

ABSTRACT

‘EVERYBODY WANTS TO LIVE’:  
A LITERARY READING OF THE *MAQAMA*  
BY YEHUDA AL-ḤARIZI, ‘THE ROOSTER’

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This paper proposes a new reading of ‘The Rooster’, one of the best-known *maqamas* in Yehuda Al-Ḥarizi’s *Sefer Tahkemoni*, by comparing it to the original Arabic version by Ibn al-Shahīd. This reading stems from the hypothesis that this art of storytelling is based on the poetic principle of uncertainty and is therefore associated with various forms of the ambiguous and the ambivalent (the grotesque, the uncanny, the ironic, etc.). As I have argued elsewhere about other rhymed Hebrew stories, this approach is appropriate to the character of some of the most fascinating rhymed stories produced in medieval Hebrew literature. In the present study I suggest yet another demonstration of the benefit that can accrue from the adoption of this approach.