

ABSTRACT

THE *SILUQ* IN HEBREW LITURGICAL POETRY
FROM AL-ANDALUS: NEW DISCOVERIES

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All liturgical poets (*Payytanim*) of medieval Spain wrote large compilations of poems (*Qedushtaot*), to be performed during the service of the Day of Atonement. Over the years these elaborate poetic constructions fell apart, as editors of prayer books chose what to include. Sometimes these editors also shortened poems or changed their liturgical function. Modern scholarship seeks to re-assemble the original compilations and strives for a better understanding of these poems in their original context. The present article contributes to this effort in the form of a full and corrected edition of the long poem which ended the *Qedushta* written by Solomon ibn Gabirol for the morning service of the Day of Atonement. This poem, belonging to the genre of the *Silug*, is made up of seven sections and more than 160 lines and is presented here based on several sources, with a full commentary. The edition of the poem presented here includes many corrections to previous publications, and a whole section, previously unknown.

A further discovery follows this first one in the form of a part of the *Silug* for Yom Kippur most probably written by Ibn Gabirol's eminent predecessor, Yosef ibn Avitur. Here we do not possess a full version of the poem, but even the partial version is an important discovery, since this *Silug* has remained completely unknown and unmentioned in both ancient prayerbooks and modern scholarship. Alongside these textual discoveries, the present article addresses one key poetic feature of these *Silugim*, namely, their highly formal structure. This formal setting seems surprising, given that the *Silug* has usually been depicted as a free-verse form, verging on prose and dedicated to long narrative and rhetorical addresses. And yet, thanks to Shulamit Elizur's recent discussion of the ancient *Silug*, we know that there have always been poets who formalized the *Silug* in various ways. Therefore Ibn Avitur and Ibn Gabirol did not innovate so much as they enhanced an existent, if marginal, poetic tradition.