֹם קְרָב עַל נִזְרְךָ מִן יְשׁוּעָתוֹ וְעֶזְרָתוֹ נָזְרִים, (ש' 24)
בשורות 58-25: תיאור הקרב:
בְּקוּמְךָ אֶל קְרָב רַבִּים וְרוֹמִים, וְעַמִּים מִמְּךָ רַבִּים, וְשָׂרִים (ש' 25)
לְצוּרִי אֶעֱשֶׂה שִׁיר, יַעֲלֶה עַל בְּנֵי הַשִּׁיר, וְיִהְיֶה שִׁיר לְשִׁירִים, (ש' 58)
בשורות 64-59: הקדשת השיר לאל:
וְיִלְכוּ יוֹנְקוֹתָיו כַּלְּבָנוֹן, וְעַד שְׁנְעָר יְשַׁלַּח קְצִירִים, (ש' 59)

אֲשֶׁר יֵטִיב לְעוֹשֶׂה טוֹב, וְיֵרַע לְכָל עוֹשֶׂה וְכָל דּוֹבֵר שְׁקָרִים. (ש' 64)

In his martial poems, Samuel Hanagid uses figurative language and images that belong to the battlefield. The images are many and particularly in the section that describes the battlefield gloriously and proudly, e.g.:

1. גדולים כליל 2. חיילים כהררים 3. חם לבב כאש תבער 4. רום לב כשמיים 5. קומה כתמרים 6. ובנטירה כמו גמל 7. ואיבה כמו נחש 8. וקטב כמריריים 9. פיהו חד כסירים 10. גבותם כארמונים 11. כולם יצעדו למות כהולך בחדוה לארות צוף מייערים 12. וגזרה בחצרות כמלכים 13. ושתם בקרבות כשבורים 14. גביהם לבנים כלבנה 15. עתה הם כמו כושים שחורים 16. כל שואג ביום איד ככפירים.

1. Big like night, (2) soldiers like hills, (3) hot of heart like a burning fire, (4) noble in heart like the heavens, (5) tall like palm trees, (6) protective like a camel, (7) hostile like a snake, (8) deadly like pestilence, (9) tall like castles, (11) All will march to death like one walking happily to gather nectar from honeysuckles, (12) and cutting through courts like kings, (13) and drinking them in battles like the broken ones, (14) their backs white like the moon, (15) now they are like black Cushites, (16) all shouting on a festival like lion cubs.

2.1.1. A Study of a Martial Poem by Abu Tammām

The poem 'The sword is more reliable than books' (السَّيْفُ أَصْدَقُ إِنْبَاءً مِنَ الكُتُب) is considered one of the most famous poems that left a strong echo in Arabic literature (Altabrizi 1937: 40-45). This is a poem of praise – a Qasida – consisting of 71 verses that was written after a victory and served as an example for the martial poems of Samuel Hanagid.

Abu Tammām sings about the conquest of Amorium/'Amoriyyah, which took place on August 12, 838, by Caliph Al-Mu'taṣim (842-882), after the Byzantines attacked the Muslim city of Zabeteria[5] taking captive a Muslim woman who called on the caliph to release her from Byzantine captivity.

Abu Tammām opens the poem with a satire against the Manichaeans, who observed the stars and warned the Caliph and advised him to postpone the date of his attack on 'Amoriyyah. The Qasida consists of four sections, each devoted to a certain subject.

In verses 1-4 the poet glorifies power and warfare and criticizes those who make predictions. In the first line he uses a metaphor that omits the imaginary (man), but cites his quality "the truth". The sword determines the result of the battle, and not looking at the stars. In the second line he denies the possibility of obeying the black predictions made on dark nights compared to the brightness of swords gleaming on a dark night. To strengthen his argument, the poet uses two rhetorical devices characteristic of the battlefield: white metals for sharp swords, and black curtains for the words of the prophets and also the converse pair and the contrast between the colors:

Metals/white swords (بِيضُ الصَفائِح) // black curtains (سودُ الصَحائِف).

In the third verse Abu Tammām uses figurative language when he compares lances to bright stars in the heavens. The combatants realize who is the victor and who the defeated by the sounds of the swords and lances used in the battle. The fourth verse mocks with irony the gamble of the would-be prophets, believing that all of their predictions are falsehoods and lies.

السَيفُ أَصدَقُ إنباءً مِنَ الكُتُب في حَدِّهِ الحَدُّ بَينَ الجِدِّ وَاللَعِب

'The sword is more reliable than books, its blade distinguishes between seriousness and folly'

بِيضُ الصَفائِحِ لا سودُ الصَحائِفِ في مُتونِهِنَّ جَلاءُ الشَكِّ وَالرِيَبِ

'The white [metal] swords and not the black curtains eliminate doubt and suspicion'

وَالعِلمُ في شُهُبِ الأَرماحِ لامِعَةً بَينَ الخَميسَينِ لا في السَبعَةِ الشُهُبِ

'Knowledge of the meteors of the spears rising between the two Thursdays, not in the seven meteors'

أَينَ الروايَةُ بَل أَينَ النُجومُ وَما صاغوهُ مِن زُخرُفٍ فيها وَمِن كَذِبِ

"Where is the story, and where are the stars, and their ornaments and their lies?"

Verses 5-7 express the euphoria of a great victory, so great that even poetry and prose cannot describe it. The gates of heaven opened before this victory, and the earth was revealed in its finest clothing. The poet expresses his joy and astonishment over the conquest of 'Amoriyyah, considered among Muslims to be the fulfillment of a dream. The victory is as sweet as honey mixed with camel's milk.

فَتحُ الفُتوحِ تَعالى أَن يُحيطَ بِهِ نَظمٌ مِنَ الشِعرِ أَو نَثرٌ مِنَ الخُطَبِ

'It was an exalted conquest worthy to be surrounded by compositions of poetry or sermons in prose'

فَتحٌ تَفَتَّحُ أَبوابُ السَماءِ لَهُ وَتَبرُزُ الأَرضُ في أَثوابِها القُشُبِ

'A conquest for which the gates of heaven open and the earth goes out in beautiful holiday clothing'

يا يَومَ وَقعَةِ عمورية اِنصَرَفَت مِنكَ المُنى حُفَّلاً مَعسولَةَ الحَلَبِ

[5] A town in the Turkish district.

'Oh! On the day of the 'Amoriyyah incident your hopes ceased and were replaced by joy as sweet as milk with honey'

Verses 8-10 describe the destruction and devastation that befell the city. The caliph set the city on fire and even the rocks could not withstand the fire, and the residents abandoned the city, while the Muslims stood strong. This section presents the pictures of destruction and flames that turned night into day, and it was as if the sun had not set. The great victory was achieved thanks to God, and the faith and confidence in God helped the caliph to overcome and defeat the infidels.

لَقَد تَرَكتَ أَميرَ المُؤمِنينَ بِها لِلنارِ يَوماً ذَليلَ الصَخرِ وَالخَشَبِ

'Behold the prince of the faithful, you left the city humiliated, the fire of war devouring the rocks and trees'

غادَرتَ فيها بَهيمَ اللَيلِ وَهوَ ضُحىً يَشُلُّهُ وَسطَها صُبحٌ مِنَ اللَهَبِ

'You abandoned the city on a dark night when the flames of the fire of war turned it the morning of a clear day'

وهو ضحى: صور الليل قد ارتد باهر الضوء بصورة الضحى،

'And in the morning: the pictures of night were covered with blinding light as if it were noon'

رمى بك الله برجيها فهدمها ولو رمى بك غير الله لم تصب

'God sent you to destroy towers, and if anyone but God had sent you, they would not have suffered'

Verses 11-13 praise and glorify the caliph. This section is devoted to Caliph Al-Mu'tasim, a haughty figure, known for taking revenge and restoring the honor of the Muslims, a figure always on guard and whose first priority is to satisfy God's will, and the faith to reward him and dedicate to him victory over the infidels. Here the caliph is described as a talented commander, heading a strong army that instills fear in its enemies, and at the end of the section the poet blesses the caliph for his unceasing efforts to spread Islam and bring it victories.

تَدبيرُ مُعتَصِمٍ بِاللَـهِ مُنتَقِمٍ لِلَّـهِ مُرتَقِبٍ في اللَـهِ مُرتَغِبِ

'Proper planning of Mu'tasim – belief in God, God's avenger, relying confidently on God, a desirable man'

لَم يَغزُ قَوماً وَلَم يَنهَض إِلى بَلَد إِلا تَقَدَّمَهُ جَيشٌ مِنَ الرُعَبِ

'He did not invade the people and did not rise against a country unless a strong army preceded him'

خَليفَةَ اللهِ جازى اللهُ سَعيَكَ عَن جُرثومَةِ الدينِ وَالإِسلامِ وَالحَسَبِ

'The Caliph of God, God will reward your journey to purify religion, Islam and justice of germs'

Abu Tammām's poem is full of colorful language using paired expressions (فتح/ الفتوح) (منقلب- انقلابا), and puns (صفائح-صحائف), along with the use of rhetorical questions that heighten the critique and satire against the predictors (أين الرواية, اين النجوم). And he also used a negative metaphor شابتْ نواصي اللَّيالي وهيَ لمْ تشب.

The poem concludes with a description of the shock incurred by the residents of the city, from the degree of destruction, by which they remained stricken, and calling the enemy "yellow" and their faces pale while the faces of the Arabs are joyful.

أَبْقَتْ بَنِي الأَصْفَرِ المِمْرَاضِ كاسِمِهِمُ صُفْرَ الوجُوهِ وجلَّتْ أَوْجُهَ العَرَبِ

'Let the yellow ones [the Byzantines] go free and their faces became yellow, and opposite them, the Arabs' faces were glowing'

Also in the poem "God of Strength" Hanagid, like Abu Tammām, mentions names from history, such as Ahasuerus and Sisera: "They called her name sister of the incident / Ahasuerus and Esther the heroine," "Do to them like you did to Sisera, and do for me / like you did for Barak with Deborah." Like Abu Tammām, who gave names of defeated historical figures, such as the Emperor Casra and Alexander, and cites the Byzantine Emperor Theophilos, who was also defeated like his predecessors.

3. Between Ḥamāsa Poems and Martial Poems

As said above, the direct contact between Arabic and Jewish culture found expression in the formation and development of Hebrew poetry both in terms of structure and contents. Many motifs found their way from Arabic poetry to Hebrew poetry.

Structure – The basic structure of the Qasida is dual – the poem opens with a preface (*nasīb*) and continues with body of the poem. The poems were written according to a traditional format: Every line is a verse, every verse divided into two – open and closing, and with equivalent rhymes. Many Qasidas open with a preface that is unrelated thematically or rhetorically to the main part of the poem, but presents a kind of independent poem in which only at the end, the poet changes the subject by a sophisticated maneuver and turns to the main theme of the poem. As pointed out above, Hebrew martial poetry was influenced by Arabic *Ḥamāsa* poetry, and most of Samuel Hanagid's martial poems follow this principle of the Qasida, and they are generally divided not into two parts, but three (opening – description of the course of the battle – concluding blessings and praise of God). Thus, one of the similarities between the two kinds of poetry is the structure of the Hebrew poetry, which imitates that of the Arabic poetry.

Rhyme – In both Arabic and Hebrew poetry the use of the same rhyme throughout the poem is common. Here again Arabic poetry influenced Hebrew poetry in the Middle Ages. The poem "The Conquest of 'Amoriyyah" (السيف أصدق أنباء من الكتب) uses this kind of rhyme scheme. Similarly, Samuel Hanagid wrote his poems using that convention.

Ornamental openings – Both Hebrew and Arabic poets opened their poems with ornamental language, demonstrating impressive skill in the use of a rich vocabulary.

Rhetorical techniques – Medieval Hebrew poetry was influenced by Arabic poetry, thus we can discern an abundant use of rhetorical techniques in both cases, such as: figures of speech, anthropomorphism, personification, homonyms and metaphors.

Battle depictions – In both genres (Arabic and Hebrew) a section of the poem is devoted to depiction of the battle and the arms used in it, and the descriptions are exaggerated.

A section on victory - In both cases a section is devoted to victory in battle. At the same time, as mentioned above, the two poetries differ with regard to the addressee:

Addressing God in prayer – Samuel Hanagid devoted an entire section of his poems to prayer to God, while the Arabic poet did no such thing because *Ḥamāsa* poetry has its source in the heroic Jahiliyyah poetry, which left no place for a God operating on the basis of justice, and to whom one could turn in prayer and ask for forgiveness, because man's fate is pre-determined by an arbitrary supreme power – Time.

The dominant and impressive presence of God in a poem, as opposed to the pagan concept expressed in the heroic Arabic poetry of the Jahiliyyah, is revealed once more in the last section, which in the conventional usage in Arabic poetry is devoted to the praise of the poet and his heroism or the heroism of his tribe and king. The poems of Samuel Hanagid are not intended to praise any human being at all, but to praise God. Abu Tammām attributes the victory to the caliph, whom he describes as a wise and strong man, and also God has a significant part in the victory because this battle was conducted in the name of Islam.

3.1. Characteristic Motifs in Both Arabic and Hebrew Poetry

Samuel Hanagid stressed in his poems of fate that "Time shatters man like glass." In that motif he was influenced by the poetry of Al-Ma'ari, who believed that time shatters man like glass, and for that reason he was regarded as a heretic for denying the belief in resurrection of the dead (Ratzaby 2007: 183).

(1) וְסוֹפָהּ לְהִדַּמּוֹת לְצַלַּחַת אֲשֶׁר שָׁבְרוּ כָתוּת חֲרָשֶׁיהָ

"And its end is to be like a plate / which they broke into shards" (Hanagid, *Ben Qohelet*, 1993, end of poem 22)

يُحَطِّمُنا رَيبُ الزَمانِ كَأَنَّنا زُجاجٌ وَلَكِن لا يُعادُ لَهُ سَبكُ

'Death will shatter us as if we were glass / and indeed its casting will not be renewed' (Ma'ari, 1961: 182)

Hanagid also sees that "Time leads a man from bad to worse:"

וְיֵשׁ עַיִן אֲשֶׁר בָּכְתָה בְיוֹם רַע וְכָהֲתָה מִכְעָסִים רָאֲתָה בּוֹ

'And there is an eye that weeps on a bad day / and went dark from the angers it saw'

וְעָלָיו תִּבְךְ יוֹם מָחָר אֲשֶׁר בָּא וְרַע מָנָהוּ וְתִתְאַוֶּה לְשׁוּב

'And it will weep on the morrow / and it will count the bad and wish for it to return' (Hanagid 1981: 72).

In Hanagid's martial poetry there are motifs related to enmity, the enemy and the war, for example, the motif of lances and swords.

- **Lances and swords**

This motif recurs in Hanagid's martial poems, and also has roots in Muslim poetry. From our poem the description of the lance and the sword:

ومن قولنا في وصف الرمح والسيف: بكل رديتي كأن سنانه/ شهاب بدا في ظلمة الليل ساطع

'Every lance its point as if were / a fiery arrow appearing in the dark of night' (Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi 1986: 1: 175).

And likewise, the Nagid says:

כְּאִלּוּ הָרְמָחִים הַשְׁלוּחִים בְּרָקִים מִלְּאוּ אֲוִיר בְּאוֹרָה

'As if cast lances / their lightning filling the air with light' (Hanagid, *Ben Tehilim* 1985: (*Elohai 'Oz*): 8).

And in the poem under discussion the motif recurs:

'אָז פָּגְשׁוּ רְמָחִים אֶת רְמָחִים וְרָמוּ הַגִּבִּירִים בַּגִּבִּירִים (אלוה עוז שו' 61)

,And thus, lances met lances and fighters went up against fighters'

"In My Heart is Warmth," l: 28, meaning the arrows met from all sides since they all threw them, i.e, all the warriors.

כְּאִלּוּ עֵץ חֲנִיתָם עַל יְמִינָם מְנוֹר אוֹרֵג, וּפִיהוּ חַד כְּסִירִים

'As if the wood of their spear was on their right hand, woven and its mouth sharp as thorns' ("In My Heart is Warmth", l: 37, meaning the length of the spear and describing its mouth as thorns)

וְיַחַד נִסְחָפוּ, כִּי אֵל הֻדָּפָם וְנָסוּ מִפְּנֵי חֶרֶב גְּעוּרִים

'And together they fled, because they were pushed away and fled from the challenging sword' ("In My Heart is Warmth," l: 49, meaning they fled together from the sword because the sword instilled fear in them)

- **The motif of the warriors – the lions**

Hanagid writes about the courage of his soldiers, their numbers and their lightness.

וְכָל שׁוֹאֵג בְּיוֹם אֵיד כַּכְּפִירִים – עֲלֵיהֶם יִשְׁאֲגוּ הַיּוֹם כְּפִירִים

'And they all shout in the daytime like lions' whelps – who will shout today like lions' whelps' (Ibid., l: 58, meaning that the warriors on a tough day shout like lions, and today they do shout like lions)

- **Motif of the enemy**

The idea is to kill the enemy in his weakness, before he gets stronger and kills you. Hanagid took this idea from the Arabs, saying: (Hanagid, *Ben Mishlei* no: 128).

אִישׁ מֵהָרֹג שׁוֹנֵא יוֹם דַּל יְהִי נִבְדָּל
'A man who refrains from killing his enemy on a weak day will be set apart'
הוּא יַהֲרֹג אוֹתוֹ מָחָר בְּעֵת יִגְדַּל
'he [the enemy] will kill him on the morrow when he grows'

In *Kelila wadimna* Ibn Al-muqaffa said:

ومن وجد عدوه ضعيفا ولم ينجز قتله, ندم اذا استقوى ولم يقدر عليه

'And he who finds his enemy weak and does not kill him, will regret it when he gets stronger and he cannot match him' (*Kelila wadimna* 1934: 213 .

In the poem "In My Heart is Warmth", ll. 30-43 the enemy soldiers and their heroism are described.

וְכֻלָּם יִצְעֲדוּ לָמוּת כְּהוֹלֵךְ / בְּחֶדְוָה לֶאֱרוֹת צוּף מִיְּעָרִים,
'All will march to death like one walking / happily to gather nectar from honeysuckles'

וְיָרוּצוּ לְשַׁחֵת אֶת בְּשָׂרָם / וְיָקוּצוּ בְּחַיֵּי הַבְּשָׂרִים
'And they will run to destroy their own flesh / and will reject the life of the flesh'

- **Motif of the dust of horses in battle darkening the light**

About the dust raised by the horses' hooves as they gallop darkening the light. This image of dust, or clouds of dust darkening the light of day and interfering with the vision of the warriors, is also found in the writings of the Abassid poet Al-Mutanabbī 'A mighty army whose knights' eyes are covered by the dust of the horses' hooves and are like those seeing with their ears' … Al-Mutanabbī 2008, 3: 427 في جحفل ستر العيون غباره /فكأنما يبصرن بالأذان..

וְעֵינֵיהֶם, לְאַבְקַת מַרְכְּבוֹתָם, מְמֻלָּאוֹת בְּחֹשֶׁךְ לֹא סָדָרִים

"And their eyes like dust in their sockets, filling them with darkness' ("In My Heart is Warmth," l: 38, describing the eyes as full of darkness causing them confusion as if from dust).

In the *Hamasa* poetry by Abu Tammām, we can point out three central motifs:

- **The motif of the sword**

The sword was a status symbol of heroism, courage, and fame, and vice versa: fear of the drawn sword testified to a soft-hearted man (and maybe to a sinner, who feared to go to war and fall because of his sins), who might have a negative influence on his comrades going to the same battle. In Deuteronomy 20:8, it says: "The officials shall go on addressing the troops and say, 'Is there anyone afraid and disheartened? Let him go back to his home, lest the courage of his comrades, flag like his'." Rabbi Akiba interpreted this verse as follows: disheartened – who cannot see a drawn sword and there is no need to bring evidence to prove this fear, unlike the other exemptions from war where proof is required, such as: one who builds a house, plants a vineyard, or betroths a wife (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sotah 44a).

"The fiery ever-turning sword" (Gen. 3:24) describes a weapon, which the cherubim held in their hands, when they were assigned to guard the entrance to the Garden of Eden, in order to prevent Adam from approaching the tree of life and eating from it, gaining eternal life. The fiery sword burns in great heat, the ever-turning sword is evidently a double-edged sword, sharp on both edges. The combination testifies to a very hot sword, like lightning. The ever-turning sword was a threat and a power for revenge against anyone who dared to enter the divine garden (Dor 2015: 12-14).

The sword in *Hamasa* poetry is like a strong beast and suggests courage:

السيف أصدق أنباء من الكتب ... في حدِّه الحد بين الجد واللعب

'The sword is more reliable in its actions than books, its blade distinguishes between seriousness and folly'

بيض الصفائح لا سود الصحائف في ... متونهن جلاء الشك والرّيَب

'The white [metal] swords and not the black curtains remove doubt and suspicion'

والعلم في شهب الأرماح لامعة ... بين الخميسين لا في السبعة الشهب

'Knowledge of the meteors of the spears rising between the two Thursdays, not in the seven meteors'

- **The motif of the brave and strong warrior**

ومُطعَم النصر لم تكهم أسِنَّته .... يوما ولا حُجِبتْ عن روح محتجب

'This refers to God – ever stronger when he is the brave warrior and as always achieving victory in every battle, his drawn swords never grow dull'

- **The motif of the burning fire**

The use of the motif of fire in Abu Tammām's poem was meant to describe war when it breaks out like fire in battles.

لقد تركتَ أميرَ المؤمنينَ بها للنَّار يوماً ذليلَ الصَّخر والخشبِ

'Behold the prince of the believers. You have left the city defeated when the fire of war devours it Sultans rocks and trees'

غادرتَ فيها بهيمَ اللَّيلِ وهوَ ضُحى يَشْلُهُ وَسْطَهَا صُبْحٌ مِنَ اللَّهَبِ

'You abandoned the city on a dark night when the flames of fire of the war turned it into the morning of a bright day'

ضوءٌ منَ النَّار والظَّلماءُ عاكفة وظُلمة منَ دخان في ضُحىً شحبِ

'Light breaks through from a fire when darkness reigns and converges with the cloud of smoke on a bright day'

Summary and Conclusions

In this research I examined the martial poems of Samuel Hanagid, trying to understand Hanagid's identity on the basis of his works in comparison to the poetry of Abu Tammām. As mentioned, medieval Hebrew poetry is mostly associated with the Hebrew poetry of the Jews of Spain under Muslim rule. Hebrew poetry in general was greatly influenced by Arabic poetry and was integrated into the Hebrew poetry of the Jews of Spain (Tobi 1995: 6-41). In the same period, Hebrew poetry was characterized by the form of the poetry and its contents: sacred poetry, concerning the love of God and the Torah and constitutes a part of the cycle of prayer, recited in the form

of *piyyut*. And secular poetry refers to various subjects from the course of life and philosophical thought (Tobi 1995: 6-41).

The wonderful poetry of Samuel Hanagid is of great importance, including the martial poems that document his personal experiences and the challenges he faced in battles of the Granada wars between 1038 and 1055. The martial poems describe Hanagid's victories and his survival in good health and uninjured after the battles (Zinder2007:155-157). These martial poems, written in the Qasida format and the conventions of Arabic poetry, including vocalization and integrating between emotions and existential conflicts presented lyrically, describe wars and battles in rich and sophisticated language.

In his various works, Samuel Hanagid described the wars and battles in which he took part by virtue of being the vizier. In his poetry, the complex poetic structure is noticeable, but together with it a number of paradoxes: first of all, on the religious level. The martial poems that Hanagid wrote include "secular" descriptions of the battlefield, but also descriptions of great faith in a God of salvation. Secondly, on the experiential level, Hanagid presents his grappling between tension and intellectual effort and the need to give meaning and understanding to the unfolding events. And finally, on a stylistic level, the martial poems present realistic sections together with descriptions that are far from realistic. Similarly, the poetry of Abu Tammām, which is a part of his poems of praise, describes the heroism of the caliph Al-Mu'tasim in his war on 'Amoriyyah.

The martial poems of Samuel Hanagid that were examined here reveal how he preserved his Jewish identity by expressing trust and faith in God. When the Jewish reader connects and strengthens his faith in God, he learns to endure suffering and experiences in a struggle in which he felt the enormous power of God and the strength of faith. This is a lesson that Hanagid teaches to his readers on patience and accepting physical torments as part of a process of salvation and waiting that are necessary in order to fulfill the divine promise of salvation.

I would like to draw the attention of researchers to the potential for future research to examine, in comparative studies, the degree of authenticity of the descriptions used by the poets and their involvement in the battles.

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