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The Semiotics of Fear and Anxiety in Andalusian Petitionary Poetry of the Taifa Kings Era (422–484 AH)

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to explore the passions and underlying emotions in Andalusian petitionary poetry during the Taifa Kings era, analyzing selected examples through the lens of semiotics of desires (simiā' al-ahwā'). It examines the linguistic devices employed by the poetic self and their procedural representations to identify the internal semiotic markers of the human psyche, given that the poetic discourse of this period is saturated with emotional centers that govern the production of meaning. Among these emotions, fear and anxiety emerge prominently, reflecting the volatile political, social, and intellectual context of the Taifa period. This type of emotional expression constitutes a crucial component of petitionary poetry, as poets often reveal a state of anxiety that could endanger their lives if they fail to appeal successfully to authority, lose their beloved, or exacerbate paternal anger. The addressed authority in this poetic context typically involves one of three figures: the ruler, the beloved, or the father.

Keywords: Semiotics of desires, fear, anxiety, petitionary poetry, Taifa Kings era.

INTRODUCTION

Passions and emotions constitute a fundamental element and core component of Arabic poetry, as they reflect the poet's personal feelings, sensations, and lived experiences. These passions may be positive—such as joy, happiness, enthusiasm, excitement, love, contentment, pride, patience, optimism, and the like—or negative, including miserliness, fear, anxiety, depression, sorrow, guilt, shame, jealousy, envy, loss, and despair. They may also be composite emotions that combine both positive and negative dimensions. The diversity of these passions and emotions appears clearly and distinctly in Arabic poetry in al-Andalus, through poetic language and figurative imagery that signify the states poets experience as a result of psychological and social influences. Such expressions stimulate the recipient and render them captive to emotional identification with what the poet produces.

Psychologists define positive emotions as "those emotions that generate within us satisfaction, comfort, and joy."(1) Andalusian poetry during the era of the Taifa kings is characterized by its pronounced embodiment of emotional passions, as poets addressed in their poems positive content inspired by the civilization, environment, and beauty with which their land abounded. This, in turn, was reflected in their experiences and psychological states, contributing to the depiction of Andalusian life and instilling optimism in the reader and recipient alike, making poetry a source of inspiration and hope while reinforcing positive values within Andalusian society.

Some critics maintain that "investigating a given emotion within a literary text requires, first and foremost, identifying the general frameworks through which it is employed, then tracing its trajectory from the initial

moments of its emergence and the gradual stages of its development, until its final embodiment."(2) The ultimate aim of every identity-based text lies in the outcome to which the identity-bearing self arrives through its production of a text imbued with an appeal-laden meaning, charged with emotional weight and governed by a quantity of passions that control textual production. This necessitates examining the lifestyle of the era whose texts are being studied through a semiotic lens, within the framework of the "semiotics of passions," in order to discern the identity dimensions that shaped the text, the repercussions of that emotive, supplicatory discourse on the recipient, and the extent to which it succeeds—or fails—in eliciting a response.

The Semiotics of Fear and Anxiety

The lexical root of *fear* (khawf) denotes terror and dread.(3) It is said: *khāfa* (he feared), *khawfan*, *khīfah*, and *makhāfah*, from which derive intimidation and causing fear; its adjectival form is *khāʾif* (fearful).(4) It signifies "the anticipation of harm based on a presumed or known sign,"(5) just as hope and desire signify the anticipation of something desirable based on a presumed or known sign. The antonym of fear is security, and the term is used with reference to both worldly and otherworldly matters. This indicates that several emotions stand in opposition to fear, such as hope, desire, security, and tranquility.

Ibn al-Jawzi defines fear as "a characteristic of the soul that manifests in the presence of what is feared; fear concerns what is anticipated, whereas sorrow concerns what has already passed."(6) Thus, fear is the expectation of an unpleasant occurrence preceded by signs indicating its possibility.(7) It constitutes a passion opposed to the passion of longing, manifesting its effects in the emotional state of the self and accompanied by a disturbed feeling arising from the state of fear that befalls it. Lexically, fear also points to panic, dread, and weakness.

The terminological meaning of fear does not diverge from its linguistic sense.(8) Al-Raghib al-Isfahani defines it as "the anticipation of harm based on a presumed or known sign, just as hope and desire are the anticipation of something desirable based on a presumed or known sign; fear is opposed by security and is used with regard to both worldly and otherworldly matters." (9) Al-Jurjani defines it as the anticipation of the occurrence of something harmful or the loss of something beloved,(10) while al-Taftazani describes it as "a distress that afflicts a person due to what they anticipate of harm."(11) From these definitions, it becomes evident that fear is a feeling of disturbance and insecurity resulting either from the occurrence of harm in the present or the expectation of its occurrence in the future. The term appears in the Qurʾan: *"Who has fed them against hunger and secured them from fear"* (Qurʾan 106:4).(12)

The semiotics of fear manifest clearly in the poetry of the Taifa period when Ibn ʿAmmar (d. 474 AH) was imprisoned in the fortress of Shaqura.(13) He realized that he would be handed over to al-Muʿtamid and would face punishment for his betrayal, ingratitude, and denial of favors. Nevertheless, he did not lose hope in al-Muʿtamid's pardon and forgiveness. Thus, he sought intercession from al-Radi ibn al-Muʿtamid and wrote to him upon his arrival in Shaqura to take custody of him, hoping that he would ransom him from the political danger posed by al-Muʿtamid:

(al-Kāmil meter)(14)

"They said 'Yes,' so I placed my cheek upon the dust,
In gratitude to him and seeking blessing through his sons.
O al-Radi, even if you do not meet me
With what I know of al-Radi's gracious face,
Suppose that, for a clear excuse, you have withdrawn—
What excuse is there for withholding intercession?
It is easy, by your noble hand, to redeem letters,
So blessed is the captive whom you redeem."

In these verses, the passion signifies a transition from anxiety to reassurance, as indicated by the phrase "I placed my cheek upon the dust," which connotes humility, submission, and gratitude. Yet it also implies a submission born of a prior fear that has temporarily subsided, while still retaining traces of that former passion of fear.

The passion of anxiety and fear of neglect or denial resurfaces through the vocative expression "O al-Radi," coupled with the conditional "even if you do not meet me," which conveys doubt and inner anxiety. It is as though the poet suffers from an obsession with forgetting or marginalization, despite his overt expressions of hope and gratitude.

The passion further manifests in the existential fear of abandonment in the phrase "suppose that you have withdrawn," which denotes concealment or distance—an image associated with fear of loss. The rhetorical question "what excuse is there?" reveals inner tension resulting from rejection or disappointment at the refusal of intercession. Collectively, these verses construct a fluctuating image oscillating between trembling hope and gnawing fear. Lexical items such as *perhaps*, *if only*, *omen*, *withdrawal*, and *even if you do not meet me* function as markers of tension, translating at the semiotic level into a profound existential anxiety rooted in loss, betrayal, and non-

acceptance. On this basis, the passion of fear constitutes "a counter-program to the passion of longing, whose effects appear in the emotional state of the self and are accompanied by a disturbed feeling arising from the state of fear that overtakes it; lexically, fear denotes panic, dread, and weakness, and it is a psychological disturbance resulting from the anticipation of harm."(15) This inclination emerges from the dominant emotion in the text, taking various forms, including fear of rejection (the refusal of intercession), anxiety over loss (loss of security and status), and mild supplication to the addressed, expressed through bodily signs (placing my cheek on the ground) and narratives that refer to previous actions (the page of al-Radi) and uncertain future possibilities (redeeming him). This results in a tense interweaving of desires between hope, expectation, and fear. Andalusian sources present examples of supplicatory poetry imbued with the inclination of fear, as in what Abd al-Malik ibn Ghassan al-Hajjari (d. 454 AH) wrote when he lampooned al-Ma'mun ibn Dhul-Nun: (16)

Al-Tawil:
You have defamed al-Ma'mun unjustly, and yet I trust like a dog
Where I am not secured.
It is forbidden for him to bestow his bounty upon his flesh,
And as for generosity, lament there at its grave.
Lines of disgrace before the gates of his palace,
Inscribed with its veil for those who seek it.

The poet here embodies the experience of imprisonment and the fear of the ruler's wrath, attempting intercession and confession of his guilt to avert punishment, which could very well be death itself. He thus sent a message: (17)

Al-Tawil:
I entreat you, may I receive mercy from you,
Perhaps I depart from a grave in life and be interred?
The punishment of sinners is not in the prohibited,
But the permanence of anger and reproach is reprehensible.

The inclination of fear in the text functions as an active force in the production of meaning, arising from the poet's emotional turmoil and generating a state of affective confusion through the use of linguistic and suggestive markers within the text. The poet attempts to persuade the addressed to refrain from punishment, employing terms indicative of fear such as "I entreat you," "mercy," "depart from a grave," and "life is a grave." Here, the poet identifies a central inclination originating from fear, anxiety, and hope, prompted by his satirical attack on the authority figure. The emotional discourse drives him to cling intensely to the addressee, using a form of plea ("may I receive mercy?"), which conveys an excess of emotion. These affective markers denote constraints imposed on the subject and values attributed to the addressee in the state of inclination, determined by other semantic and affective nuances (18).

His emotion simultaneously expresses the semiotics of existential anxiety and fear of annihilation ("a grave in life"), resulting from the consequences of his satirical act and opposition to authority, which he equates to living death if forgiveness is not granted. The repetition of "grave" reinforces his heightened anxiety, as repetition functions as "a reflection of the dominant idea in the poet's mind and his attempt to affirm the words and expressions" (19).

In the second verse, the confession of guilt is evident in "the punishment of sinners is not in the prohibited," indicating that the submission resulting from acknowledgment of guilt necessitates heightened anxiety—not solely from punishment, but from the persistence of enmity between the poet and the authority figure. The phrase "permanence of anger and reproach" carries a semiotic implication that the poet has reached the apex of fear and anxiety over the lack of mercy and the persistence of wrath. The poet's self encounters psychological resistance to this state, and the production of inclination (process) in the preceding verses progresses through stages: supplication and seeking mercy from higher authority, existential anxiety over the "grave in life" (as in "I entreat you, may I receive mercy?"), followed by acknowledgment of guilt, submission, and fear of punishment ("the punishment of sinners is not in the prohibited"), culminating in protest against the permanence of wrath ("but the permanence of anger and reproach is reprehensible"). The self thus progresses in producing inclination from submission to supplication, to acknowledgment, and finally to moral evaluation of feelings, representing a transformation from weakness to submission and moral judgment.

A similar inclination appears in the case of 'Abbad ibn al-Mu'tazzid bi-Allah (d. 461 AH),(20) ruler of Seville, who experienced fear after his father, the judge Abu al-Qasim, became angry with him. Feeling cornered, he fled, yet

escape proved ineffective as he remained in conflict with fear. He wrote to his father to implore him and alleviate his fear, and when despairing, he wrote: (21)

Al-Tawil:
And when my grandfather scolded me and would not permit
My soul to drink from the cup of ill fate,
My patience decreased when I had no compassion from you,
Only harshness and reproach.
I fled with my soul seeking relief,
While sweet life without you is bitter.

Here, the inclination of fear and anxiety dominates due to the threat to the self. It represents a psychological existential anxiety expressed in a processual emotional state. Terms like "scolded my grandfather" and "ill fate" metaphorically signify misfortune or abandonment, expressing despair and hopelessness. "Ill fate" indicates lost status, (21) revealing the poet's existential tension due to loss of position. Linguistic markers of severe anxiety include "my soul had no compassion from you," indicating psychological unease. Anxiety here results from insecurity and abandonment, transforming the self into a state of existential disturbance. The phrase "sweet life without you is bitter" reflects the enduring stage of anxiety.

By applying procedural tools from the semiotics of inclination, one can determine the degrees of tension, "where the type of presence is derived from the organization of two simple poles concerning density and scope or quantity, each with a strong maximum and a weak minimum, culminating in analysis of the potential organization through the combination of different forms" (22). In the third verse, the poet is compelled to flee from the pain he endures ("I fled with my soul"), signaling peak anxiety and a plea for relief ("seeking relief"). The process of producing the inclination of fear manifests through stages: initial abandonment ("scolded my grandfather," "ill fate," "my soul had no compassion"), rising anxiety ("my patience decreased," "harshness," "reproach"), peak anxiety ("I fled with my soul," "seeking relief"), and enduring anxiety ("sweet life without you is bitter").(23)

A similar phenomenon appears in the poetry of Ibn Hazm al-Zahiri (d. 456 AH), who experienced imprisonment and wrote to Abi Hilal al-Aziz to intercede on his behalf with the caliph. Prison inflicted a longing for his family and children.(24) Terms such as imprisonment, chains, exile, separation, and threat are evident in his verse: (25)

Al-Basit:
He complains to the chain of the pain he endures,
And with his groaning returns it to his complaint.
O you who sleep, let not the chains trouble him,
Tell how he sleeps bound in his repose.

The poet attempts to represent fear through a situation not only of physical restraint but also of incapacity to return, reunite, or enjoy life. Anxiety parallels fear, forming a scene of intrusive thoughts, which poison the self, symbolizing death and the end: (26)

Al-Basit:
How many sudden thoughts have assailed him in his vigil,
Watering him with pure poison that he now ingests.

The poetic self creates a paradox: thought becomes an enemy, transforming memory into pure poison, the harshest manifestation of fear associated with nostalgia and remembrance. Psychologically, the poet controls his mood and emotions, making thought an active and disturbing force that becomes a painful somatic emotional experience.

Among Andalusian texts reflecting fear and anxiety is the experience of the grammarian Ibn Sīda (d. 458 AH), who endured intense fear during the rise of the Banu al-Muwaffaq state. He fled to a neighboring region and, fearing punishment, wrote a supplicatory letter demonstrating humility and hope for mercy and pardon: (27)

Al-Basit:
Is there a way to kiss your right hand,
For security lies therein?
I have sacrificed, so is there shelter in your shade

For one afflicted and one bright-eyed?
Troubles have been quelled by his troubles,
Leaving neither outsider nor kin.
O ruler of the domains, I am feverish,
Clinging to your path, neither closer nor farther.

Analyzing Ibn Sīda's verses according to the semiotics of inclination requires tracing the transformations experienced by the self in the text and the resulting manifestation of inclinations such as fear and anxiety and their semantic implications. Semiotics of inclination emphasizes the semantic lexicon of words, providing the first step toward gathering information and understanding how desires and inclinations operate. Consequently, inclinations are studied as semantic structures through which the self moves from one state to another via affective tensions that produce desire(28). In the preceding verses, this transformation is evident: from hope to anxiety to protest. In the first verse, the beginning of hope and fear is revealed in the phrase "Is there not?", alongside submission and awe ("kissing your hand"). Here, the poet seeks security while experiencing a state of threat and anxiety ("for security lies therein"), a security that conveys peace and blessing to the audience, as indicated by "the right hand". The inclination in this first verse represents a cautious fear, expressing the poet's longing for safety from the actions of those in authority.

The second verse, however, indicates the poet's readiness for sacrifice and self-annihilation, a sentiment revealing the pain dominating his disturbed emotions ("I have sacrificed"). This act of sacrifice provides him with comfort and protection, expressed metaphorically as "the shade of your protection" and "slumber", which imply assumed calmness. The poet then moves to describe the body's anxious state under tension, where "the liver burning" and "the watchful eye" depict a body in turmoil and an unquiet eye, embodying both physical and psychological anxiety, accompanied by a desire for rest or calm.

In the third verse, the poet describes the calamities that have befallen the self ("quenched, stripped of its troubles"), a representation that amplifies suffering and collapse. Here, the fear is that of disintegration, the self succumbing under repeated pressures resulting from a state of weakness. The fourth verse, meanwhile, suggests loss of protection and estrangement ("a stranger whose kin have withdrawn from him"), heightening anxiety and disorientation, as the lost self finds neither peace nor stability, implying a persistent fear of separation and loss.

In the fifth verse, the poet addresses the central authority, "king of the domains", with the phrase "feverish upon the path". The tension here revolves around a requested pardon that has not been granted, with the greatest anxiety expressed in "neither closer nor farther", a fear of deprivation and wandering that intensifies the state of collapse. The poem, therefore, presents an ascending trajectory of anxiety, beginning with desire and aspiration for security—signifying positive and negative aspects, an initial split separating two opposing facets of a single sensibility (29). Anxiety then escalates to the apex of fear under the weight of trials and distance, eventually culminating in hesitation, doubt, and perplexity, manifesting fear as a state of tension.

As noted, "the meanings of humiliation and degradation in these verses explain the extent of fear filling the poet's heart, which he did not conceal in the rest of the poem and which became realized through the ruler's threat of death" (30):

Al-Basit:
Misfortune has befallen me, and I approach complaining;
Am I, for your servant, allowed to suffer?
And if you are determined upon my blood,
Know that I do not wish for it to be shed unjustly.
Blood formed by your honors, and he who forms it,
No reproach shall be upon him if it perishes.
If your sword's heat turns cold,
Then your blessings' warmth turns likewise.

The terms "misfortune" and "complaint" express the pain and fear arising from the relationship between the supplicant and the addressed, representing the servant's fear of punishment by his master. The emotional transformation begins with fear and apprehension ("misfortune has befallen me"), followed by sad complaint and suffering.

In the second verse, the inclination of anxiety dominates, linked to acceptance of annihilation ("shedding my blood"); yet the poet demonstrates a readiness to submit, denying the desire for survival—a shift from fear to acceptance of fate. The text continues to emphasize semiotic manifestations of fear, including anxious submission to authority, illustrated in the third verse, which produces the relational dynamic between the master and the supplicant, separate from reality and reflecting the meaning of "as long as that action is your honor, you have the right to destroy it." The fourth verse shows fear intertwined with gratitude ("if your sword's heat turns cold"), where the sword signifies punishment and blessings indicate favor—a paradox accepted by the poet, transforming the self from fear to the coexistence of pleasure and pain.

Similarly, just as al-Muʿtazzid experienced fear at his father's hand, his son al-Muʿtamad (d. 488 AH) suffered fear when assigned to lead the army to seize Málaga (31). Following defeat, he feared his father's anger and fled. He then composed a poem to his father, revealing his profound fear and distress, describing how fear and anxiety overwhelmed him(32)

Al-Basit:
The soul is panicked, and the eye tearful,
The voice low, and the gaze downcast.
My complexion changed, yet no illness afflicts the body,
My hair turned grey, yet old age had not reached me.

The dominant inclination in the poem is grief, expressed through words denoting sorrow and anguish, revealing the depth of the poet's pain caused by his father ("the panicked soul, tearful eye, lowered voice, downcast gaze, changed complexion, grey hair"), all emanating from his inner human experience.

The emotional manifestations in the text reflect fear and anxiety, where the soul's panic functions as a psychological semiotic marker, indicating a composite affect of fear, anxiety, and despair (33). The Qur'an refers to panic in "If evil touches him, he panics" (34), with panic representing the opposite of patience (35). It has been regarded as an emotion opposing patience, reflecting anxiety, disturbance, and chest constriction caused by misfortune or disease (36). The tearful eye in the verse signals a bodily reaction to acute grief and fear, an external manifestation of the inclination through bodily signs. Similarly, the low voice reflects collapsed confidence and loss of expression, and the downcast gaze symbolizes submission and fear. The interconnection of body and psyche appears in "my complexion changed, yet no illness afflicts the body, my hair turned grey", where bodily change arises from internal disturbance, while "no illness" indicates psychological rather than physical disruption. Grey hair signifies early-life concerns and anxieties.

The inclination passes through phases of affective stimulation, beginning with preparation or initial desire—"an initial split separating two opposing facets of a single sensibility" (37)—signifying loss of internal control, marked by panic and downcast gaze, signaling the onset of crisis. This is followed by tension or arousal, culminating in emotional outburst, a complement to initial stimulation: "it indicates the mind's ability to focus on the subject, targeting the affective mass and propelling it into a field of visible tensions, forming the basis for constructing inclinations, necessary for generating adaptations ('I desire, I know, I can') that define the self's relation to its world" (38).

External emotional expression is evident in the tearful eye and low voice, a stage of tension where affect is visible in the body. The counterpart, as Grimas and Fontanille note, is "similar to a 'value of value'"—borrowed from chemistry to mean the number of atoms added to a compound—but in the semiotics of inclinations, it refers to affective determinants imposed on the subject, which are not defined by utility but by other affective-semantic shadows" (39).

In this stage, excess emotion produced by fear interweaves bodily and psychological meanings ("my complexion changed, my hair turned grey"), (40)exhausting the self. The final stage of inclination production is stabilization or resolution, "a transition from one state to another, a series of changes in state" (41), in which submission to affect occurs and fear and anxiety settle without resistance. The final verse represents the peak of suffering, where natural temporal factors (aging) become psychological consequences (greying from anxiety).

Such emotion is also evident in al-Radi ibn al-Muʿtamad (d. 484 AH),(42) who experienced fear after his father's anger and composed supplicatory poems, sensing impending death at his father's hand and expressing deep fear.

In the first poem, he implores his father not to kill him, invoking "loss" and reminding him of ancestral pardons and protection of blood(43)

Al-Tawil:
The nature of the world is enmity for the virtuous,
And your customs transmit ignorance of the greatest kind.
Be patient with its hardships; perhaps it will ease one day.
Do not harbor grief if you are wise;
No intelligent person dwells upon grief.
I shall complain to the resting place of my heart through its reproach,
And how strange is the complaint of the wounded to the blade.
How often have the rulers before you restrained blood,
And its shedding was as the harvest of bees.
My worry disturbs me for its deficiency,
And my knowledge rests me through your favor.

The poem vividly demonstrates the inclination of fear and anxiety, arising from the anticipation of injustice and dread of al-Mu'tamad ibn 'Abbad, faced with a weak and submissive self. The dominant and prevailing inclinations result from the poet's helplessness before the ruler (his father), expressed lexically in phrases like "complaint of the wounded to the blade", symbolizing submission to the authority, and "my worry disturbs me", reflecting inner uncertainty leading to sleeplessness and anxiety. Another paradox highlights his awareness of the other ("my knowledge rests me"), juxtaposing the cruelty of death with its sweetness ("restraining blood, shedding blood like bees' harvest"). Fear dominates the poet, making him anticipate loss ("grief") as a potential fate from the supplicated father, a product of anxiety; he mitigates this fear by resorting to complaint toward the source of fear, reminiscent of Al-Mutanabbi's verses (44).
Al-Basit:
O most just of men, except in dealing with me;
In you is the dispute, and you are both adversary and judge.

The terms the poet uses indicate the inclination of fear and anxiety, reflecting the adaptability of inclination across affective dimensions (45). This is evident in the state of hesitation manifested in the previous two verses, beginning with questioning. When fear intensified for Ibn 'Ammar (d. 477 AH) toward al-Mu'tamad ibn 'Abbad, after having been responsible for al-Rashid ibn al-Mu'tamad's imprisonment in the hands of the ruler of Seville (46), this fear, stemming from the threat of punishment, made him hesitant before deciding to return and confront him, seeking his compassion. He wrote to him: (47)

Al-Tawil:
Should I trust my perception, or listen to my companions,
And punish my rival, or bend along with the group?
If I follow my judgment, I proceed with inclination,
And if I pursue it, I retreat backward.
I fear you for the right you have over my blood,
And I beseech you for the love you hold in my heart.

Here, the poet depicts his psychological tension, revealing an internal conflict arising from anxiety in decision-making and fear of losing hope for deliverance. The prevailing inclination is anxiety, which, according to the semiotics of inclination, is defined as: "nothing but that oscillation which emerges in representations, placed under the disposition of another inclination that connects it from a tense self along a more particular path; anxiety, in a sense, prepares the ground for other inclinations and defines the self's formation" (48). This represents a primary form of fear, evident in the internal struggle between self-confidence and reliance on others ("Should I trust my perception"), followed by turning to another out of fear ("listen to my companions"). Taking action requires courage, but is confronted with the fear of consequences. The poet vacillates between fear of decision and anxiety over loss of justice.

While Ibn 'Ammar (d. 474 AH) achieved his sovereign's pardon this time and escaped a punishment that never exceeded fear, his anxiety peaked when he could not rejoice long in taking Murcia (49). Al-Mu'tamad had sent him there, and he fell into al-Mu'tamad's hands after six years of flight. This time, fear was not mere speculation; he

knew the consequences of the ruler's punishment regardless of familial proximity, though hope was not entirely extinguished. He expressed this fear clearly to al-Mu'tamad(50)

Al-Tawil:
I fear you for the right you have over my blood,
And I beseech you for the love you hold in my heart.

He further expressed this fear in verses sent from prison in Shiqura: (51)

Rajaz:
By God, I do not know if
They said: tomorrow is the day of meeting,
Should I kill those before me,
Is it fear or shame that restrains me?

These verses embody the hesitation and indecision tormenting the poet, revealing the inclinations of fear and shame intertwined with anxiety, arising from the implications of the anticipated meeting. The poet depicts his psychological fragmentation and division between fear and shame of the other (the supplicated ruler), while the object of inclination (the anticipated meeting) represents the potential exposure before the ruler. Inclinations produce an emotional and cognitive disturbance ("I do not know"), alongside intense internal tension ("should I kill those before me"), incorporating temporal elements ("tomorrow") that provoke fear.

Similarly, the vizier Ibn Shahid (d. 426 AH) endured imprisonment by the caliph al-Mu'tali billah due to his openly expressed opinions and accusations from enemies. Confined, he suffered intense fear and panic, describing his feelings in a poem and appealing to the caliph: (52)

Al-Tawil:
Who informs the youths that I, after them,
Remain in the abode of the oppressors, alone?
Residing in a house inhabited by the wicked,
Standing upon embers, seated in hardship.
And when the prison door trembled, hearts shattered
For fear of death and misery.
I am not bound by chains that ring,
But by the moment, through the wrath of the imam, I am restrained.

Ibn Shahid experienced a state of oscillation between isolation and threat in prison, wherein the inclination of fear transformed the space into a source of anxiety. Solitude induced a sense of vulnerability before coercive authority, manifesting as continuous physical pain ("standing upon embers"). Anxiety peaked when "hearts shattered for fear of death", and took on symbolic dimension as "the chains" reflected the gaze of the "imam's wrath". In these verses, fear moves from the external—imprisonment and material restraint—to the internal, where the self shifts from resisting fear to coexisting with it. Fear thus becomes a semiotic structure governing the human relationship with authority and fate.

The inclination of fear in supplicatory poetry of the Taifa kings does not solely encompass the overwhelming emotions in Andalusian texts but functions almost as a historical document of the period. Poets utilized semiotic expressions to depict crises or trials, shaping these inclinations into supplicatory forms aimed at securing pardon, emotional rapprochement, or erasure of prior offenses against the ruler, often stemming from betrayal or the poet's misstep against authority.

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(15) Nafh al-Tayyib, 3/363.
(16) Nafh al-Tayyib, 3/424.
(17) See: Semiotics of Inclinations, Greimas, pp. 32–33.
(18) Abdulhadi Khudair, Literary Criticism: The Poet of Al-Hamasah, Dar Al-Safa, Amman, 2010, p. 95.
(19) Al-Muʻtadid ibn ʻAbbad: Abu Amr ʻAbbad ibn Muhammad ibn Ismaʻil al-Lakhmi, titled al-Muʻtadid billah; after his father's death, he assumed the title of the Muʻtadidiyya. Born in Seville around 407 AH / 1016 CE; known for political acumen and bravery, sometimes harsh, also a poet and literate; died 461 AH. See Ibn Bassam al-Shantirini, Al-Dhakhira fi Mahasin Ahl al-Jazira, edited by Ihsan Abbas, Dar Al-Thaqafa, Beirut, vol. 3, pp. 93–118; Ibn Khalkan, Wafayat al-Aʻyan wa Anba' Abna' al-Zaman, ed. Ihsan Abbas, Dar Sader, Beirut, vol. 3, pp. 322–325.
(20) Ibn Al-Abar, Al-Hulla al-Sira', vol. 2, pp. 46–47.
(21) Al-Maydani, Majmaʻ al-Amthal, vol. 2, p. 428.
(22) Al-Nahl, p. 66.
(23) Muhammad Al-Ajimi, Modern Arabic Novel Criticism, p. 67.
(24) Ibn Hazm al-Zahiri, Diwan Ibn Hazm al-Zahiri, edited and studied by Subhi Rashad, Dar Al-Sahaba, Tanta, 1st ed., 1990, p. 69.
(25) Ibid., p. 69.
(26) Ibid., p. 69.
(27) Al-Dhabi, Bughya al-Multamis fi Tarikh Rijal Ahl al-Andalus, Dar Al-Katib Al-ʻArabi, Cairo, 1967, p. 418.
(28) See: Semiotics of Inclinations, p. 159.
(29) Greimas and Fontani, Semiotics of Inclinations, pp. 30–31.
(30) Bughya al-Multamis, p. 418.
(31) Malaga: an Andalusian city, flourishing, located on the coast between Al-Jazira al-Khadra and Murcia; see Yaqut al-Hamawi, Muʻjam al-Buldan, vol. 5, Dar Sader, Beirut, p. 43.
(32) Diwan al-Muʻtamad ibn ʻAbbad, King of Seville, edited by Hamed Abdel-Majid & Ahmad Ahmad Badawi, Imperial Press, Cairo, 1951, p. 38.
(33) On the Prophet (peace be upon him): "Interpretation of Al-Jazʻ: disturbance of the heart, grief of the person, change of calm and alteration of condition. Al-Jazʻ: its nature, origin, and treatment," Islamic Knowledge Network: https://www.almaaref.org/maarefdetails.php?id=17979
(34) Al-Maʻarij, 19.
(35) Tafsir al-Tabari — Ibn Jarir al-Tabari (310 AH).
(36) Muhammad Mahdi al-Naraqi, Jamiʻ al-Saʻadat, vol. 3, p. 278.
(37) Dr. Jamala al-Rawi, The Disease of Al-Jazʻ, Al-Jazirah, July 27, 2020. https://www.al-jazirah.com/2020/20200727/ar5.htm
(38) Greimas & Fontani, Semiotics of Inclinations, pp. 30–31.
(39) H. Y. Abu Ghalyoun, Semiotics of Inclinations in the Novel "The Last Arab Tale" by Waciny Laredj, p. 40.
(40) Greimas, Semiotics of Inclinations, pp. 32–33.
(41) Greimas, Semiotics of Inclinations, p. 35.
(42) Al-Radi ibn al-Muʻtamad: Abu al-Tahir al-Radi ibn al-Muʻtamad ibn ʻAbbad, Andalusian ruler and poet, born in mid-5th century AH, son of al-Muʻtamad billah, famed for panegyrics and elegies; killed in 484 AH after surrendering Ronda to the Almoravids. See Ihsan Abbas, History of Andalusian Literature (Taifas and Almoravids), pp. 190–193; Ibn Bassam, Al-Dhakhira fi Mahasin Ahl al-Jazira, vol. 3, pp. 270–275.
(43) Al-Hulla al-Sira', 2/73.
(44) Diwan al-Mutanabbi, Dar Beirut, 1983, p. 332.
(45) Rawiya Al-Shawi, Semiotics of Inclinations in the Novel "Fitnat al-Zuʻan" by Ibrahim Al-Koni, MA Thesis, Majallat Al-Tawasul, vol. 31, no. 2, 2025, p. 34.

(46) Seville: a large city, seat of the Andalusian kingdom, residence of Banu ‘Abbad, western to Cordoba, historically a Roman base; see Yaqut al-Hamawi, Mu‘jam al-Buldan, vol. 1, Dar Sader, Beirut, 195.
(47) Muhammad ibn ‘Ammar, Salah Khalis, p. 279.
(48) Greimas & Fontani, Semiotics of Inclinations, p. 261.
(49) Murcia: a city in Andalusia, known for gardens and orchards, once home to Ibn Mardanīsh; see Yaqut al-Hamawi, Mu‘jam al-Buldan, vol. 5, Dar Sader, Beirut, p. 107.
(50) Diwan Ibn ‘Ammar, p. 52.
(51) Muhammad ibn ‘Ammar al-Andalusi, Salah Khalis, p. 306; Al-Hulla al-Sira’, 2/154.
(52) Ibn Shahid al-Andalusi, Diwan and Letters, edited by Muhyiddin Deeb, Modern Library, Beirut, 1997, p. 63.

