Editors and Editions of *Diwan* Yehuda ha-Levi

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Abstract

Judah ha-Levi was one of the most prolific medieval Hebrew Poets and composed about a thousand secular and liturgical poems. His liturgical production was absorbed quite quickly into prayer books, but there remained a need to collect his complete oeuvre, especially his secular poems. These collections generally contained captions for each poem, relating to the different occasions of each composition. A collection of this sort is known as a *diwan*.

Assembling and editing a *diwan* was no easy task since ha-Levi was active in three different places, in Christian Spain, in Muslim Spain, and finally in Egypt. Yehuda ha-Levi may have succeeded in reaching the Land of Israel, where he possibly found his death, but no works of his were transmitted from there.

The first *diwan* originated in Spain, and the three later editors considered it to be authoritative. These later editors all lived in Egypt and are known by name. All lived within one hundred years of ha-Levi’s death and sought to expand the existing *diwan* and complete the collection of ha-Levi’s works. The last of these *diwans* was subsequently edited by two anonymous editors.

Each of the diwans has a different system by which it orders the sequence of the poems; each also provides different headings to introduce the poems. In this paper, I describe the different ordering sequences and explain their rationales.

The process whereby the *diwans* of our great medieval poets came to be edited is mostly a mystery. It is not always clear whether the poet edited and collected his own collection of his work, known as a *diwan*, or whether this was done by admirers who lived at the same time as the poet, and collected and edited years of work, piece by piece. In the unique case of Shmuel ha-Nagid (993-1056), we have the testimony of his son Yehosef, who listed the poems that his father sent to him to copy, collect, and organize in chronological order, according to the dates they were composed. In this way, the Nagid’s *diwan* was preserved through the Middle Ages and we possess a manuscript of it today.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Yehuda ha-Levi is a special case. He worked in three cultural centers which were very far from one another- first in Christian Spain, then Muslim Spain, and at the end of his life, in Egypt, for almost a full year (Elul 1140–Sivan 1141). We do not know anything about the poems that he took with him when he left on his voyage to the Land of Israel. Accordingly, the work of collecting his literary output posthumously was not simple. An editor working in one center did not necessarily know what was going on in the two other centers. In the end, the *diwan* was assembled by editors from Yehuda ha-Levi’s last location, Muslim Egypt which was cut off from Christian Spain, and this fact has left its mark on the completeness of the collection.

Yeshua ben Eliyahu ha-Levi was one of the most influential editors of *Diwan* Yehuda ha-Levi. It is through him that we know of the previous editor, Hiyya ha-Mugrabi, whom Yeshua considered especially important. Hiyya was a judge in the court of Shmuel ben Hananya, the leader of the Egyptian Jewish community, at least until the latter’s death (1159). He was of Spanish extraction, the scion of immigrants from the west, and he took his time collecting and editing the text of the *diwan* after Yehuda ha-Levi’s death (1141).[[2]](#footnote-3) Hiyya’s classic edition is preserved in fragments of several different *diwans* from the centuries after ha-Levi’s death. The most complete manuscript of this edition is preserved in the Bodleian Library in Oxford (Neubauer-Cowley 1970)[[3]](#footnote-4) and is relatively late. It was a distinguished edition, that relied on the Mugrabi tradition of a family of Spanish descent.

Besides Hiyya, Yeshua names two other editors in the Arabic headings to the poems in his *diwan*. Yeshua’s addition was based on Hiyya’s but these other editions helped him towards his goal of assembling a complete collection of Yehuda ha-Levi’s poems. One of these editors was David ben Maimon, who Mordechai Akiva Friedman believes should be identified as the brother of Maimonides who drowned at sea on a trading venture to India.[[4]](#footnote-5) The second was Sa‘id ’ibn ’Al-Qash from Alexandria, whose signature is found on a recommendation letter from 1208, together with the signatures of the city’s *dayyān* [Jewish religious court judge]*,* the senior cantor, and other dignitaries.[[5]](#footnote-6) Besides the work of these two editors, Yeshua relied on various traditions that he considered reliable, as well as on *ʾōrʾaq* (papers, books). All of these were ostensibly sources and editions compiled after Hiyya’s time. Yeshua was an expert in all these sources and had his own unique editorial methodology.

Yeshua’s Diwan

Yeshua’s project was not an easy one – at least that was his complaint in the Arabic introduction to his edition. He claimed there that the tendency to attribute any liturgical poem with the acrostic “Yehuda” to the great poet made it difficult to distinguish between the poems of Yehuda ben Shmuel ha-Levi and poems by other poets of his generation named Yehuda, such as Yehuda ibn Balaam (from Toledo, active in Seville during the second half of the 11th century), Yehuda ibn Ghiyyat (from Granada during the first half of the 12th century), and Yehuda ibn ‘Abbas (who died in the East no earlier than 1167). All of them were important poets, but none of them were on the same level as Yehuda ben Shmuel ha-Levi. The editor’s uncertainty about the attribution of some of the poems, which he shares with his readers in the forward to his *diwan*, demonstrates the scope of his knowledge of poetry, his broad-mindedness, and of course, his responsible approach to editing.

Yeshua ben Eliyahu ha-Levi’s work reveals itself to be a diligent effort to update Hiyya ha-Mugrabi’s *diwan*, using the additional sources that he had access to. He began editing the ha-Levi *diwan* after a previous attempt to edit the *diwan* of Abraham ibn Ezra.[[6]](#footnote-7) He paid particular attention to muwashshah )girdle) poetry[[7]](#footnote-8) in the ha-Levi *diwan*. In the headings preceding these poems, Yeshua notes the melodies by which these poems should be sung, indicating this by setting down the opening words of the muwashshah poem with the same melody. He had promised to do this in the introduction – according to his limited knowledge.[[8]](#footnote-9) But his knowledge was not limited at all.

Shmuel Miklos Stern concludes from Yeshua’s knowledge of muwashshah poetry that he was from Spain, the home of themuwashshah and that he lived during the middle of the 12th century or the 13th century at the latest.[[9]](#footnote-10) Hayyim Schirmann was of an entirely different opinion. According to him, Yeshua’s hesitations regarding the correct identifications of Yehuda ha-Levi’s and Abraham ibn Ezra’s poems prove Yeshua ha-Levi’s distance from Spain. Schirmann also argued, based on the fact that Yeshua misattributed some poems composed by other poets to Yehuda ha-Levi, that Yeshua ha-Levi was active a significant time after Hiyya ha-Mugrabi. He maintained that Yeshua lived no earlier than the 15th century.[[10]](#footnote-11) It transpires that we must accept both scholars’ opinions; Stern’s regarding Yeshua’s time, and Schirmann’s regarding his place.

A person as knowledgeable and talented as Yeshua ben Eliyahu ha-Levi would have certainly left some sort of trail in the Cairo Genizah, in the documents from the 11th to 13th centuries – the main period for Genizah documents. Indeed, Yeshua ben Eliyahu ha-Levi is mentioned in Cairo Genizah fragments. “Our teacher, and rabbi Yeshua ha-Levi, the dear student, son of our teacher and rabbi, Eliyahu ha-Levi, the glory of the Levites” appears in a 1228 legal document from Fustat. Approximately 15 years later, in a legal document from 1244, he is given honorifics: “The honorable, great, holy, our scholar, our glory, teacher, and rabbi,”[[11]](#footnote-12) In the intervening years, the man with all these honorifics also became known as the great editor of the *Diwan* ha-Levi.

If Yeshua was indeed active in old Cairo during the first half of the 13th century, then he was of the generation of, and in the same place as, the famous Arab *hûwašaḥ* ibn Sana al-Mulk (1155-1211) – the composer of the treatise on Andalusian muwashshah*,* “The House of Brocade.”[[12]](#footnote-13) It is likely that the *muwashshah* sources that were available to this Cairo-based author were also available to the “great scholar” Yeshua ha-Levi. Ha-Levi was must have been familiar with the poems as well as the melodies to which the Arab poets set their poems. It was an accepted convention also in Arabic poetry at this time for the melody and meter of one muwashshah poem to serve as a model for other muwashshah poems.

Yeshua’s Arabic style in his general introduction to the *diwan* and the poem headings makes it clear that Yeshua indeed belonged to the golden age of Judeo-Arabic, which lasted until the 13th century. For instance, he gave the *Diwan* ha-Levi a rhyming title: *Kitab al-shathur/ fi al-manzum wa-al-mantur* (The Book of the Golden Weaving of Poetry and Prose). This alone demonstrates that Yeshua had knowledge of Arab culture and the ways it expressed itself. We can also learn about Yeshua’s cultural world from a heading of one of the poems that discusses a question of attribution. He establishes there that the evidence for attributing “Zion, Won’t You Ask” (Poem 1: 96)[[13]](#footnote-14) to Yehuda ha-Levi is stronger than the evidence attributing “*kifʾa nabki*” (Let Us Stop and Weep) to the famous *jahili* poet, ’Imru al-Qayis.

Yeshua ben Eliyahu’s knowledge of Arabic poetry and poetic culture can also be seen in his comment on the liturgical poem, “Since You Have Become the Seat of Love, My Loves have Rested Where you Rested.”[[14]](#footnote-15) In the Arabic heading to the poem, Yeshua not only reveals Yehuda ha-Levi’s Arabic source for the poem, a love poem by ʾAbu ʾa-Šayĕș ʾal-ḥizʾaʿi (8th century),[[15]](#footnote-16) but also shows an understanding of the unique structure of the poem, which is exceptional, according to him, in its literary flourishes – the “wonderful flourish” of the repetition of the word “ʾ*ašer*” as the second to last word in every one of the poem’s stanzas. This reminds him of a poem with a similar structure by ibn Abbad, the 10th-century vizier and poet.[[16]](#footnote-17) Without fanfare, Yeshua also includes the Arabic source for the poem “A Sleepless Night” by Yusuf Abu Harun Al-Ramadi, a famous Andalusian poet (died 1022), in his *diwan* (I:323). Yeshua also includes, and again without fanfare, the Arabic source of the riddle about scissors “Happy are Friends” (I: 256): *wahal ʾaqtadi dû kālâh*.”[[17]](#footnote-18)

Yeshua’s tendency towards Arabization can be seen from, among other things, his work on some of the single rhyme poems (poems with a monorhyme at the end of the stanza). Yeshua was no longer willing to follow Hiyya, his great predecessor, in terms of organizing the poems according to a theme: long panegyrics and short panegyrics, wine and love poems, and wedding poems, riddles, ascetic poems, poems of Zion, and finally, in a sort of appendix, that he possibly acquired at a later date, poems from ha-Levi’s youth in Christian Spain.[[18]](#footnote-19) Apparently, the large number of additions that Yeshua wanted to add to the *diwan* made it difficult for him to maintain Hiyya’s thematic editorial sequence. He decided to order the poems “according to the Arab poets,” alphabetically, according to the rhyming letter at the end of every stanza.[[19]](#footnote-20) He even added glosses in Judeo-Arabic for rare or difficult words at the margins of the manuscripts. Given Yeshua’s scholarship, it is no wonder that his *diwan*, the *Kitab al-Shathur*, was popular in Judeo-Arabic society and copies of it were common especially in North Africa.

A manuscript of Yeshua’s *diwan* was purchased by Samuel David Luzzatto in 1839 from a merchant, who had acquired it in Tunis. Luzzatto produced two small volumes based on this manuscript. The Hebrew description on the title page of the first volume says: “Betulat Bat Yehudah. Collected poems from the *diwan* of [Yehuda ha-Levi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judah_ha-Levi), may the memory of the righteous be a blessing, edited with notes and an introduction, by Samuel David Luzzatto, Professor at the Rabbinical College of Padua.” This volume was published in 1840, and the second a generation later, in 1864, with the Hebrew inscription: “Diwan Rabbi [*Yehuda ha-Levi*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judah_ha-Levi)*,* may the memory of the righteous be a blessing. Published for the first time by the *Mikitze Nirdamim* society from an old manuscript belonging to Samuel David Luzzato of Trieste, teacher of Torah in Padua. The first volume includes eighty-six poems with an introduction and comments by Samuel David Luzzato.” Rabbi Luzzato was never able to publish another volume. The manuscript eventually found its way to the Bodleian Library in Oxford (Neubauer-Cowley 1971).[[20]](#footnote-21) This manuscript is easy to read, unlike the later manuscript of Hiyya’s *diwan,* Neubauer-Cowley 1970.[[21]](#footnote-22)

The most important manuscript of Yeshua’s *diwan* is the one on which Hayyim Brody based his own edition of the ha-Levi *diwan*, published in Berlin at the end of the 19th century. Brody titled his work: “*Diwan*- a book that contains all the poems by the great poet, Yehuda Ben Shmuel ha-Levi, published in one volume from manuscripts and printed editions, with edits and an introduction by Hayyim Brody, and the prestigious scholars who helped him.” The final volume, which includes religious poetry, and which does not include a commentary, was published in Berlin 30 years after the first volume. Essentially Yeshua’s *diwan* served as the foundation for the Brody edition, though every once in a while he acknowledges that Neubauer-Cowley 1970, the representative of Hiyya’s *diwan,* contains better versions of some of the poems.

Yeshua’s *diwan* is the richest edition in terms of its inventory of poems. Originally it included over four hundred monorhyme poems (with a closing rhyme at the end of the stanzas) as well as strophic poems (poems with alternating rhymes). In its current state, the manuscript is composed of 244 folios, which were originally divided into two volumes. The first volume currently contains folios 1-101, and the second, the rest. The first volume preserved the numbering of the quires⸺6, 8, 9 (folios 39,49, 59), and the numbering starts all over in the second volume. At the top of folio 121, quire 3 is marked, and quires 12, 14, and 19 are marked as well (folios 190, 191, 225). Currently quite a few of the original quires are missing, and the manuscript is only one volume. Some of the poems that were originally in the manuscript have not survived, but are known to us because their opening words are listed on the title page, and some of the poems whose listings did not survive on the title page have survived in the body of the manuscript. Some poems are missing both in the body of the manuscript and in the listings.

The *diwan* is split into three parts. The first part contains the monorhyme poems, which the editor ordered alphabetically according to the accent the rhyme falls on (part I: 1-421). The second part contains religious poetry with alternating, rich and diverse rhymes, and the third part contains letters written in rhyming prose, as well as religious poetry with less frequently alternating rhymes (part III: 1-108). In addition to the part I poems, the first volume also includes the first unit of part II (II A: 1-61). This unit is missing an index as well as poems II-A: 15-42 in the middle, and poems 68 and onwards. There are 41 poems in total in this unit. However, 53 poems were mistakenly bound at the end of the manuscript that were thought to be part of part III. We have marked these as III (II): 128-180. These too, do not have an index.

The second volume begins with the second unit of part II (II-B). It also includes religious poetry with diverse rhymes (II-B: 1-51) from sources other than Hiyya’s *diwan*, as well as a collection of muwashshah poetry (II-B: 52-107), and a collection of eulogies (II-B: 108-147). The collection of eulogies has survived almost entirely complete.[[22]](#footnote-23) In addition to part II-B, the second volume also includes all of part III (III: 1-108). Part III opens with a list of texts in rhyming prose (III: 1-17), and then strophic poetry with less diverse meter, some metered syllabotonically and some, mostly liturgical poetry (III: 17-108), that are even metered in the old way, using intonation. Most of the part III poems are listed on the title page, but the poems themselves are not necessarily included in the body of the manuscript.

Hiyya’s *Diwan*

Hiyya’s *diwan* is a *diwan* of monorhyme poetry that survived in dozens of manuscript fragments in the Hebrew collections of the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg (also known as the Firkovich Collection). For many years, this collection was not accessible to Western scholars. It is only over the last half-century that all scholars have had access to it. In terms of strophic religious poetry (with diverse rhymes) only fragments of 6 manuscripts exist in the collection mentioned above. We can reproduce the religious poetry contained in Hiyya’s collection by utilizing, besides these fragments, Yeshua’s *diwan*, which, as mentioned, disassembled Hiyya’s *diwan* and restructured it according to his own system. Yeshua nevertheless preserved the order of Hiyya’s *diwan* within the new groupings he created. Our reconstruction efforts are also aided by liturgy. The religious poetry in these collections is organized according to the liturgy for the Sabbath, weekdays, and holidays. They begin with *rĕšût* *piyyûṭim*, followed by *yôșer* *piyyûṭim*: *yôșerôt* and *ʾôpanîm, meʾôrāôt* and ʾ*ahabaôt, zûlatôt*and *mî kamôkā piyyûṭim,* and ʾ*adônāy malĕkenû* (*geʾulaôt*). Afterward, come *piyyûṭim* for the *Amidah* (*magēnîm, mĕḥyaôt, and mĕšûlašôt*) together with their tunes. The collection ends with *sîlûqîm* and *havdalah* *piyyûṭim*.

The various groups are arranged according to the year, starting with ordinary Sabbaths, then the Sabbath of *Parshat Haḥodesh*, a collection of poems for weddings, and then for Shavuot, *Shabbat Ḥazon,* laments for the 9th of Av, a collection for *Shabbat Naḥamu*, Rosh Hashanah*, seliḥot* for the 10 Days of Redemption and Yom Kippur, Sukkot and *Shemini `Atzeret*, the 10th of Tevet, drought, *seliḥot* for *Ta‘anit Esther*, *Shabbat Zakhor,* and finally private eulogy *piyyûṭim*. There is a heading in Arabic at the beginning of every group. The heading marks the end of the previous group, which ends with *piyyûṭim* for the Amidah *(qerôvôt)*, and the beginning of a new group. A typical heading reads: *nājĕzat ʾal-qerôva, lĕḥatan, wayatĕlûhʾa ʿînyan šĕbûôt* (The *qerôva* for the groom has ended, and will be followed by content regarding Shavuot).[[23]](#footnote-24)Yeshua, or the editors or copyists who preceded him understood, for some reason, that the word *qerôva* refers to the whole collection and not just the second half that actually contains a *qerôva (piyyûṭ for the* Amidah *).* They mistakenly titled this group *qerôvôt*, and instead of *ʿînyan* –content-- wrote *qerôva*.[[24]](#footnote-25)

Yeshua thought that Hiyya’s *diwan* of religious poetry was incomplete. He collected all the additions to Hiyya’s collection in one place- the second unit of part II. The heading at the beginning of the additional poems is especially interesting. In this unit, Yeshua sought to include strophic poetry not found in Hiyya’s *diwan*. He was willing to assume that Hiyya was mistaken, or that he left out these poems because he didn’t consider them worthy of being collected (perhaps he thought that Hiyya was censoring the poems). According to Yeshua, he came across these poems by chance. This is what Yeshua had to say in the Judeo-Arabic original: *nabtadî fî ʾaljaza ʾaltʾanî mîn ʾaltʾanʾ bamʾa lam yûtbatâh mîn ʾalaqûwal ʾalmalḥanah ʾalmûzûnâh ʾalâtî laʾ yašûkâ fî ʿazûhʾa lâșʾaḥāb hâdʾa ʾaldîwʾan wâtârkhʾa Rabbi Hiyya sâhûwʾa ʾaw ʾanâh lâm tāqʿa lâh fî râgbātûhʾa fîtșmûhʾa ʾalî ʾahâlûhʾa waʿatārātûhʾa.* In translation: We will start with the second part of the second part, with poems set to music (sung) and metered (meticulously), that were not listed (by Hiyya), and which cannot be doubted by anyone as to their attribution to the composer of this *diwan* (Yehuda ha-Levi). R’ Hiyya omitted them by mistake, or because he did find them worthy of adding them to those like them. I came across them by chance.”[[25]](#footnote-26) Contained in this list of 51 *piyyutim* are also poems that he found, according to him, in David ben Maimon’s *diwan* (Poems 22-25). They are certainly not poems that he found “by chance.”

David ben Maimon’s *Diwan*

Not only did Yeshua copy and edit Hiyya’s *diwan* thoroughly, he also added various poems that were from editions assembled by earlier editors. Regarding monorhyme secular poetry, we have found at least 2 of these supplementary pages in the appendix to fragments from a precise copy of Hiyya’s *diwan* of monorhyme poetry. The manuscript of this *diwan* was preserved in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg Yevr. II 209.1. As he was wont to do, Yeshua explicitly attributed some of the poems in the appendix to David ben Maimon’s transmission. He did so, as usual, in the poem headings of various poems in part I of his *diwan* (poems 23, 180, 196, 398). Regarding the religious poetry, which Yeshua included and attributed to David ben Maimon in part II (poems 22-25, 94, 97) – we have not found any parallels in the torn copy of David ben Maimon’s *diwan*.

One of the poems that Yeshua’s *diwan* quotes verbatim, including its Arabic heading, from Ben Maimon’s *diwan* is “Unhappy are My Thoughts during Hannukah” (part I: 180). From its content, it is clear that this poem was written after ha-Levi had left Alexandria, where his ship had docked on Rosh Hashanah eve, 1140.[[26]](#footnote-27) The poem was written in the middle of Hannukah when ha-Levi was already in Cairo. It expresses the author’s longing for the recipient of the poem that is the result of the distance between them on the Hannukah holiday. The poem ends with a request: “Distinguish between the lions and the sheep/and between the roses and cut thorns.” The writer wants to remind the recipient that he must not give in to temptation, and he must distinguish between good and evil, lions and sheep, roses, and cut thorns (see Isaiah 33:12). It’s not clear from the poem who the sheep and the thorns are meant to represent, but we can certainly assume that the writer is referring to himself as the “lion” and “roses.”

Aaron ibn Al-ʿAmmānī, mentioned in the poem’s heading, was Yehuda ha-Levi’s host in Alexandria. Though his family was indeed originally from Amman in modern-day Jordan, hence the name Al-ʿAmmānī, he was from Jerusalem, which especially charmed the poet. The longing expressed in the poem was thought to be for his Alexandrian host, whom he had left before Hannukah. For some reason, the poem is not included in Hiyya’s *diwan*, which raises questions. However, this poem appears in the additions to Hiyya’s *diwan* and the end of David ben Maimon’s *diwan* with the following title: *wajʾab R. Aaron haḥaber ʿnāh fî yĕmê Ḥannûkâh fakataba ʿalêha*.”[[27]](#footnote-28) In the heading, Yeshua quotes the poem and heading from Ben Maimon’s *diwan*, and then adds: “*min naqal kaṭ David ben R’ Maimon*” (from the transmission of David ben Maimon’s manuscript). According to David ben Maimon and Yeshua, the poem was written by Yehuda ha-Levi to ibn Al-ʿAmmānī: “And he (Yehuda ha-Levi), missed his friend[[28]](#footnote-29) on Hannukah, and (Yehuda ha-Levi) wrote to him.” Accordingly, it was ha-Levi who was doing the missing, and it was he who wrote the poem, “Unhappy are My Thoughts During Hannukah” after he left Alexandria. But there is another possibility regarding the meaning of the heading

The alternative interpretation of the heading to the poem, “Unhappy are My Thoughts During Hannukah,” is as follows: R’ Aaron, his friend, missed him[[29]](#footnote-30) (Yehuda ha-Levi), during Hannukah, and (Aaron) wrote (to him (Yehuda ha-Levi). The subject of “and wrote,” then, is Aaron, and not Yehuda ha-Levi. This also explains the characteristics of the poetic reply that ha-Levi wrote to Al-ʿAmmānī that can be found in Hiyya’s diwan. It is written in the same meter and with the same rhyme as “Unhappy,” as exchanges of poems tended to be: “Slowly depart from friends and brothers…Could my heart contain this separation from Aaron? / And our hearts cry and sigh,” (part I: Poem 153). According to the poem, Yehuda ha-Levi’s heart also sighed and cried over his separation from ibn Al-ʿAmmānī.

The meaning of a letter written by someone named Abu Al`Ala to Yehuda ha-Levi and sent from Alexandria to Cairo can now be better understood.[[30]](#footnote-31) The letter criticizes the status Yehuda ha-Levi’s host attributes to himself after hosting the poet and specifically refers to the exchange of poems between ibn Al-ʿAmmānī and the great poet. Among other things, the letter criticizes the poems that ha-Levi wrote in honor of ibn Al-ʿAmmānī. It should be noted that Abu Al`Ala is careful not to be critical himself, but rather quotes people from whom he heard the criticism, and is simply passing that criticism on. On the other hand, Abu Al`Ala does express his distaste for the phrase, “cut thorns,” from “Unhappy are My Thoughts During Hannukah.” The criticism of the content of Al-ʿAmmānī’s poem fits the general air of criticism of ha-Levi’s Alexandrian host in the letter. It is unlikely that the careful Abu Al`Ala would criticize a poem that ha-Levi himself had written.

The attribution of the poem “Unhappy are My Thoughts on Hannukah” to ibn Al-ʿAmmānī becomes even more likely when taking into account the very similar derogatory terms that appear in another poem that he certainly wrote. In his autobiographical poem, “I Was Young in My Father’s House,”[[31]](#footnote-32) he tells of how he was exiled from his temple “*bêt ʿalmâqdas*” (an Arabic term for Jerusalem) by the Christians (’*Adûmîm)* and arrived in Egypt (ʿ*Anamîm* per Genesis 10:13). This, apparently, refers to the Crusader conquest of Jerusalem in 1099.[[32]](#footnote-33) He could have reached Alexandria by sea in just a few days from the port at Ashkelon, where Crusader captives were redeemed.[[33]](#footnote-34) Beginning in 1109, Aaron ibn Al-ʿAmmānī’s signature begins to appear on court documents in Alexandria: “Aaron Bar Yeshua the Doctor, of blessed memory.”[[34]](#footnote-35)

Al-ʿAmmānī ‘s appointment as a judge did not go without local opposition; he was, after all, a stranger in Alexandria. According to his complaints in his poem, “I Was Young in my Father’s House,” he was oppressed there by “a fox that ruins the vineyards,” another harsh epithet like the “sheep” and “cut thorns” in “Unhappy.” In his own words, Aaron felt some relief after Yehuda ha-Levi’s visit (he calls him, “a lion’s whelp,” referencing Gen 49:9 “Judah is a lion’s whelp”). His poem is unequivocal: “My temple, my temple, to those would ensnare me/ The Christians have driven me to Egypt *…*Until the lion’s whelp, who fenced my vineyard/ and the fox that ruins the vineyards fled.” Yehuda, the lion’s whelp, drives away the fox that ruins the vineyard (see Song of Songs 2:15). This was certainly after ha-Levi’s correspondence with his host, which Abu Al`Ala mentioned in his letter. This time as well, ha-Levi replied in verse, with a poem, written according to custom in the same meter (‘*hamĕrûbâh*’) and same rhyme (-*mîm*): “Carry, oh, mountains, deserts, and seas/my greetings to my forlorn friends” (part I: poem 151).

The exchange of poems between ha-Levi and Al-ʿAmmānī could not but inspire criticism from the Alexandrian judge’s opponents. This can be seen in Abu Al`Ala’s secret letter. In his letter, written in Arabic, Abu Al`Ala (who is perhaps Al-ʿAmmānī ‘s fox that ruins vineyards) quotes the Arabic headings of the secular poems that ha-Levi addressed to ibn Al-ʿAmmānī and his household, as well as their replies. He mentions the heading of the poem “To the Best of Villages and Choice Spikenard,” about fountains *(‘zarʾaqʾat*), as well as the heading to the poem, “My Master Thought me an Owl and Osprey” about chickens (*dêjʾaj’*), and finally what he says about “ʾ*almûas,”* without noting ha-Levi’s reply. Apparently, there was no reply.

Opinions diverge regarding the identity of the poem about “ʾ*almûas.*” S.D. Goitein, who discovered and first published the letter understood “*mûas*” as “razor.”[[35]](#footnote-36) In their edition, Moshe Gil and Ezra Fleischer read the word, “ʾ*almanʾam*” (sleep).[[36]](#footnote-37) Neither Goitein nor Gil and Fleischer could find the poem by ha-Levi’s that the criticism could be referring to.[[37]](#footnote-38) If we return to Goitein’s first, correct reading, “ʾ*almûas*,” and understand it as “ʾ*almîas*,” that is to say, “a swaying walk” or “foppish gait,” we can identify the allusion to another secular hedonistic poem that ha-Levi wrote to Al-ʿAmmānī. That is the poem, “Beautiful Voiced” (part I: 346), where ha-Levi describes the swaying gait of the pretty young women, carrying apples and pomegranates: “And what shall I say to the gloriously tall like a palm/the wind blowing her to and fro?” (Verse 15). If it is valid to criticize any of the hedonistic poems that ha-Levi wrote in honor of the judge, there is no better example than this one.

For all intents and purposes, the poem is written as a *qasida*. It opens with an erotic *nasib* describing a group of beautiful young women, their gazes deadly: ”and killed a man, though they are pure and innocent” (Verse 4). Further on, ha-Levi also describes the other parts of their bodies, their white skin and black hair, their red lips against their white teeth, and subsequently additional parts of their body, “bearing apples and pomegranates” (Verse 14). From there, the poem moves on to describe the destructive effect they have on men: “see, the hearts they captured have been torn apart /ask, will the torn become whole?” Later ha-Levi makes the metaphor regarding the tearingexplicit when he establishes in a rhetorical transition that the issue of this type of tearing can only be resolved by a judge as great as Aaron. In doing so he lists all of his friend’s rabbinic and secular titles: “ask a judge, ask a friend, ask a rabbi…ask a son of Zion about issues of life and death”(verses 18-19).

Abu Al`Ala’s critical letter was aimed at Aaron ibn Al-ʿAmmānī, the author of the poem “Unhappy are My Thoughts” who s. Hiyya did not include the poem in his ha-Levi *diwan*, because it wasn’t written by ha-Levi. Yeshua mistakenly followed David ben Maimon, who was not aware of the true origins of the poem, and included it in his edition of the *diwan*. The poem about melancholy thoughts during Hannukah was written by the Alexandrian judge to Yehuda ha-Levi and sent to him in Cairo (Fustat). He sought to warn Yehuda ha-Levi that he shouldn’t be tempted by flatterers like Abu Al`Ala, the author of the secret letter, who seek to present themselves as protecting Yehuda ha-Levi’s honor, but whose real intention is to undermine ibn Al-ʿAmmānī.

Abu al-Qash’s *Diwan*

As we have seen, Yeshua’s *diwan* is an important aid in the identification of other *diwan*s and intermediate editions by editors who were active between the Hiyya ha-Mugrabi edition and Yeshua’s. One of them, Abu Sa’id ibn al-Qash, is mentioned by Yeshua by name the section containing monorhyme poems. Ibn al-Qash’s contribution can be recognized from a manuscript in which are preserved some of the poems that Yeshua claims he received from Abu Sa’id ibn al-Qash. This *diwan* is from a manuscript in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg, Yevr. I A 106.1 The manuscript contains an expansive anthology that includes many poems by Yehuda ha-Levi. In its current truncated state, the manuscript I sonly 38 folios long but it contained at least 230 units of poetry according to the number in the heading of the last poem that survived. The full manuscript almost certainly contained a much larger collection.

Yeshua mentions Abu Sa’id ibn al-Qash by name in the headings of 13 monorhyme poems: “*kaṭ Sa’id ibn al-Qash*” (Sa’id ibn al-Qash’s manuscript or book), and they are all indeed absent from Hiyya’s *diwan*.[[38]](#footnote-39) In addition, he explicitly says regarding the poem, “To God, to You,” (part I: 26), that ibn al-Qash attributes it to ha-Levi, but Hiyya does not. Yeshua’s familiarity with ibn al-Qash’s *diwan* can also be seen in a critical note that Yeshua makes in a long heading at the beginning of Yehuda ha-Levi’s riddle poem regarding a pen, “See the Scepter” (part I: 129).

Yeshua begins his critical comment: ”Something interesting happened regarding the attribution of the poem ‘See the Scepter.’” According to Yeshua, one should pity the writers and poets who are hurt by unfaithful transmitters who attribute to them poems that they did not write. The opposite is true when good poems are attributed to bad poets. As an example of this failure in transmission, Yeshua cites a series of poems known to us as a group only from ibn al-Qash’s *diwan.* The group of poems begins with “a Box in the Shape of a Cube” thought to be by Yehuda ibn Ghiyyat, Yehuda ha-Levi’s younger peer.[[39]](#footnote-40) This poem is followed by a group of poems that have minimal headings: “Also his”; “His,” “His,” “His.” This gives the impression that the whole group consists of poems by ibn Ghiyyat. However, amazingly enough, the series ends with the famous, “Zion, Won’t You Ask,” also given the laconic heading, “his.” This indicates that the earlier poems in the series are also by ha-Levi.

The poems mentioned in Yeshua’s comment are found in the same order in ibn al-Qash’s *diwan*. Some of the poems are dispersed through Yeshua’s diwan, ordered according to his system by rhyme scheme, and are attributed by him as coming from ibn al-Qash’s *diwan*. It appears to be the case that the subject of Yeshua’s criticism was ibn al-Qash’s *diwan*. Apparently, Yeshua did not want to mention the name of the *diwan* that was the object of his criticism by name. Perhaps there was a good reason for this. During the thirteenth century, the ibn al-Qash family was a significant one in Alexandria; as we have seen, a person with this name signed a recommendation letter next to the signatures of the Jewish community’s chief judge, its head cantor, and other dignitaries.[[40]](#footnote-41)

In addition to its being a resource of knowledge regarding the circumstances of the composition of various poems, Abu Sa’id ibn al-Qash’s *diwan* is an excellent resource for the poems of lesser-known poets of ha-Levi’s generation. Mentioned by name are Yosef ibn Barzel (from the first half of the 12th century) and Yosef ibn Tzaddik (from Cordova, died in 1149), as well as many poems by Shlomo ibn Gabirol (11th century). The complete collection was certainly very rich, and a responsible editor like Yeshua could not ignore it, even if he didn’t always appreciate the way the editor organized the content. In any case, Yeshua’s primary starting point was Hiyya’s *diwan,* although he did use Abu Sa’id ibn al-Qash’s *diwan* as well.

Unique in this sense is the poem “My Heart asks If High” (part I: 98). The acrostic reads “Levi,” and Yeshua was unsure whether the poem was really by Yehuda ha-Levi or whether it was by his less famous peer Levi ibn al-`Tabban.[[41]](#footnote-42) To justify the inclusion of the poem in his *diwan*, Yeshua declared that he found the poem not only in Hiyya’s *diwan* but also in Abu Sa’id ibn al-Qash’s. He nevertheless concludes the heading with a note of reservation: “This (poem) is also by him, and was transmitted in the edition by ben al-Qash, and in the edition by R’ Hiyya as well, and it is signed with the acrostic “Levi.” God knows the truth.”[[42]](#footnote-43)

The Character of Yeshua’s *Diwan*

Yeshua’s *diwan* is an attempt, almost at any cost, to complete Hiyya’s *diwan* which served as its foundation and point of departure. To enrich his collection of ha-Levi poems, Yeshua sometimes relied on single copies, vague attributions, and whatever editorial additions to the ha-Levi *diwan* were available to him. Though Hiyya’s *diwan* was the most reliable, Yeshua enriched his *diwan* with additional poems included in the *diwans* of two additional editors, whom he mentions by name, David ben Maimon and Abu Sa’id ibn al-Qash. Texts of these editions of the *diwans* can be identified by the poems that are not included in Hiyya’s *diwan,* as well as by the places Yeshua explicitly cites one of those two as his source.[[43]](#footnote-44) In his enthusiasm to enrich his collection of ha-Levi poems, Yeshua was not always stringent in his scholarship and included some suspect poems, as well as poems that are certainly not by Yehuda ha-Levi. One might say that the richness of Yeshua’s *diwan* does not necessarily reflect well on its collector.

An additional problem with Yeshua’s *diwan* is the textual corrections that he made to various poems. Even poems with verified attribution are sometimes transmitted in Yeshua’s *diwan* in their revised version. Ultimately, the versions of the texts in the latest manuscript of Hiyya’s *diwan* (Neubauer-Cowley 1970) are more reliable than the versions in Yeshua’s *diwan*, which was copied in the 13th-14th century. Brody, who made *diwan A* (that is to say, Neubauer-Cowley 1971) the foundation of his edition of Yehuda ha-Levi’s poetry, noted in many places: I have interpreted this according to the version in manuscript B (Neubauer-Cowley 1970). A similar issue exists regarding the reliability of the headings that Yeshua set at the beginning of the poems.

Yeshua had to re-edit the Arabic headings that discuss the circumstances of the composition of the poems. One of the largest issues that the collection suffers from is the way the poems have been reorganized. Yeshua did not preserve the order of Hiyya’s *diwan* nor the Arabic headings that often relate one to another. Yeshua regarded his new organization of the poems, according to the closing rhyme following the conventions of Arab poets, as a great accomplishment. However, it did more harm than good. Every poem needed a new heading that did not relate to the poems before or after it in the original. For this reason, he sometimes added a secondary heading alongside the primary heading without naming the *diwan* that is its source.[[44]](#footnote-45)

The Influence of Yeshua’s *Diwan* on Later *Diwans*

A particular problem for the study of Yeshua’s *diwan* is that it is mainly represented by a single manuscript (Neubauer-Cowley 1971), and this copy is defective in several places. The missing sections are poems 48-61 (rhyming schemes with the letters *heh-waw*), poems 144-158 (rhyming schemes with the letter *mem*), and poems 213-259 (rhyming schemes with the letter *nun*). In the last case, the letter *ḥet*, marking the beginning of the next quire was preserved after poem 258 (the beginning of poem 259). The mark *waw* of the previous quire was also preserved. The missing folios from quire *zayin* were probably detached from the complete manuscript.

Partial compensation for the missing parts of Yeshua’s *diwan* can be found in *Diwan* Schocken 37 from the 17th century. The part of the manuscript that contains poems by Yehuda ha-Levi is divided into two parts. The first part is an original collection of monorhyme poetry by Yehuda ha-Levi. However, many of the poet’s poems are missing. Some of the missing poems can be found in the second part of the collection. The additions in this part are exclusively based on Yeshua’s *diwan*, and follow it in terms of the order of the poems the textual versions, and the Arabic headings. The *Diwan* Schocken manuscript contains many of Neubauer-Cowley 1971’s shortcomings yet surprisingly also fills in the omissions of the Schocken manuscript in various places. It is reasonable to conclude that the Schocken manuscript is based on a version of Neubauer-Cowley 1971 that included the missing sections. The Schocken manuscript thus preserves poems from the lost *zayin* quire.

The version of Yeshua’s diwan that the Schocken manuscript drew upon included the lost quire *zayin* (poems 214-248). Among the poems from Yeshua’s *diwan* preserved in the Schocken *diwan* that were not preserved in the Neubauer-Cowley 1971 manuscript is the lost *qasida* that ha-Levi wrote in honor of his Egyptian benefactor, the merchant Halfon al-Damiati.[[45]](#footnote-46) Except for it having access to the missing quire, the elements missing in the Schocken *diwan* match those of Neubauer-Cowley 1971 exactly and the Schocken diwan transmits the poems that are defective in Neubauer-Cowley 1971 in their defective form. The poems that are missing beginnings are the same in both: “Will You Exchange Youth for Old Age?” (Part I: 360), and “My Tongue has Learned Lamentation” (I: 39). In addition, the poems that are missing endings are the same in both: “To You, My Soul is Secure” (I: 36), “The Poem has Already Adorned You”(I: 47), and “Will You Chase Young Girls” (I: 213). All of these poems are in a special unit at the end of the *diwan*.[[46]](#footnote-47)

An additional manuscript that was written by a scribe familiar with Yeshua’s *diwan* in its complete state is the manuscript from the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg: Yevr I 808.[[47]](#footnote-48) This is a manuscript of religious poetry that includes 200 *piyyûṭim* of which more than 170 of them are by ha-Levi that are collected together in the second half of the manuscript. The manuscript is from the 17th century and is thought to be a Karaite *diwan*. The scribe was familiar with the entire collection of *piyyûṭim* in the second part of Yeshua’s *diwan*, including the Arabic headings, indicating that his source text was a complete copy of Yeshua’s *diwan*.

At the beginning of the collection, the scribe included *piyyutim* from the second part of Yeshua’s *diwan*, though not in order. He then copied the *piyyutim* from the second unit of part II, starting from the *piyyutim* that, according to Yeshua, were not included in Hiyya’s *diwan* (*piyyûṭim* 1-51), followed by the muwashshah poems, which come later in Yeshua’s *diwan*,(52-107), followed by the lamentation poems, that close the second unit of Yeshua’s *diwan* (108-147). Finally, he included a full collection of ha-Levi’s lamentation poems (*kinot*) for the ninth of Av (he calls them *petîḥôt*). These were not preserved in Neubauer-Cowley 1971. The collection of ha-Levi’s eulogies (that the scribe refers to as *kinot*), as well as the laments for the ninth of Av were preserved in their entirety in this collection.[[48]](#footnote-49) All the other groups of poems can be found in the collection following the order known to us from Yeshua’s *diwan*, but with many missing poems. In contrast to Schocken 37, the reason for the missing poems in this collection is not clear, just as the reason for its inclusion of ha-Levi’s eulogies and laments is not clear to us.

The eulogies fill in all the missing pieces from the group of eulogies in Neubauer-Cowley 1971. The same is true for the other series of liturgical poems, such as poems 15-42, missing in the first unit of the second part of Yeshua’s *diwan*, but complete in the Karaite *diwan,* which contains *piyyûṭim*: 19,22, 24-29. This is also true regarding other missing sections of Neubauer-Cowley 1971, especially the unit of 53 *piyyûṭim* (128-180), which was mistakenly bound with the third part of Yeshua’s *diwan* at the end of the volume even though its original place is at the continuation of the poems with diverse rhymes. In this minor manuscript, the *piyyûṭim* of part III(b) appear in their original position as a continuation of the first unit of part II, *piyyûṭim* 1-67, with changing, diverse rhymes.

The story of the transmission of the Yehuda ha-Levi’s *diwan* is the story of medieval book culture. Yeshua ben Eliyahu ha-Levi put a lot of effort into updating and Arabicizing the original *diwan*. Over the years his *diwan* became authoritative and was considered the most comprehensive *diwan* of Yehuda ha-Levi’s poetry, both secular and religious. The *diwan* was used by at least two different editors to build their own editions, one of secular poetry, and the other religious, as late as the 17th century. Yeshua ben Eliyahu himself had already used two different *diwans* to complete his edition⸺one of monorhyme poetry (*Diwan* Sa‘id ’ibn ’al-Qash) and one of strophic poetry with diverse rhymes (*Diwan* David ben Maimon). The *diwans* that are represented by the Schocken Manuscript and the Karaite Manuscript were familiar with a more complete version of Yeshua’s *diwan,* which wasalso known to the person who copied Yeshua’s *diwan* in 1517. During that year, the defective version of Yeshua’s *diwan* was copied onto the manuscript now known as Neubauer-Cowley 1971, and this is the copy that was sold in Tunisia less than three hundred years later and acquired by Shmuel David Luzzatto.

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1. D. Yarden, *Diwan Shmuel Hanagid,* Jerusalem, 1946 p. 1, D. Sasson*, Diwan of Shemuel Hannaghid* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. (E. Fleischer), eds. Elizur, S. and Beeri, T. (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi, 2010), p. 840. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. (Uri 498) Poc. 741. According to the water stains on the manuscript on folios 230, 235, it was dated by Efraim West from the Manuscript Department at the National Library of Israel. I am grateful to him for this. This manuscript is described in Neubauer’s catalog (note 21), pp. 641-656 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Friedman, M. A. (Friedman), (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi, 2009) p. 313 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Goitein, S.D., *Palestinian Jewry in early Islamic and Crusader Times,* (Hebrew) ed. Hacker, J. (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi, 1980). p. 306. (He mistakenly records בו סעד instead of בו סעיד). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. ibn Ezra, A. *Diwan Abraham ibn Ezra,* (Hebrew) ed. Iger, A. (Berlin: Itzkowski and Frankfurt A. M. 1886) pp. XV-XX [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Strophic form poetry, in which, addition to the main contrasting rhyming scheme, is also a secondary short rhyming scheme with a set rhyme. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. ibn Ezra, A. *Diwan ibn Ezra,* pp. 13-14 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Stern, S. M. “The *Mûwašaḥ* of Abraham ibn Ezra” *Hispanic Studies in Honour of I. G. Llubera*, ed. Pierce, F. (Oxford: The Dolphin Book, 1959), p. 383 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Schirmann, H. “Hebrew Secular Poetry from a Geniza Manuscript” *Teuda Vol. 1* ed. Friedman, M.A. (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1980) p. 109 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. CUL TS 13J4.3. It should also be compared to CUL TS 20.98 in which the same man, with the same pedigree, appears in a document from 1244. Fustat of the first half of the 13th century could indeed suit the man and his work as the collector of Yehuda ha-Levi’s poetry. Our knowledge of this relies on S.D Goitein’s personal index cards which are preserved at the National Library of Israel [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. ibn Sana al-Mulk, *Dar al-Tirāz*, ed. Rakabi, (Damascus: 1949) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. The diwan is split into three parts: (a) secular single rhyme poems, (b) strophic poems with a rich variety of contrasting rhymes, and (c) rhyming prose and poems with less variety in their contrasting rhymes. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. H. Schirmann, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain and Provence Vol. 1* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1954). p. 467. The meaning: ever since we drank of the delights of love in your lovers dwelling-place, I cannot forget you again. And allegorically: my devotion to God does not leave me since I experienced my first revelation. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. I. Levin, *Poetry Weaved by Wisdom: Studies in Hebrew poetry in Spain and the Influence of Old Piyyutim and Chronicles on Modern Hebrew Poetry* (Lod: The Haberman Institute for Literary Research: Hakibbutz Hameuchad (Levin) (Schirmann, Hebrew Poetry in Spain and Provence Volume 1), 2009) p. 295. Levin does not even note that the identification of the Hebrew poem with the Arabic poem was done by Yeshua. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Mûḥammad bin Fu (Talams'ani)tuḥ ʾal-Hamidi, Tunisia: Dar al-arab al-Islami, 1952, pp. 175-176 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. ʾAl-Talamsʾani, *Napaḥ ʾAl-tib*, Beirut 1968, Volume 4, p. 147. I was helped with the reading and deciphering of the Arabic titles by Yehoshua Blau, of blessed memory, and regarding the identification of the Arabic poetry, I am grateful to Iyas Nasser, may he be blessed with a long and good life. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. These were apparently added at a later stage of the editing process [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. The opinions of the Arab poets influenced Yeshua to such an extent that he ignored the Hebrew rhyming convention in which the rhyme must be between not just the final letters of the rhyming words but at least one additional letter. He only took the last letter into account, even when it concludes a closed syllable in Hebrew. Thus, he placed “Zion, Do you Ask?” which has a rhyme of *rāyikh* together with other poems with a silent *khaf* rhyme: after *rāyikh* (1: 96) comes *yekh* (1:97) and *lakh* (1:98), and so on. As one would expect he also did this with rhymes of a final *mem*, which is always a closed syllable. The explanation for this policy is because in Arabic the last syllable is generally open, and thus the last letter usually a rhyming letter. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Oxford Neubauer-Cowley 1971. A Neubauer, *Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford: Clarendon Press) (Neubauer) 1851, pp. 168-175 (Opp. Add 4 to 81). M’ Beit-Ariĕ in his additions and corrections to the catalog, Oxford 1994, p. 356, dates the catalog to the 13th-14th century. Fleischer, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain*, p. 878 (footnote 118) pushes the dating back, arguing that paleography is not an exact science. Given the lack of more precise knowledge, for the meantime we will have to stick with this dating. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Poc. 741 (Uri 498). Ephraim West from the Manuscripts Department of the National Library of Israel dated the manuscript for me according to the water stains that appear on folios 230 and 235. I am grateful to him for this. The manuscript is described in Neubauer’s *Catalog* (footnote 21), pp. 641-656 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. A few poems are missing: II-B: 129-130, 134, 136-137. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. RNL St. Petersburg, Yevr II 646.43b. The word ”ענין”- the matter of, was translated from the Arabic ”מעני,” meaning content, etc. The heading is quoted word for word in Yeshua’s *Diwan* as follows: ‘R’ Hiyya said: *qʾala R’Hiyya, nājĕzat ʾal-qerôva, lĕḥatan, wayatĕlûhʾa ʿînyan šĕbûôt”* (Neubauer-Cowley, p. 95). This should be compared to a second RNL manuscript (manuscript 2): “And it contains content for Shabbat Naḥamu… *nājĕza înyan šabbat naḥāmû, wayatĕlûh înyan Rosh Hashanah*” (p. 14, 16) [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. See the Neubauer-Cowley manuscript pp. 190, 194, 201, 202. Fleischer thought that something could be learned about Yeshua’s location from the incorrect use of the term ”*qerova.*” Fleischer, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain*, p. 891, footnote 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. See also, Fleischer, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain*, p. 893, footnote 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. Friedman, *Halfon and Yehuda ha-Levi*, p. 302ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. RNL Yevr. II A 209.1 p. 48 (the heading), the poem itself is on p. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. For a discussion on the meaning of “התרחק ממנו,” see Friedman, *Halfon and Yehuda ha-Levi*, p. 313, footnote 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. For a discussion on the meaning of “התרחק ממנו,” see Friedman, *Halfon and Yehuda ha-Levi* p. 313, footnote 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. M. Gil and E. Fleischer, *Yehuda ha-Levi and His Circle: 55 Geniza Documents,* (Jerusalem: Ha’igud Ha‘olami Le-Mada‘ei Ha-Yahadut, 2001). Pp. 463-466. The link that they make (footnote 12) between line 12 to line 17: “And he wrote panegyrics for us” (line 12), and in the *qasida* “Unhappy are My Thoughts,” he says,” etc. does not seem likely to me. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. H. Schirmman, *New Poems from the Genizah*, (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and the Humanities, 1965) p. 237. The poem was published there attributed to Yehuda ha-Levi. Its continuation has since been discovered, and in it Yehuda ha-Levi is explicitly mentioned as the recipient of the poem. See Y. Granat, “To Alexandrian, with the sound of bell and pomegranate in light of a “new” poem by Aaron ibn Al-ʿAmmānī” *Tarbitz* 85 (2018), pp. 657-681 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. H. Schirmman, *Studies in the History of Hebrew Poetry and Drama*, (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1979) p. 304. Schirmman raised the conjecture that Al-ʿAmmānī fled the Land of Israel after it was conquered by the Crusader forces in 1099. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Goitein, *Palestinian Jewry*, pp. 237-253 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. M. Frenkel, “*’Compassionate and Benevolent’: Jewish ruling elites in the Medieval Islamicate world; Alexandria as a case study*, (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi, 2007). p. 97 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. S. D. Goitein. “Letters about R. Yehuda Hallewi’s stay in Alexandria and the collection of his poems” *Tarbiz 28* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1959). pp. 352-354 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. Gil and Fleischer, *Yehuda ha-Levi and his Circle*, pp. 463-464. Following them, Frenkel, *Compassionate and Benevolent,* p. 555, and R.P. Scheindlin, *The Song of the Distant Dove: Judah Halevi’s Pilgrimage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) pp. 136, 273 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. The poem, “Happy, and Let my Sleep be Long” (I:362), which is suggested as the subject of the criticism, is not a pleasure poem that could be criticized at all, and in addition, is not one of the poems of friendship with Al-ʿAmmānī, which was the actual subject of the criticism. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. Poems I: 27, 89, 149, 150, 263, 264, 289, 294, 309, 311, 315, 402, and the poem “Take a Harp” that survived in the Schocken *Diwan*. The two poems that Yeshua attributes to ibn Al-Qash, “Entreat the Lord,” (I:189) and “The Sun, Like a Groom” (I: 333), are also found in Hiyya’s *Diwan* (255, 289). Apparently Yeshua attributed them to ibn Al-Qash’s *diwan* by mistake. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. For the poem written by Yehuda ha-Levi with the exact same opening, see Part I: 396. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. Goitein, *Palestinian Society,* p. 304. (he reads *Bo Sa‘ad* by mistake. See also, J. Yahalom “*Kitab al’sadur fi almanzum wa’al-mantur*: Yehuda ha-Levi’s Diwan edited by Yeshua ha-Levi” From: *Heritage and Innovation in Judeo-Arabic Culture in the Middle Ages* Ed. Y. Blau, D. Doron, (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press 2000). p. 130. Fleischer thought that one cannot assume that Yeshua was critical of a *diwan* that he considered reliable. (Fleischer, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain*, p. 925). This is may be how Fleischer himself worked. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. The poem is included in *Poems of Levi ibn Altabban: Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary*. Ed. D Pagis, (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and the Humanities, 1968). pp. 55-56. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. Fleischer, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain,* pp. 849, 950-951. There he proves that even poems with the acrostic “Levi” could be by Yehuda ha-Levi. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. Yeshua only noted poems that originated in Ibn al-Qash’s *diwan* if they did not appear in Hiyya’s. Exceptions to this are the two poems mentioned in footnote 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. Some of these headings were partially preserved in the original part of the Schocken *Diwan*. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. The first person to notice this was my faithful assistant, Yonatan Vardi, who greatly aided me with the research for this paper and who deserves full credit for noticing this. JTS ENA 515 is an exact copy of Neubauer-Cowley 1971, including all its defects (including missing quire *zayin*). The manuscript heading declares that it was “copied from a manuscript found in Egypt in 1517.” Evidently, the Oxford manuscript was already in its present state in 1517. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. *Diwan* Schocken placed all these together on page 193a, which is the last page of monorhyme poems. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. See also, Fleischer, *Hebrew Poetry in Spain*, pp. 901-904. Fleischer compares the poems in this *diwan* to the ha-Levi *Diwan* represented by the “Wilsker list,” but the latter is a late *diwan*, which Yeshua was not familiar with. This comparison and the others he makes in that article are irrelevant. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. Under the heading: *Petîḥôt* and Laments (laments and eulogies). This heading also appears in the Neubauer-Cowley 1971. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)