

**Hebrew Bible: Intertextuality in Spanish-Hebrew Literature**

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**(1) Abraham ibn Ezra, *muwashshah* (ca. 1100)**

עֲתָה אֲסִיר יְדִידוֹת הַנְּנִי, אֲתַחַנְנָה לָךְ--לֹא תַעֲנֵנִי, 20 אֵיךְ תַחֲשֶׁה עֵדֶן וְתַעֲנֵנִי? לוֹ אֲגֹדֶעַה וּפִיךָ תִפְתַּח בְּגִנְאֵי אוֹ שְׂבַת.	שָׁמֶשׁ בְּיוֹם וָלַיִל לֹא יִזַּח, עָלֵינוּ זְרַח!  שָׁמֶשׁ אָנוּשׁ, נֹסֶה אוֹר פְּנִיךָ עַל אוֹהֲבִים, עֲשֵׂה בְרָצוֹנְךָ-- 5 אֵל תִּגַּפֶּם בְּחֻצֵי עֵינֶיךָ! לְמָה בּוֹעֲפֶנְךָ לֵב תִרְצַח? הוֹאֵל נָא וְקַח!
נִפְתַּח וְצוּר בְּפִיךָ מִמְלָחִים, מַעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹהִים--לֹא מִרְקָחִים, 25 רֵיחַ בְּאַפְּךָ פִתְפוּחִים-- חֲבִיבֵי אֵן אֶכְלֵת אֶלְתַּפְּאֵחַ קָם אַעֲמַל לִי אַח.	כּוֹכְבֵי זָבוּל יִקְנְאוּ אוֹתְךָ, פִי חֲמָדוֹ הָיוֹת אוֹרָם פָּכָה, 10 הִנֵּה בְךָ אֲדַמָּה מַלְכָה. קוֹם, הֲצַבֵּי, עֲלֵה גַם הַצֹּלַח וְהִדְרֵךְ צֹלַח!
	עֵין אֲשֶׁר תִּשׁוּרֵךְ אֲשֶׁרֶיהָ-- לוֹלֵי מְשׁוֹךְ לְבָבִים אַחֲרֶיהָ; 15 מָה אַעֲשֶׂה אֲנִי בְדַבְרֶיהָ? הַעֵין אָנוּשׁ לְכַבּוֹ תוֹכַח-- הִיא הִיתָה לְפַת.

O sun which does not set by day or night, Arise upon us!

O sun-like man let the light of your face shine  
 Upon them that love you; do it with your favor  
 And let not the arrows in your eyes harm them!  
 Why must you kill a heart in anger  
 When it is yours for the taking?

The stars in heaven envy you,  
 They desire a shade of light like yours;  
 With your radiance the earth outshines the sky.  
 Arise, O gazelle, go up and triumph  
 And your majesty, prosper.

The eye that sees you is happy —  
 Now if only the heart would resist the attraction.  
 What am I to do in this case?  
 Although the eye should be a teacher to man's heart, she has become a snare.  
 I find myself at present a captive of my affection;  
 I plead with you, but you are unresponsive;  
 Shall I remain silent? Will you answer me then?  
 I am prepared to die if only you would speak,  
 Be it in praise or blame.

The choice honey from your lips is sweet;  
 It is God's work, unblemished.  
**Your breath radiates the fragrance of apples.**  
*My beloved, where have you eaten the apple?*  
*Come and say to me: ah!*

(Leon J. Weinberger, *Twilight of a Golden Age: Selected poems of Abraham Ibn Ezra*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997. 90-91.)

## (2) Abu Nuwas (756-814)

وعدتني قُبْلَةً من جَبْنِي فتفاضتْ جَبْنِي عَشْرَ قُبُلٍ  
 ما رأيتُ العَضَّ في تُفَاحَةٍ بعدُ إلا هاج لي منها خَبَلٌ  
 ليس ذلك العَضُّ من عَيْبِهَا إنما ذلك رَسولٌ لِلقُبُلِ

The apple promised me a kiss of my beloved. Thus my beloved owed ten kisses.  
 Never I saw the biting in an apple without becoming greatly disturbed.  
 Such a bite is not a shame for (the apple), but it is a forerunner of kisses.

(*Diwan*. ed. Gregor Schoeler. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1900. 4: 5, no. 4; trans. Arie Schippers, "Hebrew Andalusian and Arabic Poetry: Descriptions of Fruit in the Tradition of the 'Elegants' or Zurafa.'" *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33.2 (1988) : 219-232. 222.)

**(3) El robo de Dina – Sephardic ballad**

Se pasea las doje flores, entre en medio una conchá  
 Dixo la conchá a las flores: Hoy es día de pasear  
 Se pasea la linda Dina por los campos del rey Hamor  
 A favor de sus doje hermanos, caminaba sin temor  
 Arrimóse a una tienda, pensando que no hay varón.  
 Visto la hubiera visto Xehem, hijo del rey Hamor.  
 Ayegóse para eya, tres palabricas le habló.  
 —Linda sox, la linda Dina, sin afeite y sin color.  
 Lindos son vuestros hermano, la flor vos yevatex vos.  
 —Si son lindos y non son lindos, a mí que me lo guadre el Dio.—  
 Ayegóse más a eya, hizo lo que non es razón.  
 Se esparte la linda Dina, se va a pasear ande su señor.  
 A solombra del tejado, a que no la enfaniara el sol.  
 Su padre, desde la vido, a recibirla salió:  
 —¿Quién vos demudó la cara y quién vos demudó la color?  
 O vola demudó el aire, o vola enfanió el sol.  
 —Ni me la demudó el aire, ni me la emfamió el sol.  
 Me la demudó un muchachico, Xehem, hijo del rey Hamor.—  
 Estas palabricas diziendo, cazamenteros le mandó.

Twelve flowers are out walking, between them walks a rose.  
 Says the rose to the flowers: good day for a walk!  
 The beautiful Dina is out walking in the fields of King Hamor  
 Because of her twelve brothers, she walks without fear  
 She approached a tent, thinking no one was in it.  
 Xehem, son of King Hamor, caught a glimpse of her.  
 He came up to her, telling her three little words.  
 —You are beautiful, beautiful Dina, even without any makeup on.  
 You brothers are handsome, but you take the cake.  
 —Maybe they are and maybe they aren't, only God knows for sure!  
 He came up to her, and did that which is not right.  
 Then beautiful Dina went away back to her father's house.  
 She walks under the eaves of the houses, so the sun will not burn her.  
 As soon as her father saw her, he went out to greet her:  
 —Who changed your complexion? Who changed your coloring?  
 Either it was the wind or the sun that did it.  
 —It was neither the wind nor the sun;  
 A young guy, Shehem, son of King Hamor, changed it for me.  
 As soon as she said these words, he sent off matchmakers to him.

*(Judeo-Spanish Ballads from New York. Ed. Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981. 31.)*

**(4) Spanish ballad: *La bella malmaridada***

"La bella mal maridada véote tan triste, enojada, Si has de tomar amores, que a tu marido, señora, besando y retozando, juraba y perjuraba Allí habló la señora, "Sácame tú, el caballero, Por las tierras donde fueres yo te haría bien la cama Yo te guisaré la cena de gallinas y de capones Que a este me marido que me da muy mala vida, Ellos en aquesto estando, "¿Qué hacéis, mala traidora? "¿Y por qué, señor por qué? nunca besé a hombre, Las penas que él merecía, con riendas de tu caballo, Con cordones de oro y sirgo en la huerta de los naranjos En sepultura de oro póngasme encima un mote, "Aquí está la flor de las flores, cualquier que muere de amores Que así hice yo, mezquina,	de las lindas que yo vi, la verdad dila tú a mí. por otro no dejes a mí, con otras dueñas lo vi, mucho mal dice de ti; que te había de herir": allí habló, y dijo así: tú sácasme de aquí. bien te sabía yo servir, en que hayamos de dormir. como a caballero gentil, y otras cosas más de mil. ya no lo puedo sufrir, cual vos bien podéis oír." su marido helo aquí: ¡Hoy habedes de morir!" que nunca os lo merecí: mas hombre besó a mí. señor, daldas vos a mí: señor, azotes a mí. viva ahorques a mí; viva entierres a mí; y labrada de un marfil señor, que diga así: por amores murió aquí: mándese enterrar aquí." que por amores me perdí."	5  10  15  20  25
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<p>["Beautiful mismarried girl        You seem so sad and angry,        If you must take a lover,        for I've seen your husband,        kissing and caressing,        he swore up and down        Then the lady spoke        "Take me, oh knight,        In whatever lands you may be        Well I will make the bed        I will cook you dinner        hens and capons        For this husband of mine        he makes my life quite hard,        And in that moment,        "What are you doing, traitoress?        "Why, o why, my Lord?        I never kissed any man,        Whatever punishment it is,        With the reins of your horse,        With cords of gold and serge,        in the orange grove        in a golden tomb        and an epitaph        "Here is the flower of flowers,        whoever dies for love        Just as I, miserable,</p>	<p>the most beautiful I've seen,        tell me true what happened.        don't leave me for another,        lady, with other women,        speaking quite ill of you, 5        that he had to harm you":        then she spoke, and said this:        take me away from here.        I will know how to serve you well,        in which we will sleep. 10        as befits a real gentleman,        and more than a thousand other things.        I can no longer stand him        as you can well understand."        her husband happened upon them: 15        Today you will surely die!"        I did nothing to deserve it:        but rather, he kissed me        my Lord, give it to me:        my Lord, whip me, 20        my Lord, hang me;        bury me alive;        adorned with ivory        my Lord, that says this:        who died for love here: 25        shall be buried here."        was lost on account of love."]</p>
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(Lorenzo de Sepúlveda, *Romances nuevamente sacados de historias antiguas de la crónica de España*, Antwerp, 1551, fol. 258, reproduced in Lope de Vega, *La bella malmaridada o la cortesana*, ed. Christian Andrés (Madrid: Castalia, 2001), 229-30. English translation mine.)

(5) Vidal Benvenist, *Melitsat `Efer ve-Dina* (Zaragoza, ca. 1400): Dina's Lament

ותען דינה ותאמר. מר לי מר. העל יופי הזקן וצבי תפארתו. לבך תשית  
 לדעתו. ואם על חמדת פניו והדרתו. פקחת עיניך לעמת מחברתו. ובמה  
 יודע פי עת דודים [עתו]. בקרחתו או בגבחתו. אין בו רק שבתו. לאכול  
 ולשתות וישבות מכל מלאכתו. ואיך תאמר שאל יעקב בעזרו. ויאכל  
 חצי בשרו. ישב בדר ממקומו לא ימיש. חי נזון בלתי מרגיש. ולא נודע 85  
 אם בהמה אם איש. ומה בצע בכספו וזהבו. [ועל] חמדת נשים לא יבא.  
 ימיו נזעכו ורוחו חובלה. ומה יתבונן על בתולה. ואיך אשא בימי  
 עלומים. בביר מאביך ימים. האמנע מחפץ בחורי חמד למשכב דודים  
 בימי בחורותי. ושכבתי עם אבותי. אבי אבי ראה גם ראה לחולשת האישי  
 ותולדתו. מתהלך בחוץ על משענתו. כי תם כחו [וחילו]. ומקלו יגיד לו. 90

## ותשא משלה ותאמר

נוחם לנפשה מאנה לקחת דינה בקרחת וגם גבחת על קיר לבכה [פשתה] מספחת כסף ולא מצאה לנפשה נחת חברת צבי עופר זמיר פוצחת אופיר ופניו מגדלות מרקחת בדי זהבו נחשב אמתחת	לא יעלוז רוחה [בחמדת] אוצרות כיר ראתה שיכה בדגל אהבה יערב משוש גילה בכך גילה [וואל] מאין מחיר דוד נאהב [נחשב זהב] אכן [מלא] ימים בפנים זועפים	95
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[Dina answered, saying: "It is bitter to me, so bitter! Shall my beauty enhance his reputation? You heart honors his request, but what of his heart's [lack of] desire? You have opened your eyes to his role in my wedding! How shall I know what is the season of love with him, with his baldness or his receding hairline? Everything about him is old! He wants only to eat, drink, and rest from his work. How will you say that the God of Jacob helps him, now that half of his flesh is wasted? He sits in his house and does not move from his place! He is still alive, but his passions are dead. One cannot tell if he is an animal or a man. What will I profit from his silver and gold, if I cannot satisfy my womanly desire? His days are extinct and his spirit broken. Why should he look upon a virgin? How can he pretend to prolong his youth, when he is older than *your* father? Shall I hold myself back, in the days of my youth, from desiring to lie in the bed of love with beautiful young men, only in order to sleep with men of my father's generation? Father, my father, just look at his weakness and his condition! He has to walk around outside with his cane, for his power and might are finished, still his rod tells him what to do!

She took up her parable and said:

"Where will Dina get rest for her soul,  
 in baldness and in receding hairline?  
 For she has seen old age on the flag of love,  
 Spread out like a scab on the wall of her heart.  
 Her spirit will not rejoice in the pleasures  
 Of money; neither will her soul find satisfaction therein;  
 Mirth is sweetened to joy in the company of joy,  
 And with the friendship of the hart, the doe breaks into song.  
 The love of a young lover trumps all the gold of Ophir,  
 And the sight of his face is like that of fragrant flowers.  
 Surely the face of one full of years is uglier,  
 His fine clothes as sackcloth."]

(Vidal Benvenist. *Melitsat `Efer ve-Dinah le-Don Vidal Benvenesht*. Ed. Matti Huss. Jerusalem: Y.L. Magnes, Hebrew University, 2003. Lines 81-97. Translation mine.)

**(6) Melitsat `Efer ve-Dina: Shibbutz with double entendre**

Father, my father, just look at his weakness and his character! He has to walk around outside with his cane, for his power and might are finished, **and his staff speaks to him!** (Ho 4:12) (ed. Huss ll. 89-90)

אָבִי אָבִי רְאֵה גַם רְאֵה לְחַוְלֵשׁתְּ הָאִישׁ  
וְתוֹלְדוֹתָיו. מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּחוּץ עַל מִשְׁעָנָתוֹ. כִּי תָם כָּחוֹ [וְחִילוֹ]. וּמִקְלוֹ יִגִּיד לוֹ.

**(7) Melitsat `Efer ve-Dina: Ironic shibbutz**

וַיְהִי מִמָּחָרֵת וַיֵּאָסֹף עֶפְרָאֵת כָּל זְקֵנֵי עַמּוֹ. וְאֵת כָּל בְּנֵי שַׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ.  
לְשִׁמּוֹחַ בְּשִׂמְחַת חֲפָתוֹ. וּבְיוֹם חֲתוּנָתוֹ. וַיֵּלְכוּ לְבֵית דִּינָה בְּתֻפִּים  
וּבְמַחֲוֹלוֹת. וְכָל הָעָם רוֹאִים אֶת הַקּוֹלוֹת. וְכִשְׁמוֹעַ דִּינָה אֶת קוֹל הָעָם  
בְּכַנּוּרוֹת וּבְמִצְלִתִּים.

And so it was that on the next day Efer gathered up all the elders of his nation; all the inhabitants of the town, to rejoice in the simha of his nuptials, on the day of his wedding. And they went to Dinah's house with tambourines and dancing, **and the whole town heard the sounds** (Ex 20:15) of celebration. (ll. 254-55)

(Vidal Benvenist. *Melitsat `Efer ve-Dinah le-Don Vidal Benvenesht*. Ed. Matti Huss. Jerusalem: Y.L. Magnes, Hebrew University, 2003. Translation mine.)