

THE “AL-SHAYB”

MOTIVE AND ASCETIC POETRY IN THE WORK OF IBN HAMDIS

EL MOTIVO “AL-SHAYB” Y LA POESÍA ASCÉTICA EN LA OBRA DE IBN HAMDIS

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ABSTRACT

In this research it is addressed the sophisticated interplay between the “al-shayb” (white hair/old age) motif and ascetic (zuhdiyya) themes in the poetry of Ibn Hamdis, preeminent voice of Arabic Sicilian literature. While Sicilian Arabic literary culture emerged as a cosmopolitan synthesis of local, Arab, and Berber traditions—reflecting both North African-Berber customs and Eastern Islamic influences—scholarly attention to its distinctive poetic strategies remains limited. Despite growing recognition of Ibn Hamdis as a paradigmatic figure of Mediterranean Arabic poetry, mainly through the work of researcher Nicola Carpentieri, a critical gap persists in analyzing how he transforms conventional poetic topoi to articulate unprecedented cultural trauma following the Norman conquest of Sicily. Employing close textual analysis within historical and intertextual frameworks, this research demonstrates that Ibn Hamdis’s treatment of “al-shayb” operates as a polysemous symbol that simultaneously marks personal aging and embodies the collective decline of Islamic Sicily. Unlike traditional ascetic poets who advocate spiritual withdrawal, Ibn Hamdis innovatively deploys zuhdiyya as a rhetorical strategy to dignify political displacement, transforming repentance into historical commentary. His poetry reveals three distinctive features: (1) the “shayb” motif functions as temporal marker and metaphor for civilizational collapse, where graying hair mirrors Sicily’s demise; (2) death is anthropomorphized through inherited Arabic traditions (notably Zuhayr’s “blind camel” imagery) but reinterpreted through exile consciousness; and (3) psychological portrayals of aging incorporate sharp social critique of elders pursuing youth, framed as moral degradation.

Keywords: Sicilian literature, Sicily under Arab rule, Ibn Hamdis’ poetry, Al-shayb motif, Zuhdiyya.

RESUMEN

En esta investigación se aborda la compleja interacción entre el motivo “al-shayb” (cabello blanco/vejez) y los temas ascéticos (zuhdiyya) en la poesía de Ibn Hamdis, figura destacada de la literatura árabe siciliana. Si bien la cultura literaria árabe siciliana surgió como una síntesis cosmopolita de tradiciones locales, árabes y bereberes, reflejando tanto las costumbres norteafricanas y bereberes como las influencias islámicas orientales, la atención académica a sus distintivas estrategias poéticas sigue siendo limitada. A pesar del creciente reconocimiento de Ibn Hamdis como figura paradigmática de la poesía árabe mediterránea, principalmente a través del trabajo del investigador Nicola Carpentieri, persiste una brecha crítica en el análisis de cómo transforma los tópicos poéticos convencionales para articular el trauma cultural sin precedentes tras la conquista normanda de Sicilia. Mediante un análisis textual minucioso dentro de marcos históricos e intertextuales, esta investigación demuestra que el tratamiento que Ibn Hamdis da a “al-shayb” funciona como un símbolo polisémico que marca simultáneamente el envejecimiento personal y encarna el declive colectivo de la Sicilia islámica. A diferencia de los poetas ascéticos tradicionales que abogan por el retraimiento espiritual, Ibn Hamdis utiliza de forma innovadora la zuhdiyya como estrategia retórica para dignificar el desplazamiento político, transformando el arrepentimiento en un comentario histórico. Su poesía revela tres rasgos distintivos: (1) el motivo “shayb” funciona como marcador temporal y metáfora del colapso de la civilización, donde

el encanecimiento refleja la desaparición de Sicilia; (2) la muerte se antropomorfiza a través de tradiciones árabes heredadas (en particular, la imagen del “camello ciego” de Zuhayr), pero se reinterpreta a través de la conciencia del exilio; y (3) las representaciones psicológicas del envejecimiento incorporan una aguda crítica social de los ancianos que buscan la juventud, enmarcada como degradación moral.

Palabras clave: Literatura siciliana, Sicilia bajo el dominio árabe, Poesía de Ibn Hamdis, Motivo al-shayb, zuhdiyya.

INTRODUCTION

The literary corpus of ‘Abd al-Jabbār Ibn Ḥamdīs (c. 1056–1133) occupies a singular position within the broader landscape of Arabic poetry in the medieval Mediterranean. As a Sicilian poet writing in Arabic during the twilight of Islamic Sicily, Ibn Ḥamdīs witnessed and poetically chronicled the disintegration of a political and cultural order, transforming his experience of exile and displacement into one of the most compelling voices of nostalgia and temporal meditation in Arabic literature (Granara, 2019). Within this rich poetic tapestry, two interconnected elements demand particular scholarly attention: the recurrent deployment of the al-shayb (بيش) motif—literally referring to gray hair or old age—and the presence of ascetic (zuhdiyya) themes that permeate his work with profound reflections on temporal fragility and worldly detachment (Carpentieri, 2024c).

The shayb motif in Arabic poetry extends far beyond its literal physiological referent, functioning instead as a polysemous symbol that encompasses temporal marking, moral authority, elegiac loss, and rhetorical sophistication (Rashwan et al., 2024). In the specific context of Ibn Ḥamdīs’s poetry, this motif acquires additional layers of meaning, operating simultaneously as a marker of personal aging and as a metaphor for collective decay—the graying of the poet’s hair mirrors the decline of Islamic Sicily itself (Carpentieri, 2016). This symbolic convergence between bodily experience and historical catastrophe represents one of the most sophisticated uses of traditional Arabic poetic topoi in the service of expressing unprecedented cultural trauma.

Equally significant is the poet’s engagement with zuhdiyya” (زهدية, ascetic poetry, a genre crystallized in the classical period by Abū al-‘Atāhiyya and characterized by its emphasis on worldly renunciation, moral admonition, and meditation on temporal transience (Larkin & Sharlet, 2019; Sperl, 1989). However, Ibn Ḥamdīs’s deployment of ascetic themes diverges from traditional models in crucial ways. Rather than advocating pure spiritual withdrawal,

his ascetic voice frequently functions as a rhetorical strategy for dignifying collective loss and political displacement. This innovative use of ascetic discourse transforms zuhdiyya from a call to mystical retreat into a sophisticated commentary on the historical circumstances that shaped the diaspora of Sicilian Muslim elites (Brann, 2023; Lala, 2023).

The scholarly significance of examining these interconnected motifs lies not merely in their literary sophistication, but in their capacity to illuminate broader questions about cultural memory, identity formation, and poetic innovation under conditions of political crisis (Larkin & Sharlet, 2019). Recent scholarship has increasingly recognized Ibn Ḥamdīs as a paradigmatic figure whose work transcends the traditional boundaries of exile poetry, offering instead a complex meditation on the relationship between personal temporality and collective historical experience. Several studies by Nicola Carpentieri (Carpentieri, 2016, 2018, 2022, 2023, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c) have highlighted the emergence of a distinctive “poetics of aging” in the Islamic West, while William Granara’s comprehensive examination of the poet’s biographical and historical context has demonstrated the centrality of memory and displacement in shaping his literary voice (Granara, 2019).

However, we could not find during literature research the intersection of the shayb motif with ascetic themes in Ibn Ḥamdīs’s poetry, even though it reveals a sophisticated textual strategy that merits detailed analysis for several reasons. First, it demonstrates how traditional Arabic poetic conventions could be redeployed to articulate experiences of cultural rupture that had no precise precedent in the classical tradition. Second, it illustrates the complex negotiations between autobiographical authenticity and literary convention that characterize much of medieval Arabic poetry. Third, it provides crucial insights into the ways in which poets of the Islamic West developed distinctive regional approaches to inherited Eastern models, contributing to what can be understood as a specifically Maghrebi-Andalusi poetic sensibility.

Methodologically, this analysis requires a multifaceted approach that combines close textual reading with attention to historical context, intertextual relationships, and the broader traditions of Arabic rhetoric (balāgha). The polysemic nature of both the shayb motif and ascetic themes demands particular care in avoiding reductive interpretations that might flatten their complex semantic operations. Furthermore, the temporal distance separating contemporary readers from Ibn Ḥamdīs’s historical moment necessitates careful attention to the social and aesthetic connotations that aging and asceticism carried within

medieval Arabic literary culture (Mahmoudi & Cheraghi, 2022; Talebpour, 2022).

Considering the above, in this research it is aimed to examine how Ibn Hamdis, the prominent Sicilian Arab poet, transforms the traditional “al-shayb” (white hair/old age) motif into a complex symbol that simultaneously signifies personal aging and embodies the collective decline of Islamic Sicily following the Norman conquest. It is analyzed the sophisticated interplay between this aging motif and ascetic (zuhdiyya) themes in Ibn Hamdis's poetry, revealing how he innovatively deploys ascetic discourse not as pure spiritual withdrawal but as a rhetorical strategy to dignify political displacement and cultural trauma. Methodologically, the study employs close textual analysis of selected poems from Ibn Hamdis's Diwan, situated within their historical context of exile and cultural rupture, while incorporating intertextual examination of connections with earlier Arabic poetic traditions (particularly comparing his treatment of aging with poets like Abu Nuwas and Zuhayr) and careful attention to Arabic rhetorical conventions (balāgha) to unpack the polysemic nature of the “al-shayb” motif and its relationship to ascetic themes in expressing unprecedented historical experience.

DEVELOPMENT

“*Al-shayb*” (بش - white hair, old age) runs alongside the motif of exile in Ibn Hamdis' poetry. In most of these poems, the poet complains about the graying of the black hair of youth, making it shine like silver.

يَنْيَمِي يَفْطُشُ الْمِائِةَ

هَضَفَ طَوِيحُ هُنْمِ رَجَتِ

(Hamdis, 2018)

As if the comb in my right hand were running through my hair,

It makes its way through the silver threads.

The poet describes his entry into old age as the end of a long journey. He has already reached his home. In his present state, he no longer needs a horse or a camel. Life for him consists of praying five times a day, while danger hovers over his head.

And we are ready to fear

سُنَّالِ ابْنِ مَلَّةٍ شَحَوَاهِي فَبُهِجَتِ وَ

ثَعَسَ اهْتَعَسَ بْمُايَاوَلِي

سَفَلًا وَكَمْسُجَ نِيَابِ امْهَقِي رِفَتِ

(Hamdis, 2018)

We are in an apartment where fear haunts our peace.

There is no peace or communication left here.

Nights and days run one after another,

Let them separate our bodies from our souls.

“Shayb” motif is closely linked to the ascetic poem. Sometimes, the naming of this or that poem in the diwan is conditional. For example, in the following poem, the spirit of asceticism is felt only in the last verse. The poet expresses that he has devoted his days to the desires of the soul, that he has tasted the “fruits” of the sins he has committed, and in return, he has sought refuge in the mercy of God in the grave.

أَضَى أَخْ سِيفِنَا يَوْهَ يَفْ يَنْارِ مَكْ يَلِ

I didn't overdo it on myself

أَهَبْتُ بَا مَلْمَةَ بِي شَيْ يَنْتَلِمُ شِ دَقِ

يَسْمُ شَطَالَاتِ دَقِ يَلِي لِي يَفْ يَلِ امْ فِ

ادِّهَاجِ يَسَاعِ مَلِ يَفْ كَبِ تَسْرِغِ

سِرْغِ لَازِمُ يَنْتَجَا يَنَا كُشَالِ وَ

أَهَبْتُ دَرَاءَ لَمْ تُجْ وَكُشَا هَلَلِ يَلِ عِ

And she became in sin like yesterday

يَدِي تَمْدَقُ امْ وُوسِ نَمِ يَحْشَابِ اِيْ فِ

يَسْنَانِ مَحْرَمِ رُبْقَا يَفْ نَأْ كِيْ مَلِ يَدِ

(Hamdis, 2018)

How long will I follow my desires?

As if I'm not afraid of the damage that indulging in such desires would do to my soul.

Even though my hair doesn't get tangled when I go to bed at night,

The sun was shining brightly on my head when the morning dawned.

I have fallen into sin with my own hands.

I will definitely reap the “fruit” of this.

I complain to God about my sins.

As I sleep at night with sin,

I also open the morning with it.

If I had forgotten that there would be mercy in the grave,

The sins I had committed terrified me.

As we can see, this is a poem by a man who looks critically at his own life and remembers his sins. Here, the motif of old age is presented in the traditional way as the shine

of hair. The replacement of night with day is a metaphor, representing the replacement of black hair with white hair.

The darkness-light metaphor conveys the ready and natural analogy between the physical action of light in enabling us to see objects and that of spiritual light, a new insight into the truth of the speaker's tragic situation. This vision that "white hair" inspires is well expressed by Ibn Hamdis in another poem:

يبابش رورس يبيش مه ىفن

I did not regret it. The cares of old age have wasted the pleasures of my youth; White hair brought darkness where it gave light (Shugair, 2023). It is not known from the poem what sins the poet remembers and suffers for. Since he was a gentle and loyal person, we can assume that he did not commit many sins and did not follow the precepts of Islam. In this respect, Ibn Hamdis's asceticisms are reminiscent of the regretful poems that Abu Nuwas wrote towards the end of his life. This can be seen more clearly by looking at one of Abu Nuwas' asceticisms:

قرشك يبونذت مطع نإمبر اي
مظعأ كوفدع نأب مت ملع دقل
نس حم لل لكوجري ال ناك نإ
مجرم لاري جتسي و ذولي نمبف
اعرضت ترمأ امك ببرك وادأ
مجرى اذ نمف يدي تدر اذلف
اجرل اللقل يسوكي ليل لى
ملسم ينأمت كوفدع لي مجو
(Nuwas, 2003)

O God, the Most Merciful, the Most Merciful,

How many sins were before me...

If only a believer asks you for forgiveness,

So to whom does the sinful servant turn?

Rejection don't my hand, O Great God,

In front of knee drowned pardon when you wish.

After all I am Muslim, oh pardon beautiful,

A hope There is a fire in my heart.

(Gasimova, 2019)

The same motif recurs again and again in Ibn Hamdis' poetry. In poem number 150 of the Divan, the poet regrets the multitude of his sins. "If I repent one hour, I repeat my evil deeds the next," says the poet, and also complains about the night.

ىرفت ىدوفو ىنامساپ تليقت

رجف رون نع هي ف لي للا بهي غ

يقك رح ي ف نو كس لا توم ب د

يرم ج ر م ح ه د ا م ر ي ف ل ب خ و

And I will eat my food

يرم ع لكاي نامزلا نأ ري غ

(Hamdis, 2018)

In my senses, the darkness of night has been replaced by the light of day.

Silence replaced their movements, and the fire of life was lost in the dull ashes.

The poet's life, which is spent in search of sustenance, is "eaten up" by time. Whenever he thinks he has gained a benefit, behind this benefit lies a loss. The poet seeks refuge in God from following the temptations of Satan, from the evil of his tongue and actions, and hopes for His help. Ibn Hamdis' poems about old age sometimes contain critical thoughts. He considers it a great sin for older men to be attracted to younger women. Old men sometimes consider the natural aging process a disaster for themselves, they hate their age, their gray hair, and their mistakes. They do not even realize what disgust they face when they declare their love for younger women. According to the poet, such an act is a great shame:

Shame on the Sheikh

The girl sees her closeness to me

(Hamdis, 2018)

Young to the girl approaching to the old man shame be it.

That girl this to oneself inappropriate, shameful counts.

The poet's "shayb" theme in his poems homeland longing and expatriation motive also revives. From old age complaining poet In Sicily his youth, his first your love remember He throws. His youth laughter, old age while to tears drowning These tears are salty. If there were, they would be one river, sea assumption if you do (Hamdis, 2018). The motif of alienation dominates some of Ibn Hamdis's pessimistic poems. The poet breathes new life into the motif of exile, which is remembered in canonical images in Arabic poetry. The following poem reminds us of the poem Imruu-l-Qays recited on his deathbed:

هذب يرغ هي ل ع ثن ه ب يرغ م ك

هذب يرغ عك وشن هاجش بي عكو

انيل عيئانتال ءُبْزْكَ تَطْلَسُ
هَبْ يَرْقِي نَادَتْلَا ءُحَرْفِ سَعْفِ
انَّ حَبْصَتْفِ يِقْتَنِي تَمَفْ
هَبْ يَبْتَسِي فَن لَّكَ سِي فَن لَّكَ

(Hamdis, 2018)

Every one stranger longing pulling one stranger There is a girl.

Every one sad person sadness inside which to the girl according to It's even sadder.

Separation sadness upon us collapsed,
wish you well. joy to us if it were closer.

What when we meet, to each other doctor we are.

The next poem is very famous:

انه اه نابيرغ انا انت انا

بيسن بيرغلل بيرغ لك

(al-Qais, 2004)

Hey girl next door, we are two strangers here.

Strangers always share each other's fate - reminds me of the verse.

Ibn Hamdis also touches on the psychological aspects of old age. During old age, a person becomes frail, and he considers illness as an approach to death. Not only the body of an old person weakens, but also the soul:

أشيع توجر تضرم ايدي تئنك
بابشل خريش يف تئنك يلاي
أتود تيشخ ترضم يدي ترضف
بسحلا دذع يضرنا دق: تئلوق
نيه لك ءلصافت خيشل سئنف
باهذلا فزط يلع هتؤوق
ينام دق أقصم تسلو
پارسلا يلع دازملا يكوئ لهو

(Hamdis, 2018)

My youth flourished time if I get sick,

Life my hope I wouldn't cut it.

In old age when you get sick from death, I am afraid,
"Doomsday" day "it's getting closer" - he said, I think.

The old man spiritual world every day one less weakens,
Physical strength also constantly decreases.

I wish myself (happiness) with I'm not cheating.

Human sir mirage come closer, can you?

In fact, the poet so thinks that old age is also relative. What makes him old age not, heavy life abroad spent years, sadness and It is sadness. From his ghazals in one poet young one with the girl the conversation to the pen takes. Girl poet old man knew rejection does, "our from our proximity you benefit You see, I while damage "I'll take it," he says. Later poet writes:

اهمول ناك امل ينس تملع ولو
هراج لك احراج انا ناس يلع
يتب يباش ناو فنع يف ينبيشل
هه داف اءي ده ماي ع نم يئاقل

(Hamdis, 2018)

If he is mine my age if he knew, the words until sharp was me sharp sword like would not hurt.

Because my in my youth heavy, misfortune full days from what I have been through my hair It has turned white.

It is known that Arabic in literature asceticism of the poem the most perfect examples Abu -l- Atahiya created. It's in their asceticism of death terrible image arises. Poet people mortal to the world to not sleep, constantly grave his suffering to think All this motives I billion Hamdis in his poem also from time to time sounds like a poet one very in his poem's sins remember throws and God's him/her that he will forgive hope This is in the sense his/her asceticism poems Abu Nuvas poetry with sounds like a poet again and again of your sins from the majority story does. With this so, death motive also his/her in poetry head raises. Poet of death anthropomorphic image creates.

بابشلا دزب كنم تابل س اما
هبال اسلا نم دزت سئي لهف

And minutes of hours

هبال راش ءلك آكرم غل

And the danger is from her

هبال او اراف ظاب لكي لع

يدلا ءصحب اهزت م لع

هبال ساح اهل ميمح لك ل

(Hamdis, 2018)

Death human youth "steals" his cloak.

Death human "eats" his life.

He with his “claws” from a person it sticks.
 In return for this human soul also one from the side magnet like him/her to sin dragging.
 Sins are so many there are many,
 Angels so many bees I get tired of writing.

We are here of death anthropomorphic image we see. Arabic in his poem this about strong one tradition was created. Zuheyr Death to a blind camel resembles:

شَعِي نَمَوْ ذَايَ خَلَا فَتَلَا كَتُّمَيْسَ
 مَأْسِي كَلَّ أَبَا لَوْحَ نَيَّامَاتِ
 بَصِي نَمَاءُ وَشَغَطْبَخَ إِيَّانَ قَلَا تِيَّأَرُ
 مَزْهِيَتْ رَمْعِيَّ تَبَخُّ نَمَوْ هُتَمَاتِ
 هَلْبَقِ سِمَامُ وَمَوِيَّ لَمَلَعِ مُلْعَوُ
 مَعْدِيغِ يَفَامِ لَعِ نَعْنِي نَلْوَ
 قَرِيَتْ رُومُ يَفِ عِنَاصِيَّ أَلْ نَمَوْ
 مَسْنَمَبِ أَطْوِيَّ وَبَايَ نَأْبِ سُرُضِيَّ
 هَلْضَفَتْ لَخَبِيَّ فَتَلْضَفَتْ أَذْ كُيَّ نَمَوْ
 مَمْدِيَّ وَهْنَعِ نَعْتَسِيَّ هِرْمُوقِ يَلَعِ

(Sulma, 2008)

The world completely free from worries I am full.

Who lives eighty years? If it lasts, it's mine too. like annoying.

I see that death is a blind camel like everything trampling goes; who is it? your foot under falls, its destruction It is like stepping on a tree that person doesn't know long life drove is getting old.

I yesterday head from the giver I am aware. Today what saying that it will happen I can, but tomorrow what head than it will give I am unaware.

Who saw it? in the works skillful not, its alive chewed legs under they are trampling.

If your opportunity where in case own to his people hand If you don't catch it, it's up to you. face turns, reprimands they will (Gasimova, 2019).

Thus, Ibn Hamdis's “shayb” poems are interesting in several ways. On the one hand, these poems remind the poet of his youth and Sicily, which in turn brings up the motif of exile. On the other hand, “shayb” poems resonate with ascetic poetry. Here, the poet more often recalls his sins, like Abu Nuwas, and asks for forgiveness. However, the

image of death also comes to life in his old age poems. Sometimes the poet creates a psychological description of old age, and sometimes he criticizes those who fell in love with youth in their old age. All these motifs bring harmony and diversity of thought to his poetry. We also see such diversity in the poet's works written in other genres.

It should be noted that Ibn Hamdis' poems describing his old age also express his longing for his homeland. In his poems written far from his homeland, the poet recalls Sicily with feelings of sadness. In many of these poems dedicated to Sicily, the poet compares his old age spent abroad with the idealized life of his youth in Sicily (Carpentieri, 2016). Thus, Ibn Hamdis' poems dedicated to old age are built on contradictory meanings. The poet contrasts the difficult life he spent in old age with the happy years of his youth in Sicily. At this time, Ibn Hamdis compares white hair, which is a symbol of old age in Arabic literature, with the glow of dawn, while black hair, which is a symbol of youth, is similar to darkness.

CONCLUSIONS

Ibn Hamdis's poems centered on the al-shayb motif—white hair as a symbol of old age—reveal a deeply layered and nuanced poetic vision that intertwines personal experience with collective historical trauma. On one level, al-shayb evokes the poet's lost youth and his native Sicily, reactivating the enduring theme of exile. The graying of his hair becomes not merely a sign of physical aging, but a powerful metaphor for the erosion of an entire cultural and political world—the collapse of Islamic Sicily under Norman conquest. Thus, the personal lament over aging merges seamlessly with a broader elegy for a vanished homeland, transforming individual memory into collective mourning. At the same time, these poems resonate strongly with the tradition of zuhdiyya (ascetic poetry), particularly as exemplified by figures like Abū al-ʿAtāhiyya and, more relevantly in tone, the late penitential verses of Abū Nuwās. Ibn Hamdis frequently reflects on his past sins, expressing remorse and seeking divine forgiveness. However, unlike classical ascetic poets who advocate complete withdrawal from worldly life, Ibn Hamdis employs ascetic themes as a rhetorical and emotional strategy to dignify his experience of displacement. His repentance is not solely spiritual but deeply historical—rooted in the trauma of exile and the loss of cultural continuity.

Moreover, the theme of death is vividly personified in his poetry, continuing a rich Arabic tradition seen in the works of pre-Islamic and early Islamic poets like Zuhayr, who likened death to a blind camel trampling the unsuspecting. Ibn Hamdis revitalizes this anthropomorphic image, portraying death as an ever-present force that steals youth,

consumes life, and draws the soul inexorably toward the grave. This existential awareness is intensified by his psychological portrayal of old age—not only as physical decline, but as spiritual vulnerability and emotional fragility. The poet also engages in sharp social critique, condemning elderly men who pursue young women, which he views as both morally degrading and a denial of the dignity that should accompany age. This critique underscores his broader meditation on the proper conduct and inner transformation expected in later life.

Ultimately, Ibn Ḥamdīs's shayb poems are not merely reflections on aging, but a sophisticated convergence of themes: exile, nostalgia, repentance, mortality, and moral introspection. Through this synthesis, he transcends conventional poetic topoi, crafting a unique “poetics of aging” that is both deeply personal and profoundly historical. Far from being a passive victim of time, the poet uses the motif of al-shayb to assert agency over memory, identity, and cultural survival, positioning his work as a cornerstone of the Maghrebi-Andalusi literary sensibility. In doing so, he enriched Arabic poetry with a distinctive voice that speaks powerfully to the intersections of time, loss, and resilience in the Islamic West.

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