

UNORTHODOX
TEXTS

LATIN READINGS FROM THE
AGES OF TRANSLATION

Contents

The tectonic plates of history	3
A Spaniard visits Baghdad.....	10
Fidus interpres.....	35
Paradise lost	46
Altera via.....	60
Aedificando ad destruendum	66
More tectonics.....	85
A letter from the battlefield	91
A papal nuncio in Karakorum.....	103
The Christian Hebraists.....	117
The Latin Talmud	124
The Kuzari	158
De gentili et tribus sapientibus.....	186
The autodidact.....	206

The tectonic plates of history

Reductionism is a scientific approach that advocates the explanation of complex phenomena in terms of simpler or more fundamental ones. This approach can work very well in the natural sciences. According to statistical mechanics, for example, the flow of a fluid can be described as the result of the interactions (collisions) between large numbers of atoms or molecules. At the other end of the spectrum, it is possible to adopt an approach that disregards the details and concentrates on the large-scale (macroscopic) aspects of the phenomena of interest. An example of this kind, taken again from the natural sciences, is the theory of plate tectonics and continental drift. It does not explain the features of specific lakes or mountains, but rather establishes that these accidents tend to occur at the boundaries between large adjacent tectonic plates as they move relative to each other.

Reductionism
and tectonics

If we try to apply a reductionist approach to history, we may ask ourselves what an atom of history might be. The obvious answer would be an event, that is, an occurrence or a human action that takes place at a point of space and time. To use a classical Roman terminology, an event is a “res gesta”, a thing done. But we can immediately appreciate that the reductionist approach based on this historical atom is not likely to work if nothing else because events are not mutually identical. A foot applied to the accelerator pedal of a car is an event. The collision of two cars is another event. Even if the second event were the result of the first, we still would like to know

Events

whether the collision was the result of a premeditated act. If the driver of the second car is the prime minister of a country, the consequences of these two atomic events can entail repercussions of a completely different nature from those that can be resolved by insurance companies. Nevertheless, the detailed compilation of events is an important part of historical research.

Against the background of the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Greek civilization emerged as a newcomer to the field and, in its relatively short and meteoric apogee, left an indelible mark still dominant in the modern world at large. A-posteriori explanations for this unique tectonic can be concocted, but it is best to regard it, in the style of Euclidean geometry, as one of the primary common notions of universal history. Every scientist, historian, journalist, politician, orator, artist, teacher, philosopher of today can echo, *mutatis mutandis*, Horace's famous dictum: *Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes intulit agresti Latio*.

Greece

The common characteristic behind every product of Greek creativity can be described with the Greek word *logos*, which is rendered approximately as reason. It is not, by any means, that the Greeks were the first to use logical thinking. In mathematics, we have extraordinary documents such as the Ahmes papyrus, dating back to at least 1800 BCE, during the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, in which one can find rudiments of algebra. Clay tablets found in the Mesopotamia, and dating back to about the same period, testify to a highly developed and accurate Babylonian arithmetic, geometric, and trigonometric understanding. There

Logos

are similarly impressive mathematical achievements in the Chinese, Indian, Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations. Moreover, logical argumentation was used routinely, and correctly, in legal and religious disputes without resorting to Aristotelian logic. But the peculiarity of the Greek culture was that logos for them was not just a method but also an end, an aesthetic ideal worthy of pursuit for its own sake.

In their pursuit of logos, the Greeks created separate disciplines, with well-defined hypotheses and scopes. With the use of the logos (reason) they also sought the reason of things, their purpose, and their logical interconnections. They systematically classified objects, they invented the concepts of definition and proof. They studied the very process of reasoning. Thales of Miletus (624-548 BCE) is traditionally regarded as the first exponent of the Greek mode of thought. Miletus was a Greek coastal colony in Ionia, Asia Minor, in present-day Turkey. A limited territorial expansion had been spearheaded centuries earlier by the Greek mainland.

Thales

At about the time of Thales, the Persian empire started to compete in the international scene. Cyrus the Great (600-530 BCE), founder of the Achaemenid empire, invaded Ionia in 546 and conquered Babylonia in 539 BCE. A fictionalized account of the life of Cyrus the Great as the ideal ruler was written by the Greek general and historian Xenophon (430-354 BCE). A series of wars ensued between Persia and a divided Greece. Despite some impressive initial victories, described by the Greek historian Herodotus (484-425 BCE), by the beginning of the fourth century BCE

Persia

Greece was an exhausted nation and an apparently spent culture. Or was it?

The ancient kingdom of Macedonia was situated to the north of Greece proper. In 512 BCE Macedonia was incorporated as a vassal kingdom into the Persian empire, while preserving a considerable degree of autonomy and acting as a buffer between the two powers. The original Macedonian language can be considered as a dialect of Greek. The accession of Philip II (382-336 BCE) to the Macedonian throne in 359 marks the beginning of a new era of military hegemony of Macedonia in the region. His son and successor Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE), famously tutored in his adolescence by Aristotle, invaded the Persian empire in 334 and, in a mere decade, established an empire that included Greece, the Balkans, Egypt, the Middle East, and Persia up to the gates of India.

Macedonia and
Alexander the
Great

The three centuries that start with the untimely death of Alexander the Great are known as the Hellenistic period of history. Greek ideas irrupted in its areas of influence and resulted in a healthy blending of cultures. The Greek language became widespread in the form of Koine (common) Greek and new avenues of communication became possible between hitherto insular traditions. New cities were founded that blended old and new lifestyles. The city of Alexandria in Egypt, founded by Alexander the Great, was the site of the Library of Alexandria, a centre of higher learning and an unprecedented repository of multicultural documents. Euclid's enduring mathematical treatise known as the Elements was written in Alexandria. A project of translation of the

The Hellenistic
period

Hebrew bible into Greek was started in Alexandria on or about 250 BCE, resulting in the so-called Septuagint version, later officially adopted by the Christian church. The influence of Hellenism on Jewish culture and history was also very significant. The Maccabean revolt in 167 BCE resulted in the establishment of the independent Hasmonean kingdom of Judea. The New Testament was written in Greek, and so were the works of the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius.

The largest portion of the Hellenistic-controlled areas was home to the Seleucid empire, which included most of the old Persian empire. Egypt was a separate entity known as the Ptolemaic kingdom. By the first century BCE, these two Hellenistic powers came to an end through the emergence of two new empires. The Parthian empire was effectively a revival of the Persian empire. It took over most of the Seleucid territories. From the west, the Roman empire conquered the larger part of Europe, Turkey, Judea, and the Mediterranean coast of Africa, including Egypt. By the beginning of the third century CE, the Parthian empire was taken over by the Sassanid dynasty, which inaugurated one of the richest cultural periods in the history of Iran. Meantime, the Roman empire of the West had begun its slow decline. The Greek-speaking Eastern Roman (or Byzantine) empire, on the other hand, remained strong. In 330 CE, emperor Constantine established its capital in Byzantium, which he rebuilt and renamed Constantinople. He also adopted Christianity as the dominant religion of the empire.

Parthians and
Sassanids,
Rome and
Byzantium

The boundaries between the Roman empire (West or East) and the Persian empire (under Parthian or Sassanid dynasties) changed over time. The largest westward expansion of the Sassanid empire took place during the Byzantine-Sassanid war (602-628). By 621 it included Egypt, and in 626 the forces of Khosrow II laid siege to Constantinople. From this point on, fortunes are drastically reversed, and, after a string of Byzantine victories, a peace treaty is signed in 628 confining the Sassanid empire to its prewar boundaries. Meanwhile, in the Arabian Peninsula, a new historic force was beginning to rise, Islam. At the death of its prophet and founder Muhammad (570-632), the entire peninsula had been unified under the banner of the new religion.

The rise of
Islam

The expansion of Islam was rapid and decisive. During the first 30 years after Muhammad's death, the Muslim empire was extended to comprise not only the whole of the Sassanid territories, but also a good portion of the erstwhile Byzantine lands, including Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. In 631 the capital was moved from Medina to Damascus, marking the beginning of the Umayyad Caliphate (661-750). An important territorial gain was launched in 711 in the Iberian Peninsula, under the name of al-Andalus. Except for a small enclave in the north, retained by the Visigoths, al-Andalus included present-day Portugal, Spain, and parts of France. The Umayyad dynasty in Syria (though not in Spain) came to a violent end with the Abbasid revolution in 750. In 762 the Abbasid caliph al-Mansur founded the city of Baghdad, not far from the old Sassanid capital. In time, Baghdad became one of the largest cities in the world.

Umayyads
and Abbasids

The Abbasid caliphate inaugurated the period known as the Golden Age of Islam. Baghdad became the capital of the caliphate, a multicultural centre of economic and intellectual activity. The House of Wisdom, like its predecessor in Alexandria a millennium earlier, was both a library and an institute of higher studies. One of its greatest achievements was the program of massive translation and commentary of philosophical and scientific treatises from Greek and other languages into Arabic. Baghdad and its House of Wisdom were destroyed in 1258 by the Mongol invasion.

Baghdad and
the Golden
Age of Islam

A Spaniard visits Baghdad

The town of Tutela (now Tudela, in Navarra, Spain) was founded by the Romans on the banks of the river Ebro. Under Islamic rule since 802, it was conquered in 1119 by King Alfonso of Aragon and Navarra, thus ending an era of relatively friendly relations between the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities in the city. Shortly after the Christian conquest, Binyamin ben Yonah, known now as Benjamin of Tudela, was born to a local Jewish family. Little is known about his life or his motivations to undertake a trip around the world, but his concise travelogue, written in fluent Hebrew, has become an important key to understand how Europeans saw themselves in relation to other contemporary cultures.

Benjamin of
Tudela

Leaving his native city ca. 1160, he visited several hundred cities, each of which is vividly described in his travelogue. He also recorded the number and activities of the Jewish communities and their relation to the society at large. This feature of the travelogue has led some to speculate that Benjamin was on a personal journey, perhaps with some ulterior Messianic intent. Nothing of the sort can be definitively concluded. He marveled at the splendour of cities like Baghdad and Constantinople in comparison with his hometown, just as any traveler would today, and he was similarly interested in the customs and circumstances of his brethren in faith. As analyzed in detail in an interesting doctoral thesis,¹ Benjamin of Tudela's travelogue attracted the

Itinerarium
Beniamini

¹ Freedman M (2016), *The transmission and reception of Benjamin of Tudela's Book of Travels from the twelfth century to 1633*, University of Manchester.

attention of Christian scholars. The book was translated into Latin and printed in 1575. The first Hebrew edition dates from 1543, printed in Constantinople by Soncino, the oldest Hebrew printing house. A partial list of the cities visited by Benjamin of Tudela includes Barcelona, Narbonne, Genoa, Rome, Naples, Thessaloniki, Constantinople, Tyre, Jerusalem, Damascus, Mosul, Baghdad, Basra, Cairo, Alexandria, Palermo. The trip was accomplished during a period of 10 to 12 years. After leaving each city, Benjamin of Tudela reports on the length of travel time to the next.

The oldest extant Hebrew manuscript is housed in the British Library. Its opening is shown in the figure below. There is some damage to several pages. Otherwise, the manuscript is very clear and can be read without difficulty by a modern Hebrew reader. The title reads

THIS IS THE BOOK OF TRAVELS [Massa'ot]
THAT R' BINYAMIN BAR YONAH FROM
THE LAND OF NAVARRA N" A WROTE.

A manuscript

The Hebrew abbreviation N" A (nun 'ayin) stands for נשמתו עדין, which can be translated as “may his soul rest in peace”, or “may his soul be in Eden”.

The introductory paragraph (perhaps added by the scribe) can be translated literally as:

THIS R' Binyamin left his place the city of Tutela and he came out and went and arrived in many faraway lands as it is explained in his book and in every place he entered he wrote all the

The incipit

things that he saw and heard from reliable people that were not heard in the land of Spain [Sepharad] and he also cites some of the sages [chakhamim] and princes [nesiim] in each place and he brought this book with him when he came (back) to the land of Castille [Kashtila] in the year 4933 [1173]. And the aforementioned R' Binyamin is a man of understanding and intelligence and knowledge of the Torah and Talmud [Halakhah] and everything that we checked to scrutinize his words was found to be correct and to the point and well established in his expression because he is a man of truth. And this is the beginning of his book.

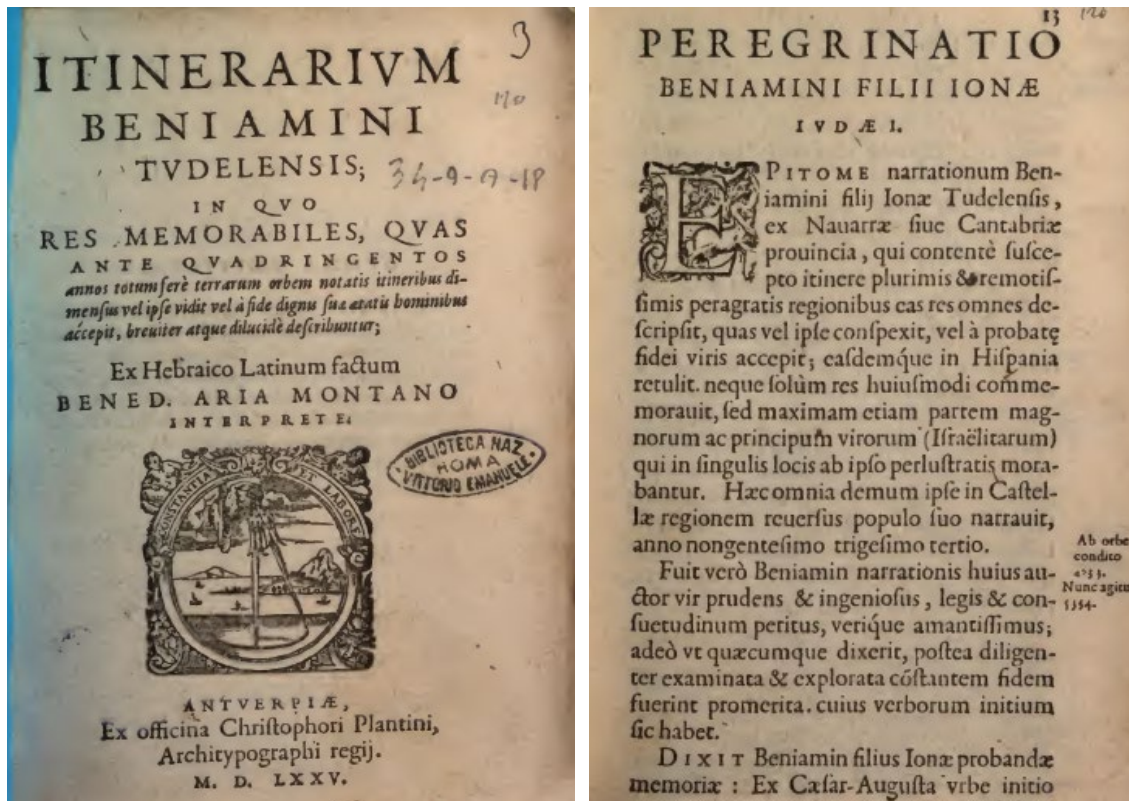


Opening paragraph of the oldest extant manuscript of the Massaot, probably from the 14th century, preserved at the British Library (Ms. Add. 27089, f 149r.)

The opening paragraph translated above is quite faithfully reproduced in the Latin edition, shown below. The first four cities he visits or mentions briefly are Zaragoza, Tortosa, Terragona, and

Minor differences

Barcelona. Interestingly, the departure from Tudela is referred to as “ex Caesar Augusta”, whereas the Hebrew simply says: “from my city”.



Cover and prologue of the first Latin edition, Antwerp 1575

Who undertook the translation of Benjamin of Tudela’s Massa’ot into Latin, and why? The answer to these questions is part of another major trip, a journey of the intellect, that took place in Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries, the Christian Hebraist Movement. Benito Arias Montano (1527-1598) was a Spanish member of this movement. After obtaining a degree in oriental languages from the University of Alcalá, known also as the Complutense, Arias Montano was ordained as a Catholic priest and participated in the final period of the Council of Trent,

Benito Arias
Montano

which launched the Counter-Reformation. His impeccable academic and religious record was brought to the attention of Philip II, who placed him at the head of a team to produce a new multi-language translation of the Bible, at the suggestion of the Plantin printing house in Antwerp. A previous project, the Complutense Polyglot, had been completed under the direction of Cardinal Cisneros (1436-1517), but it was considered controversial. The new project, known as the Biblia Regia or the Antwerp Polyglot, required Arias Montano to spend seven years in Antwerp, where he conducted extensive research and became acquainted with other personalities in this field. The project was completed in 1572, after a dilatory attempt to have it pre-empted by the Inquisition. On his return to Spain, Arias Montano was appointed chief librarian of The Escorial. It was there that he translated Benjamin of Tudela's Itinerarium. It was published by Plantin in Antwerp in 1575. He is remembered as a polymath, a linguist, and a poet.

1. Hinc itineribus duobus distat Bagdad magna urbs, initium regni Caliphae nomine Amir Almumanin Alghabassi, ex progenie illius quem Ismaelitae prophetam suum vocant, qui toti doctrinae et sectae Ismaelitarum praeest: atque hoc nomine ceteris omnibus Ismaelitis regibus suspiciendus venerabilisque habetur:

The Abbasid
caliph in
Baghdad

praeest enim omnibus illis ut summus
quidam omnium pontifex.

The royal
palace and its
gardens

2. Habetque intra urbem ipsam Bagdad
palatium trium miliarium area
constructum, intraque palatium silva
omnium terrae orbis arborum
generibus instructa est, non solum
fructiferis sed sterilibus etiam;
bestiarum quoque naturis omnibus
frequens. In media autem silva
maximum stagnum aquarum ex Tigri
flumine deductarum. Calipha autem
in illa silva animi causa vel
deambulante vel cenante venationes,
aucupia et piscationes a ministris
exercentur, hunc locum ille petit
consiliariorum et principum suorum
comitatu instructus.

How the caliph
pays for his
own living
expenses

3. Estque nomen proprium magni huius
regis Al-Ghabassi Hhaphtsi, qui valde
Israelitas amat, linguarum peritus,
Mosaicae legis legendae studiosus,
qui Hebraice doctus docte et legit et
scribit. Is autem sibi hanc religionem
indixit, ut nullum usum capiat vel cibi
vel potus, aut vestitus, nisi ex

Reverence for
his person

manuum suarum labore. Est vero artifex storearum et tegetum elegantissimarum, quas sigillo proprio notatas in forum vendendas praecipuis ministris suis tradit. Eas vero magnates terrae emunt, illiusque quaestus pecunia ipse sibi victum parat. Est autem probis moribus vir et fidelis, suoque ritu religiosus, humanissimeque salutatur et alloquitur homines omnes.

Happiness and
house arrest

4. At vero Ismaelitis non licet illum intueri. Peregrini autem, qui ex remotissimis regionibus domum illam celebrem Meka dictam, in terra Aeliman sitam petunt, hac iter faciunt Caliphae salutandi studio; ingressique in palatium clamant: Domine noster Ismaelitarum lux, legisque nostrae iubar, ostende nobis faciei tuae splendorem; quorum verbis ipse non intendit animum. Tum vero principes familiares ac ministri ipsius eundem huiusmodi oratione petunt: Domine noster, expande pacem tuam super homines hos ex remotis regionibus huc venientes, quos mirabilis

A family
conflict

cupiditas impulit confugiendi in umbram decoris tui. Eadem igitur hora ille vestis suae alam sublatam e fenestra demittit, quam peregrini adeuntes religiose exosculantur.

Ramadan,
pomp,
circumstance,
and modesty

Auditoque huiusmodi responso ex uno illorum familiarium principum, Ite in pace, iam quippe Dominus noster Ismaelitarum lux excepit et dedit vobis pacem. Existimatur enim ab his tamquam ille quem ipsi suum Prophetam praedicant.

5. Redeunt itaque in patriam unusquisque suam laetissimi, postquam hoc modo dimissi huiusmodi principis oratione fuerint. Ac domum redeuntes, a fratribus, consanguineis et: familiaribus atque necessariis vestium exosculationibus excipiuntur. Singulis autem principibus iis, qui Caliphae inserviunt, singula sunt palatia intra illam maximam regiam, singuli tamen ferreis catenis vincti incedunt, atque singulis horum aedibus praefecti sunt custodes observantes, ne quis

International
dignitaries,
street
celebrations

adversus maximum illum regem
novarum rerum aliquid tentet.

A sermon and
an animal
sacrifice

6. Accidit enim semel, ut ipsius fratres
adversus eum coniuratione inita unum
alium quempiam ex ipsorum numero
praeficerent, quamobrem ipse decreto
sanxit, ut singuli gentilitiae ipsius
familiae filii catenis ferreis
vincirentur, ne iterum eiusmodi
aggrederentur facinus adversus
maximum regem. Verum unusquisque
versatur in privata aula amplis
honoribus cultus, habetque urbes,
oppida et regiones, ex quibus per
quaestores allata tributa et vectigalia
quotannis accipit. Exercent autem
convivia, et genio per totam vitam
indulgent.

A royal road

Public
medicine

7. Sunt vero in illo maximi regis palatio
admirandae magnitudinis aedificia, et
columnae ex argento et auro et
penetralia his metallis obducta, et
omnibus gemarum et unionum
generibus exornata. Quo palatio ille
semel in anno tantum prodit eo festo
vel paschate quod ab ipsis Ramadan

dicitur. Concurrit autem frequens hominum turba ex variis et remotis regionibus ad illam diem ipsius faciei videndae caussa. Vehitur vero ille mula regiis vestimentis ex auro et argento contextis indutus, caput cydari ornatus incomparabilis pretii lapidibus splendenti. Super cydarim vero nigrum sudarium gestat, quo gestamine saeculi huius verecundiam profitetur, ac si diceret: Hanc maximam quam conspicitis amplitudinem tenebrae obscurabunt in die mortis.

8. Comitantur praeterea ipsum Ismaelitarum magnates omnes pulcherrimis culti vestibus equisque insidentes principes Arabiae, principes Mediae et Persidis, principes regionis Tuboth, quae ab Arabia trium mensium itinere distat. Prodit autem ex regia sua ad magnam quam vocant precationis domum in porta Bosra aedificatam. Illa enim illis maxima precationis domus habetur. Porro tam viri quam feminae omnes qui illum diem celebrant,

purpureis et sericeis indumentis
vestiti sunt. Invenias etiam per vias et
plateas cunctas omnia
instrumentorum, canticorum,
salutationum genera ipso praetereunte
ludentia, atque ipse Calipha maximus
rex ab omnibus salutatur huiusmodi
vocibus: Pax super te Domine noster
Rex. Ipse, inquam, suam ipsius
vestem exosculatur, qua interdum,
interdum vero sola manu protensa
pacem et salutationem illis significat.

9. Atque ita usque ad precessionis atrium
incedit, ubi turri lignea conscensa ex
superiori loco legem suam pro
concione interpretatur. Tum vero
Ismaelitarum sapientes consurgentes
illi fausta omnia precati gratulantur,
magnitudinem et pietatem eximiam
multis exemplis perspectam, quam
perpetuam ipsi optant. Hanc vero
gratulationem ceteri omnes
promovent, respondentes amen.
Deinde vero ipse illis omnibus
benedicit. Mox camelus adductus ab
ipso iugulatur. Hoc enim paschale
convivium illis habetur. Ex cuius

carne principibus illis ministris suis
particulas distribui iubet degustaturis
mactationem ab ipsorum rege sancto
factam, quo illi dono valde laetantur.
Hisque suo ritu peractis, ab illa
precationis domo discedunt.

10. Redit autem Rex alia via quam
venerat secundum Tigris fluvii ripam
ipse solus, nam ceteri principes ac
ministri navigiis per fluvium vecti
redeunt ante illum, donec ingrediatur
in regiam. Observatur autem via illa
diligenter toto anno per custodes, ne
quis forte eo loco ingrediatur, qui
pedum illius vestigiis sacer es. Toto
ipso deinceps anno intra regiam
continetur nusquam alio egressurus.
Est autem ipse puris moribus, atque
iuxta suam illam sectam iustus et
pius.

11. Construxit vero palatium ultra
fluvium in ipsa ripa brachii cuiusdam
Euphratis fluminis, qui ex altero urbis
latere fluit, in quo magnas domos
aedificavit et fora, atque etiam
xenodochia aegrotantibus pauperibus

curandis idonea. Numeranturque ibidem sexaginta fere medicorum apothecae, omnibus necessariis aromatum, medicamentorum et aliarum opportunarum rerum generibus ex regia domo allatis abunde omnes instructae. Exhibetur itaque aegrotantibus cunctis eo deductis regio sumptu quidquid ad medicinam et victum atque integram curationem commodum esse censetur, donec confirmari contingat.

12. Est praeterea eodem in loco palatium quod DAR ALMARAPHTHAN vocatur, hoc est, domus misericordiae, furiosis omnibus in regione inventis includendis, vincendis et curandis destinatum; quorum singuli ferreis compedibus ligantur, donec ad mentem redeant. Tunc enim singuli in domum suam reverti permittuntur, curantibus id et examinantibus per singulos menses viris, quibus id muneris a rege demandatum est. Haec omnia eleemosynae ac beneficii causa a rege illo instituta sunt conferendi

communiter omnibus eo venientibus,
qui vel insania vel alio morbo
laborent. Est enim, ut diximus,
ingenio misericordi et humano,
bonaeque mentis.

GRAMMATICAL AND CONTEXTUAL NOTES

Paragraph 1

- *Hinc itineribus duobus: supply diebus.* From here, in a two-day trajectory ... The previous stop was the city of 'Ukbara, just north of Baghdad. Farther north is the ancient city of Samarra, with its famed spiral mosque, and once capital of the Abbasid caliphate before its return to Baghdad.
- *Bagdad magna urbs:* Baghdad was one of the largest cities in the world, second to Constantinople. It may have had as many as one million inhabitants at the time of Benjamin's visit (ca. 1160)
- *Initium regni Caliphae:* *Initium* should be understood as "the head" according to the Hebrew original. That is, Baghdad is the capital of the kingdom of the Caliph.
- *Amir Almumanin:* Amir al-Mu'minin. This is not the name of the Caliph but rather his title: The Prince of the Believers. The caliph at the time of Benjamin's visit would have been al-Mustanjid. This fact is further confirmed by internal evidence (see below).
- *Alghabasi:* the Abbasid. The guttural Arabic sound 'ayin is often transliterated as gh.
- *Ismaelitae:* The term Ismaelite was often used in Hebrew texts of those days to refer to all Muslims, whether Arab or not.
- *Hoc nomine ... suspiciendus ... habetur:* he is supposed to be revered by this name
- *Ut summus ... pontifex:* as a supreme priest, that is, a Pope.

Paragraph 2

- Trium miliarum area: of three miles in area (probably referring to its extent or perimeter)
- Instructa: built inside
- Non solum fructiferis sed sterilibus etiam: in the Vulgate (Genesis 1:12) we read “et protulit terra herbam virentem, et facientem semen iuxta genus suum, lignumque faciens fructum”. The intent in the description of the Baghdad gardens is that they contained plants of every kind.
- Naturis omnibus: ablative of description
- Frequens: filled with. It can take the genitive.
- In media silva: Latin expression for “in the middle of the forest”
- Ex Tigri flumine deductarum: probably by means of a system of canals.
- Animi causa: for the sake of recreation
- Aucupia et piscationes ... exercentur: Catchings of fowl and fish are performed
- Hunc locum ille petit: he goes to this place
- Consiliariorium ... comitatu instructus: equipped with a retinue of advisors

Paragraph 3

- Hhaphtsi: al-Hafiz. There seems to be a confusion here, since al-Hafiz was a different caliph of the Fatimid dynasty, who reigned in Egypt in the period

1132-1149. This is most probably a copyist error. Further internal confirmation of the fact that the current Caliph was al-Mustanjid is found just a couple of pages below.

- Sibi hanc religionem indixit: he has proclaimed to himself this religion. This is not the Jewish religion, but rather the norms described in what follows, namely, that he will not take any food, drink, or clothing unless earned from his own labour. How he does this is explained in the next sentence.
- Storearum: storea, -ae is a straw mat
- Tegetum: teges, tegetis is a rug or a cover
- Sigillo ... parat: The trick consists of the fact that the king hand-makes mats and rugs, to which he applies the royal seal, to be sold in the market by his ministers. The magnates buy them, and from the proceeds of the sale the king pays for his victuals.
- Probis moribus: ablative of description

Paragraph 4

- Non licet illum intueri: this version omits the words “except once a year” that appear in manuscripts and other editions.
- Aeliman: Yemen
- Salutandi studio: with eagerness of greeting him
- Iubar: iubar, -is (n) is a radiant light
- Non intendit animum: does not pay attention
- Impulit: perfect tense of impello

- Confugiendi in umbram decoris tui: to seek shelter in the shadow of your grace. Benjamin of Tudela succeeds in conveying the solemnity of the occasion.
- Sublatam: from tollo, -ere

Paragraph 5

- Ac domum redeuntes ... excipiuntur: this sentence does not appear in the manuscripts. Once they arrive home, they are received by all their relatives with kisses of the robes.
- Singulis ... sunt: dative of possession
- Regiam: regia, -ae (f), a royal palace
- Vinciti: from vincio, -ere, to bind, to tie
- Incedunt: the subject is palatia
- Novarum rerum: here used in the sense of attempting to put in practice a new and rebellious idea
- Tentet: alternative spelling of temptet. The direct object is aliquid.

Paragraph 6

- Coniuratione inita: ablative absolute
- Quempiam: quispiam, quaequam, quodpiam means anyone, anything. Similar to quisquam.
- Unum ... ex ipsorum numero: that is, one of the rebelling brothers
- Sanxit: perfect of sancio, -ire. To decree

- Gentilitia: gentilitius, -a, -um: that is common to a group or nation
- Aggrederentur: alternative spelling for adgrederentur. Deponent verb (to begin, to undertake)
- Facinus: facinus, facinoris (n) is a (bad) deed. Construe in the accusative singular. It is interesting to note the objective and detached approach of Benjamin of Tudela. Having praised the Caliph for his human qualities, he does not shrink from describing how he holds his whole immediate family under house arrest, however luxurious their lifestyle may be.²
- Versatur: the verb verso, -are in the passive voice can be translated as “to stay, to dwell”
- Cultus: from colo, -ere
- Allata: from affero, afferre, attuli, allatus (to bring, to produce)
- Vectigalia: vectigal, -galis (n) is a tax revenue
- Quotannis: every year
- Genio ... indulgent: they indulge in enjoyment

Paragraph 7

- Penetralia: inner chambers, recesses

² We read in Muir W (1915), *The Caliphate, its rise, decline and fall*, Smith Elder and Co., London, p 589 n: “I may notice however, a characteristic scene at the elevation of Al-Mustanjid. One of Al-Muktafi’s wives wished a younger son of whom she was mother to succeed. She gained over many Amirs to her side, and had their slave-girls armed with daggers to plunge into the new Caliph as he visited his father’s remains. He got scent, however, of the plot, and arming himself in mail, with a strong following, attacked the women, wounded some, drowned others, and placed the rebel son and mother in prison.”

- *Obducta*: from *obduco*, -ere (to cover)
- *Paschate*: from *pascha*, *paschatis* (n). Comparable to the Passover feast.
- *Frequens hominum turba*: a large crowd of people
- *Causa*: alternative spelling of *causa*
- *Cydari*: alternative spelling of *cidari*. From *cidar*, *cidaris* (n), the tiara or another regal ornament for the head (possibly a turban). It is used in the Vulgate (Leviticus 8:9): *Cidari quoque textit caput*. Its first use in Latin appears to be in *Historiae Alexandri Magni* by Curtius Rufus, where the word is defined as: *cidarim Persae vocabant regium capitis insigne*. The form *cidarim* (acc.) appears also in the Vulgate (Zacharias 3:5), where the word is considered feminine (*cidaris*, *cidaris* (f)).
- *Saeculi huius verecundiam profitetur*: The modesty of this world may be acknowledged

Paragraph 8

- *Comitantur*: notice that *comitor*, -ari can be considered a deponent verb that can take an accusative object
- *Insidentes*: from *insideo*, -ere, to sit on
- *Regionis Tuboth*: probably Tibet
- *Precationis domus*: a house of prayer, a Mosque
- *Porta Bosra*: Baghdad's Basra Gate. Baghdad was founded by al-Mansur, the second Abbasid caliph in 762. The original city had a perfectly round shape and was accessed through four equidistant gates known as

Bab al-Kufa (SW), Bab al-Sham (Damascus Gate, NW), Bab al-Khorasan (NE), and Bab al-Basra (SE), indicating the direction to the named cities or areas. At the time of Benjamin of Tudela's visit, however, the old city walls had been destroyed. New walls and gates had been recently built (ca. 1130) on the expanded perimeter of the city. Of these new gates only one survives, Bab al-Wastani.



Bab al-Wastani

- *Purpureis et sericeis*: made of purple and silk
- *Ipso praetereunte*: ablative absolute
- *Interdum interdum*: only occasionally, from time to time
- *Sola manu protensa pacem et salutationem illis significat*: not much has changed ... The verb *significare* means literally *signum facere*

Paragraph 9

- Turri lignea conscensa: ablative absolute. Conscendo, -ere: to climb
- Concione: alternative spelling of contione, from contio, -onis (f)
- Interpretatur: interpretor, -ari is deponent
- Gratulantur: gratulor, -ari is deponent. It takes the dative of the person congratulated or praised, and it can take the accusative of the thing praised. Rising, the sages, having prayed for his good fortune, congratulate him for his great and extraordinary piety demonstrated by many examples, which (piety) they wish for him
- Benedicit: takes the dative of the person blessed
- Illis habetur: is considered by them
- Mactationem: mactatio, -onis (f) is a killing or a sacrifice
- Suo ritu: according to their ritual

Paragraph 10

- Pedum: from pes, pedis (f)
- Vestigiis sacer es: it is consecrated (reserved) to the footsteps
- Nusquam alio egressurus: he will never go out to another place
- Iuxta suam illam sectam: not in the Hebrew original

Paragraph 11

- Brachii cuiusdam Euphratis fluminis: of a certain branch of the river Euphrates
- Latere: from *latus*, *lateris* (n)
- Xenodochia: *xenodochium*, -ii (n), a house for guests. From Greek.
- Idonea: construe in the neuter accusative with *xenodochia*
- Apothecae: *apotheca*, -ae (f), a storehouse, subject of *numerantur*
- Aromatum: from *aroma*, *aromatis* (n). From Greek for herb, spice. By extension, a drug. Supply *cum*: with all necessary kinds of drugs, etc.
- Allatis: from *affero*, to contribute.
- Abunde: adverb (abundantly)
- Omnes instructae: construe with *apothecae*. The store houses are abundantly equipped by the royal palace with all the necessary kinds of drugs etc.
- Exhibetur: the subject is *quidquid ... censetur*. Whatever is deemed to be necessary for healing is provided to all the sick brought there
- Regio sumptu: at the royal expense

- Donec confirmari contingat: until it is appropriate to verify (that they are healed). The Hebrew original expresses all this in a simpler manner.

Paragraph 12

- Dar almaraphthan: The British Library manuscript reads Dar almaristan. To this day, Arabic uses the loan words maristan and bimaristan for a mental hospital (or a hospital in general). On the other hand, if to keep the maraphthan reading, this word in Farsi means my friend, and it can perhaps alternatively be related to the Hebrew root r-f-a, which means to cure, or to a similar Arabic root meaning to mend. At any rate, the original Hebrew manuscript does not include the explanation “hoc est, domus misericordiae”.
- Furiosis ... includendis: to intern all the mad people found in the region. The manuscript, somewhat curiously, specifies that this happens during the summer season, and people are kept under observation until the winter returns.
- Ferreis compedibus ligantur: this cruel treatment of mental disease (reflected in expressions such as the Spanish “loco de atar”) was not uncommon until fairly recently, as documented in Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization*.
- In domum suam reverti permittuntur: it is clear that this kind of mental disorder was considered temporary, and that the sick were sent home after monthly examinations.
- Quibus id ... demandatum est: this seems to state that during their internment, the king is entrusted with their expenses.

- Eleemosynae: eleemosyna, -ae (f), from the Greek for alms, mercy, pity.
- Qui vel insania vel alio morbo laborent: those who toil with insanity or other disease. The policy extends to all diseases, whether mental or somatic.
- Ingenio misericordiae et humano: ablative of description

Fidus interpres

Written translations of commercial, legal, and literary texts seem to be as old as written languages themselves. Excavations at Ebla (Syria), conducted by an Italian archeological team starting in the 1960s, revealed the existence of a gigantic library dating back to approximately 2500 BCE. The Eblaites spoke a Semitic language, but among the multitude of documents found in the site there are cuneiform tablets which contain Sumerian-Eblaite dictionaries. In nearby Iraq, the library of Ashurbanipal was excavated in 1849, containing the Epic of Gilgamesh, the first known work of literature. The twelfth and last tablet is an Akkadian literal translation of a much older Sumerian poem.

Mesopotamia

The battle of Qadesh between the Hittite empire and Egypt took place in 1274 BCE near present-day Homs (Syria). A peace treaty between the two powers was signed at the conclusion of the battle and recorded in inscriptions in both languages. The Egyptian version is found engraved in hieroglyphics on the walls of a temple of Ramses II, while the Hittite version is recorded in Hittite cuneiform tablets that were found in present-day Turkey.

Egypt



A Sumerian cuneiform tablet containing a portion of the Gilgamesh story

Gilgamesh

The ancient Egyptian language was decoded by Jean-François Champollion (1790-1832) thanks in part to the discovery of the celebrated Rosetta (Rashid) stone, carved in 196 BCE in Ptolemaic Egypt, during the reign of Ptolemy IV. It contains the text of a decree in three versions, the first two in Egyptian hieroglyphs and Demotic (alphabetic) script, respectively, and the third one in Greek.

The Rosetta stone

A translation of the Hebrew bible into Greek was commissioned during the reign of Ptolemy II, who was Ptolemy IV's grandfather. The somewhat

The Septuagint

legendary circumstances that surround this project, known as the Septuagint, are preserved in the Letter of Aristeas. Written in Greek, it tells the story of this translation project as having originated with the exiled Aristotelian philosopher Demetrius of Phalerum (350-280 BCE), who is described (probably inaccurately) as the director of the Library of Alexandria. The letter of Aristeas is the first document to mention this library.

In the translation of Henry St. John Thackeray, we read

Demetrius of Phalerum, as keeper of the king's library, received large grants of public money with a view to his collecting, if possible, all the books in the world; and by purchases and transcriptions he to the best of his ability carried the king's purpose into execution. Being asked once in my presence, about how many thousands of books were already collected, he replied "More than two hundred thousand, O king; and I will ere long make diligent search for the remainder, so that a total of half a million may be reached. I am informed that the Jews also have certain laws which are deserving of transcription and a place in thy library." "What is to hinder thee, then," replied the king, "in this task? For all the necessary means are at thy service." And Demetrius answered, "Translation is also required. For in the Jews' land, they use a peculiar script (just as Egyptians have their system of letters) and speak a peculiar language. It is commonly thought that they use

The letter of
Aristeas

The library of
Alexandria

Scripts

the Syrian language, but this is an error; it is another dialect." And when the king had learnt all the facts, he gave command that a letter should be written to the high priest of the Jews, in order that the proposal above-mentioned might be carried into effect.

Aristeas goes on to record some details of Demetrius' official request:

"To the great king from Demetrius — In obedience to thy order, O king, that the books which are wanting to complete the library should be added to the collection, and that those which are defective should be duly repaired, I have expended great care upon these matters and now submit a reference to thee. The books of the Jewish law with some few others are wanting. They are written in Hebrew letters and in the Hebrew tongue, and have been interpreted somewhat carelessly and do not represent the original text, according to information supplied by the experts, because they have never received a king's fostering care. It is necessary that these books too should in an emended form find a place in thy library, because this code of laws, in that it is divine, is full of wisdom and faultless. For this reason, authors, poets, and the mass of the historians have abstained from any mention of the books aforesaid and of the men who have lived [and are living] in accordance with them, because the views presented in them have a certain sanctity and holiness, as says Hecataeus of Abdera. If then it be thy good pleasure, O king,

Previous
inaccurate
translations

A request to
Jerusalem

a letter shall be written to the high priest at Jerusalem, bidding him send six elders from each tribe, men of the highest repute and versed in their country's law, in order that we may test wherein the more part agree, and so obtaining an accurate translation may deposit it in a conspicuous place in a manner worthy of the undertaking and of thy gracious will. Fare ever well! "

The king accedes to the request, provides the necessary funds, and sends a letter to the high priest Eleazar in Jerusalem asking for seventy-two experts to participate in the Septuagint (i.e., seventy-fold) project.

Well, Eleazar selected the men of the best character and the highest culture, such as one would expect from their noble parentage. They were men who had not only acquired proficiency in Jewish literature but had studied most carefully that of the Greeks as well. They were therefore well qualified to be sent on embassies and undertook this office whenever occasion required. They possessed a great genius for conferences and discussions bearing on the law. They cultivated the due mean, the best of courses, and while they abjured a harsh and uncouth disposition, they were likewise above conceit and the assuming of an air of superiority over others, and in conversation they were ready to listen and to give an appropriate reply to every question. And this

The character
of a good
translator

bearing they all observed, and it was in such conduct that they most desired to outstrip each other, being all worthy of their leader and of his virtue.

Now after three days Demetrius look the men with him and passing over the breakwater seven furlongs in length, to the island crossed the bridge and proceeded to the northern district. There he held a session in a house which had been prepared by the seashore, magnificently built in a secluded situation, and bade them carry out their work of translation, since all the necessary appliances had been well provided. And so they proceeded to carry it out, arriving at an agreement on each point by comparing each other's work; the appropriate rendering so agreed on was then transcribed under the direction of Demetrius. The session used to last until the ninth hour, and thereafter they would depart to attend to their bodily comforts, all their wants being plentifully supplied. Moreover, Dorotheus used every day to make the same arrangements for them as were made for the king, for he had the king's order so to do. Every day at dawn they would come to the court, make their salutation to the king and depart to their own place. And when, as is the custom of all the Jews, they had washed their hands in the sea and had offered a prayer to God, they betook themselves to the reading and interpretation of each passage.

Consultation

No matter how fictionalized this account may be, the enterprise was a resounding success. A few features of the passages just cited are worthy of attention. Firstly, the confirmation of the existence and magnitude of the library of Alexandria, in whose creation Demetrius was involved. A second element of the story is that the project was a collective endeavour achieved through a process of consultation between several experts in the cultural context of the source and in the subtleties of the target language. A consequence of this refining process was as strict an adherence as possible to the original wording³ and structure, with a minimum of interpretation. Finally, the human qualities of the translators themselves are emphasized.

Not all translators are animated by similar principles. It is true that every translation is also an interpretation, since choices must be made, but some translators, like Cicero, deliberately set out to use the source only as a scaffold to build upon. Submission to the source would be regarded as a sign of intellectual weakness. Remaining for now within the biblical domain, we will find a spectrum of attitudes.

Different philosophies

Several different translations of the Hebrew bible into Aramaic were produced in Roman times. The

The Targumim

³ A possible consequence of this punctiliousness is a slight misunderstanding of the function of the Hebrew letter waw at the beginning of a word. Under normal circumstances, this should be translated as the conjunction “and”, or “kai” in Greek. But in biblical Hebrew the waw preceding a verb in the imperfect (future) form indicates only a conversion of the tense into the perfect. This slight misunderstanding is responsible for so many occurrences of the conjunction “and” at the beginning of verses. “And God said: let there be light”. “And God saw that the light was good”. This somewhat unnatural feature ended up adding beauty and solemnity to the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the King James version, and to most translations of the Hebrew bible into other languages.

oldest one is attributed to Jonathan ben Uzziel, a disciple of Hillel the Elder (1st century BCE).⁴ This is a partial translation, comprising only the books of Prophets. The next translation, known as Targum Onkelos and attributed to Aquila of Sinope (35-120 CE), is still widely in use in Jewish academies and is often printed along with the original Hebrew. A Christian translation that includes also the New Testament is known as the Peshitta (with a meaning akin to the Latin term *vulgata*). Its language is Syriac (or Eastern Aramaic). It is the official version of the bible in several Eastern Churches. There are several other Aramaic translations, known as Targumim

Origen of Alexandria (184-253 CE) compiled the Hexapla, a critical edition of the Hebrew bible in six parallel columns containing, respectively, the original Hebrew text, a transliteration into Greek characters, Aquila's version translated into Greek, Symmachus translation, the Septuagint, and Theodotion's translation. Symmachus and Theodotion are second-century CE Jewish scholars who produced Greek alternatives to the Septuagint.

The Hexapla

Saint Jerome (Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus, 342-420 CE) was the first Christian scholar to advocate and produce a Latin translation of the Hebrew bible based on the original Hebrew text rather than on the Septuagint. This concept is known as *hebraica veritas*. Jerome's complete translation, including the New Testament, is known as the Vulgate. His translation of the Old Testament is supposedly done directly from the Hebrew original,

Jerome's
Vulgate

⁴ This translation should not be confused with the much later translation of the Pentateuch, known as Targum Pseudo Jonathan.

as opposed to earlier versions which used the Greek Septuagint as their source. The collection of those earlier translations constitutes the so-called *Vetus Latina* (VL), preserved in fragmentary form.

Translation from Greek and other languages into Latin did not start with Jerome. Lucius Livius Andronicus (284-205 BCE) translated the *Odyssey* and other Greek works into Latin. He was also the first author to write original plays in Latin. Andronicus marks the start of a period of four centuries of Roman literature, which consisted in part of emulation of the Greek models.⁵ This period includes all the major figures that we associate with the height of Latin writing: Terence, Plautus, Livy, Virgil, Horace, Catullus, Cicero, Ovid, Seneca ...

Andronicus

The classics

The role of translation, however, and its execution are peculiar to this intellectual period.⁶ In a well-known passage of *De Oratore* (I, 155), Cicero explains his use of translation as a technique to improve one's rhetorical skills as follows:

Cicero

Postea mihi placuit, eoque sum usus
adulescens, ut summorum oratorum Graecas
orationes explicarem, quibus lectis hoc
adsequerbar, ut, cum ea, quae legeram Graece,
Latine redderem, non solum optimis verbis
uterer et tamen usitatis, sed etiam exprimerem

⁵ See: Lockwood D P (1918), Two thousand years of Latin translation from the Greek, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 49, pp. 115-129.

⁶ See: Robinson D (1992), Classical theories of translation from Cicero to Aulus Gellius, *TextconText* 7/1, pp. 1-55. Also: McElduff S (2013), *Roman theories of translation: surpassing the source*, Routledge Monographs in Classical Studies, Taylor & Francis.

quaedam verba imitando, quae nova nostris
essent, dum modo essent idonea.

Cicero writes about this topic also in *De Optimo
Genere Oratorum* (V:14):

Converti enim ex Atticis duorum
eloquentissimorum nobilissimas orationes
inter seque contrarias, Aeschinis et
Demosthenis; nec converti ut interpres, sed ut
orator, sententiis isdem et earum formis
tamquam figuris, verbis ad nostram
consuetudinem aptis. In quibus non verbum
pro verbo necesse habui reddere, sed genus
omne verborum vimque servavi. Non enim ea
me adnumerare lectori putavi oportere, sed
tamquam appendere.

Non ut
interpres, sed
ut orator

An interpres is a word-by-word translator, slavishly
adhering to the original text, rather than an orator,
who uses the source text as clay in the hands of the
potter. Horace in his *Ars Poetica* (131-135)
expresses a similar idea, at the same time
introducing the expression *fidus interpres*:⁷

Publica materies priuati iuris erit, si
non circa uilem patulumque moraberis orbem,
nec uerbo uerbum curabis reddere fidus
interpres nec desilies imitator in artum,
unde pedem proferre pudor uetet aut operis
lex.

Horace

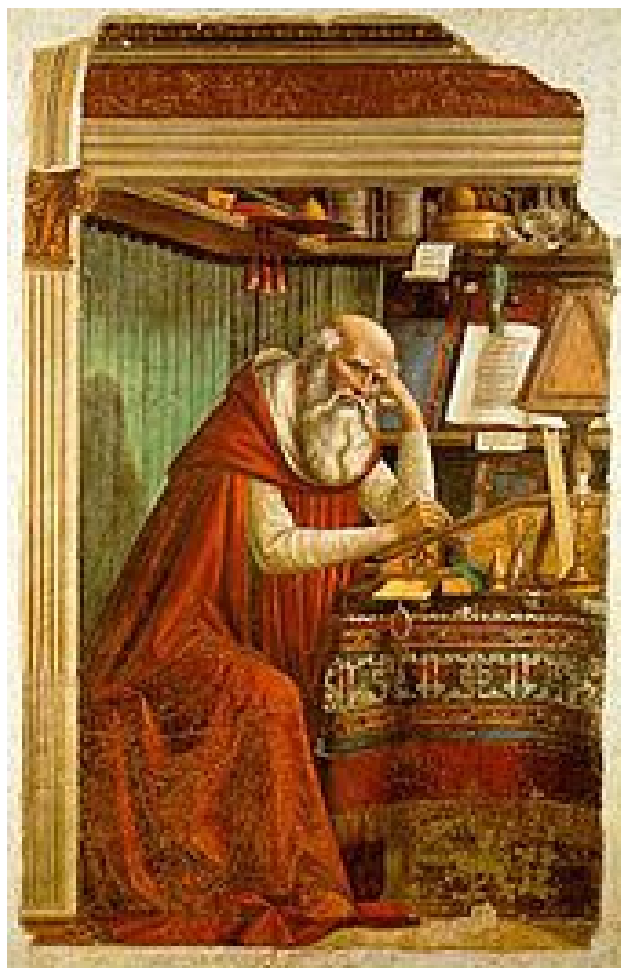
⁷ On this point, see: Sánchez Pérez C (2014), *La figura del fidus interpres en el Ars Poetica de Horacio*, *Estudios Clásicos* 2e, pp187-194.

In short, do not act as a faithful translator, who can fall victim to the rules of the game.

Cicero's own translation of Plato's *Timaeus*, partially preserved, is in fact quite literal and, as most of what Cicero wrote, excellent. But apart from this influential translation, the Romans did not act as transmitters of the Greek texts in Latin. A later translation of the same dialogue, by Calcidius (4th century CE) was almost the only trace available in Latin in the early Middle Ages, except for the work of Boethius (477-524 CE), the last of the Western Roman original thinkers. He conceived a gigantic translation program of the works of Plato and Aristotle, tragically interrupted by his imprisonment and execution on charges of conspiracy.

Calcidius and
Boethius

Paradise lost



St. Jerome in his studio, according to Ghirlandaio

It is tempting to imagine ourselves as would-be Jeromes sitting in a scriptorium, surrounded by codices and Torah scrolls, inside a cloud of creative inspiration, looking for the perfect word and the perfect turn of the phrase. We have at our disposal Jerome's Vulgata, what is left of Origen's Hexapla,⁸

Resources

⁸ Field F (1875), *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*, Tomus I, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

the Septuagint, the Vetus⁹ Latina, several Targumim, the Peshitta, the Hebrew Masoretic¹⁰ text, and perhaps some fragments of the Dead-Sea scrolls.

When it comes to the Old Testament, the Vetus Latina is a translation from the Septuagint, whereas Jerome’s claim is that the Vulgata draws from the veritas of the Hebrew text. We will, therefore, place the two Latin versions side by side and compare the results. For this purpose, we will work on Chapter 3 of the book of Genesis (Bereshith). This chapter has historically given rise to serious theological, moral, and social questions and controversies. The original Hebrew is open to different literal interpretations. These differences are greatly magnified when using a translation, where slight discrepancies in wording can lead to significant misunderstandings.

Comparative
analysis of
Genesis 3

Biblia Vulgata	Vetus Latina
1. Sed et serpens erat callidior cunctis animantibus terrae quae fecerat Dominus	1. Serpens autem erat prudentissimus omnium bestiarum quae sunt super terram,

⁹ Sabatier P (1748), *Bibliorum Sacrorum Latinae Versiones Antiquae seu Vetus Italica*, apud Reginaldum Florentain.

¹⁰ We cannot know exactly what Hebrew source was used by Jerome, since the Masoretic text was not established until much later. The Masoretes (from masorah or masoret, meaning tradition) were biblical scholars whose main aim was to determine the exact spelling and vowel signs of the Hebrew and Aramaic scriptures. The oldest Masoretic manuscript is the incomplete 10th century Aleppo codex.

Deus. Qui dixit
ad mulierem: Cur
praecipit vobis
Deus ut non
comederetis de
omni ligno
paradisi?

quam fecit
Dominus Deus. Et
dixit serpens
mulieri : Quid
quia dixit Deus :
Non edetis ab
omni ligno
paradisi?

2. Cui respondit
mulier : De fructu
lignorum, quae
sunt in paradiso,
vescimur:

2. Et dixit mulier
serpenti: A fructu
ligni, quod est in
paradiso, edemus:

3. De fructu vero
ligni, quod est in
medio paradisi,
praecepit nobis
Deus ne
comederemus, et
ne tangeremus
illud, ne forte
moriemur.

3. De fructu autem
ligni, quod est in
medio paradiso,
dixit Deus, non
ederis ex eo,
neque tangetis
illud, ne
moriemini.

4. Dixit autem
serpens ad
mulierem:
Nequaquam
morte moriemini.

4. Et dixit serpens
mulieri: Non
morte moriemini.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5. Scit enim Deus quod in quocumque die comederitis ex eo, aperientur oculi vestri: et eritis sicut dii, scientes bonum et malum. | 5. Sciebat enim Deus, quoniam qua die manducaveritis de eo, aperientur vobis oculi : et eritis tanquam dii, scientes bonum et malum. |
| 6. Vidit igitur mulier quod bonum esset lignum ad vescendum, et pulchrum oculis, aspectuque delectabile : et tulit de fructu illius, et comedit : deditque viro suo, qui comedit. | 6. Et vidit mulier quia bonum lignum ad escam, et quia placet oculis videre, et decorum est cognoscere : et sumens de fructu eius, edit; et dedit viro suo secum, et ederunt. |
| 7. Et aperti sunt oculi amborum: cumque cognovissent se esse nudos, consuerunt folia | 7. Et aperti sunt oculi amborum, et agnoverunt quia nudi erant, et consuerunt folia fici, et fecerunt sibi campestria. |

figus, et fecerunt
sibi perizomata.

8. Et cum audissent
vocem Domini
Dei deambulantis
in paradiso ad
auram post
meridiem,
abscondit se
Adam et uxor
eius a facie
Domini Dei in
medio ligni
paradisi

9. Vocavitque
Dominus Deus
Adam, et dixit
ei : Ubi es?

10. Qui ait : Vocem
tuam audivi in
paradiso et timui,
eo quod nudus
essem, et
abscondi me.

8. Et audierunt
vocem Domini
Dei deambulantis
in paradiso ad
vesperam, et
absconderunt se
Adam et mulier
eius a facie
Domini Dei in
medio ligni
paradisi.

9. Et vocavit
Dominus Deus
Adam, et dixit
illi : Ubi es?

10. Et dixit ei :
Vocem tuam
audivi
deambulantis in
paradiso : et
timui, quia nudus
sum, et abscondi
me.

11. Cui dixit : Quis enim indicavit tibi quod nudus esses, nisi quod ex ligno de quo praeceperam tibi ne comederes, comedisti?

11. Et dixit illi : Quis nunciavit tibi quia nudus es, nisi a ligno quod praeceperam tibi tantum ne ex eo manducares, ab eo edisti?

12. Dixitque Adam : Mulier quam dedisti mihi sociam, edit mihi de ligno, et comedi.

12. Et dixit Adam : Mulier, quam dedisti mecum, haec mihi dedit de ligno, et edi.

13. Et dixit Dominus Deus ad mulierem : Quare hoc fecisti? Quae respondit : Serpens decepit me, et comedi.

13. Et dixit Dominus Deus mulieri : Quid hoc fecisti? Et dixit mulier : Serpens seduxit me, et manducavi.

14. Et ait Dominus Deus ad serpentem : Quia fecisti hoc, Maledictus es inter omnia animantia, et

14. Et dixit Dominus Deus serpenti : Quia fecisti hoc, maledictus tu ab omnibus pecoribus, et ab omnibus bestiis,

bestias terrae :
super pectus
tuum gradieris, et
terram comedes
cunctis diebus
vitae tuae.

quae sunt super
terram : super
pectus tuum et
ventrem tuum
ambulabis, et
terram edes
omnes dies vitae
tuae.

15. Inimicitias
ponam inter te et
mulierem, et
semen tuum et
semen illius : ipsa
conteret caput
tuum, et tu
insidiaberis
calcaneo eius.

15. Et inimicitias
ponam inter te et
inter mulierem, et
inter semen tuum
et semen eius :
ipsa tibi servabit
caput, et tu
servabis eius
calcaneum.

16. Mulieri quoque
dixit :
Multiplicabo
aerumnas tuas, et
conceptus tuos :
in dolore paries
filios, et sub viri
postestate eris, et
ipse dominabitur
tui.

16. Et mulieri dixit :
Multiplicans
multiplicabo
tristitias tuas, et
gemitum tuum : in
tristitiis paries
filios, et ad virum
tuum conversio
tua, et ipse tui
dominabitur.

17. Adae vero dixit :
Quia audisti
vocem uxoris
tuae, et comedisti
de ligno, ex quo
praeceperam tibi
ne comederes,
maledicta terra in
opere tuo: in
laboribus
comedes ex ea
cunctis diebus
vitae tuae.

18. Spinās et tribulos
germinabit tibi, et
comedes heram
terrae.

19. In sudore vultus
tui vesceris pane,
donec revertaris
in terram de qua
sumptus es: quia
pulvis es et in
pulverem
reverteris.

20. Et vocabit Adam
nomen uxoris
suae, Heva : eo

17. Adae autem dixit :
Quia audisti
vocem mulieris
tuae, et edisti de
ligno, de quo
praeceperam tibi
de eo solo non
edere, maledicta
terra in operibus
tuis: in tristitiis
edes illam omnes
dies vitae tuae.

18. Spinās et tribulos
germinabit tibi, et
edes foenum agri.

19. In sudore faciei
tuae edes panem
tuum, donec
convertaris in
terram ex qua
sumptus es: quia
terra es, et in
terram ibis.

20. Et vocabit Adam
nomen mulieris
suae, Vita :

quod mater esset
cunctorum
viventium.

quoniam haec est
mater omnium
viventium.

21. Fecit quoque
Dominus Deus
Aadae et uxori
eius tunicas
pelliceas, et
induit eos :

21. Et fecit Dominus
Deus Adam et
mulieri eius
tunicas pelliceas,
et induit eos :

22. Et ait : Ecce
Adam quasi unus
ex nobis factus
est, sciens bonum
et malum : nunc
ergo ne forte
mittat manum
suam, et sumat
etiam de ligno
vitae, et comedat,
et vivat in
aeternum.

22. Et dixit Dominus
Deus : Ecce
Adam factus est
tanquam unus ex
nobis, in
cognoscendo
bonum et malum :
et nunc ne
aliquando
extendat manum
suam, et sumat de
ligno vitae, et
edat, et vivat in
aeternum.

23. Et emisit eum
Dominus Deus de
paradiso
voluptatis, ut
operaretur terram,

23. Et dimisit illum
Dominus Deus de
paradiso
voluptatis operari

de qua sumptus
est.

terram, ex qua
sumptus est.

24. Eiecitque Adam :
et collocavit ante
paradisum
voluptatis
Cherubim, et
flammeum
gladium, atque
versatilem, ad
custodiendam
viam ligni vitae.

24. Et eiecit Adam, et
collocavit eum
contra paradisum
voluptatis; et
ordinavit
Cherubim, et
flammeam
romphaeam, quae
vertitur, custodire
viam ligni vitae.

GRAMMATICAL AND CONTEXTUAL NOTES

Verse 1

- a. The main difference between the two translations is the use of the comparatives “callidior” and “prudentissimus”.
- b. The original Hebrew has ערום, a word that (in the bible) can mean “naked” or “cunning” (Latin: callidus).
- c. Curiously, the word ערום is used in both senses in this chapter. More curious still is the fact that the word is used in the sense of nakedness just in the previous verse (Genesis 2:25). This coincidence did not escape the attention of the Talmudic rabbis. The Midrash Rabba¹¹ attributes to R’ Joshua ben Karha (2nd century

¹¹ The Midrash Rabba is an extra-Talmudic Oral Law collection of commentaries compiled during the 4th and 5th centuries CE.

- CE) an interpretation that would attribute sexual motivations to the serpent.
- d. While Jerome sticks to the Latin “callidus”, the VL opts for “prudens”, which does not have any negative connotations. This is in accordance with the Septuagint which uses the Greek term φρόνιμος (prudent). Obviously, Jerome did not agree, and corrected according to his *hebraica veritas*. In the Hexapla we find that both Aquila and Theodotion (and Symmachus) render ערום correctly as πανοὔργος
 - e. The Dead Sea scrolls fragments pertaining to this chapter (1Q1 and 4Q10) are extremely short and very damaged. In the Masoretic text, the spelling variant עירם is used for “naked”. It appears that 1Q1 confirms the spelling ערום, used in the Masoretic text both in 2:25 and 3:1.
 - f. A separate minor issue raised by both Latin translations is in the use of the question mark. Clearly, punctuation marks are not indicated in ancient manuscripts. Jerome uses “cur” and the VL opts for “quid quia”, both of which convey an interrogative aspect. The Hebrew text does not necessarily offer such aspect. The combination כי אף literally means “although”, which seems to establish a sort of complicity consistent with the serpent’s cunning, leaving the end of the sentence to be understood tacitly. The fragment 1Q1, however, seems to provide the prefix ה, which would imply a question. Another possible interpretation is that the word כי can be understood separately as posing a question (e.g., in 2 Kings 18:34).

Verse 3

- a. In this verse, Jerome uses indirect statement, whereas VL follows the Septuagint in using a direct quote, which the Hebrew does as well. The result is a more vivid scene in the VL.

Verse 4

- a. Morte moriemini: this is an example of the use of a Semitic style in an Indo-European language. These Hebraisms (just as the conjunction kai at the beginning of verses) entered the Septuagint. The King James version opted instead for the emphatic expression “ye shall not *surely* die”.

Verse 5

- a. Manducaveritis: From manduco, -are, a frequentative form of mando, -ere, to chew. In later Latin, it became synonym of to eat. The French “manger” and the Italian “mangiare” derive from eat, while Spanish preferred to stay with “comer”
- b. The tense difference between scit and sciebat is explained by the fact that in Hebrew both are possible. The Masoretes, in adding the vowel signs, inclined the balance toward the present.

Verse 6

- a. The Septuagint (and, therefore, VL) is more in accord with the Hebrew in this verse.

Verse 7

- a. Perizomata: from perizoma, -atis (n), an apron (from Greek)
- b. Campestris: from campestre, campestris (n): an apron or a pair of drawers worn by wrestlers.
- c. Ficus and fici are both correct forms of the genitive singular

Verse 10

- a. VL follows the Septuagint in repeating deambulantis

Verse 11

- a. Both the VL and the Vulgate introduce “nisi”, which is not necessary. The original poses a simple question, but the “nisi” is correct in suggesting a “num” effect in a Latin question.

Verse 12

- a. The VL is more literal. The repetition of the subject (“haec”) has a powerful effect in shifting the blame (that woman, she, the one you gave me).

Verse 13

- a. One may be tempted to translate “seduxit me” as “it seduced me”, but that would not be correct. Seducere means to turn aside, to deceive.

Verse 14

- a. Super pectus tuum et ventrem tuum: VL follows the Septuagint. The original Hebrew uses a single word, which Jerome translates as pectus.

Verse 15

- a. Ipsa: this can only be the feminine nominative singular, which implies that both Jerome and VL have made a mistake. The subject is not “mulier” but “semen”. The Septuagint uses the masculine, which is also wrong (since sperma is neuter). The Hebrew masculine refers to “zera”, the Hebrew word for seed, which is masculine. In short, it is the seed (the descendancy) who will strike your head.
- b. Conteret caput tuum: The original Hebrew intends here a pun using two homonymous stems. Jerome captures the idea, while VL seems to miss the point

Verse 16

- a. Multiplicans multiplicabo: VL manages to render this Hebraism in meaningful Latin (just as in verse 4).
- b. Tristitias tuas et gemitum tuum: VL is misled here by the Septuagint. Jerome's translation is accurate. In the Hexapla we find that Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus use correct equivalent words for "conception".
- c. Sub viri potestate eris: The Hebrew word תשוקה means desire, urge, longing. It is not clear why Jerome would depart here from the hebraea veritas, while VL tries its best to follow the Greek αποστροφή. The Hebrew can be translated as "to your man is your desire". Symmachus correctly renders תשוקה as ορμή (impulse).

Verse 20

- a. Heva, Vita: In Hebrew, the name for Eve (חווה) derives from the Semitic root ḥ-y-h (to live). Symmachus (in the Hexapla) proposes Ζωογόνος (!)

Verse 24

- a. Ante, contra: the word מקדם can be translated as "from the east". It was used in the same sense in Genesis 2:8. In that verse, the Septuagint correctly translated it as κατα` ανατολάς. Why not here? It is used at least four more times in Genesis (e.g., in 13:14, where Jerome uses "orientem").
- b. Romphaeam: alternative spelling for rhomphaeam, a long sword or javelin.

Altera via

In 529 CE, the Byzantine emperor Justinian I decreed the closure of the Academy (a largely neo-Platonic institution) in Athens. At that time, the Sassanid emperor was Khosrow I, an admirer of Greek philosophy and science in general. He offered academic positions to the refugees from Justinian's closure, incorporating many of them in the Academy of Gundishapur. He sponsored translations of Greek, Sanskrit, and Syriac texts into the contemporary Persian language. Significantly, this academy attracted also Nestorian Christians whose doctrine had been proscribed at the council of Ephesus (431) and banished from Byzantium in 489. Nestorians, who were fluent in Syriac and Greek, played an important intermediate role in the translation of Greek works into Arabic, since Arabic, Syriac, and Hebrew belong to the same branch of Semitic languages.¹²

Justinian

Khosrow

Gundishapur

Nestorians

In 762 CE the Abbasid caliphate moves its capital to Baghdad. The Abbasid cultural enterprise known as the House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Ḥikma) has to be understood not as a particular building or a collection thereof, but more as a two-pronged program consisting of (i) the procurement of translations into Arabic of philosophical, medical, mathematical, astronomical, and other scientific texts written in Greek and other languages (Sanskrit, Mandarin, Persian, Hebrew, Syriac, Latin), and (ii) perhaps more

Bayt al Ḥikma

Translations,
commentaries,
and original
works

¹² On this and other aspects of the Gundishapur academy see Söylemez M M (2005), The Jundishapur School: its History, Structure, and Functions, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 22/2, pp 1-27.

importantly, the production of commentaries on these works, and of original works in these fields, including (but not limited to) applications to specifically Islamic topics.

An example of the success of this program is Hunayn Ibn Ishaq (809-873), a Nestorian Christian polymath and polyglot who translated more than a hundred works and wrote a few dozen books on anatomy and medicine, most of which are lost. His contemporary al-Kindi (801-873) is considered the first thinker to have written on philosophical topics in the Arabic language, thus establishing a philosophical vocabulary that was used by his successors. Abu Nasr al-Farabi (872-950) is known as al-mu'allim al-thani (the second master), in deference to the first (Aristotle), on whose works he commented. It is through these commentaries and philosophical developments that al-Farabi had a direct and decisive influence on the course of Medieval philosophy. He also wrote original works on a variety of topics, including physics, music, and sociology.

Ibn Ishaq

Al-Kindi

Al-Farabi

Building upon his predecessors, the Persian polymath Ibn Sina (known in Latin as Avicenna) rose to new heights and is now considered by many as the greatest thinker of the Golden Age of Islam. He is not directly associated with Baghdad, having spent most of his life in Iran, but he was directly influenced by al-Farabi's commentaries on Aristotle. Ibn Sina wrote in both Persian and Arabic, often in verse form. His most comprehensive work in Persian is the *Danishnama*, or *Book of Knowledge*. Al-Ghazali (1058-1111) was also Persian, but he did spend a considerable portion of his life in Baghdad. In an autobiographical book, he

Avicenna

Al-Ghazali

describes his own path to mysticism via a rejection of philosophy. Like Descartes six centuries later, al-Ghazali used systematic doubt to arrive at certain knowledge, while reaching a completely different conclusion. He rejected the principle of causality in nature. Paradoxically, his short and clear introduction to philosophy, particularly logic, was one of the most well-read books in scholastic circles in Europe.

How could this wealth of original and translated texts in Arabic become available to European readers? The answer to this question is quite complex, but two keywords are a large part of it, namely, Latin and Spain. With the decline of the Western Roman empire, European national identities started to emerge, and vernacular languages began slowly to acquire a systematic literary form. Nevertheless, Latin remained the dominant common language of learning and communication for many centuries. The translation of any work into Latin could achieve an immediate effect on the entire continent. But who could undertake the translation from Arabic? The obvious milieu for this enterprise was Spain, where large Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities coexisted and interacted.

Spain

Christians,
Muslims, and
Jews

In 1125, Francis Raymond de Sauvetât, known as Raymond of Toledo, was appointed archbishop, a post that he kept until 1152. A man of vision and varied interests, Raymond understood the unique position of the city in Europe where philosophical and scientific works written in Arabic and Hebrew were widely available and known not only to Muslims and Jews, but also to Arabic-speaking Christians (Mozarabs). Following his instinct, he created the Translation School of Toledo. One of the first and most illustrious members of this school was Gerard of Cremona (1114-1187). The number and range of his translations is unmatched. Dominicus Gundissalinus (1115-1190), allegedly the first director of the school, also made fundamental contributions, both for his translations and for his original works. He collaborated with Abraham ibn Daud (Avendauth, 1110-1180) and with John of Seville, and consulted with them in linguistic matters.

Raymond of Toledo

Escuela de Traductores

Gundissalinus

Avendauth

John of Seville

Not all translations are attributable to the Toledo school. Adelard of Bath (1080-1152) acquired a command of Arabic through his extensive travels in Europe and the Middle East. Among other contributions, he produced the first translation (from Arabic!) of Euclid's Elements of Geometry. The earliest Arabic-Latin translations seemed to have been by Constantine the African (11th century), who was active in the Medical School of Salerno, in Southern Italy. Although not organized in a formal group, many translations originate from Sicily. Michael Scot (1175-1232), a translator of Ibn Rushd (Averroes) was active both in Italy and in Toledo.

Adelard of Bath

Constantin the African

Salerno

Michael Scot

A considerable number of original works, influenced by the distant intellectual activity around Baghdad, were written in Spain by Muslim and Jewish thinkers, such as Solomon Ibn Gabirol (1021-1061), Judah Halevi (1075-1141), Averroes (1126-1198), and Maimonides (1138-1204). Some of their works were also translated into Latin. The Jewish philosophical works were usually written in Arabic using Hebrew characters (such as Maimonides' Guide of the Perplexed). They were translated almost immediately into Hebrew by the family of translators Ibn-Tibbon in Southern France. Ibn Gabirol's masterpiece Fons Vitae, which introduced neo-Platonic ideas into scholasticism, was known widely only in its Latin translation and mistakenly attributed to a supposedly non-Jewish scholar by the name of Avicenna.

Ibn Gabirol

Judah
Halevi

Averroes

Maimonides

Ibn Tibbon

Fons vitae

The Latin translation movement ceased almost complete before 1300, when the School of Toledo started a program of translations into Castilian. The Latin baton was only picked up again two centuries later with the Renaissance and the Reformation, and with advent of the printing press. A revival of Jerome's concept of *Hebraica Veritas* led to the emergence of a Christian Hebraist movement. Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) studied Hebrew and Arabic with the Italian Jewish philosopher Elia del Medigo (1458-1493). He applied his knowledge to the study of the Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism) and laid the foundations of a Christian Kabbalah. Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522) was a Catholic Hebrew scholar who advocated the study of post-biblical Hebrew sources, such as the Talmud and the Midrash, in the original languages (Hebrew and Aramaic). He publicly defended the Talmud against banishment, and he influenced the ideas of Luther. Another important figure in the Hebraist movement was Johannes Buxtorf (1564-1629), professor of Hebrew and Aramaic grammar at the University of Basel. During the 16th and 17th centuries several partial or complete printings of the Talmud in Latin were produced.

Renaissance

Pico della
Mirandola

Elia del
Medigo

Reuchlin

Defense of
the Talmud

Buxtorf

Latin
Talmud

Aedificando ad destruendum

The fall of the Umayyad Caliphate in 750 CE, with its capital in Damascus, at the hands of the Abbasid family had many decisive consequences in the political, cultural, and geographical realms. In a manner oddly reminiscent of the fall of Troy and the survival of Aeneas, who fled and became the mythical ancestor of Rome, the only survivor of the Ummayyad dynasty, Abd ur-Rahman, fled Damascus and arrived in Spain in 755, conquered Cordoba, and became its Emir in 756, thus founding a dynasty that would rule al-Andalus for almost 400 years. Back in the Middle East, the Abbasids transferred the capital from Damascus to Baghdad, founded in 762 by the second Abassid caliph al-Mansur. The parallel developments of the Iberian and Mesopotamian caliphates oversaw the Islamic Golden Age, five centuries of flourishing of the arts and sciences.

Umayyad and
Abbasid
Caliphates

Al-Andalus

Baghdad

The Bayt al-Ḥikma (house of wisdom) was a library and institute of advanced studies established by al-Mansur and further expanded by Harun al-Rashid (ruled 786-809) and his son al-Ma'mun (ruled 813-833), who is credited with the launching of a massive translation movement. Syrian Christian scholars, among others, were commissioned to translate philosophical, mathematical, medical, and other scientific texts from Greek and Indian sources into Arabic. At the same time, based in part on these translations, Arab, Persian, Jewish, and Christian thinkers produced original contributions in those and other fields, such as musical theory.

Bayt al-Ḥikma

Translations,
commentaries,
and more

The historian al-Humaydi (1029-1095), born in al-Andalus, escaping sectarian persecution, settled in Baghdad, with its more tolerant multicultural atmosphere. He records the impressions of a horrified earlier visitor of the city as follows: “At the first meeting [of a learned assembly] there were present not only people of various (Islamic) sects, but also unbelievers, Magians, materialists, atheists, Jews and Christians, in short, unbelievers of all kinds. [...] One of the unbelievers rose and said to the assembly: we are meeting here for a discussion. Its conditions are known to all. You, Muslims, are not allowed to argue from your books and prophetic traditions since we deny both. Everybody, therefore, has to limit himself to rational arguments. The whole assembly applauded these words.”¹³

An eyewitness account

These snapshots give us an idea of the cultural milieu of Baghdad during the heyday of Bayt al Hikma. The various schools of Islamic theology (Kalam) were represented here and argued among themselves and with the “falasifa”, namely those advocating an open mind and the blending together of theology and philosophy. Among these, some of the most prominent were al-Kindi (801-873), al-Farabi (872-950), Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980-1037), al-Ghazali (1058-1111), and Ibn Rushd (Averroes, 1126-1198). Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina and al-Ghazali were Persian. Ibn Rushd was born in Cordoba. Al-Kindi, al-Farabi and

Kalam

Al- Kindi

Al-Farabi

Avicenna

Al-Ghazali

Averroes

¹³ Quoted from Altmann A (1946), *Saadya Gaon, The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs*, abridged edition, Philosophia Judaica, East and West Library, Oxford. Saadya al-Fayyumi (882-942), known as Saadya Gaon, was an Egyptian-born Jewish philosopher. His main philosophical work was written in Judeo-Arabic under the title *Kitab al-amanat wa-al-itiqadat* (The Book of Beliefs and Opinions) while he was living in Baghdad in 933.

al-Ghazali spent at least part of their lives in Baghdad. No two of them were contemporary, but with the perspective of time it is possible to regard them as arguing different points of view on philosophical and religious matters.

Al-Ghazali's intellectual journey, documented in part in his autobiographical work *al-Munkidh min ad-Dhalal* (The Rescuer from Error), is quite extraordinary. Trained in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) he was attracted to philosophy, particularly through the works of Ibn Sina. His book *Maqasid al-Falasifa* (The Aims of the Philosophers) was translated into Latin in the twelfth century and exerted a great influence on European thinkers, including Thomas Aquinas.¹⁴ But, as recounted in his autobiography, al-Ghazali was in search of unquestionable truth, which led him to a Cartesian process of utter doubt. Unlike Descartes some five centuries later, however, al-Ghazali does not attain any philosophical certainty. He rather finds that philosophy is not the right path to truth, as he amply discusses in his follow-up treatise, provocatively entitled *Tahafut al-Falasifa* (The Demise of Philosophers, also known as *The Incoherence of Philosophers*).¹⁵ He found his rescuer in Sufism, as expressed in his major work *Ihya' Ulum ad-Din* (The Revival of Religious Science").

Maqasid al-Falasifa

Tahafut al-Falasifa

¹⁴ This point is well argued in Lohr C H (1965), *Logica Algazelis: Introduction and Critical Text. Traditio* 21, pp 223-290

¹⁵ Ibn Rushd point by point reply to al-Ghazali's *Tahafut* is pointedly entitled *Tahafut at-Tahafut* (The Incoherence of the Incoherence). The influence of this and other philosophical works of Ibn Rushd on European philosophy was even greater than al-Ghazali's, leading to a movement known as Averroism.

The aim al-Ghazali in his *Maqasid al-Falasifa* was to write a preamble to his next, more important, and ambitious work (*Tahafut al-Falasifa*), where the aims of the philosophers are discredited. The *Maqasid*, however, was largely interpreted in the West as a statement of al-Ghazali's own views, a sort of introduction to Ibn Sinna's more elaborate treatise *Kitab al-Shifa*. This misunderstanding may have been due to the circumstance that the most widespread Latin translation did not include the author's prologue. This omission, however, does not take place in the 13th century Hebrew translation¹⁶ by Isaac Albalag, who faithfully follows the original Arabic.¹⁷ This Hebrew manuscript is very well preserved and clearly readable even today. The figure below shows a few lines at the beginning of al-Ghazali's introductory remarks,¹⁸ that can be translated roughly as: "You have asked me to explain the words of the philosophers and to expose their confusion and the traps of their mistake, but there is no hope to satisfy your desire unless I first inform you on their intentions and explain to you their belief ...". Interestingly, the Hebrew term "shibush", translated here as "confusion" of the philosophers, in the Arabic original reads "tahafut al-falasifa", which is the title of the second book. It should be clear from this prologue that there was no confusion in al-Ghazali's mind as to the purpose of the *Maqasid al-Falasifa*, which should act as a brief exposition of the main philosophical doctrine of Aristotle as understood by Ibn Sina.

The Latin translation and the missing prologue

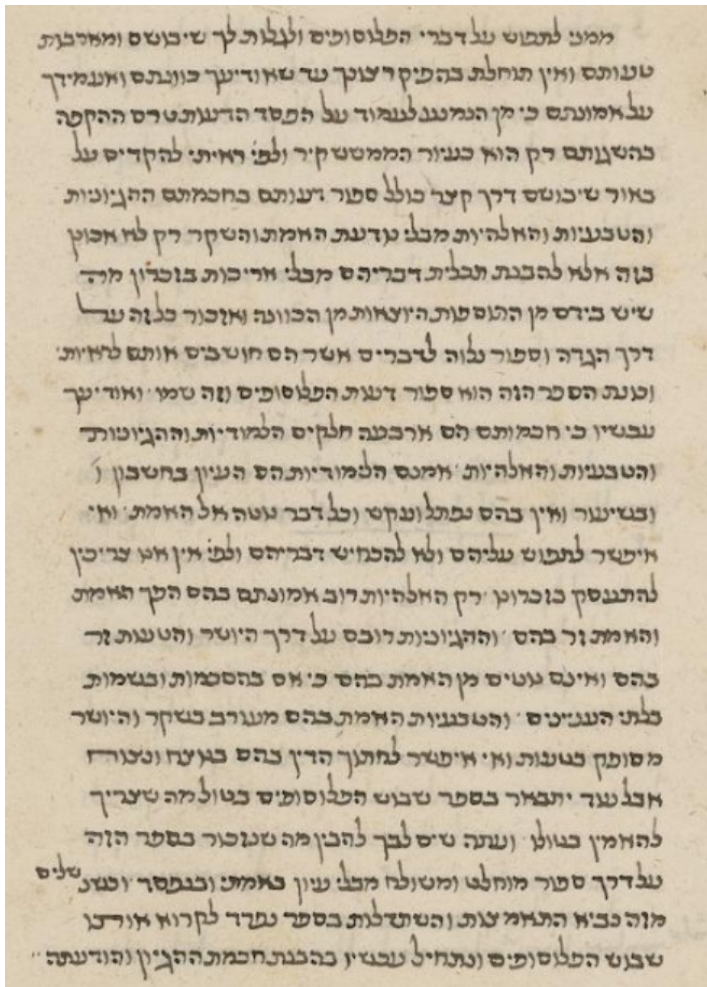
Albalag's Hebrew translation

The prologue

¹⁶ Manuscript preserved in the Vatican Library as Vat. Ebr 346, in a copy from 1492.

¹⁷ Modern editions in Arabic: Dunya S (1961), *Maqasid al-Falasifa*, Dar al-Ma'arif bi-Misr; and Bejou M (2000), *Maqasid al-Falasifa*, Damascus.

¹⁸ The words "shaol shaalta" [you asked] are the final two words in the previous page.



https://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/bav_vat_ebr_346/0028

Al-Ghazali goes on to point out that the philosophical doctrine can be divided into four parts: mathematics, logic, natural science, and theology. Mathematics, he continues, does not need any discussion, since its truths cannot be disputed. The book consists, therefore, of three parts, each one devoted to one of the remaining subdisciplines.

The first Latin translation is attributed to Dominicus Gundissalinus (1115-1190), who, being in Toledo, was able to consult with Jewish colleagues for any queries in translation from Arabic. A manuscript copy is preserved in the Vatican Library as Vat.Lat.4481.

Gundissalinus
in Toledo

The part pertaining to Logic is printed with critical comments by Lohr (op. cit.). The first edition of Gundissalinus' translation was printed in Venice by the printing house of Petrus Liechstenstein von Köln in 1506. Translations to modern languages do not abound.¹⁹

مقاصد الفلاسفة

القول في المنطق

مقدمة في تمهيد المنطق وبيان فائدته وأقسامه

(أما التمهيد) فهو أن العلوم وإن انشعبت أقسامها فهي محصورة في قسمين: التصور والتصديق.

(أما التصور) فهو إدراك الذات التي يدل عليها بالعبارة المفردة على سبيل التفهيم والتحقيق، كإدراك المعنى المراد بلفظ الجسم، والشجر، والملك، والجن، والروح، وأمثاله.

(وأما التصديق) فكذلك بأن العالم حادث، والطاعة بتأب عليها والمعصية يعاقب عليها، وكل تصديق فمن ضرورته أن يتقدمه تصوران فإن من لم يفهم العالم وحده، والحادث وحده، لم يتصور منه التصديق بأنه حادث، بل لفظ الحادث إذا لم يتصور معناه صار كلفظ المادتين مثلاً. ولو قيل: العالم مادته لم يتكسك لا تصديق ولا تكذيب، لأن ما لا يفهم كيف ينكر أو كيف يصدق به، وكذا لفظ العالم إذا أبدل بمجهول، ثم كل واحد من التصور والتصديق ينقسم إلى ما يدرك أولاً من غير طلب وتأمّل، وإلى ما لا يحصل إلا بالطلب. أما الذي يتصور من غير طلب فكالموجود والشيء وأمثاله. وأما الذي يتحصل بالطلب فكمعرفة حقيقة الروح والملك، والجن، وتصور الأمور الحقيقية ذاتها. وأما التصديق المعلوم أولاً فكالحكم بأن الاثنين أكثر من واحد، وأن الأشياء المساوية لشيء واحد متساوية، ويضاف إليه الحسيات، والمقبولات وجملة من العلوم التي تشتمل النفوس عليها من غير سبق طلب وتأمّل فيها، وينحصر في ثلاثة عشر نوعاً وسيأتي في موضعه. وأما الذي يدرك بالتأمّل فكالتصديق بمحدوث العالم، وحشر الأجساد، والجهارات على الطاعات والمعاصي وأمثاله، وكل ما لا بد في تصوره من طلب فلا ينال إلا بذكر الحد، وكل ما لا بد في تصديقه من طلب فلا ينال إلا بالحجة، وكل واحد منهما من ضرورته

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(أما التمهيد) فهو أن العلوم وإن انشعبت أقسامها فهي محصورة في قسمين: التصور والتصديق.

(أما التصور) فهو إدراك الذات التي يدل عليها بالعبارة المفردة على سبيل التفهيم والتحقيق، كإدراك المعنى المراد بلفظ الجسم، والشجر، والملك، والجن، والروح، وأمثاله.

(وأما التصديق) فكذلك بأن العالم حادث، والطاعة بتأب عليها والمعصية يعاقب عليها، وكل تصديق فمن ضرورته أن يتقدمه تصوران فإن من لم يفهم العالم وحده، والحادث وحده، لم يتصور منه التصديق بأنه حادث، بل لفظ الحادث إذا لم يتصور معناه صار كلفظ المادتين مثلاً. ولو قيل: العالم مادته لم يتكسك لا تصديق ولا تكذيب، لأن ما لا يفهم كيف ينكر أو كيف يصدق به، وكذا لفظ العالم إذا أبدل بمجهول، ثم كل واحد من التصور والتصديق ينقسم إلى ما يدرك أولاً من غير طلب وتأمّل، وإلى ما لا يحصل إلا بالطلب. أما الذي يتصور من غير طلب فكالموجود والشيء وأمثاله. وأما الذي يتحصل بالطلب فكمعرفة حقيقة الروح والملك، والجن، وتصور الأمور الحقيقية ذاتها. وأما التصديق المعلوم أولاً فكالحكم بأن الاثنين أكثر من واحد، وأن الأشياء المساوية لشيء واحد متساوية، ويضاف إليه الحسيات، والمقبولات وجملة من العلوم التي تشتمل النفوس عليها من غير سبق طلب وتأمّل فيها، وينحصر في ثلاثة عشر نوعاً وسيأتي في موضعه. وأما الذي يدرك بالتأمّل فكالتصديق بمحدوث العالم، وحشر الأجساد، والجهارات على الطاعات والمعاصي وأمثاله، وكل ما لا بد في تصوره من طلب فلا ينال إلا بذكر الحد، وكل ما لا بد في تصديقه من طلب فلا ينال إلا بالحجة، وكل واحد منهما من ضرورته

المذمومة.

First two pages (excluding the Prologue) of a modern Arabic edition (Bejou, 2000)

¹⁹ A German translation is found in Beer G (1888), *Al-Gazzali's Makasid al-Falasifat*, Brill, Leiden. A modern Spanish translation can be found in Alonso M A (1963), *Maqasid al-falasifa, o Intenciones de los filósofos*, Juan Flors, Barcelona.

Petrus Liechtenstein Colonienſis
 Germanus: et oris Erweruelde oriūduſ
 Ad laudem ⁊ bonozem dei ſūmi tonan
 ti: et ad cōmune bonum ſeu vtilitatem
 ſūmis cum vigilijs laboribuſq; hoc pre
 clarū in lucem opus prodire fecit Anno
 Virginei partuſ. M.D.VI. Idibus Fe
 bruarijs ſub hemiſpherio Veneto.

* *

Incipit Logica Algazelis de hiſ que
 debent preponi ad intelligētiā logicę:
 ⁊ ad ostendendum vtilitates eiꝯ: ⁊ par
 tes eiꝯ.

Capitulum primum.

Imagina
 tio et cre
 dulus ſūt
 propuetaſ
 tes ſcienti
 arum



Iūvis ſcientiarū mul
 ti ſunt rami: due tñ ſunt
 proprietates: imagina
 tio ⁊ credulus. Imagi
 natio eſt apprehēſio re
 rū quas ſignificant ſiru
 gule dictiones ad intel
 ligendum eas: ⁊ ad certificandū. ſicut eſt
 apprehenſio ſignificationis huiꝯ noiſ
 canis arbor: ſpiritus: angelus: ⁊ ſimiliū
 Credulus vō eſt ſicut q; dicitur mund
 us cepit: et obedientia remunerabitur:
 Neceſſe eſt autem omnem credulitateꝯ
 Precedant ad minus due imaginationes
 Quiſquis enī non intellexit ſignificatio
 nē huiꝯ dictionis per ſe que eſt mūdus
 ⁊ huiꝯ dictionis per ſe que eſt cepit: nō
 intelliget credulitatē hanc q; mūdus ce
 pit: ſed hoc nomen mundus non imagi
 nanti eiꝯ ſignificatiōē erit nihil ſigni
 ficans velut bundus: ſimiliter et ſigni
 ficatio huiꝯ verbi qđ eſt cepit: non intel
 ligenti eam erit velut ſignificatio huiꝯ
 vocis que eſt cebit quaſi nulla: et tunc ſi
 diceret tibi būdus cebit: nec crederet nec
 pcederet: qđ enī quis non intelliget quō
 pcedet vel negabit: Amplius imagina
 tio et credulus vtraq; dicitur in id qđ
 primū apprehendit p ſe ſine exquiſitiōē
 ⁊ excoꝛtatione: ⁊ in id qđ nō apprehen

ditur ſine Inquiſitione: Qđ autem ima
 ginatur ſtatim ſine inquiſitione eſt: ſicut
 ens: aliquid: res: ⁊ ſimilia: Quod vō non
 imaginat ſine inquiſitione eſt ſicut ſpūs
 ⁊ angelus: ⁊ imaginatio rerum: quarum
 eſſentie ſunt occulte. Credulus vō que
 ſtatim apprehendit ſine inquiſitione eſt
 velut ſcientia hec: ⁊ eſt q; duo ſunt plus
 q; vñ: ⁊ quecuq; equalia idem: et inter
 ſe credibilia alia: et cum hiſ etiam ſunt
 ſenſibilia: ⁊ pbabilia ⁊ multa alia de ſen
 tentijs in quibus retinēdis oēs cūeniūt
 ſine precedenti inquiſitione que compre
 henduntur in. iij. ſpeciebus de quibus
 poſtea loquemur. Credulus autē que
 non apprehendit ſine inquiſitione eſt ve
 lut hec q; mundus cepit: ⁊ q; eſt reſurre
 ctio corpoz: ⁊ q; retributio eſt maloz et
 bonoz: ⁊ ſimilia. Quicquid aut non poſſeſt
 imaginari ſine inquiſitione non poſſeſt
 apprehendi ſine diffinitione: ⁊ quicquid
 non poſſeſt credi ſine inquiſitione nō po
 teſt apprehēdi ſine argumētatione: Sed
 ante hoc neceſſe eſt precedere ſine dubio
 aliquam ſcientiam. Cum igit ignozau
 rimus ſignificatiōē huiꝯ noiſ homo:
 ⁊ interrogauerimus quid eſt: ⁊ reſpon
 debit quidē nobis q; eſt aīal rationale
 mortale: oportebit tunc q; animal ſit cog
 nitū apud nos: ſit et rationale ad hoc
 vt per cognitionē horum duoz acquiratur
 nobis cognitio hoīs ignoti. Iterum
 etiam dum non credimus q; mūdus ce
 pit ⁊ dixerit quis q; mundus eſt forma
 tus: ſed oē formatū cepit: ergo mundus
 cepit certe hoc totū non faceret nos ſcire
 id qđ neſcimus de inceptiōe mūdi niſi
 pcederet credulus q; mūdus eſt for
 matus: et q; oē formatū cepit: et tunc ex
 hiſ duabus ſcientijs acquiremus ſcienti
 am rei ignote nobis. Maniſteſtum eſt
 igitur ex hoc q; oīs ſciētia que inquiriſ
 nō acquiriſ niſi per aliquā ſcientiā que
 pcedit: et hec non tendit in infinitū: nā

Sciētia que
 inquiriſ inq
 riſ p pceden
 tem ſcientiā

Qđ qđ nō
 intelligit nō
 debet cōce
 dere

neceſſe eſt vt hec pueniāt ad prima que ſunt ſtabilia in natura intellectus ſine in quiſitione et meditatione. Hoc eſt ergo qđ dicitur preponi in tractatu logice.

De vtilitate logice. Capitulu ſecundu.

Ignotus nō
pōt ſciri niſi
per notum

Poſtq̄ aut̄ manifeſtu eſt qđ igno-
tum non poteſt ſciri niſi per notū
et oſtat qđ per vnū aliqđ notū non poteſt
ſciri quodlibet ignotum: ſed quodlibet
ignotū habet aliqđ propriū notum ſibi
ſuueniens qđ eſt via perueniendi ad aliū
et reſentādi in intellectu illud: qm̄ ipſuz
eſt via qua veniē ad manifeſtationē ſu-
lius. tunc quod inducit ad cognoscēdas
ſcientias imaginatiuas vocat̄ diffinitio
et deſcriptio: qđ vero inducit ad ſcien-
tias credulitatis dicit̄ argumentatio: Ar-
gumētatio aut̄ alia eſt ſyllogiſmus: alia
inductio: alia exemplum: Diffinitio vō et
ſyllogiſmus diuidit̄ in rectuz per quod
acquirit̄ veritas: et falſum ſed verifiſimile
eſt ſcientia vō logice dat regulam qua
diſcernit̄ an diuinitio et ſyllogiſmus ſint
vitiōſa an nō ad hoc vt diſcernat̄ ſcien-
tia vera a non vera: et hoc eſt quaſi pon-
dus et meſura ad oēs ſcientias. In eo
aut̄ qđ non ponderat̄ pondere nō cogno-
ſcit̄ argumentu vel diuinitio: lucrum
vel damnum. Signis aut̄ dixerit qđ ſi vtili-
tas logice eſt diſcernere ſcientiā ab igno-
rantia tunc que vtilitas eſt a deſt ſcientie
generaliter: Dicemus qđ ois vtilitas vi-
lis eſt in comparatione felicitatis eterne
que eſt felicitas alterius vite: Hoc aut̄ fe-
licitas pendet ex pfectione anime: Per-
fectio anime oſtat in duobus: munditia
ſc̄ et ornata. Munditia vō aie eſt vt ex-
purget̄ a ſordidis moribus: et ſuspendat̄
a phantaſis turpibus. Ornata vō eius
eſt vt depingat̄ in ea certitudo veritatis
ita vt reuelent̄ ei veritates diuine: imo
eſſe totius ſm̄ ſeriem eius in reuelatione
qđ vera que ſuueniat veritati in qua non
ſit error nec occultatio: Verbi gratia. Si

Species ar-
gumētiati-
onis

Perfectio a-
nime cōſiſtit
in munditia
et ornata

eſt ſpeculū cui non eſt perfectio niſi ap-
pareat in eo forma pulchra ſm̄ qđ ipſa
eſt ſine deformitate et permutatione: qđ
non ſit niſi ſit oīno terſum a ſorde et ru-
bigine: et poſtea apponant̄ ei forme pul-
chre niſi in rectitudine. Anima ergo ſpe-
culum eſt: nam et depingunt̄ in ea forme
totius eſſe cum mūda et terſa fuerit a ſor-
didis moribus: nec poteſt ipſa diſcernere
re vere inter mores honeſtos et inhone-
ſtos niſi per ſcientiā. Depingi autem for-
mas omnū que ſunt in aīa nihil aliud e-
ſt qđ ſcientiā omnū eſſe in ea. Non eſt aut̄
via oueniēdi in ſcientiā niſi per logica:
ergo vtilitas logice eſt apprehēſio ſcien-
tie: vtilitas ſcientie eſt acquiſitio felicitatis
eterne. Si ergo oſtiterit qđ felicitas
eterna non poteſt haberi niſi ppter per-
fectionē anime que non eſt niſi mūditia
et ornata perfectio logice eſt ſcientia ma-
xime vtilitatis.

Alia ſpeculū
lum eſt.

Scientia non
quirit eter-
nas felicitas
tem

De partibus logice Capitulu tertiu.

Partes logice et ordo earū cogno-
ſcunt̄ et oſtentione ſue intentionis: Intentione vō eſt diſfinire et probare et
diſcernere vitiōſa a non vitiōſis: ſue ve-
ra a falſis. Et his aut̄ qđ eſt magis ne-
ceſſariū probatio eſt que quidē cōpoſita
eſt. Probatio enī nō poteſt ordinari ad
minus niſi ex duabus propoſitionibus
ſicut poſtea dicemus. In oī aut̄ propoſi-
tione eſt predicatū et ſubiectū: In oī vō
predicato et ſubiecto dictio eſt que oīno
ſignificat aliqđ intellectū. Volens aut̄
quis apprehendere cōpoſita in eſſe vel
in ſcientia difficile poteſt peruenire ad il-
lud niſi prius habeat cognitionē vniuſi
cuiuſq̄ partiū. Sicut enī fabricator dor-
mus prius eget preparatione laterum: ſi
gnor et luti vt poſtea et eis fabricet dor-
mū: ſic ſcientia erit ſm̄ formā ſc̄ri: ergo
inquiſitor ſcientie cōpoſiti dicit̄ primū
apprehendere ſcientiā partiū: vnde ſed-
tur vt primū loquatur de dictionibus: et

Intētio lo-
gice q̄ ſit

Capitulum primum

Quamvis scientiarum multi sint rami, duae tamen sunt proprietates; imaginatio et credulitas. Imaginatio est apprehensio rerum quas significant singulae dictiones ad intelligendum eas et ad certificandum, sicut est apprehensio significationis huius nominis: canis, arbor, spiritus, angelus, et similia. Credulitas vero est sicut quae dicitur mundus coepit, et oboedientia remunerabitur. Necesse est autem omnem credulitatem praecedant ad minus duae imaginationes. Quisquis enim non intellexerit significationem huius dictionis per se quae est mundus et huius dictionis per se quae est coepit, non intelliget credulitatem hanc quae mundus coepit. Sed hoc nomen mundus non imaginanti eius significationem erit nihil significans velut bundus. Similiter et significatio huius verbi quod est coepit : non intelligenti eam erit velut significatio huius vocis quae est coebis quasi nulla. Et tunc si diceret tibi bundus coebit nec crederet nec concederet, quod enim quis non intelliget quomodo concedet vel negabit.

Sint: subjunctive, because of quamvis.

Imaginatio et credulitas: These words can, of course, be translated as imagination and credulity, but this would not necessarily convey the original meaning. In English (and so too in classical Latin) we might say: “The writer’s imagination, assisted by the reader’s credulity, resulted in a successful science-fiction novel”. In our context, however, these words should represent two carefully calibrated technical terms used, among others, by Avicenna and al-Ghazali to indicate two modalities of the cognitive process. The Arabic

terms are: تصوّر (taṣawwur) and تصديق (taṣdiq). The Arabic root ṣ-w-r includes the meaning associated with the English word image, thus Gundissalinus rendering of taṣawwur as “imagination”. The intention, however, is more something like “formation of an image”, “conception”, “representation”, or the German “Vorstellung” such as understood by Schopenhauer. Albalag’s Hebrew translation takes advantage of the proximity of Hebrew and Arabic and translates taṣawwur as ציור (tsiur), from the same Semitic root. As for taṣdiq, it derives from the Arabic root ṣ-d-q, whose main meaning includes: to be true, to believe, to verify, to justify. The first sentence of the Maqasid is a direct transcription of Avicenna’s first sentence of the treatise on Logic from the book al-Najat (The Deliverance). In an authoritative English translation of this book,²⁰ taṣawwur and taṣdiq are rendered, respectively as conceptualization and assenting. For taṣdiq, Albalag, taking again advantage of the Semitic roots shared by Hebrew and Arabic, uses hetzdek, which means justification, or verification.²¹

Singule dictiones: (read singulae dictiones (subject of the clause)), “individual words”. Each word indicates a thing.

Ad intelligendum eas et ad certificandum: the purpose of taṣawwur is to capture things to understand and certify them. The verb “certificare” is a Medieval neologism (from certum + facere, to make certain, to verify).

Sicut est: introduces an example.

Credulitas vero est: for the more difficult concept of taṣdiq, al-Ghazali does not provide a definition but rather two examples of propositions (instead of isolated words): that the world had a beginning, and that there is a recompense to obedience. Avicenna is more explicit at this point, implying that taṣdiq is conveyed by means of a syllogism, a reasoned argument governed by the rules of Logic.

Ad minus: at least.

Quisquis enim non intellexerit . . . : one needs to understand the terms involved in a proposition if one is to understand the proposition itself. To emphasize

²⁰ Ahmed A Q (2011), *Avicenna’s Deliverance: Logic*, Oxford University Press.

²¹ For more on the translation of these two terms, see Wolfson H A (1943), The Terms Tasawwur and Tasdiq in Arabic Philosophy and Their Greek, Latin, and Hebrew Equivalents, *The Muslim World* 33/2, pp 114-128.

this point, al-Ghazali proposes to replace the proposition “the world had a beginning” with something like “the world had a beginning”, in which case one would not be able to either confirm or contradict the presumed truth of the proposition. It is this clarity and simplicity of expression that made al-Ghazali’s work easily accessible in the West, as compared with the more technical treatises of Avicenna.

Amplius imaginatio et credulitas utraque dicitur in id quod primum apprehenditur per se sine exquisitione et excogitatione, et in id quod non apprehenditur sine inquisitione. Quod autem imaginatur statim sine inquisitione est sicut ens, aliquid, res, et similia. Quod vero non imaginatur sine inquisitione est sicut spiritus et angelus et imaginatio rerum, quarum essentiae sunt occultae.

Amplius: moreover

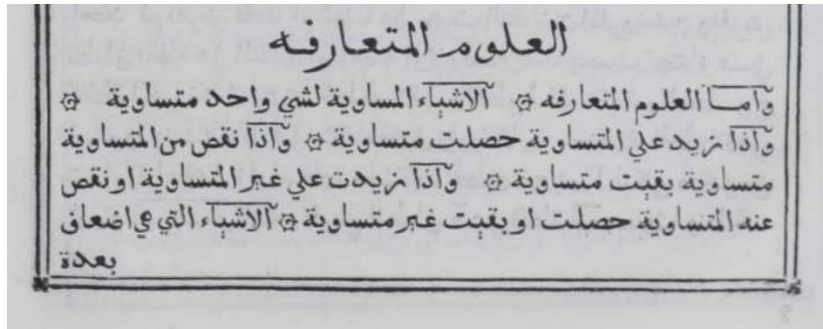
Dicitur: another version has “dividitur”. In typical Aristotelian fashion, any concept that is introduced can be further divided into subclasses. Thus, each of the two modes of cognition is classified as to whether it requires further investigation or not.

Exquisitione: inquisitione

Credulitas vero quae statim apprehendit sine inquisitione est velut scientia haec: et est quod duo sunt plus quam unum, et quaecumque aequalia idem et inter se credibilia alia, et cum his etiam sunt sensibilia, et probabilia, et multa alia de sententiis in quibus retinendis omnes conveniunt sine praecedenti inquisitione, quae comprehenduntur in xiii speciebus de quibus postea loquemur.

Credulitas vero: In the case of credulitas (taṣḍiq), just as in the case of imaginatio (taṣawwur), there are things that can be apprehended immediately, and other things that require investigation. Al-Ghazali gives us a few samples of the first kind, such as the mathematical primary notions.

Quaecumque aequalia idem et inter se: the punctuation marks are somewhat misleading. The word “idem” should be in the dative case (“eidem”, as suggested by Lohr (op. cit.)). The word “et” should be understood as “also”. A better reading would be: “quaecumque aequalia eidem rei, et inter se aequalia sunt”. Al-Ghazali is quoting from Euclid’s elements. In the first book of the Elements, in Adelard of Bath’s translation, we read the first scientia universaliter communis: “si fuerint aliquae duae res alicui rei aequales, unaquaeque earum erit aequalis alteri”. Adelard’s translation was based on an Arabic translation of the Greek original. If we translate directly from al-Ghazali’s Arabic text, we obtain: “the things equal to one thing are mutually equal”. The Arabic language expresses this axiom in a mere five words. These five words happen to be identical to the formulation in al-Tusi’s translation.²²



Al-Tusi’s translation of Euclid’s common notions. Al-Ghazali’s wording is identical:

الأشياء المساوية لشيء واحد متساوية

Credibilia alia: it is best to ignore these two words, or to add “credibilia” to “sensibilia” and “probabilia”.

²² Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (1201-1274) was a Persian scientist who made original contributions to several fields. It has been claimed that some of Copernicus’ ideas were taken directly from al-Tusi. It is not clear whether al-Tusi knew Greek to be able to produce his translation. It is possible that earlier Arabic translations of the Elements were available to al-Tusi. At any rate, al-Tusi was born after al-Ghazali’s death, and al-Ghazali may have been using one of these earlier translations.

Credulitas autem quae non apprehenditur sine inquisitione est velut haec quod mundus coepit, et quod est resurrectio corporum, et quod retributio est malorum et bonorum, et similia. Quicquid autem non potest imaginari sine inquisitione not potest apprehendi sine definitione, et quicquid not potest credi sine inquisitione non potest apprehendi sine argumentatione.

Credulitas ... similia: Al-Ghazali gives us examples of propositions whose truth cannot be grasped without further investigation

Quicquid autem ... argumentatione: This is a crucial methodological statement. It establishes that in the case of imaginatio (taşawwur), what cannot be apprehended directly requires the provision of a definition. In the case of credulitas (taşdiq), on the other hand, what cannot be believed directly requires a logical process of argumentation.

Sed ante hoc necesse est praecedere sine dubio aliquam scientiam. Cum igitur ignoraverimus significationem huius nominis “homo” et interrogaverimus quid est, et respondebitur quidem nobis quod est animal rationale mortale, oportebit tunc quod animal sit cognitum apud nos, sitque et rationale, ad hoc ut per cognitionem horum duorum acquiratur nobis cognitio hominis ignoti.

Praecedere ... aliquam scientiam: this can be construed as an accusative infinitive depending on necesse est. Scientia should not be translated as science, but rather as knowledge.

Cum igitur ignoraverimus: for if we do not know, if we should be ignorant of

Oportebit: impersonal (it will be necessary). Al-Ghazali is hinting here at the weakness of logic, and of philosophy in general, as the means to arrive at any reliable truth. The style is somewhat ironic: if we define a concept in terms of

other concepts, these ones need to be known in advance. But how can we know them without further definitions, while avoiding a vicious circle?

Ad hoc ut: so that

Iterum etiam dum non credimus quod mundus est formatus. Sed omne formatum coepit. Ergo mundus coepit certe. Hoc totum non faceret nos scire id quod nescimus de inceptioe mundi nisi praecederet credulitas quod mundus est formatus, et quod omne formatum coepit. Et tunc ex his duabus scientiis acquiremus scientiam rei ignotae nobis.

Iterum etiam: furthermore, the same as in the previous case.

Mundus est formatus: the world has been made

Sed: a logical connector.

Omne formatum coepit: everything that has been made had a beginning (in time). It would be self-contradictory to assert that something has been made and, at the same time, that it has existed forever.

Ergo: Therefore. Al-Ghazali is giving us an example of a syllogism. The two premises are: (i) the world has been created; (ii) every created thing had a beginning. The conclusion is (according to the rules of logic to be discussed later in the treatise): the world had a beginning.

Hoc totum: All this. Al-Ghazali, with his masterful simplicity of explanation, cannot resist to add his implied criticism of the presumed power of Logic. In other words, he is telling us, there is a catch.

Nisi praecederet credulitas quod mundus est formatus: unless the belief that the world has been created would precede. Notice the non-classical use of “quod” (not just here, but almost everywhere) to mean “that”.

Scientiis, scientiam: knowledge, information (not science).

Manifestum est igitur ex hoc quod omnis scientia quae inquiritur non acquiritur nisi per aliquam scientiam quae praecedit; et haec non tendit in infinitum, nam necesse est ut haec praeveniat ad prima quae sunt stabilia in natura intellectus sine inquisitione et meditatione. Hoc est ergo quod dicitur praeponi in tractatu logicae.

This sentence summarizes the conclusions to be drawn from the first chapter. Namely, that since any knowledge that may be pursued is acquired on the basis of a preceding knowledge, and since this chain cannot be sustained by an infinite regress, it is necessary to arrive at some well-established first knowledge that does not require further research.

Capitulum secundum: De utilitate logicae

Postquam autem manifestum est quod ignotum non potest sciri nisi per notum, et constat quod per unum aliquod notum non potest sciri quodlibet ignotum, sed quodlibet ignotum habet aliquod proprium notum sibi conveniens quod est via perveniendi ad illud²³ et representandi in intellectu illud, quoniam ipsa est via qua venit ad manifestationem illius, tunc quod inducit ad cognoscendas scientias imaginativas vocatur definitio et descriptio, quod vero inducit ad scientias credulitatis dicitur argumentatio.

This rather long sentence is not very difficult to understand, particularly if one breaks it down into smaller pieces.

Postquam autem manifestum est quod ignotum non potest sciri nisi per notum: this is a repetition of the argument in the previous paragraph, that is, that it is evident that no unknown (fact or concept) can get to be known except on the

²³ Original has “alium”, corrected here in accordance with other sources.

basis of something already known. The “postquam” opens the reasoning (“since ...”)

et constat quod per unum aliquod notum non potest sciri quodlibet ignotum: moreover, it is also evident (constat) that through some arbitrarily given known fact (aliquod notum) one cannot acquire knowledge about any desired unknown. This argument is further explained below.

sed quodlibet ignotum habet aliquod proprium notum sibi conveniens quod est via perveniendi ad illud et representandi in intellectu illud, quoniam ipsa est via qua venit ad manifestationem illius: each unknown has something unique that determines the road of access to it and to its representation in the intellect. Notice the use of “venio” in the passive voice (the road by means of which one arrives at this manifestation).

tunc quod inducit ad cognoscendas scientias imaginativas vocatur definitio et descriptio, quod vero inducit ad scientias credulitatis dicitur argumentatio: the “tunc” can be regarded as the conclusion of the argument started by “postquam”, although there is no logical necessity implied. The paragraph intends to establish the terminology. A definition or a description is appropriate for the knowledge of the taşawwur type, while an argument provides access to a taşdiq.

Argumentatio autem alia est syllogismus, alia inductio, alia exemplum. Definitio vero et syllogismus dividitur in rectus per quod acquiritur veritas, et falsum sed verisimile est.

Dividitur: each one of definition and syllogism is divided.

Rectus: syllogismus is masculine, while definitio is feminine. The sense is clear

Falsum sed verisimile est: false but appearing to be true.

Scientia vero logicae dat regulam qua discernitur an definitio et syllogismus sint vitiosa an non, ad hoc ut discernatur scientia vera a non vera; et haec est quasi pondus et mensura ad omnes

scientias. In eo autem quod non ponderatur pondere non cognoscitur augmentum vel diminutio, lucrum vel damnum.

Logic provides a means to discern true from false reasonings and definitions. It acts like the standards of measurement in the case of (commercial) transactions, where it is important to determine the actual weight (in scales, explicitly mentioned in the original Arabic and Hebrew) of the merchandise. Without these standards, it is not possible to know whether there has been increase or decrease, profit or loss.

Siquis autem dixerit quod si utilitas logicae est discernere scientiam ab ignorantia, tunc quae utilitas est (adest) scientiae generaliter. Dicemus quod omnis utilitas vilis est in comparatione felicitatis aeternae quae est felicitas alterius vitae. Haec autem felicitas pendet ex perfectione animae.

Someone might ask: granted that logic is useful in discerning knowledge from ignorance, but what is the usefulness of knowledge? The original Arabic and Hebrew are clearer. Ignore “adest” and construe scientiae in the genitive singular.

Felicitas alterius vitae: This is an indication of the fact that, although presenting philosophy as dispassionately as he can, al-Ghazali does not hide his mistrust of philosophy, as explicitly argued in his Tahafut al-Falasifa. The introduction of the world to come is completely unwarranted at this point. On the other hand, he does have a point in the sense that if someone were to question the “usefulness” of knowledge, then this person would be so out of reach of this treatise, that the author might as well use a religious argument.

Perfectio animae constat in duobus: munditia scilicet et ornatu. Munditia vero animae est ut expurgetur a sordidis moribus, et suspendatur a phantasiis turpibus. Ornatus vero eius est ut depingatur in ea certitudo veritatis ita ut revelentur ei veritates

divinae. Imo esse totius secundum seriem eius in revelatione (inquam) vera quae conveniat veritati in qua non sit error nec occultatio.

Suspendatur a phantasiis turpibus: That it may break off from ugly fancies. The Arabic original uses the stem q-d-s which is rendered in some manuscripts as sanctificetur.

Imo: read immo.

Esse: construe as a noun (existence). Nay, existence according to its whole arrangement, in true revelation, that may be fitting to the truth in which there is no error or concealment.

Verbi gratia: Si est speculum cui non est perfectio nisi appareat in eo forma pulchra secundum quod ipsa est sine deformitate et permutatione. Quod non fit nisi sit omnino tersum a sorde et rubigine, et postea apponantur ei formae pulchrae nisi in rectitudine. Anima ergo speculum est, nam et depinguntur in ea formae totius esse cum munda et tersa fuerit a sordidis moribus; nec potest ipsa discernere vere inter mores honestos et inhonestos nisi per scientiam. Depingi autem formas omnium quae sunt in anima nihil aliud est quam scientiam omnium esse in ea.

Verbi gratia: for example

Cui non est perfectio: dative of possession

The analogy is drawn between the soul and a mirror. This is a favourite image in Sufism, probably influenced by Plotinus.

Non est autem via inveniendi in scientiam nisi per logicam. Ergo utilitas logicae est apprehensio scientiae; utilitas scientiae est acquisitio felicitatis aeternae. Si ergo constituerit quod felicitas

aeterna non potest haberi nisi propter perfectionem animae quae non est nisi munditia et ornatus, perfectio logicae est scientia maximae utilitatis.

Perfectio logicae: an alternative reading is “perfectio logica”.

More tectonics

On Wednesday, November 27, 1095, Pope Urban II delivers a speech at the Council of Clermont, which he had convened in his native France (now Clermont-Ferrand, Auvergne). There are several different recollections of this speech and its effects, the shortest of which is recorded in the anonymous *Gesta Francorum* as follows:

Urban II

The Council of
Clermont

Holy war

Fratres, vos oportet multa pati pro nomine Christi, uidelicet miserias, paupertates, nuditates, persecutiones, egestates, infirmitates, fames, sites et alia huiusmodi, sicuti Dominus ait suis discipulis: "Oportet vos pati multa pro nomine meo", et: "Nolite erubescere loqui ante facies hominum; ego vero dabo vobis os et eloquium", ac deinceps: "Persequetur vos larga retributio". Cumque iam hic sermo paulatim per uniuersas regiones ac Galliarum patrias coepisset crebrescere, Franci audientes talia protinus in dextra crucem suere scapula, dicentes sese Christi unanimiter sequi vestigia, quibus de manu erant redempti tartarea. Iamiamque Galliae suis remotae sunt domibus.



The Council of Clermont, illumination attributed to Jean Colombe (1430-1493)

This council was the result of an appeal of Alexius I Comnenus, emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, to the Pope. The Eastern and Western Churches had been at odds for a long time, but the rapprochement sought by Alexius was a call for military assistance against the Seljuk advances.²⁴ Although Alexius' request was of limited scope, Urban conceived a much larger program: the conquest of the Holy Land from Islamic rule.

Alexius
Comnenus

As indicated in the *Gesta Francorum*, the response was overwhelmingly popular. It launched the historical phenomenon known as the First Crusade. It is fair to say that the eastern call for help stands as an excuse

The First
Crusade

²⁴ The Seljuks were a Turkic people that had adopted the Persian culture and conquered all of Persia by the mid-eleventh century.

for a movement that has much deeper roots. The Pope could count on the religious allegiance and fervour, instilled over centuries, of all social classes, including nobility, artisans, and serfs. But would that be enough to start a holy war in an unknown and distant land?

Historians have debated the root causes of the First Crusade, from famine and disease, poverty and injustice, lack of social mobility, racial and religious prejudice, opening of new markets in the East, attempt to increase the papal political domination, attainment of glory by the knights. A *carte blanche* was given to peasants and nobles alike to act with violence against the perceived enemies of Christianity. Thus, one of the first acts of violence committed by the inflamed masses, with no military experience or discipline, was to massacre Jews along the way. This part of the First Crusade is known as the People's Crusade, or Paupers' Crusade, under the leadership of Peter the Hermit, a fanatic priest.

Most of the knights and the clergy did not directly participate in the initial acts of indiscriminate slaughter and looting. The untrained masses failed to make it to Jerusalem in one piece. Nevertheless, when the final assault on Jerusalem took place in July 1099, a wholesale massacre of the civilian population ensued. A few days later, the Kingdom of Jerusalem was established, with Godfrey of Bouillon at the head. When Benjamin of Tudela visited the Kingdom of Jerusalem, which reached into modern-day Lebanon, he reported dispassionately on buildings, officers, and authorities, but did not explicitly mention the Crusaders.

Causes

Massacres of German Jews

The People's Crusade

Massacre in Jerusalem

The Kingdom of Jerusalem

Many documents about the First Crusade have survived, including letters, eyewitness reports, chronicles of participants, and histories. One of the most important is the *Alexiad* written by Anna Comnena, daughter of Alexios I. Written ca. 1145 in Greek, it is a detailed and unique account of the First Crusade within the framework of the Byzantine empire. This book was not translated into Latin until the 19th century. Many personal letters have been preserved, among which two of those written in Latin by Stephen Count of Blois to his wife Adela of Normandy, daughter of William the Conqueror and mother of Stephen, King of England.

Anna
Comnena

The *Alexiad*

Stephen and
Adela of
Normandy

If the First Crusade appears as an unexpected tectonic phenomenon, an even more drastic and consequential one originates a mere 60 years after Urban's speech at Clermont, with the birth of Temujin (1158-1227) in the Mongolian steppes.

Birth of
Temujin

Temujin's reputation as a local chieftain grew, and he formed alliances with other leaders in the region. By 1206, Temujin had defeated all other competitors for power and in a Kurultai (general assembly) he was proclaimed Khagan (supreme ruler) of the whole Mongol nation under the new name of Genghis Khan.

Genghis Khan
as Khagan

Genghis Khan was an innovator, and a born manager. He introduced administrative, economic, and cultural reforms and encouraged limited religious freedom and literacy. At the same time, he exercised power with an iron hand and appointed members of his family to the most important posts. His empire expanded rapidly to encompass Northern China, Central Asia and parts of Russia and the Ukraine.

Expansion

After the death of Genghis, a power struggle ensued between his sons and other entitled relatives. His third son, Ögedei, was confirmed as supreme Khagan in a Kurultai held in 1229. The empire kept expanding further into China, northern India, and Russia. Kiev fell in 1240. The death of Ögedei in 1241 unleashed internal power struggles. In Europe, the Mongol armies stopped at the gates of Vienna, to the great relief of the West, while the succession was contested. The capital of the empire remained at Karakorum in Mongolia, but the unity of the empire began to collapse, even if the territorial expansion continued. Möngke Khan, grandson of Genghis, became the supreme ruler in 1251.

Ögedei

Further expansion

Möngke

Baghdad fell in 1258 to the forces of Hulagu, one of Möngke's brothers. The city was reduced to ruins and much of the population massacred, thus bringing an end to the Abbasid dynasty and its former splendour. Damascus fell soon thereafter. The Mongol forces, however, were defeated by the Egyptian Mamluk army at Ain Jalut, near Acre, in 1260, and no further Mongol advances in the Middle East took place.

Fall of Baghdad

Ain Jalut

When Möngke died in 1259, his younger brother Kublai, who had been the governor of Northern China, and had started an expansionist campaign towards the south, was elected as the next great Khan in a controversial Kurultai that took place in Karakorum in 1260. Kublai always considered that his main dominion and his most important achievements were in China. He was the founder of the Yuan dynasty, after annihilating the Song dynasty in 1279. Kublai's reign was well managed and inclusive. It stimulated

Kublai Khan

Yuan dynasty

international trade and incorporated the latest scientific discoveries.

The death of Kublai Khan in 1294 marks the beginning of the territorial decline of the Mongol Empire, which took another two generations. It disintegrated into independent Khanates bringing the end of the period known as the Pax Mongolica. One of the important international economic contributions of this period was the guarantee of safe travel over the Silk Road. This trade route, however, may have been the carrier of the black plague into Europe in the mid fourteenth century.

Disintegration

Pax Mongolica

Silk Road

Black Plague

A letter from the battlefield

William the conqueror (1028-1087), the first Norman king of England, and Matilda of Flanders (1051-1083) begat eight children, of whom the seventh was Adela of Normandy, born in 1067. At the age of fifteen, she was married to the 37-year-old Stephen Henry (1045-1102), who inherited the titles of Count of Chartres and Blois. Heeding the call to holy war of Urban II, Stephen joined the First Crusade as the commander of one of the armies and participated in the sieges of Nicaea and Antioch. He returned home in 1098 but rejoined the campaign in 1101. He was killed in battle in 1102.

Adela of
Normandy

Stephen Count
of Blois

Adela's pedigree, wealth, and education were unmatched by Stephen. She was regent of her husband's and one of her son's offices, and as such exercised actual administrative power for many years. After 1120, she dedicated herself to the Church, and she is recognized as a Catholic saint. Several of her letters, written in Latin, are preserved, but unfortunately not those of a personal nature.

Adela as
regent and
saint

While commanding the Crusader army, Stephen wrote several letters in Latin to Adele, one of which is transcribed below.²⁵ In the exemplary letter below we see, on the one hand, a man of great refinement and high moral values, respectful of his wife, loving his children, and caring for his staff. On the other hand, we see a man for whom the adversary is automatically

A letter from
Antioch

Human nature

²⁵ Latin original available from D'Achery L (1723), *Spicilegium sive Collectio Veterum aliquot Scriptorum*, I, 2nd ed., Montalant, Paris., pp 430-431.

despicable, and for whom those who do not share his world view are as so many chess pieces of a different colour, to be obliterated without mercy for the sake of winning the game. All these negative qualities are covered with a patina of spirituality and called God's work. Such is human nature.

tere potuisset. Postea vero quasi pro obedientia commendavimus ei exteriorem honorem secretariæ nostræ, minus precibus domini Pontificis obstricti, exceptis Ecclesiis, & decimis, & exceptâ turre quæ in superiori parte civitatis nostræ sita est, cum appositis domibus & farnis: hoc tenere tamen & convenientiâ, ut det nobis huiusmodi suum unicum & duobus quos prius genui illi uxor sua, ut fiat Canonicus Regularis in Ecclesiâ nostrâ, & cum eo relinquat nobis cum omni pace totum hunc rem ad secretariam nostram pertinentem in perpetuum possidendum cum omni pace & dilectione sæpe nominatus Gaufridus. Fiat vero concessio & pueri & honoris usque ad expirationem decem annorum, ita tamen ut eo die qui puer canonicalem induerit habitum, dimittat nobis totum omnium honorem ad sanctuarium pertinentem, & ad jus Ecclesiæ nostræ ubicumque inventus fuerit, & infra terminum decem annorum disposuerit nobis tradere insuam. Si autem nec expletis decem annis aliqua consilii calliditate noluerit nobis tradere filium suum ut Canonicus fiat Regularis, sicut pactum est, honorem tamen liberum sine omni inquietudine sive cum filio sive sine filio, consummato termino in pace nobis relinquet.

Testes sunt huiusmodi pactiois G. Episcopus. Aimericus de Laroca. Grimals de Laroca. Ipse Gaufridus Deltalino. Guillelmus Bonafos. Guillelmus de Meder. Arnaldus Guillelmus. Stephanus Beraltz. Arnals Guirals; & omnis Conventus Canonico-
rum.

MARBODUS Redonensis Episcopus respondet HILDEBERTO Cenomani Episcopo. qui illum consulerat de viro à quo uxor debitum sori postulabat, licet ipse votum Monasticæ vite consensu episcopi emisisset.

Matque W. Archiepiscopus J. Cenomanensi Episcopo salutem. De muliere quæ decumbenti viro, atque postulatam habitum Monachi non solum præstitit assensum, sed etiam votum continentie oblatum, ipsa cum tradidit tonsurandum, nunc autem facti penitens, eundem ad debitum sori postulat reverti; nihil aliud nobis videtur, quàm quod Augustinus sic ad Ecdicium scribens ait: « Quod Domino patri consensu ambo voveratis, perseverantes usque in finem reddere debuistis, à quo proposito si lapsus ille est, tu saltem constantissimè persevera: quod te non exhortaret, nisi quia tibi ad hoc ipsum consenserat; nam si nunquam renuissis ejus assensum, numerus te nullus defraudasset annorum. » Sanè quod mulier suam tuetur causam, scilicet quod per ministros Ecclesiæ, nec assensum vim dederit, nec promiserit castitatem, ei ad rescindendum continentie votum non intelligo suffragari: licet si per eos fieret, ordinatio factum diceretur. Et hoc beatitudini vestre scripsi, in eorum sententiam sine disceptatione transiurus, quibus id quod melius est, Dominus revelabit. Vale.

An. MDCVIII.

STEPHANI Comes Carnustensis ac Bileensis ad uxorem ADRLAM.

Refert uxori quæ in carceribus

STEPHANUS Comes ADRLÆ dulcissimæ atque amabilissimæ conjugii, carissimique filii sui; atque

sanctis fidelibus suis tam majoribus, quàm minoribus, totius salutis gratiam & benedictionem. Credas certissimè, carissima, quod nuntius iste, quem dilectioni tue misi, sanum me atque incolumem, atque omni prosperitate magnificatum Dei gratiâ dimisit ante Antiochiam. Et jam ibi cum omni electo Christi exercitu sedem Domini Jesu cum magna ejus virtute per viginti tres continuas septimanas tenueramus. Deias pro certo, mi Dilecta, quod aurum & argentum, atque divitias multas duplo nunc habeo, quàm tunc quando à te discessi mihi dilectio tua attribuit. Nam cuncti Princeps nostræ communi consilio totius exercitus me dominum suum, atque omnium suorum actuum provisorem atque gubernatorem, etiam me nolente, usque ad tempus constituerunt. Satis audisti, quia post captam Nicetam civitatem non modicam pugnam cum perfidis Turcis habuimus, & eos Domino Deo subveniente devicimus primùm; posthæc totius Romanæ partes Domino acquisivimus: postea Cappadociâ, atque in Cappadociâ quemdam Turcorum Principem Assam habitare cognovimus. Ilic iter nostrum direximus: cuncta vero castra illius vi devicimus, & cum in quoddam firmissimum castrum in alta rupe situm fugavimus; terram quoque ipsius Assam unis ex nostris Principibus dedimus, & ut prædictum Assam debellaret cum multis Christi militibus ibi eam dimissimus. Deinde per mediam Armeniam semper nos insequentibus utendos Turcos usque ad magnum flumen Euphratem fugavimus; & etiam ad ripam ejusdem fluminis dimissis cunctis Sarcinis, & saumaris suis, per meam flumen in Arabiam miserunt. Ex ipsis vero Turcis audaces milites nocte se die cursu veloci in Syriam regionem intrantes, ut in Regiam urbem Antiochiam intrare valerent ante adventum nostrum, festinatum. Cunctus vero Dei exercitus hoc cognoscens, cunctipotentem Domino gratias laudesque dignas dederunt. Ad principalem prædictam urbem Antiochiam cum magno gaudio nos properantes, eam obsidimus, & cum Turcis sæpissimè ibi pueras confusiones habuimus, & in veritate lepties cum civibus Antiochenis, & cum numeris adventantibus ad subveniendum sibi auxiliis, quibus obviam occurrimus, animis ferocitibus Christo præcunte pugnavimus, & in omnibus vii. præliis prædictæ Domino Deo cooperante vincimus, & de ipsis sine omni numero verissimè interfecimus. In ipsis vero præliis, & in plurimis in civitatem factis congressionibus, de Christianis confratribus nostris multos occiderunt, quorum verè animas ad paradisi gaudia intulerunt.

Antiochiam vero urbem maximam, ultra quàm credi potest firmissimam atque inexpugnabilem reperimus. Audaces itaque milites Turci plurimam vim illam urbem civitatem confuderant, exceptis Sarcenis, Publicanis, Arabibus, Tureopolitanis, Syris, Armenis, atque gentibus diversis, quarum multitudo infinita inibi convenerat. Pro his igitur iniuriis Dei & nostris oppugnandis multos labores, & innumera mala, Dei gratiâ bucasque sustinimus. Multi etiam jam sua omnia hæc in sanctissimâ passionis consumserunt. Plurimi vero de nostris Francigenis temporalem mortem fame subsissent, nisi Dei clementia, & nostra pecunia eis subvenisset. Per totam vero hyemem ante sepeditam Antiochiam civitatem frigora prænimia, ac pluviarum immoderatas abundantias, pro Christo Dominum perpelessimus. Quod quidam dicunt, vix posse pati aliquem in totâ Syriâ lolis ardorem, falsum est: Nam hyems apud eos Occidentali nostra similis est. Cum vero Caspianus Antiochiæ Admiralus, id est Princeps & dominus, se adeo à nobis prægravatum conspiceret,

ante Antiochiam à Christianis acta fuit.

mar filium suam, Senfadolo nomine, Principi qui tenet Hierosolimam, & Principi de Cales Rodoam, & Principi de Damasco Docap: item militi in Arabiam propter Bolianuth, & in Corachaniam propter Hamelnuth. Hi v. Admiraldi cum xis. milibus electorum militum Turcorum ad subveniendum Antiochenis subito venerunt. Nos verò hoc totum ignorantes, multos de nostris militibus per civitates & castella miseramus. Sunt verò nobis per Syriam et xv. civitates & castra in nostro proprio dominio. Sed paulo antequam ad urbem venissent, per tres leugas cum nec. militibus in quadam planitie ad pontem Ferream eis occurremus. Deus autem pugnare pro nobis suis fidelibus contra eos: nam eà die virtute Dei eos pugnando devicimus, & de ipsis sine numero, Deo tempore pro nobis preliante, interfecimus, & etiam plusquam cc. capita eorum, ut inde congratularentur Christiani populi, in exercitum attulimus. Imperator verò de Babylonia misit ad nos in exercitu nuptos suos Saracenos cum literis suis, & pet eos firmavit pactum & dilectionem nobiscum.

Quid nobis in hac Quadragesima contigerit, tibi carissima, notificare diligo. Principes nostri ante quadam portam, quæ erat inter castra nostra & mare, castellum fieri constituerant: nam per eam portam quotidie Turci exeuntes, de nostris euntes ad mare interficiebant (Urbs enim Antiochia distat à mari per v. leugas) hac de causâ egressum Boimundum, & Raimundum Comitem de S. regidio ad mare, ut inde Marinapros ad hoc opus juvandum adducerent cum rx. tantum militum milibus, miserunt. Cum autem eisdem Marinaris ad nos reverterentur, congregato exercitu Turcorum nostris duobus improvisis Principibus occurrerant, & eos in fugam periculose miserunt. In istâ improvisâ fugâ plusquam quingentos nostrorum peditem ad eandem Dei perdidimus; de militibus nostris non nisi tantum duos pro certo amissimus. Nos verò eadem die ut confratres nostros cum gaudio susciperemus, eis obviam exivimus, infortunium eorum ignorantes. Cum autem prædicta portæ civitatis appropinquarem, Antiochena turba milium ac pedum de habito triumpho se extolentes in nostram pariter irruerunt. Quos nostri videntes ad Chriticola castra, ut omnes parati ad bellum nos sequerentur, miserunt: dum adhuc convenirent nostri, disjuncti Principes scilicet Boimundus & Raimundus cum reliquo exercitu suo advenerunt, & infortunium quod eis magnum evenerat, narraverunt. Quo pessimo rumore nostri furore accensi, in sacrilegos Turcos pro Christo morti parati, pro fratrum dolore concurrerunt. Inimici verò Dei & nostri ante nos confestim fugientes, in urbem suam intrare tentaverunt; sed res longè aliter Dei gratiâ evenit: nam cum transire per pontem super flumen magnam Moscholo fundatum vellent, nos eos quominus insequentes, multos ex ipsis antequam accederent ad pontem, interfecimus, multos in flumen projecimus, qui omnes necati sunt, multos verò supra pontem, plurimos etiam ante portæ introitum occidimus. Vetam tamen dico tibi, mi Dilectâ, & verissimè credas, quod eodem prælio xxx. Admiraldos, id est Principes, aliosque trecentos nobiles Turcos milites, exceptis aliis Turcis atque pagani, interfecimus. Computati sunt ergo numero mortui Turci & Saraceni mcccxx. de nostris autem unam solum non perdidimus.

Dum verò Capellanus meus Alexander sequenti die Pasche cum summâ festinatione hanc litteram scriberet, pars nostrorū Turcos insidiantium victricem pugnam cum eis Domino præeunte habuerunt, & fecerunt & de ipsis lx. milites occiderunt, quorum cuncta capi-

ta in exercitum attulerunt.

Pauca certè sunt, carissima, quæ tibi de multis scribo: & quia tibi exprimere non valeo, quæ sunt in animo meo, Carissima, mando ut bene agas, & tibi tuæ egregiè disponas, & natos tuos, & homines tuos honestè, ut decet te, tractes, quia quàm citàs poterò me certè videbis. Vale.

URBANI Pape II. Archiepiscopi & Episcopi Francie.

URBANUS Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei, Carissimis in Christo Fratribus Manasse Remensi Archiepiscopo, & cæteris per Franciam tam Archiepiscopis quàm Episcopis, Salutem & Apostolicam benedictionem. Carissimi Filii nostri Philippi Francorum Regis nuntius ad Sedem Apostolicam veniens, debuit humiliter literas, ac devotionis attulit verba: atque de illius mulieris culpâ, pro quâ venerabilis Confrater noster Lugdunensi Archiepiscopus interdictiois in ipsum sententiam protulerat, secundum Fratrum nostrorum consilium satisfecit. Juravit enim quòd idem Rex mulierem illam postquam in manus nostrâ, imò per nos in beati Petri manu refoverat, nunquam eam carnaliter habuerit. Postea verò cum Confratribus nostris consilium habentes, statim, ut Rex de Episcopis, & regni sui Primatibus, usque ad festivitatem Omnium Sanctorum aliquot ad nos dirigit, qui hoc ipsum quod nuntius ejus juravit, debeant affirmare. Ejusmodi igitur per Legatum ipsius satisfactione accepta, eundem filium nostrum Regem ab interdictiois, quæ pro hac causa in eum prolata fuerat, vinculo absolvimus, & utendi pro more regni cotona auctoritatem ei præbimus.

Data Laterani vest. Idus Maii.

ANSELMI de Ribodimonte ad MANASSEM Archiepiscopum Remensem.

In nomine Domini. Incipit Epistola quam transmissimus sancti Peregrini qui amore Dei perrexerunt Hierosolimam, anno ab Incarnatione Domini Mxcviii. tempore Urbani Pape, Indictione septima.

Domino suo & Patri M. Dei gratiâ Remorum venerando Archiepiscopo, A. de Ribodimonte, suis fidelis homo & humilis servus, salutem. Sicut Sublimitas vestra, Reverende Patet & Domine, quia etiam non præsentiter, tamen absente, in cordibus nostris à vobis auxilium quotidie postulamus, nec solum à vobis, sed etiam ab omnibus sanctæ matris Ecclesiæ Remensis filius, in quibus sanè maximam fiduciam habemus. Quia etiam Dominus noster estis, & totus regni Francorum maximè à vobis pendet consilium; notificamus pateritati vestræ aliqua de his prosperis & adversis quæ nobis evenerunt. Cetera verò per vos notificatur; ut patet in adversis nobis compatiamini, & in prosperis nobiscum gaudeatis.

Mandavimus vobis obsidentes atque capientes Nicæam, & inde recedentes, totam Romaniam atque Armeniam peragantes quomodo nos habuimus. Nunc autem restat ut de obsidione Antiochiæ, de multimodis periculis illi prælibatis, de innumeris præliis contra Regem Galapie, contra Damascum, contra illum ultimum Hierosolymitanum perpetratis, aliquantulum loquamur.

Anno circ. Mxcviii.

Philippum Regem, qui dimissa uxore se se adultæ adduxerat, gaudere ad cor rediisse.

Anno Mxcix.

STEPHANI COMITIS CARNUTENSIS AC BLECENSIS AD UXOREM ADELAM

Stephanus Comes Adelae dulcissimae atque amabilissimae
coniugi, carissimisque filiis suis; atque cunctis fidelibus suis tam
5 majoribus, quam minoribus, totius salutis gratiam et
benedictionem. Credas certissime, carissima, quod nuntius iste,
quem dilectioni tuae misi, sanum me atque incolumem, atque
omni prosperitate magnificatum Dei gratia dimisit ante
Antiochiam. Et jam ibi cum omni electo Christi exercitu sedem
10 Domini Jesu cum magna eius virtute per viginti tres continuas
septimanas tenueramus. Scias pro certo, mi Dilecta, quod aurum
et argentum, aliasque divitias multas duplo nunc habeo, quam
tunc quando a te discessi mihi dilectio tua attribuisset. Nam
cuncti Principes nostri communi consilio totius exercitus me
15 dominum suum, atque omnium suorum actuum provisorem
atque gubernatorem, etiam me nolente, usque ad tempus
constituerunt. Satis audisti, quia post captam Nicaeam civitatem
non modicam pugnam cum perfidis Turcis habuimus, et eos
Domino Deo subveniente devicimus primum; post haec totius
20 Romaniae partes Domino acquisivimus: postea Cappadociam,
atque in Cappadocia quemdam Turcorum Principem Assam
habitare cognovimus. Illuc iter nostrum direximus: cuncta vero
castra illius vi devicimus, et eum in quoddam firmissimum
castrum in alta rupe situm fugavimus; terram quoque ipsius
25 Assam uni ex nostris Principibus dedimus, et ut praedictum
Assam debellaret cum multis Christi militibus ibi eum

dimisimus. Deinde per mediam Armeniam semper nos
insequentes nefandos Turcos usque ad magnum flumen
Euphratem fugavimus; et etiam ad ripam eiusdem fluminis
30 dimissis cunctis sarcinis, et saumariis suis, per medium flumen
in Arabiam fugerunt. Ex ipsis vero Turcis audaciores milites
nocte ac die cursu veloci in Syriam regiones intrantes, ut in
Regiam urbem Antiochiam intrare valerent ante adventum
nostrum, festinarunt. Cunctus vero Dei exercitus hoc
35 cognoscens, cuncti potenti Domino gratias laudesque dignas
dederunt. Ad principalem praedictam urbem Antiochiam cum
magno gaudio nos properantes, eam obsedimus, et cum Turcis
saepissime ibi plurimas conflictiones habuimus, et in veritate
septies cum civibus Antiochenis, et cum innumeris
40 adventitantibus ad subveniendum sibi auxiliis, quibus obviam
occurrimus, animis ferocioribus Christo praeunte pugnativimus,
et in omnibus VII praeliis praedictis Domino Deo cooperante
convicimus, et de ipsis sine omni numero verissime
interfecimus. In ipsis vero praeliis, et in plurimis in civitatem
45 factis congressionibus, de Christicolis confratribus nostris
multos occiderunt, quorum vere animas ad paradisi gaudia
intulerunt.

Antiochiam vero urbem maximam, ultra quam credi potest
firmissimam atque inexpugnabilem reperimus. Audaces itaque
50 milites Turci plusquam v millia intra civitatem confluerant,
exceptis Saracenis, Publicanis, Arabibus, Turcopolanis, Syris,
Armenis, aliisque gentibus diversis, quarum multitudo infinita
inibi convenerat. Pro his igitur inimicis Dei et nostris
oppugnandis multos labores, et innumera mala, Dei gratia

55 hucusque sustinuimus. Multi etiam iam sua omnia haec in
sanctissima passione consumserunt. Plurimi vero de nostris
Francigenis temporalem mortem fame subissent, nisi Dei
clementia, et nostra pecunia eis subvenisset. Per totam vero
hyemem ante saepedictam Antiochiam civitatem frigora
60 praenimia, ac pluviarum immoderatas abundantias, pro Christo
Domino perpassi sumus. Quod quidam dicunt, vix posse pati
aliquem in tota Syria solis ardorem, falsum est: Nam hyems
apud eos Occidentali nostrae similis est. Cum vero Caspianus
Antiochiae Admiraldus, id est Princeps et dominus, se adeo a
65 nobis praegravatum conspiceret, misit filium suum, Sensadolo
nomine, Principi qui tenet Hierosolymam, et Principi de Calep
Rodoam, et Principi de Damasco Docap: item misit in Arabiam
propter Bolianuth, et in Corathaniam propter Hamelmuth. Hi V
Admiraldi cum XII millibus electorum militum Turcorum ad
70 subveniendum Antiochenis subito venerunt. Nos vero hoc totum
ignorantes, multos de nostris militibus per civitates et castella
miseramus. Sunt vero nobis per Syriam CLXV civitates et castra
in nostro proprio dominio. Sed paulo antequam ad urbem
venirent, per tres leugas cum DCC militibus in quamdam
75 planitiem ad pontem Ferreum eix occurrimus. Deus autem
pugnavit pro nobis suis fidelibus contra eos: nam ea die virtute
Dei eos pugnando devicimus, et de ipsis sine numero, Deo
semper pro nobis praeliante, interfecimus, et etiam plusquam CC
capita eorum, ut inde congratularentur Christiani populi, in
80 exercitum attulimus. Imperator vero de Babylonia misit ad nos
in exercitu nuntios suos Saracenos cum litteris suis, et per eos
firmavit pactum et dilectionem nobiscum.

Quid nobis in hac Quadragesima contigerit, tibi carissima,
notificare diligo. Principes nostri ante quamdam portam, quae
85 erat inter castra nostra et mare, castellum fieri constituerant: nam
per eam portam quotidie Turci exeuntes, de nostris euntes ad
mare interficiebant (Urbs enim Antiochia distat a mari per V
leugas) hac de causa egregium Boimundum, et Raimundum
Comitem de S. Aegidio ad mare, ut inde Marinarios ad hoc opus
90 juvandum adducerent cum LX tantum militum milibus,
miserant. Cum autem eisdem Marinariis ad nos reverterentur,
congregato exercitu Turcorum nostris duobus improvisis
Principibus occurrerent, et eos in fugam periculosam miserunt.
In illa improvisa fuga plusquam quingentos nostrorum peditum
95 ad laudem Dei perdidimus; de militibus nostris nonnisi tantum
duos pro certo amisimus. Nos vero eadem die ut confratres
nostros cum gaudio susciperemus, eis obviam exivimus,
infortunium eorum ignorantes. Cum autem praedictae portae
civitates appropinquarem, Antiochena turba militum ac
100 peditum de habito triumpho se extollentes in nosotros pariter
irruerunt. Quos nostri videntes ad Christicola castra, ut omnes
parati ad bellum nos sequerentur, miserunt: dum adhuc
convenirent nostri, disiuncti Principes scilicet Boimundus et
Raimundus cum reliquo exercitu suo advenerunt, et infortunium
105 quo deis magnum evenerat, narraverunt. Quo pessimo rumore
nostri furore accensi, in sacrilegos Turcos pro Christo mori
parati, pro fratrum dolore concurrerunt. Inimici vero Dei et
nostri ante nos confestim fugientes, in urbem suam intrare
tentaverunt; sed res longe aliter Dei gratia evenit: nam cum
110 transire per pontem super flumen magnum Moscholo fundatum
vellent, nos eos quominus insequentes, multos ex ipsis antequam

accederent ad pontem, interfecimus, multos in flumen
proiecimus, qui omnes necati sunt, multos vero supra pontem,
plurimos etiam ante portae introitum occidimus. Verum tament
115 dico tibi, mi Dilecta, et verissime credas, quod eodem praelio
XXX Admiraldos, id est Principes, aliosque trecentos nobiles
Turcos milites, exceptis aliis Turcis atque paganis interfecimus.
Computati sunt ergo numero mortui Turci et Saraceni
MCCXXX, de nostris autem unum solum non perdidimus.

120 Dum vero Capellanus meus Alexander Sequenti die Paschae
cum summa festinatione has litteras scriberet, pars nostrorum
Turcos insidiantum victricem pugnam cum eis Domino
praeunte habuerunt, et fecerunt et de ipsis LX milites
occiderunt, quorum cuncta capita in exercitum attulerunt.

125 Pauca certe sunt, carissima, quae tibi de multis scribo: et quia
tibi exprimere non valeo, quae sunt in animo meo, Carissima,
mando ut bene agas, et tibiae tuae egregie disponas, et natos
tuos, et homines tuos honeste, ut decet te, tractes, quia quam
citius potero me certe videbis. Vale.

GRAMMATICAL AND CONTEXTUAL NOTES

Stephani Comitum Carnutensis ac Bleicensis: Of Stephen, Count of Chartres and Blois	1
Supply the verb <i>dat</i>	5
<i>Me ... dimisit</i> : left me	8
<i>Sedem ... tenueramus</i> : <i>sedem tenere</i> means to lay siege (from the French <i>siege</i> , a seat)	9
<i>Mi</i> : vocative	11
<i>Dilectio tua attribuisset</i> : Stephen seems to be acknowledging that his wealth is due to his marriage to Adela. Now he has doubled it, as he explains below.	13
<i>Me nolente</i> : but of course, how else? He really did not want all those honours and riches. Ablative absolute.	16
<i>Domino Deo subveniente</i> : ablative absolute. <i>Subvenio, -ire</i> : to help.	19
<i>Per mediam Armeniam</i> : through the middle of Armenia	27
<i>Nefandos</i> : Stephen already referred to the Turks as <i>perfidi</i> . Now they are also <i>nefandi</i> .	28
<i>Saumariis</i> : Alternative spelling for <i>sagmariis</i> . <i>Sagmarius, -i (m)</i> is a late Latin word for pack horse or sumpter horse. Cf modern Italian <i>somaro</i> = donkey, ass. Ablative absolute.	30
<i>Septies</i> : <i>septiens</i> , seven times	39
<i>Ad subveniendum sibi auxiliis</i> : <i>subvenio</i> can take a double dative	40
<i>Obviam</i> : used as an adverb. <i>Obviam occurrimus</i> : we ran to meet.	40

Animis ferocioribus: ablative of description.	41
Christo praeunte: ablative absolute.	41
Praeliis: proeliis	42
Christocolis: Christocolus, -I (m) is a worshipper of Christ, a term applied by the Crusaders to their members. Notice the use of “de” as in the French “de”.	45
Credi potest: it can be believed.	48
Exceptis: without counting	51
Publicanis: Publicani or Populicani is a reference to a heretical sect, possibly the Paulicians, followers of the doctrines of Paul of Samosata and influenced by Manicheism.	51
Inibi: therein, in that place	53
Et. ... et: both ... and ...	53
Hucusque: up until now.	55
Consumserunt: comsumpserunt. From consumo, -ere.	56
Subissent: contrary to fact subjunctive. From subeo, -ire.	57
Dei clementia et nostra pecunia: there is some irony here, maybe some dark humour.	58
Praenimia: from praenimius, -a, -um, meaning “excessive”	60
Perpessi sumus: from perpetior (deponent). To bear, to suffer.	61
Dicunt vix posse pati aliquem: accusative/infinitive	61

Solis: construe from sol, solis (m)	62
Occidentali nostrae: dative governed by similis. Notice that hyems (winter) is feminine.	63
Caspianus Admiraldus: this and other names of local leaders are poorly transcribed phonetically by Sthephen. An admiraldus is an emir.	63
Leugas: leuga, -ae (f) is a unit of length (a league, perhaps about 2.5 kilometres).	74
Plusquam CC capita: nice touch.	78
Quid nobis ... contigerit: what happened to us.	83
Quadragesima: the season of Lent, which lasts approximately 40 days.	83
Cum LX tantum militum milibus: notice the spelling of milibus. With just 60 soldiers of the soldiers, namely, with 60 cavalrymen.	90
Quominus: as little (close) as possible.	111
Capellanus: chaplain.	120
Has litteras scriberet: we deduce that the letter was dictated.	121
Victricem: from victrix, victricis (f), feminine form of victor, victoris (m).	122
Exprimere non valeo: I am not able to express	126
Tibiae tuae: In an earlier manuscript, instead of tibiae (as reported by d'Achery) we find terrae, which makes more sense.	127

A papal nuncio in Karakorum

At the death of its founder, Genghis Khan (1158-1227), the Mongol Empire had a continuous extension spanning from the Caspian Sea to the Pacific Ocean. Genghis' succession was fraught with internal family squabbles, which were at least temporarily settled with the accession of Genghis' third son, Ögedei (1186-1241), as Supreme Khan. During Ögedei's reign, the empire continued its expansion to the South and to the West, where the advance included large portions of Russia and modern-day Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, and Hungary, only stopping at the gates of Vienna on account of Ögedei's death.

Death of
Genghis Khan

Ögedei

Eastern Europe

A period of uncertainty and anxiety ensued that lasted for about one generation, followed by the so-called Pax Mongolica, during which the expansion ceased, and safe commercial routes were opened that facilitated cultural and technological exchanges. Marco Polo (1254-1324) and his celebrated travel chronicles, belong to this period. He reportedly spent twenty years at the court of Kublai Khan (1215-1294). On his return to Venice in 1295, Marco Polo was taken prisoner by the Genovese navy, and was kept until 1299. While there, he befriended a fellow prisoner, Rustichello da Pisa, to whom he dictated his memoirs. Written originally in a Franco-Venetian language, the translations of the book into various European languages, including Latin, became very popular and stirred the Western imagination.

Pax Mongolica

Marco Polo

Kublai Khan

Best seller

Much earlier, in the year 1245, while the proximity of the Mongol armies resounded with ominous overtones, Pope Innocent IV had entrusted Giovanni da Pian del Carpine (1185-1252), a senior diplomat and Franciscan priest, with a letter to the Great Khan. Giovanni arrived near the Mongol capital Karakorum just in time to attend the enthronement ceremony of Ögedei's son Güyük (1206-1248) in 1246. As expected, Güyük was in no mood to become a Christian, as intimated in the Pope's letter, and wrote a reply demanding instead the submission of the Pope to the Khan's authority. A keen observer of human societies, Giovanni composed a book in Latin under the title *Ystoria Mongalorum*, the first of its kind. A well-preserved manuscript is housed in Cambridge as part of Corpus Christi MS 181, starting on p 279.

Innocent IV
and Giovanni
del Carpine

Güyük
coronation

Ystoria
Mongalorum

The manuscript is eminently readable but requires dedicated effort and attention to detail. The first line reads: *INCIPIT YSTORIA MONGALORUM QUOS NOS TARTAROS APELLAMUS*. The author is clearly warning the reader to use the terminology of "tartars" (or "tatars") with caution. According to modern ethnology, the Tatars comprise a variety of Turkic groups, distinct from the Mongols. With the expansion of the Mongol empire a fusion of cultures took place and the Europeans referred to the Mongol invaders as Tartars.

Mongols and
Tartars

The book is organized as if it were a technical report, neatly divided into eight chapters, each one covering a different aspect: geography, people, religion, customs, empire, wars, subjugated nations, advice for war against them. Although some of these chapters could have been gathered from direct observation, it is

Style and
contents

evident that most of the information was obtained through conversations with members of the court administration, which included Nestorian Christians, among others. The Cambridge manuscript includes a ninth chapter with a relation of the return trip.

Bincipit historia mongaloz quos nos tartaros appellamus.
 omnibus fidelibus ad quos presens scriptum pervenit frater Johannes de plano
 carpius ordinis fratrum minorum sedis apostolice nuntius ad tartaros et ad
 nationes alias orientis dei gratia in presenti et gloriam in futuro et de hinc
 cis dei et domini nostri ihesu christi victoriam triumphalem. **explicit saluatio incipit prolo-**

gum ex mandato sedis apostolice item ad tartaros et ad nationes alias orientis.
 et scirentur domini ihesu christi ac venerabilium cardinalium uoluntatem
 elegimus prius ad tartaros proficisci. timelimus enim ne per eos in proximo ecclesie
 dei periculum immineret.

Et quoniam a tartaris uel ab aliis nationibus timemus
 occidi uel perpetuo captiui fieri. fame siti algore estu et tinnelibus et laboribus
 nimis quam uel uires affligi. que omnia multo plus quam prius credidimus ex
 cepta morte uel captiuitate perpetua nobis multipliciter euenerunt. Non tamen
 peccamus nobis ipsis ut uoluntatem dei secundum domini ihesu christi mandatum adimplere posse
 mus. et ut proficere in aliquo christianis uel saltem sacra ueritate uoluntate et
 intentione ipsorum possemus illam facere. Ne forte subito irruentes in
 neminem eos in partem sicut peccatis hominum exigentibus. alia uice contingat
 faciant magnam stragem in populo christiano.

Morte quecumque pro uestra utili
 tate uobis scribitur ad cautelam. tanto secius credere debetis quanto nos cum
 cetera uel ipsi uideri oculis nostris. quam parum et minus et amplius per ipsos per
 et cum ipsis. ac sumimus eos uel audiuimus a christiano qui sunt inter eos capti
 et ut credimus fidedignis.

Mandatum enim a summo pontifice habemus
 ut cuncta perscrutemur et uideamus omnia diligenter. quod tam nos quam frater
 benedictus polonus eiusdem ordinis qui inter tribulationis fuit locutus inter
 pres fecimus studiose. **S**ed si aliquid scribitur pro noticia legentium
 que in uestris partibus nescimus non debetis propter hoc nos appellare invidiosos. quod
 nobis referunt illa que ipsi uideri uel ab aliis pro christo audiuimus quos esse
 credimus fidedignos. Immo est ualde crudele ut homines propter bonum quod faciunt
 ab aliis infametur.

Uolentes igitur fratres scribere tartarorum ut lectores ualeant facilius inue
 nire hoc modo per capitula describemus. Primo quid dicemus
 de terra. Secundo de hominibus. tertio de ritu. quarto de moribus. Quinto de ipsis
 ipso. sexto de bellis. septimo de terris quas eorum dominus subingarunt.
 octavo. quomodo in bello occidatur eis. ultimum de uia quam fecimus et cum
 a imperatoris et testibus qui in terra tartarorum nos inueniunt.

De terra propositum hoc modo tractare. In principio quid dicemus de
 situ ipsius. id est de qualitate. id est de dispositione ipsius aeris in eadem.
 tertium quid predicta est in ea parte posita orientis in qua oriens sicut

MS 181, Corpus Christi, Cambridge

Dicto de terra dicendum est de hominibus. Primo quidem formas describemus personarum. Secundo de ipsorum coniugio supponemus. Tertio de vestibus. Quarto de habitaculis. Quinto de rebus eorum.

5 Forma personarum ab omnibus hominibus aliis est remota. Inter oculos enim et inter genas sunt plusquam alii homines lati. Genae etiam satis prominent a maxillis, nasum habent planum et modicum, oculos habent parvos et palpebras usque ad supercilia elevatas. Graciles sunt generaliter in cingulo exceptis quibusdam
10 paucis. Paene omnes mediocris sunt staturae. Barba fere omnibus minime crescit. Aliqui tamen in superiori labio et in barba modicos habent crines quos minime tondent. Super verticem capitis in modum clericorum habent coronas, et ab aure una usque ad aliam, ad latitudinem trium digitorum generaliter
15 omnes radunt, quae rasurae coronae praedictae iunguntur. Super frontem etiam ad latitudinem duorum digitorum similiter omnes radunt. Illos autem capillos qui sunt inter coronam et praetaxatam rasuram crescere usque ad supercilia sinunt
20 tondendo ex utraque parte frontis (tondendo) plusquam in medio crines faciunt longos, reliquos vero crines permittunt crescere ut mulieres. De quibus faciunt duas cordas, et ligant unamquamque post aurem. Pedes etiam modicos habent.

Uxores vero habet unusquisque quot potest tenere. Aliquis centum, aliquis quinquaginta, aliquis decem, aliquis plures,
25 aliquis pauciores. Et omnibus parentibus generaliter coniunguntur, excepta matre, filia, et sorore ex eadem matre, sororibus autem ex patre tantum et uxores etiam patris post mortem vel alius de parentela minor ducere tenetur. Reliquas
30 mulieres omnes sine ulla differentia ducunt uxores et emunt eas valde pretiose a parentibus suis post mortem maritorum, de facili

ad secunda coniugia non migrant, nisi quis velit suam novercam ducere in uxorem.

Vestes autem tam virorum quam mulierum sunt uno modo formatae. Capis, palliis, vel caputiis vel pellibus non utuntur.

35 Tunicas vero portant de bucano, purpura, vel baldakino in hunc modum formatas. A summo usque deorsum sunt scissae, et ante pectus duplicantur. A latere vero sinistro una et in dextro tribus ligaturis nectuntur, in latere etiam sinistro usque ad brachale sunt scissae. Pellicia cuiuscunque sunt generis in eundem
40 modum formantur, superius tamen pellicium exterius habet pilos, sed a posterioribus est apertum. Habet autem caudulam unam usque ad genua retro. Mulieres vero quae sunt maritatae habent unam tunicam valde amplam et usque ad terram ante scissam. Super caput vero habent unum quid (cortice) rotundum
45 de viminibus vel de cortice factum, quod in longum protenditur ad unam ulnam, et in summitate desinit in quadrum, et ab imo usque ad summum in amplitudine semper crescit, et in summitate habet virgulam unam longam et gracilem de auro vel de argento seu de ligno, vel etiam pennam. Et est assutum super
50 unum pelleolum quod protenditur usque ad humeros. Et tam pelleolum quam instrumentum praedictum est tectum de bucaramo, seu purpura vel baldakino, sine quo instrumento coram hominibus nunquam vadunt, et per hoc ab aliis mulieribus cognoscuntur. Virgines autem et iuvenes mulieres cum magna
55 difficultate a viris possunt discerni quia per omnia vestiuntur ut viri. Pelliola habent alia quam aliae nationes, quorum formam intelligibiliter describere non valemus.

Stationes habent rotundas in modum tentorii praeparatas, de virgis et baculis subtilibus factas. Supra vero in medio rotundam
60 habent fenestram unde lumen ingreditur, et ut possit fumus exire, quia in medio faciunt ignem semper. Parietes autem et

tecta filtro sunt cooperta. Hostia etiam de filtro sunt facta.

65 Quaedam stationes sunt magnae et quaedam parvae, secundum
dignitatem vel hominum parvitatem. Quaedam solvunt subito et
reparantur, et supra somarios deferuntur. Quaedam dissolvi non
possunt, sed in curribus deferuntur. Minoribus autem in curru ad
deferendum unus bos, maioribus tres vel quatuor, vel etiam
plures, secundum quod magna est, sufficiunt ad portandum. Et
ex quocunque vadunt sive ad bellum, sive alias, semper illa
70 deferunt secum.

In animalibus sunt divites valde in camelis, bobus, ovibus,
capris. De equis et iumentis tantam multitudinem habent
quantam non credimus habere alium totum mundum. Porcos et
alias bestias minime habent. Imperator duces et alii magnates in
75 auro et argento et serico et lapidibus preciosis et geminis
multum habundant.

GRAMMATICAL AND CONTEXTUAL NOTES

Dicto de terra: The first chapter dealt with the geography of the region.	1
Personarum: in Classical Latin, persona was used to designate the mask of an actor, through which the voice of the actor sounded. Eventually, the term came to mean a character, a personality, an individual.	2
Supponemus: we will add, append, add below.	3
Habitaculis. The term habitaculum, -i is non-classical, but appears already in the Vulgate to indicate a dwelling place (e.g., Deuteronomy 33:27)	3
Maxillis: the upper jaw bones	7
Barba: beard. It can also be understood as the chin (mentum), the place where a beard grows.	10
Vertex capitis: the crown of the head	13
Habent coronas: literally, they have crowns, but the intention here is to the clerical tonsure	13
Radunt: rado, -ere means to scrape, also to shave.	15
Rasura: the part that has been shaved. A three-finger wide path is shaved from one ear to the other joining the head tonsure	15
Praetaxatam: aforementioned	18
Illos ... faciunt longos: the hair between the forehead and the tonsure is let grow in the central area (above the nose and the eyes), giving rise to the characteristic Mongolian haircut.	20



Parentibus: family relatives	25
Parentela: the collection of relatives	28
Minor: a younger brother	28
Ducere tenetur: is expected to marry	28
Post mortem maritorum: this should be the beginning of the next sentence. After the death of their husbands they do not move easily into another marriage	30
Quis: this refers to the stepson who would want to marry his widowed stepmother	31
Capis, palliis, vel caputiis vel pellibus: cappa, -ae is a late Latin word to designate a monk's hood, a cloak, a cape; pallium, -ii is a long gown; caputium, -ii is a hood, from where we get the words cappuccino, and capuchin friars; pellis, -is (f) is a hide or skin.	34

Bucano: probably a phonetic transliteration to express a stiff cotton fabric (buckram). A few lines later, the word is spelled as bucaramo	35
Purpura: this is the colour purple, but it can also be used to indicate a dyed fabric, such as those used in the robes of Roman magistrates.	35
Baldakino: In apparent derivation from Baghdad, this term designates a rich fabric embroidered with gold and silk originally made in that city. In English, it is known as Baudekin. It can also be used to signify brocade. Moreover, and less likely, baldakino can possibly be used for “multicoloured”, in which case we could interpret the sentence as “made of buckram, purple or multicolour”.	35
In hunc modum: in the following way	36
Scissae: from scindo, -ere	36
Duplicantur: they are folded, or they are doubled. That is, the tunic is rent open in the front, and the two sides are partially overlapped in the front, like in a bathrobe	37
Nectuntur: from necto, -ere. From the left they are tied with one knot, and from the right with three.	38
Brachale: brachiale, -is (n) is a sleeve	38
Pellicia: pellicius, -a, -um means leathern, made of skin	39
Cuiuscunque sunt generis: of whatever kind they are	39
Superius: neuter comparative of superus, -a, -um	40
Caudulam: caudula, -ae is the diminutive of cauda, -ae	41
Unum quid: a something	44
De viminibus vel de cortice factum: Giovanni del Carpine is (perhaps subconsciously) quoting from Caesar (De Bello Gallico, 2:33), where we find “scutis ex cortice factis aut viminibus” (with shields made of bark or twigs)	45

Unam ulnam: this is a measure of length (a forearm)

46

Desinit in quadrum: ends in a square

46



Assutum: adsutum, from adsuo, -ere (to sew on)

49

Pilleolum: either pilleolum (n) or pilleolus (m) is a small cap or coif. The alternative spelling pelleolum is used in the manuscript.	50
Tam ... quam ...: both ... and ...	51
Ab aliis mulieribus cognoscuntur: they are recognized as distinct from unmarried women	53
Non valemus: we are not capable	57
Stationes: statio, -onis (f) can mean an abode. The author is describing the Mongol yurts (or gers), which are easily assembled or collapsed, highly portable and functional	58
Filtro: alternative spelling for feltro. Feltrum, -i (n) is felt (the material). Felt making was a highly developed craft in Mongolia due to its highly insulating properties, ideal for lining the yurts in the Winter season.	62
Hostia: alternative spelling of ostia. Ostium, -i (n) is a door or entrance	62
Solvunt: the passive voice (solvuntur) may be more precise. The yurts are suddenly and quickly (subito) dismantled (solvuntur) and reassembled (reparantur)	64
Somarios; Alternative spelling for sagmarios. Sagmarius, -i (m) is a late Latin word for pack horse or sumpter horse. Cf modern Italian somaro = donkey, ass. The reading of the manuscript is not definitive here.	65
Ad deferendum unus bos: the verb “sufficiunt” governs several clauses.	67



Quocunque: wherever

69

Illa: the yurts

69

Bobus: read bovis

71

Tantum ... quantum ...: so much ... that ...

72

Magnates: magnas, magnatis (m) is a nobleman, a grandee

74

Serico: sericus, -a, um was used in Greece and Rome to designate Chinese people or garments, especially those made of silk.

75

The Christian Hebraists

For the Early Church, the role of Hebrew and Aramaic consisted at most in having been the vehicle of God's word. The Jews were regarded, therefore, as merely the custodians of the original "old" testament. Any interest in these languages was, accordingly, subsumed under the concept of *hebraica veritas*. Even in this regard, the Greek Septuagint was often considered, paradoxically, superior to the original, as Jerome would learn at his own peril.

*Hebraica
veritas*

A secondary, somewhat broader, interest of the Church arose from its desire to engage rabbinical texts (the Talmud and other Midrashic texts) in theological polemics. In this enterprise, Jewish converts to Christianity lent a helping hand. Thus, for example, Nicholas Donin, a French convert, convinced Pope Gregory IX that the Talmud contained explicit attacks against Jesus. This accusation led to a massive translation of several Talmudic tractates into Latin and to a public disputation on the charges. In 1242, thousands of copies of the Talmud were burned in Paris.

The trial and
burning of the
Talmud

An unexpected door to meaningful dialogue was opened in the twelfth century when Christian thinkers became aware of the existence of a lively and modern Jewish culture in Spain. Jewish philosophers were equally fluent in Hebrew and Arabic, and they played an important role in the School of Translators of Toledo. They were also original writers and some of their philosophical and scientific works were translated into Latin and known across Europe.

Toledo

Aquinas

Maimonides' Guide of the Perplexed was translated into Latin and widely circulated in the mid thirteenth century under the title *Dux Neutorum vel Dubiorum*. Thomas Aquinas cites it in his *Summa Theologica*.

An interesting attempt at a literary interreligious dialogue had been written in France by Peter Abelard (1079-1142), whose eventful life is emblematic of the Middle Ages. Abelard wrote his *Collationes*, a dialogue between a philosopher (presumably a Muslim), a Christian, and a Jew, with the author acting as a referee. Quite apart from the philosophical content of this dialogue, it is interesting to note how sympathetic a presentation is allowed to the Jewish position. At about the same time, his almost exact contemporary Judah Halevi wrote (in Arabic) a book, known mostly by its Hebrew title *Ha-Kuzari*, also in the form of a dialogue between representatives of the three religions and a philosopher. Although the book is mainly interested in Jewish apologetics, there is also some space allotted to the alternative positions. The Catalan Christian polymath Ramon Llull (1232-1315) used the dialogue form in his *Book of the Gentile*, and the *Three Wise Men*, allowing approximately equal space for all the presentations. Even though Llull's ultimate objective may have been purely proselytist, this fact is not explicitly brought to the fore in this book, to the point that the Gentile's eventual choice between the three religions is left undefined.

Peter Abelard

Judah Halevi

Ramon Llull

These were isolated events, but they demonstrate a growing appreciation of Judaism and the Hebrew language as living phenomena. At the beginning of the Renaissance, with its glorification of the great cultures of the past, many humanists collected Hebrew

manuscripts, befriended rabbis, and took Hebrew lessons. Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) had an extensive library of Kabbalistic, Exegetical, and Jewish philosophical works, some of which had been translated into Latin by or for him. Names like Rashi (1040-1105), David Kimhi (1160-1235), and Abraham Abulafia (1240-1296) became known in Humanistic circles.

Pico della
Mirandola

The advent of Gutenberg's printing press with movable type in the 1450s had almost immediate consequences in societies across Europe and the world at large. The cultural changes brought about by this invention can be considered even more drastic than those of the computer age. Millions of books were printed during the first few decades after its introduction and, more importantly, these books became accessible to an unheard-of number of people of all classes. By the end of the century, there were hundreds of functioning printing establishments with relative freedom of choice of the material that would be of interest to the potential market.²⁶ The classics were printed along with new books of knightly adventures written in the vernacular languages. Hebrew printing houses also proliferated, starting in Italy, and soon expanding to the whole of Europe and the Middle East.

The printing
press

Mass markets

Hebrew
printing

The emergence of the Protestant Reformation and the adoption of Protestant rites, independent of Rome, by many principalities and kingdoms throughout Europe,

The
Reformation

²⁶ As an example, a printing press at the Monastery of Sanctus Jacopus of Ripoli in Florence decided to publish as early as 1481 Maimonides' medical treatise *Regimen Sanitatis*. This book was originally written in Arabic and commissioned in 1193 under the title *Fi Tadbir al-Sihhah* by al-Afdal, one of Saladin's son, who suffered from depression.

was also an important factor in the renewed interest in Hebrew and Aramaic studies. An important forerunner of this movement was Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522). Having studied the works of David Kimhi, he published in 1506 a Hebrew grammar under the title *De Rudimentis Hebraicis*. The Reformation had not formally begun, and Reuchlin became the preeminent Catholic authority in Greek and Hebrew studies.

Reuchlin

In a manner reminiscent of Donin, the German convert Johannes Pfefferkorn (1469-1523) forcefully advocated with Maximilian I (1459-1519), the Holy Roman Emperor, who had already expelled the Jews from parts of Austria, for the confiscation of all post-biblical Hebrew books and their physical destruction. Curiously, Maximilian appointed Reuchlin to head a committee to investigate the demand. Reuchlin recommended to the contrary and suggested the establishment of Hebrew Studies chairs in all German-speaking universities. The affair, which involved the Inquisition and papal intervention, ended with a moral victory for Reuchlin, and elevated the profile of Hebrew studies in general. Reuchlin did not become a reformer, but his work influenced the beginnings of the Reformation.

The Reuchlin affair

The 16th and 17th centuries constitute the golden period of Christian Hebraists. There are many colourful figures, many of them mutually interrelated, that devoted their lives to pursue the ideals of Reuchlin. Not all of them were motivated by the same ends, but they certainly epitomize a period that has

Philosemitism

been called, somewhat arbitrarily, philosemitism.²⁷ A few sketches will suffice to trigger the interest in a more comprehensive picture.

Egidio Cardinal da Viterbo (1472-1532) followed Pico della Mirandola's fascination with the Kabbalah and was fluent in Greek and Hebrew. When his prominent Hebrew teacher Elia Levita (1469-1549) was exiled from Venice, Egidio hosted him and his family for a whole decade. Elia had written an adaptation in Yiddish (!) of the Italian version of an Anglo-Norman romance. Already in his old age, Elia left his family behind in Italy and moved to Isny (Germany) to start a printing shop with another Christian Hebraist, Paul Fagius (1504-1549). Apart from his publishing business, Fagius translated several Hebrew books into Latin, including the Talmudic tractate Pirkei Avot. In 1544 he was appointed professor of Hebrew at the University of Strasburg, but in 1549 he had to flee to England, where he was appointed Hebrew lecturer at Cambridge.

Cardinal da
Viterbo

Elia Levita

Paul Fagius

Another important figure in the Hebraist movement was Johannes Buxtorf (1564-1629). His *Manuale Hebraicum et Chaldaicum*, published in 1602, is an important contribution to the grammar of these languages for Latin and Greek classicists. More important is his *Synagoga Judaica* (originally published in German) where he presents the daily customs of Jews as they practice their religious festivals. Although written from a critical viewpoint,

Buxtorf the
Elder

²⁷ See. For example, Burnett S G (2009), *Philosemitism and Christian Hebraism in the Reformation Era (1500-1620)*, Faculty Publications, Classics and Religious Studies Department, University of Nebraska.

he nevertheless dispels many of the popular myths about the supposedly evil practices of Jews. His son was the translator of Judah Halevi's book *The Kuzari* and Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed* (a new translation). Like his father, he wrote a book on the origin of the vowel signs in the Masoretic Bible, a point that had been treated in a different way by Levita.

Buxtorf the
Younger

LIBER.

DE ELEMENTIS.

Vas et uiginti hebreorū literas esse, per quas scribimus
d omne quod hebraice loquimur, non solum Iudeorū do-
 gmata, uerumetiam christianorum p̄cepta sunt testes.
 quod Syrorum quoq; lingua et Chaldeorum, auctore Hieronymo
 approbat, Eorum elementorū hoc modo notant̄ figurę nominat̄.

vau	he	daleth	gimel	beth	aleph
v	h lene	d	g	b	a
ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
lamed	caf	iod	teth	heth	sdain
l	c	i	t	h forte	z
ל	כ	י	ט	ה	ז
zade	pe	ain	samech	nun	mem
z	p	a	s	n	m
ז	פ	א	ס	נ	מ
		thau	sin	res	quf
		t	s	r	q
		ת	ש	ר	ק

Quod autem Socrates in Cratilo Platonis cum Hermogene loquit̄.
 Quod elementorum nomina proferimus, ipsa uero elem̄ta nequaquā.
 id per quam maxime in hebraicis locum habet, uis enim literę sola di-
 ctionibus inseritur, uox autem ipsius de foris subiungitur, nam aliud
 nihil Beth, Vau, Mem, et Pe exprimūt, nisi labiorum gestulationē.
 sicut Daleth, Teth, Lamed, Nun, Thau lingue impulsū, et Zain,
 Samech, Sin, Res, Zade, dentium exhibilantem crepitum, Similiter
 Gimel, Caph, Quf, & Iod consonans, palati uuulęq; commotionem,
 Hęcillarum est uirtus literarum atq; potestas, non ut totę secundum

The Latin Talmud

The fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar's armies and the destruction of Solomon's Temple (ca. 587 BCE) mark the end of the Classical period of Jewish history. The Northern Kingdom of Israel had already fallen (ca. 720 BCE) at the hands of the Assyrian ruler Sargon II, and its inhabitants deported to various parts of the empire, but the Southern Kingdom of Judah had survived as an independent monarchy by forging fragile alliances with Egypt. Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, had been installed by Nebuchadnezzar as a vassal king in 597 BCE. Not heeding the advice of the prophet Jeremiah, he revolted and made an alliance with Egypt. This time, however, the ruse was not successful, and Judah was invaded. The destruction of the capital was followed by a massive deportation of its population to Babylon.

When the Neo-Babylonian Empire fell to the Persian armies of Cyrus the Great (ca. 539 BCE), he allowed a measured return of the exiles to Judah. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, they undertook the reconstruction of the temple (ca. 520 BCE), thus launching the period of Jewish history known as Second Temple Judaism. The first wave of returnees was followed by at least two other waves under the leadership of Ezra (ca. 458 BCE) and Nehemiah (ca. 445 BCE). The newcomers brought with them the Aramaic language and the so-called Assyrian script, which is used for writing Hebrew (and Rabbinic Aramaic) to this day.

The fall of the Northern Kingdom (Israel) to the Assyrians

The Southern Kingdom (Judah)

Zedekiah

Jeremiah

The fall of Judah and the Babylonian exile

Cyrus the Great

Zerubbabel

Second Temple Judaism

Ezra and Nehemiah

The Assyrian script

Among many religious, political, and legal reforms, Ezra was instrumental in the establishment the Great Assembly (Knesset Hag'dolah), a legislative body comprised of 120 members with authority to decide on civil and criminal matters and to establish standards of moral and legal behaviour. This body constituted an important innovation as it separated the priestly and cultic duties (still in the hands of a subset of the tribe of Levi), on the one hand, from the intellectual and educational functions, on the other. The greatest achievement of this period was perhaps to have made of every member of society, regardless of economic or social status, a potential partner in the preservation and transmission of the national cultural patrimony. Ezra instituted public Torah readings for both men and women. As prophecy disappeared from the scene, learning and wisdom occupied its place. The figure of the sage (chakham) began to take shape and to finally crystallize, at the start of the Hellenistic period, into the personality of the Rabbi, the teacher.

The Great Assembly

Separation of realms

Public Torah readings

From prophets to sages

In 330 BCE, Alexander the Great brought about the end of the Persian Empire and inaugurated a period of unprecedented and lasting cultural ramifications in the Mediterranean world. His death, just seven years later, left behind a politically divided empire, but its intellectual legacy can be felt directly or indirectly to our very day. The year 167 BCE, under the uncharacteristically intolerant rule of the Hellenistic Seleucid king Antiochus IV, saw the outbreak of the Maccabean revolt, which resulted in the successful establishment of an independent Jewish kingdom under the Hasmonean dynasty. The entry of Rome into the international realm put an end to this balance a hundred years later

Alexander the Great

Hellenism

The Maccabean revolt

The Hasmonean dynasty

Rome

By 37 BCE, the Romans had installed Herod the Great as a vassal king. As years went by, the Roman yoke, both in terms of taxation and of religious restrictions, became hard to bear and a fully fledged revolt, known as the First Jewish-Roman War, broke out in 66 CE. The emperor Nero sent several legions under the command of Vespasian, who put down the rebellion in the Northern Galilee region. Named emperor in 69 CE, Vespasian departed and left his son Titus in command. Titus laid siege to Jerusalem, where internal disagreements between moderates and Zealots ran rampant. In the year 70 CE, Jerusalem fell, and the temple was destroyed.

Herod the Great

The first Jewish-Roman war

Vespasian, Titus, and the fall of Jerusalem

The Torah, which Ezra had inculcated in public readings, contains hundreds of injunctions (mitzvot), many of which are similar in style and content to the much earlier code of Hammurabi. In this sense, it can be said that the Torah became a de facto constitution of the nation. As such, it needed a body of jurisprudence to infer the appropriate legal decisions and penalties to be imposed in individual cases that do not exactly match those contemplated in the Torah. This jurisprudence, starting from the Great Assembly and continuing with the Rabbinical schools, became known as the Oral Torah. This title appropriately places the accumulated body of case law in contrast with the written Law that had come down in writing from Moses a millennium earlier. The book of Deuteronomy [4:2] clearly states: “You shall not add anything to what I command you or take anything away from it”. This commandment was interpreted as establishing that nothing could be added in writing,

Jurisprudence

The Oral Torah

and hence the jurisprudence was transmitted orally from teacher to student and committed to memory for generations to come.

The Oral Torah, however, was not limited to legal matters, but also dealt with the recollections of personal anecdotes in the lives of famous Rabbis, and with other matters pertaining to linguistic, literary, historical, ethical, and prophetic aspects of the Torah and the other books (Prophets, and Writings) that would later become part of the official Hebrew biblical canon (the Tanakh). As can be expected, there was no unanimous agreement on the very existence of this parallel oral tradition. The sect of the Sadducees, composed largely of members of the aristocracy and the priesthood, opposed it vehemently and proposed a strict adherence to the written Torah (the Pentateuch), even excluding the books of Prophets and Writings. Many of them were also inclined to the Hellenization of society. The Pharisees, on the other hand, were the main proponents of the oral Torah and its consequent freedom of interpretation and adaptation to current social conditions. They were generally more progressive and more representative of the common people.

Sadducees

Pharisees

An important figure in the Pharisaic tradition was Hillel the Elder, who lived through most of the first century BCE. He represented the more lenient school of thought, as opposed to that of his younger contemporary Shammai, who was generally stricter. The school of Hillel prevailed, and most of the legal decisions followed its approach. Regardless, the method advocated by the oral Torah was one of argumentation and lively dialogue, where many points

Hillel the Elder

Shammai

of view were argued with both logic and casuistry, often dealing with what appear to be menial points of law and custom.

The destruction of the temple by the Romans in 70 CE, and the physical elimination of many of the prominent representatives of the intellectual elite, presented a crucial challenge as to how to preserve the oral tradition as it had been accomplished over the previous few centuries. One of the prominent rabbis, Yohanan ben Zakkai, trapped in Jerusalem during the Roman siege, unsuccessfully advocated a compromise with the enemy to save the city from destruction. Eventually, he managed to arrange his escape from the city and obtained (supposedly from Vespasian himself before his return to Rome) the survival of several important figures and the establishment and recognition of a school in the city of Yavneh (Jamnia) west of Jerusalem. This move ensured the continuity of the oral tradition for several decades.

Yohanan be
Zakkai

The Academy
of Yavneh

The second century CE witnessed a recrudescence of Roman rule and the eruption of the Second Jewish Revolt in 132 CE under the leadership of Bar Kokhba, seen by many as a Messianic leader. The rebellion was morally supported, among others, by Rabbi Akiva (50-135 CE), one of the great rabbinic teachers of that period. The failure of the revolt and the consequent massive loss of life and destruction of entire towns, on a much larger scale than that at the aftermath of the First Jewish-Roman War, presented new and unparalleled challenges to the transmission of the Oral Torah. The surviving active communities had moved to the Galilee, in the north. The spiritual leader in 165 CE was Rabbi Judah Hanasi, a direct descendant of

The Second
Jewish revolt

Bar Kokhba

Rabbi Akiva

Judah Hanasi

Hillel. He was both an intellectual authority and a wealthy man with important friendly connections with the Roman leadership (including, it is said, the emperors Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius). Judah Hanasi (Judah the Prince) conceived the project of recording the oral Law in writing. He arranged and oversaw the compilation of the Mishnah, which became the first component of the Talmud. The Mishnah was completed in the first decade of the third century.

The writing of
the Oral Law

The Mishnah

Written almost entirely in Hebrew, the Mishnah contains a large selection of rabbinical discussions that had been transmitted by memory in previous generations. Other such records, not included in the Mishnah, have also been preserved and are generally known as “baraitot” (singular “baraita”, an Aramaic term for external element). The Mishnah is organized into six sections (or orders, “sedarim”, singular “seder”), subdivided into thematic parts (or tractates, “masekhtot”, singular “masekhet” or “masekhta”). The sages of the Mishnah are known as “tannaim” (singular “tanna”, an Aramaic term for teacher, or repeater).

Baraitot

Sedarim

Masekhtot

Tannaim

The second essential component of the Talmud is the Gemarah. Compiled in the centuries following the completion of the Mishnah, it is a commentary on the latter. It was collected in two different versions resulting from the largely independent activities of the academies in the Land of Israel and in Babylonia. Both versions are written in Aramaic, albeit in different dialects. Thus, we have the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud. The texts of the Mishnah and of the Gemarah are often integrated,

The Gemarah

The two
Talmuds

each Mishnaic passage followed immediately by a much longer dissertation from the Gemarah. In addition to lengthy discussions on the topic of the passage, it is not unusual for the participants to go off a tangent and discuss non-legal matters. Thus, the Mishnah and the Gemarah can be said to comprise legal issues (Halakhah) and narrative (Aggadah), such as fables, tales of moral instruction, and the like. The Babylonian Talmud was completed around 500 CE. It has largely eclipsed its Jerusalem counterpart. The sages of the Gemarah are known as “amoraim” (singular “amora”, an Aramaic term for spokesman).

Halakhah and
Aggadah

Amoraim

The first Latin translation of considerable portions of the Babylonian Talmud was carried out in Paris in 1245. It is entitled *Extractiones de Talmud*.²⁸ A few years earlier, Pope Gregory IX had convened a process against the Talmud at the court of king Louis IX, which resulted in the public burning of thousands of copies of the Talmud and other Hebrew books in Paris.²⁹ On the accession of Innocent IV to the papacy in 1243, the order of burning the Talmud issued by Gregory IX was abrogated and a translation into Latin was commissioned. The objective of this translation was to confirm the previous condemnation of the Talmud, which took place in 1248. Nevertheless, the translation remained as an attempt at recognition of an important cultural asset.

The first Latin
translation

Pope Gregory
IX

Public
burnings

Pope Innocent
IV

²⁸ A recent scholarly edition has been published recently as part of *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* (CCCM 291), ISBN: 978-2-503-58228-3

²⁹ The process was based on translations of passages of the Talmud into French by Nicholas Donin, a Jewish convert to Christianity. Donin convinced the Pope that the Talmud was offensive to Christianity. The Jewish side of the trial was handled by four distinguished French rabbis. In the end, therefore, the whole affair can be almost comically regarded as Jews debating Jews in a fashion reminiscent to the Talmud itself. This tragic irony cannot have escaped any of the five participants in the debate.

It appears that no new translations of the Talmud into Latin were produced until the eve of the Protestant Reformation. During the years preceding the schism, the German humanist Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522) played an important role in advocating the study of Hebrew and of Jewish texts. Some historians claim that Reuchlin's prestige and his vocal defense of the Talmud and of Jewish mystical works was a direct contributor to the emergence of the Reformation itself. Paolo Riccio (1480-1541), a Jewish convert, physician at the court of Maximilian I, the Holy Roman Emperor, was asked by the emperor to produce a Latin translation, which was published in 1519. Although, just as in the case of the *Extractiones*, the intention is not to praise the Talmud but rather to expose its flaws, the result enabled the potential readers to reach their own conclusions. This partial translation of the Mishnah seems to be the first printed Latin version of Talmudic tractates.

The Protestant
Reformation

Reuchlin

Paolo Riccio

The next important publication seems to have been the 1541 translation of the tractate *Pirkei Avot*, by Paul Fagius (1505-1549), a German Protestant scholar, university professor, and Hebraist. *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) is a sui-generis tractate in the Talmud, as it deals exclusively with ethical matters and principles. Like many other tractates, *Pirkei Avot* does not have an accompanying Gemarah portion in the Babylonian Talmud. During the seventeenth century, many Latin translations of parts of the Talmud were published, mostly from the Mishnah, sometimes with extracts from the Gemarah.

Paul Fagius

Ethics of the
Fathers

A seemingly odd place to find details about the remarkable life and works of Paul Fagius (1504-1549) is the Dictionary of National Biography. Published since 1885, this encyclopedic work comprises biographical articles on about 55,000 figures in British history. Fagius was born in Rheinzabern, a small German town not far from Mannheim. At the age of eighteen he moved to Strassburg (now Strasbourg), where he met Wolfgang Capito (1478-1541), Martin Bucer (1491-1551), and other leading Protestant reformers. Capito was a renowned Hebraist, influenced by Reuchlin's thoughts and works. Under Capito's guidance, Fagius became an ardent Hebraist himself. In 1527 he moved to Isny im Allgäu as a teacher and, after two years of theological studies at Strassburg, he returned to Isny in 1537 as a Protestant pastor. Three years later, a decisive event for his scholarly life took place. He convinced Elia Levita (1469-1549), a German-born Jewish Hebrew grammarian and writer, to leave his place of residence (Venice) and join him in Isny to start a printing-press for Hebrew books. Levita was already 70 years old at the time and he had enjoyed a colourful and agitated life. A tutor to important Christian Humanists, a lodger for ten years in the residence of Cardinal Egidio da Viterbo in Rome, the author of a long chivalric book of adventures in Yiddish,³⁰ Levita decided to accept the invitation and thus to add one more chapter to his adventurous curriculum. The printing business turned

Wolfgang
Capito and
Martin Bucer

Elia Levita

Cardinal da
Viterbo

Yiddish

³⁰ The book, known popularly as Bovo-Buch, is entitled Bava (or Buovo) d'Antona. It is a widely popular Yiddish adaptation of an Italian book of the same name based on the Medieval romance of Bevis of Hampton. The Yiddish expression "bobe maises" (understood by most Yiddish speakers as "tales of my grandma") is, in fact, a corruption of the expression "the tales of Bovo".

out to be a success and made Fagius well-known in Humanistic circles. Together with Levita, they published the Tishbi, a lexicon of terms in the Talmud, with a Latin translation by Fagius. On Capito's death in 1542, the chair of Hebrew philology at Strassburg became vacant and, two years later, Fagius accepted the prestigious position. In 1549, he and Bucer were relieved from their positions for refusing to adhere to the so-called Augsburg Interim Agreement imposed by the Counter-Reformation. Having been offered refuge in England by the Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, both Bucer and Fagius moved to Cambridge, where Fagius became a Reader in Hebrew and Bucer was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity. Fagius contracted a fever and died shortly thereafter, in 1549. Not even death freed Fagius from persecution. During the reign of Queen Mary, his remains were exhumed and burnt, only to be rehabilitated by Queen Elizabeth in 1557.

The Tishbi
lexicon

Refuge in
Cambridge

One of Fagius' works during the Levita period was his excellent translation and commentary of the tractate Pirkei Avot, published in 1541. The literal translation of the title Pirkei Avot (known mostly as Ethics of the Fathers) is Chapters of the Fathers, a title preserved by Fagius as Capitula Patrum. We are reproducing all of Chapter 4 with some grammatical and explanatory notes and an occasional reference to the Latin commentaries by Fagius (printed in italics).

Translation of
Pirkei Avot
(Ethics of the
Fathers)

SENTENTIAE VERE ELEGANTES, PIAE, MIREQUE, CVM AD LINGVAM DISCENDAM, tum animum pietate excolendum utiles, veterum sapientum Hebraeorum, quas פירי אבות id est Capitula, aut si mauis Apophthegmata Patrum nominant: in Latinum uersa, scholiisque illustrata: per PAVLVM FAGIVM in gratiam studiosorum linguę sanctę.



עץ יפה תולד פירות טובים

Omnis arbor bona, profert fructum bonum.

תולדו במשיח הנשלח שהוא עתיד לדון היום ומתים

Excusum I S N A E in Algauiā, oppido imperiali,
ANNO M. D. XXXXI.

Title page of Fagius' translation of Pirkei Avot
(Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek)

66 agit de mulierum purificatione, tam ratione menstruorum, quam ra-
tione partus cōtracta, hos duos tractatus minime negligendos monet Ribbi
Elezar in presentiarū, sed tanq̄ precipuas הַכֵּתִי habendos esse. de uoce
הַכֵּתִי quid significet, uide Thibitē Elię. תְּקִימָתְךָ hebr. xi uocant. 4. anni re-
uolutiones, hanc rationē probe nosce, una cum Geometria sub qua Ḥ Ari-
thmeticam complectuntur hebr. xi, potissimas partes quas per מַשְׁכָּחִים in-
telligi, sapientie esse arbitrantur.

פֶּרֶק רְבִיעִי

זוּמָא אָמַר אִיזְחוּ חַכְמֵי הַלְלוּמָר
מִכָּל אֶרֶם שְׁנֵי אָמַר מִכָּל
מִלְמִדֵי הַשְּׂכֵלֶתִי בִי עֲדוּתֵיךָ
שִׂיחָה לִי אִיזְחוּ גְבוּר הַכֹּבֵשׁ אֶת יַצְרוֹ
שְׁנֵי אָמַר טוֹב אֶרֶץ אֲפִים מִגְּבוּר וּמוֹשֵׁל
בְּרוּחוֹ מִלֵּכָר עִיר אִיזְחוּ עֲשִׂיר הַשְּׂמִיחַ
בְּחֵלְקוֹ שְׁנֵי אָמַר יָגִיעַ כְּפֹר בִּי תֹאכַל
אֲשֶׁרִיר וְטוֹב לָךְ אֲשֶׁרִיר בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה
יְטוֹב לָךְ לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא אִיזְחוּ מִכָּבֵד
הַמִּכְבֵּד

תֵּלֵם ק"ט
מִנְיָו
תֵּלֵם ק"כ

פִּירְקֵי אֲבוֹת הַמִּכְבֵּד אֶת הַכְּרִיזוֹת שְׁנֵי אָמַר כִּי מִכְבְּדֵי אֲכָבֵד וּבִזְיוֹ יִקְלוּ

67 Illius Zoma dicit. Quis est sapiēs? qui dicit à quo
uis homine. sicut dicitur. Ab omnibus qui docue-
runt me intelligentiam concepi, quia testimonia tua
meditatio mea est. Quis nā est fortis? qui cohercet pra-
uam affectionem suam. sicut dicitur. Melior est ille
qui reprimit iram uiro forti: & qui dominatur ani-
mo suo (præstantior est) eo qui capit urbem. Quis est
diues? qui gaudiū habet in portione sua: sicut dicitur.
Laborem manum tuarum comedes beatus (eris) tu,
& bene erit tibi. id est, Beatus eris in præfenti seculo,
& bene tibi erit in futuro seculo. Quis est honore di-
gnus? qui honorat homines. sicut dicitur. Quoniam
honorificantes me honorificabo, & cōtemnentes me,
ignominia afficientur.

Psal. 119.
Prouerb. 16.
Psal. 128.
1. Sam. 2.

Quatuor hic docentur. Primum eum sapientē iudicandum, non qui præ-
sumit se omnia scire, sed qui reputat se nihil scire, & paratus est à quouis di-
scere. Nunquam inquit comicus, quisquam tam bene subducta ratione ad ui-
tam fuit, quin res, etas usus, semper aliquid apporet noui. Aliquid moneat
ut illa que credas scire nescias, & que tibi putaris prima in experiendo re-
pudies. Alterum, fortitudinē nō à corporis sed animi uiribus pēdere, ea au-
tē est, dominari prauis affectibus. Cōuenit cū illo poetico. Fortior est qui se
q̄ qui fortissima uincit oppida. Tertiū, amplissimas esse diuitias, animū sua
forte contentū, nā diues est non qui multa possidet, sed qui sua sorte conten-
tus uiuit. Huc pertinet illud. 1. Timoth. 6. Est autem questus magnus pic-
tas cū animo sua sorte contento. Postremū, reuerentiā & obseruantia erga
alios docet, & cōmendat humilitatem qua semper alios nobis præstantiores
habeamus, semper parati magis honorē alijs impartire q̄ ab alijs expectare
i 2 & am-

68 & ambire, huc etiam admonet D. Apostolus Roma. 12. Honore alius alium
preuenientes. Et uulgo iactata sententia est, Honor non est in honorato, sed
in honorante.

בְּזַעַי אָמַר הוּי רִיז לְמִצְוָה קְלָה
בְּחִמּוּדָה וּבוֹרַח מִן הַעֲבֵרָה שְׂמִינָה
גֹּדְרֵת מִצְוָה וְעֵבֵרָה גֹּדְרֵת עֲבֵרָה
שְׂשַׁכַּר מִצְוָה מִצְוָה וְשַׁכַּר עֲבֵרָה עֲבֵרָה

Ben Azai dicit. Curre ad præceptum leue, tan-
quam ad graue. Et fuge à transgressione. Præcep-
tum enim trahit præceptum, & trāsgressio transgreſ-
sionem: siquidem merces præcepti est præceptum, &
merces transgressionis (est) transgressio.

Monet hæc sententia equali studio & diligentia seruanda esse præcepta
Dei que in speciem leuia, & parua uidentur, atq; maxima ac grauissima.
e. a. u. s. m. hebrei assignant hanc: ignorari uidelicet que præcepta ampliora
mercede remunerentur sicut superius auditū est in sentētis R. Hananiae ca.
2. Dein fieri ut quo magis afuescit homo bene agere, eo libentius facit bonū.
& e. contra, quo plus mali facit, eo magis adlubescit illi malum. Vt enim
bonū ex bono, ita malū ex malo nascitur: sunt enim ut uirtutes concatenate,
ita & uitia, & dato uno incoeduciente sequuntur plura, inquit philosophus,
quod idem iudicium & de uirtutibus habeto. Est porro & horrendum dei
iudicium in malis, permittere ut de scelere in scelus, de peccato in peccatum
precipites ruant, iuxta illud Apostoli, Tradidit eos in reprobuū sensum, &c.
sicut e. contra magna misericordia illius est, quod bonos & pios ex fide in
fidem, ex uirtute in uirtutem ducit.

הוא

פִּירְקֵי אֲבוֹת

הוּא הוּי אָמַר אַל תְּהִי בִז לְכָל אֶרֶם וְאַל
תְּהִי מִפְּלִיג לְכָל דְּבַר שְׂאִיז לָךְ אֶרֶם
שְׂאִיז לוֹ שְׂעִיה וְאַיז לָךְ דְּבַר שְׂאִיז לוֹ
מִקוּם

Idem dixit. Ne contemnas quemuis hominem.
Necq; nimis remotam facias quamlibet rem. Nullus
enim homo extat cui non sit hora sua. Et nulla
res est, que non habeat locum suum.

Monet neminem contemnendum esse, cum nullus sit tam abiecte sortis
homo, qui non aliquando uel prodesse, uel obesse possit.

רַבִּי לְוִיטָס אִישׁ יִבְנֶה אָמַר מֵאֵר מֵאֵר
הוּי שְׂפַל רוּחַ בְּפִנְיָ בַל הָאֶרֶם שְׂתַקוּת
אָנוּשׁ רַמְיָ

Ribbi Leuitas uir Iabneh dicit. Maximè humili
spiritu esto. Expectatio enim hominis sunt
uermes.

Parentes est ad humilitatem, superbiam enim et omnem elationem apud
nos merito reprimat, recordatio finis nostri, nempe quod puluis & umbra
sumus, quodq; tandem esca uermium futuri sumus, iuxta illud, puluis es, &
in puluerem reuerteris.

Gen. 3.

רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בֶּן בְּרוּקָה אָמַר בַּל תְּמַחֲלֵל
שֵׁם

i 3

First four pages of Chapter 4

Filius Zoma dicit: Quis est sapiens? Qui discit a quovis homine. Sicut dicitur: Ab omnibus qui docuerunt me intelligentiam concepi. Quisnam est fortis? Qui coerces pravam affectionem suam. Sicut dicitur: Melior est ille qui reprimit iram viro forti, et qui dominatur animo suo (praestantior est) eo qui capit urbem. Quis est dives? Qui gaudium habet in portione sua. Sicut dicitur: Laborem manum tuarum comedes beatus (eris) tu, et bene erit tibi. Id est, beatus eris in praesenti saeculo, et bene tibi erit in futuro saeculo. Quis est honore dignus? Qui honorat homines. Sicut dicitur: Quoniam honorificantes me honorificabo, et contemnentes me, ignominia afficientur.

- Zoma: Some foreign names are not declined. Construe in the genitive.
- Filius Zoma: This is Simeon ben Zoma, a revered Tanna who died at a young age, before his ordination as a rabbi. He was active in Yavneh during the first half of the second century CE. It is written [Tractate Hagigah, folio 14b]: “Four entered the Pardes [the mystical Orchard]: ben Azzai, ben Zoma, Acher, and Rabbi Akiva”. Of the four, only Rabbi Akiva came out in peace, while ben Azzai gazed and died, ben Zoma was stricken with madness, and Acher (Elisha ben Avuya) became an apostate. This story stands as a warning to those planning to engage in mystical readings and experiences.
- Quo vis: construe as a single word (masculine ablative singular of quivis, quaevis, quidvis)
- Sicut dicitur: this expression introduces a biblical quote, whose source (in this edition) appears in the margin. The translator does not indicate the verse. In this case it is Psalms 119 (118): 99
- Ab omnibus: the translator has cleverly avoided the use of the Vulgate and provided his own version. This is an instance of the importance of having some familiarity with the original languages. The Hebrew original (מכל מלמדי השכלתי) contains a possible ambiguity, typical of the conciseness of Semitic languages. The key is in the interpretation of the first letter (mem),

which starts each of the verses 97 through to 104. This Psalm is written as an acrostic poem, each letter being assigned to 8 consecutive verses for a total of $8 \times 22 = 176$ verses. The letter mem at the start of a word can be interpreted as the preposition “from” (just as the prefix “a” or “ab” in Latin), but it can also be interpreted as “more than”. The Greek Septuagint and the Vulgate opted for the second meaning (“I have more understanding than all my teachers”). Ben Zoma, however, uses this verse to support his (and the general rabbinical) point of view that a person is wise who learns from everyone (“ab omnibus”). A contextual reading of the psalm supports this view, since it is difficult to support the view of the psalmist as expressing that he knows more than all his teachers. Nevertheless, both interpretations are possible. Martin Luther’s German translation (1534), King James’ English translation (1611), and Casiodoro de Reina’s Spanish translation (1569) follow the Septuagint interpretation. In Origen’s Hexapla,³¹ however, the 2nd-century Greek translation of Aquila of Sinope is recorded as rendering the Hebrew prefix mem as the Greek ἀπό (from), as opposed to the Septuagint’s ὑπέρ (above). Among Jewish commentators, Saadya ben Yosef (Gaon) al-Fayyumi (882/892-942), who translated the Psalms into Judeo-Arabic, adds a note to explain that his translation means “as I was learning from all my teachers”. Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki, 1040-1105), perhaps the most famous of all exegetes, explains the verse as follows: “I learned a bit from this person, and a bit from that person (after learning from a preeminent rabbi)”. Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164), in his celebrated biblical commentary, explains that if I learned more than my teachers it is because the Torah taught me more than any teacher ever could. This variety of interpretations of a single Hebrew letter is emblematic of how heavy the translator’s responsibility can be. Fagius makes the best possible choice that is both consistent with the Hebrew original and supportive of ben Zoma’s philosophy.

- Quia testimonia tua meditatio mea est: for the second half of the verse, Fagius uses the Vulgate version verbatim. This shows that his departure from it in the first half was fully conscious and intentional. Fagius seldom follows the Vulgate.³²

³¹ See Field F (1875), *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*, Tomus II, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p 275.

³² The 16th century witnessed the publication of many new Latin translations of the Bible at the hands of Protestant scholars. On this interesting phenomenon, see: Lenhart J M (1946),

- Cohercet: alternative spelling of coercet
- Parvam affectionem: the intent here is to the “evil inclination”, or “instinct”. The Talmud speaks of “yetzer hara” (the evil instinct) and “yetzer hatov” (the inclination to goodness). After the Deluge, God admits that “sensus enim et cogitatio humani cordis in malum prona sunt ab adolescentia sua” [Genesis 8:21, Vulgate version]. Sensus et cogitatio (together with “prona” = inclined) stand for the single word “yetzer”.
- Melior est ille ...: Proverbs 14:32
- Viro forti: ablative of comparison
- Laborem manum tuarum ...: Psalms 128 (127):2
- In futuro saeculo: the world to come. This concept does not explicitly appear in the Hebrew bible. The Talmud, on the other hand, distinguishes between “haolam hazeh” (this world) and “haolam haba” (the world to come)
- Quoniam honorificantes ...: 1 Samuel 2:30
- Ignominia: construe in the ablative (of agent)

BEn Azai dicit: Curre ad praeceptum leve, tanquam ad grave. Et fuge a transgressione. Praeceptum enim trahit praeceptum, et transgressio transgressionem. Siquidem merces praecepti est praeceptum, et merces transgressionis (est) transgressio.

- Ben Azai: For consistency with the previous passage, this should have been translated as Filius Azai. Simeon ben Azai was a contemporary of ben Zoma. Like him, he did not attain the formal degree of rabbi, but his knowledge and wisdom were legendary. Also, like ben Zoma, he is one of the four who entered the mystical orchard.
- Curre, fuge: imperatives
- Leve, grave: neuter accusatives
- Praeceptum enim trahit praeceptum, et transgressio transgressionem : one of the most often cited rules of behaviour in Jewish ethics. Praeceptum is used

Protestant Latin Bibles of the Reformation from 1520-1570, *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 8/4, pp 416-432. Eskhult J (2012), Latin Bible Translation in the Protestant Reformation, in *Shaping the Bible in the Reformation*, pp 167-185, Brill.

to translate the Hebrew word “mitzvah” (a commandment, but also a good deed).

Idem dixit: Ne contempnas quemvis hominem. Neque nimis remotam facias quamlibet rem. Nullus enim homo extat cui non sit hora sua. Et nulla res est, quae non habeat locum suum.

- Neque nimis remotam facias quamlibet rem: Just as you shouldn't scorn any person (however unimportant), you should also not consider anything so far-fetched or remote that it may never be relevant to you.
- Extat: exstat. Construe simply as “is” or “exists”

Ribbi Levitas vir Iabneh dicit: Maxime humili spiritu esto. Expectatio enim hominis sunt vermes.

- Ribbi: Fagius consistently (and incorrectly) renders rabbi as ribbi
- Levitas: Not much is known about this Tanna, Rabbi Levitas Ish Yavneh. This is his only appearance in the Mishnah. The appellation Ish Yavneh (vir Iabneh) indicates that Yavneh (Jamnia) was his home.
- Humili spiritu: ablative of description
- Esto: imperative of esse
- Maxime ... esto: curiously, Fagius leaves three words untranslated after “esto” [perhaps: “coram omni homine”]. Those three words, in fact, do not appear in all Talmud manuscripts, which seems to indicate that Fagius made his translation from a version different from the one he printed!
- Expectatio ... vermes: a dire assessment of human life, shared by other Tannaim. Notice here the complete absence of a promise of reward in the world to come.

Ribbi Iochanan filius Beroka dicit: Quicumque violat nomen Deo in oculo, de eo poena sumetur in propatulo. Idem enim est, sive quis per ignorantiam, sive quis temere, ex malitia prophanet nomen dei.

- Rabbi Iochanan filius Beroka: Pirkei Avot attempts to stick to the chronological order. This Tanna belongs to the so-called third generation, that of the disciples of Rabbi Akiva. The third generation is roughly contemporaneous with Bar-Kochbah's revolt
- In propatulo: publicly
- Per ignorantiam: Jewish biblical law introduces the concept of "shegagah" [e.g., Leviticus 4:22] to indicate a crime committed without premeditation [per ignorantiam]. The opposite is "zadon", which Fagius renders with the adverb "temere" and with "ex malitia". The intention of this passage is that, in the case of blasphemy, it does not matter ("idem est") whether it was committed through ignorance or malice.

Ribbi Ismaël dicit: Qui discit eo pacto, ut et (alios) doceat, sufficienter tradunt in manum eius, ad discendum, et ad docendum. Et qui discit ea conditione ut faciat, affatim tradunt in manum eius quod discat, doceat, custodiat et faciat.

- Rabbi Ismael: This is (most probably) the son of Yochanan ben Beroka, not to be confused with the earlier Rabbi Ishmael ben Elisha, who was rescued in his childhood from a Roman prison.
- Eo pacto: in such a way
- Tradunt: construe the subject as an impersonal "they". They grant him sufficiently
- Ea conditione: synonym of eo pacto

- Ut faciat: in such a way that he will put his learning into practice, to perform good deeds
- Affatim: synonym of sufficienter. The original Hebrew repeats the same word
- Custodiat: preserve, observe the law

Ribbi Zadok dicit: Ne facias coronam, ut magnus fias (per eam). Neque (ea utaris) tanquam securi ut vivas ex ea. Similiter et Hillel dixit: Qui (commodi gratia) servit coronae, perit. Eniam didicisti, quod quia cunque utilitatem capit ex lege, tollit vitam suam ex hoc saeculo.

- Rabbi Zadok: The chronological order has been upset, although it is possible (according to a Baraita) to explain that someone else is bringing up these sayings of Tzadok and of Hillel. Rabbi Tzadok belongs to an earlier generation of Tannaim. He was a priest at the temple in Jerusalem. It is said that, in his encounter with Vespasian, Yohanan ben Zakkai secured his own release from the besieged city together with a few other important figures, among them Rabbi Tzadok, to establish the Academy of Yavneh.
- Neque ea utaris: utor, uti, usus sum is a deponent verb that takes the ablative (to make use of)
- Tanquam securi: as an axe. Construe in the ablative (with the alternative -i ending)
- Ut vivas ex ea: The Hebrew copy used by Fagius differs here from the standard version, which states “to dig with it”. The Hebrew word “kardom” or “kurdom” can mean an axe or another tool, such as a shovel. In his commentaries (printed in italics) Fagius alludes to the alternative version.
- Hillel dixit: Hillel lived in the first century BCE. Born in Babylonia, he moved to Jerusalem and went on to become the founder of a Talmudic school of thought that advocates the practice of moderation in all aspects of life. His descendants include Gamliel and Yehuda Hanasi.
- Qui commodi gratia: for the sake of convenience
- Servit coronae: servio, -ire takes the dative. The original saying is quoted in Aramaic. It means “he who uses the crown”, an allusion to the Torah crown.

This is amply clarified in the next sentence: “quicumque utilitatem capit ex lege, tollit vitam suam ex hoc saeculo”. Again, Fagius explains (in his commentaries) that the word *corpus* is used here to represent the law, and that Hillel’s admonition is against those who abuse their prestige and expertise in the sacred texts for vainglory and ostentation.

Rabbi Iose dicit: Quicumque honorat legem, corpus illius honore afficitur ab hominibus. Quicumque vero violat lege, corpus eius violatur ab hominibus.

- Rabbi Iose: Rabbi Yose ben Halafta (d. ca. 160 CE) lived in Sepphoris (Tzipori), a multicultural city in the Galilee which was not affected by the Jewish-Roman wars. He belonged to a well-to-do and learned family.
- Legem: Torah in the original
- Corpus: Here Fagius may have fallen into a linguistic trap. It is true that the Hebrew word “guf” (גוף) means “body”, hence *corpus*. Therefore, “gufo” (גופו) can be literally translated as “his body”. But in the Talmud this word is often interpreted as the equivalent of the Aramaic “gufa” (גופא), which is used to refer to a thing in itself. The correct Latin translation is “ipse”. On the other hand, Rabbi Yose was a tanner and was thus used to dirty his hands at work. According to Eliezer Levi,³³ there is a hint here that, even if a person engages in a physical activity that pollutes the body, it will be honoured as long as the person honours the Torah.
- Honore afficitur: he is honoured
- Violat: translate as “dishonours”

Rabbi Ismaël dicit: Qui abstinet a iudicio, rumpit a se inimicitiam, rapinam, et falsum iuramentum. Qui vero extollit cor suum ostentatione, stultus est, impius, et elato spiritu.

³³ Levy E (1952), *Pirkei Avot meforashim*, Sinai Publishers, Tel Aviv. (in Hebrew)

- Rabbi Ismael: this is the son of Rabbi Yose, as indicated in other editions of the Talmud. Rabbi Yose had five sons, of whom Rabbi Ismael was the eldest. He succeeded his father as the highest rabbinical authority in Tzipori, often disagreeing with Judah Hanasi on matters of Halakha.
- Qui abstinent a iudicio: As indicated in the classical commentary of the Mishnah by Bartenura (1445-1515), the intention here is not to elude the responsibility of a just verdict in a trial, but rather to abstain from judgment if a greater judge can take up the matter or if the two sides of the dispute can reach an agreement without the need for a verdict. In this way, he can avoid the consequences enumerated in the text.
- Rumpit a se: breaks himself free from. Perhaps a better choice would be “deponit” or “demittit”
- Elato spiritu: arrogant. The Hebrew original uses the stem “gas” (גס) for what Fagius translates as “extollit” and “elato spiritu”. This is correct. Fagius elaborates further in his commentary. An alternative translation of this stem is “coarse”. Bartenora adopts this interpretation, so that the bad judge is one who is unprepared and impatient, and, as a result, silly, evil, and unrefined.

IDem dixit: Ne sis iudex unicus, non est enim unicus iudex nisi unus. Neque dicas suscipite meam sententiam, quoniam penes illos, et non penes te est potestas.

- Idem: Rabbi Ismael, reinforcing his previous opinion
- Iudex unicus: Tractate Sanhedrin discusses at length the number of judges required for each kind of judicial case. In commercial disputes, a single judge may be enough, but Rabbi Ismael counsels to always involve more than one judge, to err on the side of caution
- Nisi unus: that is, God
- Neque dicas: to the other judges

- Penes: preposition with accusative, meaning “in the possession of”, “the prerogative of”.
- Illos: the other judges. In respect to the issue at hand, Levy (op. cit.) nicely quotes the last three words from Exodus 23:2, sometimes translated as “follow the majority”. But in his commentary to the Pentateuch, Rashi disputes this interpretation.

Rabbi Iochanan dicit: Quicumque servat legem propter paupertatem, tandem futurus est ut servet eam propter divitias. Quicumque vero negligit legem propter divitias, tandem futurus est ut negligat propter paupertatem.

- Rabbi Iochanan: This is a mistake in the source. The Hebrew characters of Iochanan and Ionathan, are often confused by copyists. The identity here is likely that of Rabbi Yonathan ben Yosef, sometimes also identified as Natan ben Yosef. He was active during the middle of the second century CE and belongs to the fourth generation of the Tannaim.
- Servat: there is a verb (“shamar”) with the exact meaning of the Latin “servare”. In this case, however, the Talmud uses a different verb (“kiyyem”), akin to “fulfill” (Latin “explere”). It is a small difference worth pointing out.
- Negligat propter paupertatem: In his commentary, Fagius quotes and translates a whole paragraph from Maimonides explaining that he who neglects the study of the Torah when he is rich and, therefore, has time to devote to it, will no longer have time to do it when he has lost his wealth and needs to care for procuring food and other necessities. Fagius’ use of Medieval rabbinical sources bears witness to the depth of his knowledge and interest in the subject.

Ribbi Meir dicit: Minue negotia, et vaca legi. Estoque humili spiritu coram quovis homine. Et si vacare velis a lege, multa erunt quae te avocabunt. Quod si laboraveris in lege, multa merces tibi dabitur.

- Rabbi Meir: One of the most respected, quoted, and admired Tannaim. A contemporary of Yose ben Halafta, and student of Rabbi Akiva, and of Elisha ben Avuya (Acher, the apostate) whom he revered even after his abandonment of Judaism. His wife Bruriah, daughter of Rabbi Hananiah ben Teradion, was considered his intellectual peer. Meir earned his living as a Sofer, that is, a scribe.
- Minue: imperative
- Minue negotia et vaca legi: this is a beautiful translation that can stand alone as a classical Latin dictum. Legi here (as elsewhere) should be construed as “for the study of the Torah”. The not less elegant Hebrew original plays on the stem “asak” (אָסַק) which as a noun means “business”, and as a verb “to occupy oneself with”. In his commentary, Fagius pertinently quotes from Psalms 1:2: “But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night”.
- Estoque humili spiritu coram quovis homine: Notice that this is the same saying as that of Rabbi Levitas above. We noticed there that the three words “coram omni homine” were missing. Levy (op. cit.) reminds us that the Jerusalem Talmud mentions that Meir would stand up in the presence of an older person, regardless of his or her social or intellectual status. Bartenura adds that, in the spirit of ben Zoma’s saying, the meaning of Meir’s saying is that one can learn even from those less instructed or wise.
- Si vacare velis: the original does not imply intention, but actual fact (“si vacavisti”).
- Te avocabunt: they will call you away and distract you even more from Torah study
- Quod: this is superfluous and misleading. A better rendition would have been “Si autem laboraveris”
- Multa merces: the standard understanding is that this reward will be given in the world to come.

Ribbi Eliezer filius Iacob dicit: Qui facit praeceptum unum, comparat sibi paracletum unum. Et qui praevaricatur praevaricationem unam, comparat sibi accusatorem unum. Poenitentia, et opera bona, tanquam clypeus sunt contra ultionem (divinam).

- Rabbi Eliezer filius Iacob: There are two Rabbis with the same name and patronymic. This is the later one, a student of Rabbi Akiva's.
- Comparat: acquires
- Paracletum: Greek term for an advocate. Fagius keeps the original term used in the Talmud. This is but one example of the influence of Hellenistic culture in Israel. In Greek, παράκλητος is an advocate, a legal advisor. This term entered the Hebrew language as "praklit".
- Praevaricationem: it is not clear why Fagius uses this term for the more accurate "transgressionem", which he used above when translating ben Azai's adage. The Hebrew term is derived from the stem "avar" (עבר), whose basic meaning is to "cross over" (hence the Hebrews are literally those who crossed the river).
- Accusatorem: For consistency, Fagius should have used the Greek term κατηγορος, employed in the Hebrew original as "kategor". The lawyer pleading for the defense in a suit is called in Hebrew "sanegor", derived from the Greek συνήγορος. In his running commentary, Fagius dutifully reports on the Greek origin of these terms quoting directly from Maimonides (Rambam), The implication of this legal terminology is that deeds in this world will be judged in the world to come.
- Poenitentia: the concept of repentance in Judaism, expressed in the word "teshuvah", is somewhat different than in Christianity. The stem of teshuvah is "shav" (שב), whose basic meaning is to return, to come back. Thus, we read in Jeremiah 3:22: "Return, ye backsliding children", rendered in the Vulgate as "convertimini, filii revertentes". Repentance, then, is considered as a returning.

- Clypeus: alternative spelling of clypeus, -i (m), a shield. The Hebrew term “tris”, not found in biblical Hebrew, is of Greek origin: θυρεός, an oblong shield resembling a door (θυρ). The biblical Hebrew word for a shield is “magen” (from which “magen David”)
- Ultionem divinam: The Latin term ultio has a connotation of revenge. The Hebrew term “pur’anut”, derived from Aramaic, is more generally conceived as a disgrace, a catastrophe, and, finally, as divine punishment, rather than as revenge.

RIBBI IOCHANAN HASANDELAR DICIT: OMNIS ECCLESIA QUAE SIT PROPTER DEUM, CONFIRMABITUR. QUAE VERO NON SIT PROPTER DEUM, NON DURABIT PERPETUO.

- Rabbi Iochanan Hasandelar: literally Rabbi John the Shoemaker (from the Greek σάνδαλον, or from the Persian sandal, a wooden-soled shoe). He was a student and follower of Rabbi Akiva, whom Iochanan visited in jail before his execution by the Romans. He was a descendant of Gamliel.
- Ecclesia: The Hebrew word Knessiah (from which the word Knesset derives) means a place of assembly. Thus, we have spoken about the Great Assembly (Knesset Hag’dolah). Iochanan is distinguishing here between assemblies for a good purpose (such as meetings to study Torah or to pray, which were severely forbidden by the Romans at the time), and other meetings, such as theatres or other entertainment venues.
- Confirmabitur: the Hebrew original expresses this thought as “its end is to endure”.
- Non durabit perpetuo: the adverb “perpetuo” is not in the original, which simply says “its end is not to endure”.

Ribbi Eleazar filius Schamua dicit: Esto gloria discipuli tui tam chara tibi perinde tua ipsius. Et sit honor socii tui sicut timor praeceptoris tui. Et timor Rabbini tui sicut timor Dei.

- Rabbi Eleazar filius Schamua: Eleazar ben Shammua was also a student of Rabbi Akiva and a teacher of Judah Hanasi. He was renowned for his kindness to friends and strangers alike.
- Gloria: “honor” would have been a more accurate translation of the Hebrew original (“kavod”).
- Chara: read “cara”.
- Perinde: equally, of the same value as.
- Timor: in the sense of the fear that arises from respect and reverence, which is often associated with the Hebrew word “mora”.
- Socii: as indicated in Fagius commentary, the “socius” (Hebrew “chaver”) is a reference to the custom of students of the law to study in pairs. Notice that the genitive in “timor socii” does not indicate possession, just as in the English “fear of flying”.

Ribbi Iehudah dicit: Esto cautus in Thalmud, nam error qui in Thalmud committitur, reputatur pro temeritate seu praesumptione.

- Rabbi Iehudah: This is Rabbi Yehuda bar Ilai, who was born in Usha. He was instrumental in the move of the Sanhedrin from Yavneh to Usha after the revocation of Hadrian’s decrees prohibiting the practice of religious activities.
- Thalmud: The word Talmud here is not necessarily to be understood as the Talmud, but rather in its original meaning, namely, “study”. Fagius alludes to this in his commentary: “Potest tamen in genere referri ad omnes quarumcumque atrium et disciplinarum professores”.

- *Temeritate seu praesumptione*: we already encountered in the saying of Rabbi Iochanan ben Beroka the concepts of “shegagah” and “zadon”, which indicate, respectively, error or ignorance, on the one hand, and premeditation or arrogance, on the other. Bartenura explains that if you committed an error in your teaching due to neglect of your duties and, as a result, you permit what is forbidden, your act is considered as if it had been premeditated. Fagius commentary is along the same lines: “reputaretur perinde si temere et studio falsum doceant”.

Ribbi Schimeon dicit: Tres sunt coronae. Corona legis, Corona sacerdotii, et Corona regni. Corona autem boni nominis, ascendit supra omnes.

- Rabbi Schimeon: this is the famous Shimon bar Yochai, to whom the authorship of the kabbalistic book of Zohar is (wrongly) attributed. A disciple of Rabbi Akiva, he was forced to escape a few years after Akiva’s execution and to hide in a cave with his son Eleazar for a period of 13 years. His tomb is said to be in the town of Meron, where large crowds gather every year (during the festival of Lag Baomer).
- *Tres sunt coronae*: the Tannaim saw the three crowns to have fallen in Jerusalem (legal, religious, and political). What remains now is the symbolic crown of a good name acquired by righteous behaviour and performing good deeds. “*Melius est nomen bonum quam unguenta pretiosa*” [Eccl. 7:2, Kohelet 7:1]. In his commentary, Fagius cites from Maimonides to further explain the meaning of these crowns.

Ribbi Nehorai dicit: Commigra ad locum legis. Neque dicas ut illa te sequatur; quoniam socii tui stabiliunt eam in manu tua. Et prudentiae tuae ne innitaris.

- Rabbi Nehorai: the Aramaic term “nehorai” is equivalent to the Hebrew “meir”, the one who sheds light. The traditional assumption is that Nehorai and Meir are the same person.
- Commigra ad locum legis: Meir was forced to emigrate during the reign of Hadrian. He found refuge in Babylonia (“locum legis”) where he could pursue his study of the Torah in a safe atmosphere.
- Neque dicas ut illa te sequatur: The Torah will not follow you. It is up to you to find a place of Torah.
- Socii tui: as already pointed out, the “socii” are the indispensable partners of study, necessary to pursue the dialectical method manifest in the Talmud.
- Innitaris: rely on (+ dative).
- Et prudentiae tuae ne innitaris: a direct quote from Proverbs 3 :5. (“and lean not unto thine own understanding”).

Ribbi Ianai dicit: Non est in manu nostra neque prosperitas impiorum, neque castigationes iustorum.

- Rabbi Ianai: A disciple of Judah Hanasi, considered as bridge between the last generation of Tannaim and the first generation of Amoraim.
- Non est in manu nostra: it is not possible for us to understand,
- Prosperitas: a misprint for prosperitas. The question here is related to that of theodicy, namely, how can God allow the existence of evil. Moreover, how is it possible to explain the apparent discrepancy between one’s actions and God’s recompense. A pessimistic view of this issue appears in Ecclesiastes [Kohelet] 8:14. The book of Job deals with it in a different way. Rabbi Yanai does not express an opinion.

Ribbi Mathia filius Horesch dicit: Anteverte cum pace quemvis hominem. Estoque cauda leonum, neque fias caput vulpium.

- Rabbi Mathia filius Horesch: Rabbi Mattiah ben Charash, contemporary of Shimon bar Yochai, escaped to Rome and founded a yeshiva (religious school).
- Anteverte cum pace: be the first to greet (to ask for the health of, to say “shalom” to)
- Quemvis hominem: any man, regardless of status
- Esto cauda leonis, neque fias caput vulpium: this proverb and its opposite have been advanced, according to context. The intention here is to emphasize that when it comes to Torah learning, it is better to be among students and teachers who are greater than you, than to be the best in a mediocre class.

RIBBI IAECOB DICIT: Mundus iste similis est vestibulo ante saeculum venturum, praepara teipsum in vestibulo, ut intrare (possis) in tryclinium.

- Rabbi Iaacob: Rabbi Yaacov ben Kurshai, a teacher of Judah Hanasi
- Vestibulo: The Hebrew original uses a term of Greek origin (prozdor, derived from προσόδος = an access, a corridor).
- Praepara teipsum: by means of good deeds.
- Tryclinium: This Latin word, derived from Greek, is also used in the Hebrew original (traklin) in the sense of dining room. This imagery attempts to answer the previous question by bringing the world to come into the equation.

IDEM DIXIT: Melior est una hora, qua homo resipiscit, et facit bona opera, in hoc saeculo, quam tota vita saeculi futuri. Et

melior est una hora refrigerii in saeculo futuro, quam tota vita praesentis saeculi.

- Idem: Rabbi Yaakov
- Resipiscit: comes back to his sense. The Hebrew word is “teshuva”, which we already encountered. It was earlier translated by Fagius as “penitentia”, but now he uses the verb resipiscere, which has a connotation of return, more in consonance with the Hebrew root.
- In hoc saeculo: in this world
- Vita saeculi futuri: the life in the world to come. Recall ben Zoma and Levitas. Rabbi Yaakov seems to be contradicting himself when compared to the previous saying, also attributed to him, but he goes on to clarify.
- Refrigerii: The Hebrew expression (korat ruach) means satisfaction, contentment, pleasure.

Ribbi Schimeon filius Eleazar dicit: Noli placare socium tuum in hora indignationis suae. Neque consoleris eum in hora qua mortuus eius iacet coram eo. Neque interrogaveris eum in hora voti sui. Neque contendas invisere eum in hora calamitatis suae

- Rabbi Schimeon filius Eleazar: the son of Rabbi Eleazar ben Shammua, whom we already encountered.
- Noli placare: the gist of these admonitions, as Fagius indicates in his commentary, is that there is an appropriate time for appeasement, consolation, questioning, or visiting, as it is written in Eccl. [Kohelet] 3:1: “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven”. In his commentary, Fagius does not follow the Vulgate “Omnia tempus habent”, but rather a closer translation of the Hebrew.
- Invisere: to visit, to go to see.
- Calamitatis: Bartenura interprets the Hebrew word “kalkelato” not as a tribulation that happens for external reasons, but one that the person brought

about on himself by an act of transgression. Thus, do not visit him and put him to shame by your mere presence.

- Sui, suae: eius

Schemuel minor ille dicit: Cum ceciderit hostis tuus ne gaudeas; et cum ipse impegerit, non exultet cor tuum, ne forte videat Dominus, et displiceat oculis eius, avertatque ab eo iram suam

- Schemuel minor: Shmuel Hakatan (Samuel the Small) was known for his modesty, which explains his nickname. He was an expert on the important issue of setting the leap years. The Jewish lunar calendar is adapted to the solar one by the intercalation of a month (Adar Beth) every three years approximately. In those days, the determination was based on ad-hoc estimates, thus requiring expertise and authority. Later in the Middle Ages it was replaced by a more precise system based on the Metonic Cycle of 19 years.
- Cum ceciderit: in harmony with his modesty, perhaps, Samuel the Small limits himself to quote verbatim from Proverbs 24: 17-18 (“Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth ...”). Fagius does not follow the Vulgate but stays quite close to it.
- Impegerit: from impingo.

ELischa filius Abuiah dicit: Qui discit puer (existens) cui similis est? Atramento scripto in novam papyrum. Qui vero discit cum senex est, cui similis est? Atramento scripto in papyrum bibulam.

- Elischa filius Abuiah: Elisha ben Avuyah, teacher of Rabbi Meir, is a fascinating character in the Talmud, as is also his mere inclusion in it. After reneging his faith, he became known as Acher (“the other”). Rabbi Meir,

however, continued his friendship and devotion to his disgraced teacher and kept consulting him on issues of the Law. He is one of the four that entered the mystical orchard. Meir explained his continued friendship with the apostate with a celebrated pearl of wisdom in human relations, perhaps one of the best in the Talmud: “Rabbi Meir found a pomegranate, he ate its flesh, and he discarded the rind”. [Chagigah 15:b]

- Puer existens: when he is a child
- Similis: (with dative), similar to.
- Papyrus, -i: (feminine), paper, parchment. The Hebrew word “niyar” for papyrus is of uncertain origin (perhaps Egyptian via Akkadian niaru).
- Bibulam: bibula charta (literally “drinking paper”) is blotting paper, namely, absorbent paper that was used (until the age of the ball pen) to dry the ink before it could run. All schoolchildren until a few decades ago were required to bring blotting paper to school together with their writing nibs. The Hebrew “niyar machuq”, however, means paper that has been erased for reuse. The concept is the same in the given context. What one learns in childhood is forever engraved in memory, whereas in old age one forgets it immediately, just as writing fades quickly in reused paper.

Ribbi Iose filius Iehudah vir ex pago Babylonico dicit: Qui discit a iunioribus cui similis est? Ei nempe qui edit uvas immaturas et bibit vinum de torculari suo. Qui vero discit a senioribus cui similis est? Ei nimirum qui edit uvas maturas et bibit vinum vetus. Ribbi dicit : Ne inspicias cantarum, sed potius id quod in eo est. Aliquando enim cantarus novus refertus est vino veteri, interdum vero cantarus vetus est in quo nec novum vinum est.

- Rabbi Iose filius Iehudah vir ex pago Babylonico: Rabbi Yose bar Yehudah ish k'far Habavli is mentioned only here in the Talmud. Nothing else is known about him. The reason to include his saying is its relation to Elisha's.
- Qui discit a iunioribus: he who learns from children.

- Torculari: torcular, -is (n) is a wine or oil press. The Hebrew term is “gat”. Thus, Gethsemane is gat-shemanim, literally an oil press, appropriately located in the Mount of Olives.
- Nimirum: added for emphasis. Not in the original
- Rabbi: When the title Rabbi is left undefined, the intention is Rabbi Judah Hanasi. Curiously, Fagius has skipped the Hebrew original of this passage, even though he translates it.
- Inspitias: inspicias
- Cantarum: From the Greek κάνθαρος, originally a beetle, but later used for a recipient with two handles. The Hebrew original uses the word “Kankan”, derived from Akkadian, and with the same meaning.
- Id quo in eo est: oddly reminiscent to Rabbi Meir’s appreciation of his master Elisha.
- Refertus: from refertio (to fill with).
- Aliquando ... nec novum vinum est: the meaning is clear. Sometimes a young scholar is full of knowledge and wisdom, while an old one may know nothing and have no wisdom at all. The somewhat incompatible opinions of the Rabbis (the celebrated “on the other hand” kind of arguments) are brought in succession for the reader to compare.

Ribbi Eleazar Kaparnaita dicit: Invidia, Concupiscentia, et (amor) gloriae, extrahunt hominem e mundo.

- Rabbi Eleazar Kaparnaita: Rabbi Eleazar Hakappar was one of the last Tannaim. His son already belongs to the Amoraim.
- E mundo: most probably, the world to come.

IDem dixit: Qui nati sunt morientur, qui mortui sunt, reviviscent, qui reviviscent iudicabuntur. Scient qui adhuc nascentur, scient qui modo nati sunt, scient qui ex mortuis resurgent, quod ipse

Deus est formator et creator. Ipse est qui animadverterit (omnia). Ipse iudex est. Ipse testis est. Ipse est qui accusat in iudicio. Ipse est qui in futurum iudicabit. Benedictus sit ipse, quoniam non est coram ipso, neque oblivio, neque acceptio personarum, neque acceptatio muneris. Omnia enim sua sunt. Noveris insuper quod omnia iuxta subductam rationem transigentur. Neque securum te faciat malus genius tuus, quasi sepulchrum futurum sit refugium tuum. Te siquidem nolente formatus es, te vel nolente vivis, te vel nolente morieris. Tandemque futurum est, ut stes iudicio, redditurus rationem coram rege omnium regum, qui scilicet est Deus sanctus, benedictus sit ipse.

- Idem: Eleazar Hakappar.
- Idem dixit: in contraposition to all the previous sayings, this paragraph presents a more complete theological and eschatological view. Levy (op. cit.) reads here a deeper meaning in terms of a more combative stance against other competing worldviews.
- Morientur, reviviscent, iudicabuntur: these Hebrew verbs are preceded by the inseparable particle “le-“, which in this context can be understood as implying a destiny: the ones that have been born are (destined) to die, etcetera.
- Qui adhuc nascentur ... qui modo nati sunt ... qui ex mortuis resurgent: not in the original
- Scient: the original is much more emphatic, implying with three different verbs derived from the same stem that “they will know, they will announce, and they will acknowledge that He is God, He is the maker”, et cetera.
- Coram ipso neque oblivio: before oblivio the original includes what could be translated as “no wrong” (neque iniquitas)
- Acceptio personarum: favoritism.
- Acceptatio muneris: bribe
- Omnia iuxta subductam rationem transigentur: this is an accountant’s terminology (everything will be transacted according to the system of balance)

- Malus genius: we encountered the word “yetzer” before (when dealing with ben Zoma). This is the evil inclination.
- Sepulchrum: according to Levy (op. cit.), the Hebrew “Sheol” in this context is equivalent to the Greek Hades, which was considered a refuge for the dead. Don’t listen to your evil inclination when it tells you that Hades can grant you a safe refuge.
- Te nolente: ablative absolute (without your consent).
- Formatus es: the Hebrew has two clauses instead of just one. “Without your will you are conceived, and without your will you are alive”.
- Redditurus rationem: to account for, to be held accountable for.

The Kuzari

When did Jewish culture embrace formal philosophical speculation? From its mythical beginnings, through the period of the judges, the kings, the prophets, the fall of the Northern Kingdom, the fall of the Kingdom of Judah, the Babylonian exile, the return, and the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, the Jewish nation was delimited, both geographically and culturally, by the major civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Persia. It is upon the background of these rich cultures that the early Jewish identity defined and asserted itself in all its similarities and differences. When the armies of Alexander the Great entered the scene in 334 BCE they brought with them new political and intellectual paradigms to the region spanning from Persia to Egypt. The Greek language replaced Aramaic for official transactions in Judah, theatre houses were built for artistic and sports events, and a mutual curiosity manifested itself in a dialogue between the Hellenistic and the local cultures. The language of the rabbis gradually incorporated more and more terms of Greek origin to describe new legal and institutional concepts. A part of society openly adopted a Hellenistic lifestyle, particularly in the large Jewish centres of Alexandria in Egypt and Antioch in Syria. Jews became acquainted with different rational systems of thought, such as Stoicism and Epicureanism, which either fascinated them or provoked in them equally rational counterarguments.

Hellenistic
influences

Under the rule of Ptolemy II in Egypt, a project for the translation of the Hebrew bible into Greek was

undertaken about 250 BCE, which resulted in the Septuagint, adopted later by the Christian church as the official version of the Old Testament. Original works written in Greek or translated into it were produced during this period. The first known Jewish philosopher is Aristobulus of Alexandria (2nd century BCE), who attempted to reconcile the tenets of revealed religion with the systems of Plato and Aristotle. His works have not survived, except in a few fragments of quotations in the works of other authors. Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 BCE-50 CE), most of whose works are preserved, was influenced by stoic philosophy. He advocated an allegorical, rather than literal, interpretation of the Hebrew scriptures, and asserted that in this way they contain implicitly all the principles of truth that may be attained by philosophy. Philo's ideas were more influential in Christian than in Jewish philosophy.

The Septuagint

Aristobulus of Alexandria

Philo

Eight centuries would pass before the next encounter of Judaism with philosophy. This time, once again, it arose from contact with a new civilization: Islam. A forerunner of Islamic philosophy is the Kalam (literally: speech), which originally designated a group of scholars (mutakallimun) who used dialectical means to defend the principles of Islam. A splinter group within this movement, the Mu'tazilites, advocated the adherence to strictly rational arguments. From this group emerged the first Muslim philosopher to adopt Aristotelian philosophy, al-Kindi (801-873), who was active in the Bayt al-Hikma (House of Wisdom) established in Baghdad at the beginning of the Abbasid Caliphate. The next two major figures were al-Farabi (854-925), a prodigious mind who made contributions to several fields of

The Kalam

Al-Kindi

Al-Farabi

knowledge, and Ibn Sina (980-1037), known also as Avicenna, whose works on philosophy and medicine played an important role in the spread of Aristotelian philosophy in Europe.

Avicenna

The first Medieval Jewish philosopher was Saadia al Fayyumi Gaon (882-942). Born in Egypt, Saadia spent part of his life in Babylonia (Iraq), as the head of the Sura academy, where he was active in defending rabbinical Judaism against a dissenting Jewish sect known as the Qaraites, who had started a sort of Jewish Kalam. His major philosophical work, *Kitab al-Imanat wa-al-I'tiqadat* (Book of Beliefs and Opinions), written in 933 in Arabic using the Hebrew script and translated into Hebrew in Toledo, adopts philosophical methods to analyze the teachings of the Torah, in a manner akin to that of the Mu'tazilites. He was also the author of the first Hebrew-Arabic dictionary.

Saadia

The Book of Beliefs and Opinions

After Saadia, the centre of gravity of Jewish philosophy moved to Spain. Solomon Ibn Gabirol (1021-1060?) was one of the first philosophers to introduce Neoplatonist, as distinct from Aristotelian, ideas in Medieval Europe. His opus magnum, translated from the Arabic into Latin as *Fons Vitae*, had a lasting influence on Christian Scholasticism. The identity of its author, known as Avicebron, was mistakenly held to be a Christian or Muslim philosopher. It was only in the mid 19th century that Avicebron was definitively identified with Ibn Gabirol.

Ibn Gabirol

Fons Vitae

Judah Halevi (Yehudah ha-Levi, 1075-1141) was first and foremost a Hebrew poet, considered by many as

Judah Halevi

the greatest of all times for the refinement of his language and the beauty of his style. His poetry ranges from love verses to religious poems, and to songs of longing for Jerusalem [“Zion, will you not ask your captives’ peace / the remnants of your flocks who pray for yours?”] From the doctrinal point of view, Yehudah ha-Levi, just like al-Ghazali, was opposed to the use of Aristotelian philosophy as a substitute for revelation to seek absolute truth. His major work in this direction was written in Arabic under the long title Book of Refutation and Proof on behalf of a Despised Religion, better known by its short Hebrew title of The Kuzari.

Al-Ghazali

The Kuzari

The background to The Kuzari is the stuff of legend. Abd al-Rahman (Abdur Rahman) III (889-961) was the founder of the Caliphate of Cordoba, which had been an Emirate since its foundation by Abd al-Rahman I in 756. His reign (912-961) was characterized by openness and tolerance. An important personality in his court was the Jewish physician and polymath Hasdai Ibn Shaprut (915-970). Being fluent not only in Arabic and Hebrew but also in Latin, and endowed with natural charm, Hasdai was a de-facto ambassador entrusted with carrying out delicate diplomatic transactions. He also enjoyed great esteem among the Jews of al-Andalus. Informed of the presumptive conversion to Judaism of the rulers of the kingdom of Khazar, Hasdai is said to have sent a letter to the Khazar king or Khagan, Joseph ben Aaron, written in Hebrew. Both the letter and Joseph’s reply (also written in Hebrew) are extant, although the authenticity of the whole episode cannot be confirmed.

Hasdai Ibn
Shaprut

The Khazar
kingdom

Regardless of the historical truth of the conversion and of the epistolary exchange, Yehuda ha-Levi uses it as a literary device to provide a dramatic background to his book. Having been visited by an angel in a dream, the king is told: “your intentions are good, but not so your actions”, which dream inspires him to seek the advice of a philosopher. Not satisfied with the philosopher’s abstract speculations, the king decides to consult representatives of the two major monotheistic religions, namely Christianity and Islam. As far as the Jews are concerned, the king muses, I am satisfied to see their lowliness and their small numbers, and that everyone despises them. Thus is the stage set for a rather short exposition by representatives of Christianity and Islam. Seeing that both mention the Children of Israel as an essential element of their faith, the king decides to invite a rabbi, despite his original apprehension. The rest of the book is cast in the form of a dialogue between the king and the rabbi.

Setting

In its Hebrew version, *The Kuzari* became a foundational work in Jewish apologetics and in establishing an anti-philosophical trend, much like al-Ghazali’s *Tahafut al-Falasifa*. It was left to Maimonides (1138-1204) to restore the attempt at harmonizing Jewish religion with philosophy, just like Averroes (1126-1198) did for Islam.

Maimonides

Averroes

The first Hebrew translation, introducing the short version of the title, was accomplished by Judah Ibn Tibbon in 1167. A modern scholarly translation³⁴ by Yosef Kafih (Kapah), including the Arabic original in

Hebrew translations

³⁴ Publisher: Machon Mishnat Harambam, 2nd. Edition, Jerusalem, 2001

Hebrew characters, was published in 1997. Although some controversy has arisen as to the accuracy of various translations into Hebrew and into several modern languages, all of them are sufficiently representative of the original for the average reader. Transcriptions of the original to standard Arabic script are also available.³⁵ The first and only Latin translation was published in Basel in 1660 by Johannes Buxtorf the Younger. His father was a noted Protestant Hebraist, professor of Hebrew at Basel, and author of a grammar of Hebrew and Aramaic. Buxtorf's translation is not from the Arabic original, but from Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew version, which is printed side-by-side with the Latin.

Buxtorf's
Latin
translation

The figure below shows a 15th century manuscript (probably from Damascus) kept in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It is a copy of the original written in Arabic with Hebrew characters. The transliterated selection reads: The Khazar said to himself "I shall ask the Christians and the Muslims, for one of these practices without a doubt is the satisfactory one, and as far as the Jews are concerned it is enough what is apparent from their degradation and their scarcity and the hatred of everybody toward them". The manuscript is clear and readable. Since the Arabic alphabet is made up of 28 characters, while the Hebrew one contains only 22, additional marks are placed on some letters to compensate for this deficiency so as to render the correspondence one-to-one. The frequent combination aliph-lam is represented by a single symbol (similar to the modern cursive aleph in Hebrew).

The Bodleian
manuscript

Judeo-Arabic
script

³⁵ Publisher: Markaz al-Qawmi lil-Targ'ama, 2155, Cairo, 2014.

וזמן אסבב אהזול יכלס שכצח מן אנהם פצלה ען
 דלך לתגזיה לזי תנזיהה לפלמספה ען מערפה
 אנהזיהה ומוע הוה כבדן ינבני עני אעמל לא
 פלמספה ועלמיהם ותתקייקיהם ואנהזיהה
 מן תכון אנכזה משהורה פנהם שאיעה ביניהם
 לאתגלהם בלרוחאניהם וזן יוצק ענהם לרייב
 ומתקייקיהם וכרמאמיהם ולקד עני אמנמיהם לא
 צאדיקה למן לם יען בעולם ולה כחכמה נכסה
 ועד זר דלך כי מן רחמה פלמספה לאמר אלהי
 ואל רפוס סר סוי מנה דכרה יח פלמספה אים
 קל לפזרי פי נכסה חסל אנצרימט ולמסלמון
 כמן יחד לעמלן הו לה אך למרזי ואמה אליהור
 ככפי מנה פהר מן דלתיהם וקלתיהם ומקרת אנהזיע
 להם פדעם בעלם מן עילמא אנצרי פסלה ען
 עלמה ועמלה סקל לה מומן באחיהם ללמולקיהם
 ובקדום ללבק תגד ומה כלק לעלם באסרה פ
 איהם וזן גמיע אנמטיקין מן דריה חוס ים מן דריה
 נוח וליה יתסבון כללהם וזן ללה ענהיה בלכנה
 בא נמטיקין וסכלם ורצם ורחמה וכליהם ופיהור ותגלי

למרבייה

قال الخزرى في نفسه أسأل النصرانى والمسلمون
 فان أحد العاملين هو لا شك المرضى، وأما اليهود
 فكفى ما ظهر من ذلتهم وقتلهم ومقت الجميع
 لهم

Bodleian Library MS Pockoke 284 (1463)

The lines marked have been transliterated to standard Arabic script.

י ר ת ו כ

LIBER

COSRI

Continens

COLLOQUIUM seu DISPUTATIONEM DE RELIGIONE,

Habitam ante nongentos annos, inter REGEM COSAREORUM, & R. ISAACUM SANGARUM Judæum; Contra PHILOSOPHOS præcipuè è Gentilibus, & Karraitas è Judæis; SYNOPSISIN simul exhibens THEOLOGIAE & PHILOSOPHIAE Judaicæ, variâ & reconditâ eruditione refertam;

Eam collegit, in ordinem redegit, & in LINGUA ARABICA ante quingentos annos descripsit R. JEHUDAH LEVITA, Hispanus;

Ex Arabica in LINGUAM HEBRÆAM, circa idem tempus, transtulit R. JEHUDAH ABEN TYBBON, itidem natione Hispanus, Civitate Jerichuntinus.

*Nunc, in gratiam Philologie, & Lingua Sacra cultorum,
recensuit, Latinâ versione, & Notis illustravit*

JOHANNES BUXTORFIUS, FIL.

Accesserunt: PRÆFATIO, in qua Cosareorum Historia, & totius Operis ratio & usus exponitur: DISSERTATIONES aliquot Rabbinicæ: INDICES Locorum Scripturæ & Rerum.

Cum PRIVILEGIO.

BASILEÆ,

Sumptibus AUTHORIS,

Typis GEORGII DECKERI, Acad. Typogr. A. MDCLX.

היהודים דילי במה שהו
 נראה משפלותם ומיעוטם
 ושהכל מואסים אותם וקרא
 לחכם מחכמי אדום ושאל
 אותו על חכמתו ומעשהו ו
 ואמר לו אני מאמין בחדוש
 הנבראות ובקדמו' הבורא ית'
 ושהוא ברא העולם כלו
 בשש' ימים ושכל המדברים
 צאצאי אדם ואליו הם מ
 מת'יחסים כלם ושיש לבורא
 השגחה על הברואים והדבקות
 במדברים וקצף ורחמים
 ודבור והראות והגלות לנביאיו
 וחס'דיו והוא שוכן בתוך
 רצויו מהמוני בני אדם וכללו
 של דבר אני מאמין בכל מה
 שבא בתורה ובספרי בני
 ישראל אשר אין ספק ב
 באמתתם בעבור פרסומם
 והתמדתם והגלותם בהמונים
 גדולים] ובאחריתם ו
 ובעקבותם נגשמה האלהות
 והיה עובר ברחם בתולה
 מנשיאות בני ישראל וילדה
 אותו אנושי הנראה אלקי
 הנסתר נביא שלוח בנראה
 אלונה שלוח בנסתר והוא
 המשיח הנקרא בן אלקים
 והוא האב והבן והוא רוח
 הקדש ואנחנו מ'יחידים א
 אמתתו ואם נראה על לשוננו
 השלוש נאמין בו האחדו' ו
 ומשפנו

Ad Judæos quod attinet, satis mihi est cognita illorum humilitas, vilitas, paucitas; & quòd illos ab omnibus reprobari & contemni videmus (*ut non opus sit, illos audire*).

Accersivit itaq; Sapientem ex Edomæis, (*h. e. è [1.] Christianis*) & quæsit ex eo de Sapientiâ & Operibus seu Actionibus ipsius. Qui ei dixit; Ego credo Innovationem Creaturarum (*i. e. omnia esse creata, non ab æterno*), & Æternitatem Creatoris Benedicti; quòd sc. ille Mundum totum creaverit spatio sex dierum; quòd omnes homines rationales sint progenies Adami, ab illo familiam suam ducentes; quòd sit Providentia Dei super res creatas, quòd item adhæreat rationalibus (*h. e. se communicet cum hominibus*): credo etiam Dei iram, amorem, misericordiam, sermonem, visionem, revelationem Prophetis & viris sanctis factam; denique, quòd Deus habitet inter eos qui accepti ipsi sunt ex humano genere. Summa: Credo omnia quæ scripta sunt in Lege & libris Israëliitarum, de quorum veritate nullus est dubitandi locus, eò quòd illa publicata, vel, publicè gesta, continuè conservata & propagata, revelataque sint in maxima hominum turba & frequentia. [Et [2.] in extremo ac fine illorum (*Reipublica & Ecclesia Judaorum*) incorporata (*incarnata*) est Deitas, transiens in uterum virginis cujusdam è primariis inter Israëlitas, quæ genuit cum Hominem visibiliter, Deum latenter, Prophetam missum visibiliter, Deum missum occultè. Hicque fuit Messias, dictus Filius Dei, qui est Pater, Filius, & Spiritus Sanctus, cujus Essentiam unicam esse credimus & fatemur. Licet enim ex verbis nostris videatur, nos Trinitatem vel Tres Deos credere, credimus tamen unitatem. Habitatio au-

Ad Judaeos quod attinet: as far as the Jews are concerned.

Ut non opus sit: “opus est”: it is needed, or it is useful. Buxtorf adds parenthetical remarks throughout the text.

Accersivit: alternative spelling of arcessivit

Sapientem ex Aedomaeis: a learned man from the Christians. Buxtorf clarifies this in his parenthetical comment. The Arabic original, as expressed by Yehudah ha-Levi himself, uses the correct Arabic word to designate Christians, namely, Naṣari (Hebrew: Notzrim), which corresponds to the English Nazarenes. We can see this in the Bodleian manuscript. It is the translator Ibn Tibbon (whose version is shown on the left) who uses here the incorrect word Edom. During the Roman period in Judah, the Jews started to refer, somewhat euphemistically, to Rome as Edom. According to Genesis, the Edomites were descendants of Esau (who had red hair, hence the term Edom, from the Hebrew adom = red). The term was used to designate enemies in general, even though there is no historical connection between Edomites and Romans. The Edomite nation had converted to Judaism during the Hasmonean period, and king Herod was from Edomite provenance. When the Roman Empire adopted Christianity as its official religion (312 CE), the term was automatically transferred to designate Christians in general. There are, of course, other theological overtones to this terminological issue, some of which are mentioned in Buxtorf’s notes. It is interesting to note that Ibn Tibbon himself, just a few lines below, uses the correct term Notzrim.

De sapientia et operibus: the Khazar king wants to know not just doctrine but also behaviour

Credo: note the use with accusative

Innovationem: in Islamic theology, the stem ḥ-d-t̄ (corresponding to the Hebrew ḥ-d- š) has several meanings, including the creation of something new, that is something that has a definite beginning in time.

Quod sc.: quod scilicet. The term scilicet can be variously translated according to context as “of course”, “to be sure”, “that is”. It can also be left untranslated.

Creaverit: construe as a subjunctive perfect and translate as perfect.

Homines rationales: the Arabic original uses the term “natiqin”, which the Hebrew correctly translates as “medabrim”, that is, the speaking ones. The Scholastic and Kabbalistic view (based perhaps on the Porphyrian tree) was that there is a four-fold division of nature into inert, growing, living, and speaking entities

Ab illo familiam suam ducentes: tracing (back) their ancestry from him

Eo quod: seeing that, all the more since

In maxima hominum turba et frequentia: in large crowds. Note that the word frequentia does not mean frequency, but rather indicates a large attendance at a meeting.

Transiens: Buxtorf made a mistake, which he could have easily detected had he understood the Arabic original. The Hebrew word ‘ubar is spelled the same as ‘over, the first one meaning embryo and the second meaning passing or crossing. In the context, it should be clear that the first meaning is intended. The Arabic original is janin, which means embryo without ambiguity.

Cuiusdam e primariis inter Israelitas: the genitive is determined by virginis: of a certain virgin from the noblest among the Israelites.

Genuit eum hominem visibiliter, Deum latenter: Visibiliter and latenter (visibly and hiddenly) correspond to the Arabic terms *ẓahir* and *baṭin*, which are used in Islam to distinguish between the appearance and the deeper meaning of something.

Licet ex verbis nostris videatur: a minor point is that the Arabic original and the Hebrew translation use “tongue” instead of words. It would have been legitimate to translate “lingua nostra”. It is evident that ha-Levi is purposely weakening the Christian’s position by (i) having the sage mention the importance of the Israelites’ precedence, and (ii) bringing up the controversial issue of the Trinity, which is three and one at the same time. The reader may pick up on these issues. The king, however, does not argue against them explicitly, since he seems interested in the bigger picture.

tem ejus fuit inter filios Israël, summo ipso-
rum cum honore, quandiu Res Divina ipsis
adhæsit (*durante Templo*), donec illi rebel-
larunt contra Mesiam istum, eumque cruci-
fixerunt. Tum conversa fuit Ira Divina
continua super eos, gratia verò & Benevo-
lencia super paucos (*è Judæis*) qui sequuti
sunt Mesiam, & postea etiam super alios
populos, qui hos paucos sunt sequuti &
imitati, è quibus nos sumus. Et quamvis
non simus Israëlitæ, longè potiori tamen
jure nobis nomen Israëlitarum debetur,
quia nos ambulamus secundum verba Mes-
siæ, & Duodecim Sociorum (*h. e. Discipulo-
rum vel Apostolorum*) ejus è filiis Israël, loco
Duodecim tribuum, prout etiam populus
magnus è filiis Israëlis sunt sequuti illos
Duodecim, qui fuerunt quasi Pasta po-
puli Christiani. Unde nos digni facti
sumus Dignitate Israëlitarum, & penes
nos nunc est potentia & robur in terris,
omnesque populi vocantur ad fidem hanc,
& jubentur adhærere ei, atque magnificare
& exaltare Mesiam, ejusque Lignum (*h. e.
Crucem*) venerari, in quo crucifixus fuit, &
similia: Judiciaque & Statuta nostra sunt
partim Præcepta Simeonis socii (*h. e. Petri
Apostoli*), & partim Statuta Legis, quam
nos discimus, & de cujus veritate nullo mo-
do dubitari potest, quin à Deo sit profecta.
Nam in ipso Evangelio in verbis Mes-
siæ habetur; *Non veni ut destruam præceptum ali-
quod ex præceptis filiorum Israël, & Moysi, Pro-
pheta ipsorum, sed veni, ut illa impleam & confir-
mem, Matth. 5.*]

NOTÆ.

[1.] *Ubi prima editio habet אֲדוּם, h. e. Christianum; pro eo in secundâ
substitu-*

ומשכנו בתוך בני ישראל ל-
לכבוד להם כאשר היה
הענין האלקי נדבק בהם עד
שמרו המונותם במשיח הזה
ותלוהו ושם הקצף מתמיד
עליו ועל המונות והרצון
ליחידים ההולכים אחרי
המשיח ואחרי כן לאומות
ההולכים אחרי היחידים
האלה ואנחנו מהם זאם
לא נהיה מבני ישראל אנחנו
יותר ראוי שנקרא בני ישראל
מפני שאנחנו הולכים אחרי
דברי המשיח וחביריו מבני
ישראל שנים עשר במקום
השבתים ואחר כן הלכו עם
רב מבני ישראל אחרי השנים
עשר ההם והיו כמחמצת
לאומות הנוצרים והיינו אנו
ראויים למעלת בני ישראל
וזיתה לנו הגבורה והעצמות
בארצות וכל האומות נקראים
אל האמונה הזאת ומצויים
להדבק בה ולגדל ולרומם
למשיח ולגדל את עזו אשר
נתלה עליו והדומה לה
ודינינו וחקינו ממצות שמעון
החבר וחוקים מן התורה
אשר אנו לומדים אותה ואין
ספק באמתתה שהיא מאת
האלקים: וכבר בא באון
גליון בדברי המשיח לא באתי
לסתור מצוה ממצות בני
ישראל ומשרה נביאים אבל
באתי לחזקם ולאמצם:]

Quamdiu Res Divina ipsis adhaesit: as long as the divine cause adhered to them

Illi rebelarunt: the original and the Hebrew say: their masses rebelled

Conversa fuit: technically, Latin does not have a remote past tense, like Spanish has. Nevertheless, this form (perfect of esse + participle) was used even in Classical Latin. In Cicero we find: “Itaque in iis scriptum litteris Punicis fuit regem Masinissam imprudentem accepisse” (In Verrem II.4 103)

Super eos: again, the original and the Hebrew say: on their masses

Gratia vero et benevolentia: these are nominatives, each of them still dependent on conversa fuit. The Arabic and Hebrew do not have gratia, but just benevolentia.

Loco: in place of, instead

Prout: postea

Pasta: the Hebrew uses the term maḥmetset, a biblical word used in Exodus 12:20 to designate leavened food. The Vulgate correctly translates “omne fermentatum”. In other words, those Israelites who followed the twelve apostles acted as a ferment to the nascent Christian people. The Latin term pasta may not convey the right idea (and, thinking of the evolution of this word in our days, may even have some comic overtones).

Penes nos est potentia et robur: we have the power and the strength. A closer rendering of the original Arabic is: we obtained the victory and the spread.

Ut destruam: The Vulgate has “Nolite putare quoniam veni solvere lege”. Both the Arabic and the Hebrew use the verb “to contradict”. Why would Buxtorf choose “to destroy” is puzzling.

substitutum est פֶּרְסִי Perfam, pueriliter tegendo fraudem, odii Christianorum evitandi causâ. Cur Christianos Judai vocent Edomæos, de eo quadam sunt ex Hebrais producta in Lexico nostro Talmudico, in voce אֶדוּם. Prolixè autem hanc questionem pertractat Abarbenel Comment. in Esaiam cap. 34. ubi multa habet blasphemia & impia. Integram ejus Dissertationem exhibebimus, Deo favente, Lectori ad finem hujus libri, ne hîc nimis longâ digressionem ejus feriem turbemus.

[2.] *Qua hîc uncis sunt inclusa, ea omnia in secunda editione sunt omissa. Nos ex prima editione exhibere ea volumus.*

ס אמר הכוזרי אין בכאן מקום לסברא אך הסברא מרחיק רוב הדברים האלה אך כאשר תתאמת הראיה והנסיון עד שיאמין בו כל הלב ולא ימצא דרך אחרת להאמין בזולת מה שנתברר אצלו יתחכם להקיש וינהלה לאט עד שיקרב הרחוק ההוא כאשר יעשו הטבעיים בכחות המופלאים אשר הם רואים שאם יסופר להם עליהם מכלי ראותם היו מכחישים אותם וכאשר רואים אותם מתחכמים ושמ' להם סבות מן הכוכבים והרוחניות ולא ידחו הראור אבל אני אינני מוצא דעתי נוחה לקבל הדברים האלה מפני שהם חדשים לי ולא גדלתי עליהן וחובה עלי לחקור בשלמות עד שאמצ' העקר :
ואחר כן קרא לחכם מחכמי ישמעאל ושאל אותו על חכמתו ומעשהו ואמר לו

V. *Cosri ad hæc respondit ei (sc. Christiano); Sana ratio hanc fidem nō admittit; sed refellit majorem istorum partem. [1.] Saltem si verificarentur per rationes sufficientes, aut Experientiam, ita ut ea credere cogeret omne cor, neque aliam viam inveniret ad aliter credendum; tūm utique solertiâ & sapientiâ aliquid excogitari posset ad illud probandum, & sensim ac paulatim nos eò deducendum, ut id quod remotum (absurdum) videbatur, facile & propinquum evaderet (h. e. nobis persuaderetur); prout Physici faciunt in Virtutibus admirandis (occultis) quas Visu percipiunt, [2.] quas, si ipsis duntaxat narrarentur, neque ipsimet viderent, pro falsis haberent: posteaquam autem eas vident, solerter excogitant illarum causas, ex virtute Planetarum & Spiritualium influxuum, neque id quod vident, negant aut rejiciunt. Egò verò non invenio, quâ ratione in animum meum inducere possim, ut ista amplectar, quia mihi prorsus sunt nova (nunquam visa) neque in illis sum educatus. Incumbit autem mihi, ut Perfectionem quæram, cujus fundamentum habeam & inveniam.*

Advocavit itaque dehinc (Cosri) *Sapientem Ismaëlitam, & illum etiam de Sapientia (h.e. Doctrinâ) & Actionibus ejus interrogavit. Hic*
אנחנו B 2

Sana ratio: literally, a sound reasoning. More technically, the Arabic original uses the term “qiyas” and the Hebrew translation uses the Aramaic term “sbara”. Both in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and in the Talmud these terms are used for a technique of logical deduction based on analogy, so that a situation envisaged in the Qur’an (or the Torah) can be compared to a new situation that arises in contemporary society. In the context of the Talmud, sbara is opposed to gmara, which designates something that can be learned directly from the scriptures. More generally, qiyas and sbara can be understood as logic. Thus, the sentence can be translated as: “there is here no room for logic, but rather logic disproves most of these arguments”. The expression “hanc fidem” does not appear in the original, which simply says “here”.

Per rationes sufficientes aut experientiam: The original Arabic says “al-‘iyan” (العيان in Arabic characters, or אֵלֵעִיָּאן in Hebrew-Arabic transliteration). The meaning of this word is vision, and it can also be understood as evidence, such as that provided by an eyewitness. Ibn Tibbon correctly translated this with the Hebrew word “ha-reiyah” (הִרְאִיָּה), as can be seen at the left end of the 4th line of the Hebrew text. In Hebrew (and in Arabic) the vowels are seldom written. All characters represent consonants and, if needed, the vowels can be indicated with diacritics. Our word, however, can be “voweled” in two different ways. The same consonants with slightly different vowels yield the word “ha-reayah”, which means the proof, whether visual, or logical. Buxtorf (and many of the Hebrew commentators) took this second meaning of the word. What ha-Levi meant here was “when the observation or experiment are verified”.

Saltem ...: This is the start of a very convoluted sentence in the original. The Arabic can be rendered as: “but when the observation and experiment are verified and attain general assent, and there is no alternative but to believe what has been verified, one contrives a verbal proof so as to render closer what was distant”. Buxtorf manages to render it quite intelligibly in his Latin version, preserving the general sense without adhering to all the details

Prout physici: The previous argument is now reinforced by comparing it to what the natural scientists do when confronted with an unusual phenomenon.

Virtutibus: here virtus is understood in the sense of force. The natural scientists are sometimes confronted with unusual natural forces that they

observe. In note 2 of the next page (12), Buxtorf, with 17th-century hindsight, adduces a nice example: if people who had never seen a magnet were to be told of this mysterious force of nature, they would not believe it. But once they witness this phenomenon with their own eyes, they will come up with some explanation.

Duntaxat: construe as merely. If those phenomena were merely told to the physicists, without having seen them by themselves, they would hold them to be false.

Solert(er) excogitant illarum causas: they ably contrive (an explanation of) their causes. This whole argument should be placed in the context of scientific method (or the lack of it) at the time. Recall that this was written long before Roger Bacon (1220-1292), the doctor mirabilis, and William of Ockham (1287-1347). The idea of contriving a mathematical explanation to astronomical phenomena is oddly premonitory of the argument used by Andreas Osiander (1498-1552) in his prologue to Copernicus' magnum opus to pre-empt any criticism that invokes the necessity of objective truth in a physical theory.

Ut ista amplectar: that I should embrace these things (arguments)

Neque in illis sum educatus: The king correctly points out that for one not raised in a faith its tenets sound illogical and they require further investigation.

Cujus: refers back to perfectionem.

Sapientem Ismaelitam: This is, once again, Ibn Tibbon's meddling. The original says a sage from the sages of Islam. Clearly, the book of Genesis identifies Arabs as descendants of Ismael. But not every Muslim is an Arab, nor is every Arab a Muslim. Most probably, if historical, this sage could have been a Persian.

responditei; Nos credimus Unitatem & Æternitatem Dei, Creationem mundi, & Profapiam (*generis humani*) ab Adamo; Corporeitatem (vel Incorporationem, Incarnationem) à Deo removemus in universum: si tale quid in nostris libris videatur reperiri, illud explicamus, & dicimus, quòd sit metaphoricum, & ad Captum Intellectus nostri accommodatum: confitemur item, Verba libri Legis nostræ esse verba Dei, & illum ipsum (*librum*) demonstrare & testari de se ipso sufficienter, illum esse à nobis recipiendum; eò quòd nullus homo sit, qui similem librum componere possit; [3.] imò ne unicum quidem simile caput: credimus insuper Prophetam nostrum (*Mahometum*) esse Sigillum vel Signaculum Prophetarum, & abrogare omnem Legem antiquiorem ipsâ, vocare omnes populos ad Legem Ismaëliticam; & Retributionem seu Præmium obedientis ei esse, quòd reducturus sit animam ipsius in corpus in horto Edenis, ibique fruiturus sit amænitate & voluptate infinitâ, in Cibo, Potu, Venere, omniq; adeò eo, quod desiderare possit anima ipsius: contumacis verò & increduli pœnam esse, Detrusionem ejus in ignem inextinguibilem, ubi in æternum non finientur neque desinent cruciatus ejus.

N O T Æ.

[1.] *Initium hujus Sectionis non potuimus ad verbum reddere, sed sensum exprimere voluimus, qui eò tendit, Religionem Christianam, neq; in Sana ratione, neq; in Sensu & Experientia esse fundatam, quæ duo sint fundamenta, propter quæ fidem alicui rei adhibemus.*

[2.] *Ut E. G. in Magnete, cujus virtutem, si tantum audirent homines, non crederent: dum autem eam sensu ipso vident & experiuntur, hinc ad causas excogitandas & inveniendas deducuntur.*

[3.] *Quidam codices legunt, נפרש vel נפרשה imò ne explicare quidem possumus vel licitum nobis est unum ejus caput; propter ejus excellen-*

אנחנו מקיימים האחדות והקדמות לאלקים ית' והחדוש לעולם והיחש אל אדם ונרחיק הגשמות בכלל ואם יראה ממנו שום דבר ב דברינו נפרשהו ונאמר כי הוא דרך העברה וקירוב לשכלינו עם הודאתינו כי ספר תורתנו דברי אלקים והוא בעצמו מופת התחייבנו ב בקבולו בעבור עצמו מפני שאין אדם יכול לחבר ספר אחר כמותו וללא נפרשה אחרת מפרשיותיו ושנביאנו הוא חותם הנביאים ומבטל כל תורה הקדומה לו וקורא כל האומות אל תורת ישמעאל וגמול השומעו השבת רוחו אל גופו בגן עדן ונעימות ללא יחסר מאכל ומשתה ומשגל וכל אשר תאורה נ נפשו ועיניו הממרה הליכתו אל אש לא תכבה ולא יתמו יסוריו לעולם :

Credimus: Both the original Arabic and Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew translation use a term that can be translated as "we certify", rather than "we believe".

Ab Adamo: interestingly, the original Arabic manuscript reads: from Adam and Noah. Some Hebrew editions (like the one used by Buxtorf) do not refer to Noah.

Removemus in universum: we discard in general, absolutely, totally.

A deo: this is added by Buxtorf for clarity.

A nostris libris: the original refers to "our words", without mention of any books.

Esse: infinitive with accusative (verba), governed by confitemur, which governs also further infinitives.

Illum ipsum (librum) demonstrare et testari de se ipso sufficienter: the original says very straightforwardly that this book (the Qur'an) is a miracle.

Illum esse a nobis recipiendum: this should be construed as a passive periphrastic, implying obligation. Therefore, nobis should be construed as a dative rather than an ablative, and the preposition ab should be ignored. The original is very clear in this respect: we are obliged to accept it in and of itself (for its own sake).

Imo ne unicum quidem ... caput: nay, not even a single chapter. The original reads: a single verse.

Sigillum vel signaculum Prophetarum: This expression (خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّنَ) appears in the Qur'an, Sura 33:40. It is usually translated as Seal of the Prophets. As already pointed out before, Arabic and Hebrew are written usually without vowels. The Qur'an copies, however, carry the diacritics, to avoid any misreading. The word خَاتَم is read as khatam (خَاتَم), which means "seal", and which corresponds to an almost identical word in Hebrew, with the same meaning. An alternative reading is khatim (خَاتِيم), whose meaning is "the one who closes", "the last of". There is also the concept of the physical seal of Mohammad, in which case the word is spelled with a short vowel, namely, خَتْم, which can also mean "signature". In our context, it is evident that the sage is talking about one of the fundamental beliefs of Islam, that is, that Muhammad is the last prophet, and no other prophet can exist after him.

Antiquiorum ipsa: comparative with ablative.

Venere: sexual pleasures

Detrusionem: not found in classical sources. Noun from detrudo: to thrust down. First use of this noun appears in St. Jerome's commentary on Isaiah, Book 8: "didicimus ... detrusionem in lacum". This is a commentary on Isaiah 24:22, where reference to a pit (lacus) is made.

Neque desinent: and they will not cease.

excellentiā. Nam, scribit Muscatus, חק לישמעאל הוא לבלתי לחקור על Statutum habent Israëlitæ, ne quis inquirat in Legem ipforum, h. e. circa eam speculetur, & eam explicare vel rationibus confirmare conetur. Sic scribit Abarbenel ad Esa. 54. v. ult. Ismaëlitas non confirmare legem suam Argumentis vel rationibus, sed eos, qui illi contradicunt & se opponunt, occidere.

- 1 אמר לו הכוזרי מי שרוצין ליישר אותו בדבר האלקים ולברר אצלו כי האלקים מדבר עם בשר ודם והוא מרחיק זה צריך לברר אצלו דברים מפורסמים שאין מדחיק להם ולואי שיאמין עם זה כי הבורא דבר עם אדם ואם ספר תורתכם מופת לכם והוא בלשון ערבי אין מכיר מופתו והאות שלו לועז כמוני וכאשר יקרא באזני אינני מבדיל בינו ובין זולתו מלשון הערבי עד ש שאאמין שהוא האור :

VI. *Cofri*; Si quis aliquem eò perducere velit, ut amplectatur Verbum Dei, & evidens ipsi reddere, quòd Deus loquatur cum Carne & Sanguine; talem, inquam, qui id negat; eum oportet id facere rebus notis & evidentibus, quæ refutari nequeant. Atque utinam vel sic ei persuaderi possit, [1.] *Deum loqui cum Homine*. Quòd si Liber Legis vestrę Vobis sufficienter demonstrat (*authoritatem suam Divinam*), qui Arabicâ linguâ est conscriptus; non tamen agnoscat demonstrationem hanc, & *ταχυλογία* ejus barbarus (*qui linguam illam non intelligit*) qualis sum ego; nam si coram me legatur, nullam facturus sum ego differentiam inter illum, & quemvis alium librum Arabicum, donec illud signum ego credidero.

N O T Æ.

[1.] *Ista verba in quibusdam libris omittuntur. In impressis libris scribitur donec credat, sc. barbarus aliquis, illud signum. R. Jehudah putat legendum עד שאאמין, uti nos expressimus.*

- 1 אמר לו החכם וכבר נראו על ידו מופתים לא השמו לאורת בקבול תורתו :
- 2 אמר הכוזרי אין הדעת נוחה להודות שיש לבורא חברה עם בשר ודם כי אם במופת שמהפך בו טבע הדברים כדי שידוע כי זה לא יוכל

VII *Sapiens Ismaëlita* respondit ei: Multa quidem satis prodigiorum & miraculorum conspecta sunt per manum ejus (*Mahometi*); sed non posita sunt in signum (*ad promovendū sc. homines*) ut recipiant Legem ejus; (*quia Liber ipse per se de Divinitate sua docet*).

VIII. *Cofri*; Mens nostra nullo modo adduci potest ut fateatur, amicitiam & familiaritatem intercedere Deo cum Carne & Sanguine, nisi per prodigium, vel miraculum tale, quo ipsa rerum natu-

At the top of this page (13) there is a note by Buxtorf, quoting from “Muscatius”. Judah Moscato (1530-1593), an Italian rabbi, is the author of the first commentary of the Kuzari, known as Qol Yehudah (Judah’s voice). It is usually included in traditional Hebrew editions of the Kuzari as a running commentary written in a smaller and characteristic Hebrew script (known familiarly as Rashi’s script, a semi-cursive script traditionally used for Rashi’s commentary of the Torah and the Talmud). By a possible alternative reading of a word, Moscato claims, we learn that it is not permitted for Muslims to inquire (question) their laws. This politically and factually incorrect statement is made somewhat ironic, particularly because of a misprint in which Ismaelita is printed as Israelita. Even more astounding is the inclusion of a comment by Isaac ben Judah Abarbanel (1437-1508), who wrote commentaries on the Pentateuch and the Prophets, which were translated into Latin.

Carne et sanguine: human beings. This is a literal translation of the Hebrew expression “basar vadam” (flesh and blood). This Talmudic combination does not appear in the Hebrew Bible, where the word “basar” is used to refer to all living creatures. The book of Ben-Sirach 14:19, however, known as Ecclesiasticus in the Vulgate, includes the verse: “Sic generatio carnis et sanguinis alia finitur et alia nascitur”, reminiscent of Kohelet (Ecclesiastes 1:4). The Arabic original of the Kuzari uses “bashar”, the usual Arabic term for human beings.

Si quis aliquem perducere velit: the Hebrew subject and direct object have been confused, although the final meaning is clear. The Hebrew states: “If someone, whom people want to lead into the right way in matters of God and to explain to him that God speaks with human beings, while he denies it ...” The use of the passive voice would have been desirable to avoid any misunderstanding.

Utinam: The Hebrew edition that Buxtorf is using has the Hebrew-Aramaic term “levai”, which is indeed translated as “utinam” (would that ...). Other editions use the expression “yoter rau”, which is closer in meaning to the original Arabic expression “bilahra” (“it is preferable, more suitable, more probable”).

Sufficienter demonstrat: as in the previous page, Buxtorf seems to miss the word “miracle”. The meaning of the sentence is: if the book of your law is a

miracle to you and is written in Arabic, someone like me who does not know this language does not recognize its miraculous character.

Τεκμήρια: accusative plural. It is not clear why Buxtorf needed to use a Greek word, which is synonymous of the Latin *demonstrationes*.

Barbarus: Ibn-Tibbon uses the Hebrew word *עֲרָבִי* to indicate the same concept as the Greeks intended with the word *barbarus* (one who speaks a foreign language). The word appears in Psalms 114 (113):1. Following the Septuagint, the Vulgate indeed translates this verse as: “In exitu Israel de Aegypto, Domus Iacob de populo barbaro”.

Intercedere: to happen, to exist between. Takes the dative. Our mind can in no way be brought to admit that any familiarity or friendship between God and humans may happen, except by a miracle such that the very nature of things is turned upside down.

ra invertatur, ut constet, à nemine alio id præstari posse, nisi ab eo qui creavit res omnes ex nihilo. Deinde necesse est, ut res illa fiat coram ingenti hominum multitudine, qui eam oculis suis videant, neque per relationem aut traditionem ad eos veniat; Dehinc diligenter in eam est inquirendum, eaq; variis modis probanda, ita ut nulla in animis hominum dubitatio relinquatur, ac si per Phantasiam aut Præstigiasea facta esset. Et tamen sic vix admittent animi hominum, quòd hujus & futuri Mundi, Angelorum, Cælorum, & Luminarium cœlestiū Creator, Societatem seu familiaritatem ineat cum Materia ista vili & contemptibili, Homine, inquam, & cum eo loquatur, petitiones ejus impleat, & desiderii ejus satisfaciat.

IX. *Sapiens Ismaëlitæ.* Annon Liber Legis nostræ (*Alcoranus*) totus plenus est rebus gestis Mosis & Israëlitarum? Nec quisquam negare potest ea quæ (*Deus*) fecit cum Pharaone: quòd fiderit mare, & liberaverit electos suos; quòd submerferit eos quibus iratus fuit: quòd de cælo demiserit Manna & coturnices, quibus eos in deserto per 40. annos cibavit: quòd cum Mose locutus sit in monte Sinaj; quòd subsistere fecerit Solem in gratiam Josuæ; quòd eum juverit contra potentissimos Anakæos: ea item quæ antea fecit in Diluvio, & Subversione Sodomæ & Gomorrhæ. Annon hæc omnia sunt certa & manifesta? Neque ullus hîc est suspicandi locus, ista vel per præstigias facta, vel imaginaria & figmenta esse.

X. *Cosri*; Video, consulendos mihi esse Judæos, quia illi sunt reliquię filiorum Israël,

לא יוכל עליו אלא מי שברא הדברים מאין ושיהיה הענין ההוא לפני המונים יראוהו בעיניהם ולא יגיעם בספור ובקבלה ושיחקרו על הדב' ויבחנוהו בחינה אחר בחינה עד שלא יפול בלב אדם ספק כי יש בו צד דמיון או צד כשפים ולואי שתקבלנה הנפשות הדבר הגדול הזה שבורא העולם הזה והעולם הבא והמלאכים והשמים והמאורים יתחבר אל החומר הנבנ' הזה רל האד' ושידבר עמו וימלא משאלותיו ויעשה בקשותיו :

אמר החכם והלא ספר תורתנו מלא מדברי משה ובני ישראל ואין מדחה במה שעשה בפרעה ושבקע את הים ושהציל את בחיריו וטבע את אשר קצף עליהם והוריד להם המן והשליו אשר האכילם אחרי כן ארבעים שנה במדבר ושידבר עם משה בהר סיני והעמיד השמש ליהושע ועור אותו על הגבורים בני ענק ומה שעשה קודם לכן מן המבול ומהפכת סדום. ועמור הלא זה דבר ידוע ומפורסם ואין בכל צד סברא שהיה בתחבולה ולא בדמיון :

אמר חבורי אני רואה שצריך אני לשאול ליהודים מפני שהם שארית בני ישראל. Observo enim, ab illis argumen-

Ut constet: so that it may be known.

Praestari: to be performed. Construe as an accusative with the infinitive esse.

Praestigias: juggling, magic. Cf. the English word prestidigitation.

Vix: the Hebrew edition used by Buxtorf repeats here the Hebrew-Aramaic term “levai”, previously translated by “utinam”. Other Hebrew editions have here “yoter raii”, closer to the original Arabic expression “bilahra” (“it is preferable, more probable”).

Quod: that (non-classical use in indirect statement). The subject is creator.

Societatem ... ineat cum: should associate with.

Homine inquam: “I mean man”

Annon: nonne (to introduce a question to which an affirmative answer is expected)

Annon ... Israelitarum: The argument of the Muslim sage, just as in the case of the Christian master, is intentionally weakened by bringing the Jewish cultural precedence and thus setting the stage for the need to consult a rabbi, an idea that had been initially discarded by the king.

Siderit: it is not clear why Buxtorf uses this verb (from which the English verb to subside derives) rather than quoting (as the Hebrew does) from Exodus 14:16 (“extende manum tuam super mare et divide illud”)

Quibus: ablative of agent (a quibus)

Coturnices: coturnix, -icis (f) quail. See Exodus 16:13

Subsistere fecit solem: cf. Joshua 10:13

Anakaeos: these are the ‘giants’ (Hebrew “anaqim”) or Enacim in the Vulgate (Joshua 11:21)

Suspiciandi locus: room for suspicion. The Hebrew uses the word “sbara”, which we encountered earlier. Although it can mean a logical argument (as the Arabic qiyas), it can also mean a supposition, a hypothesis.

Consulendos mihi esse Judaeos: passive periphrastic, with accusative-infinitive dependent on video. The repeated mention of the Israelites by both the Christian and the Muslim sages convinces the king that he should consult

with the Jews. The rest of the book is indeed devoted to the dialog of the king of Khazar with the Jewish “socius” (or chaver in Hebrew).

מפני שאני רואה שהם הטענה והראיה לכל בעל דת כי יש לבורא תורה בארץ ואחר כן קרא חכם מחכמי היהודים ושאל אותו על אמונתו :

אמר לו החבר אנחנו יב

מאמינים באלדי אברהם יצחק ויעקב המוציא את בני ישראל ממצרים באותות ובמופתים ובמסות והמכלכלם במדבר והמנחילם את ארץ כנען אחר אשר העבירם את הים והירדן במופתים גדולים ושלח משה בתורתו ואחר כן כמה אלפי נביאים אחריו מזהירים על תורתו מעידים בגמול הטוב לשומרה ועונש הקשה לממרה אותה ואנחנו מ מאמינים בכל מה שכתוב בתורה והדברים ארוכים :

gumenta & rationes petere omnes eos, qui Legem & Religionē aliquā habent, pro Legis divinæ autoritate (*quia sc. tam Christianus, quàm Ismaëlitæ, in responsis suis, Israëlitarum mentionē fecerunt*). Accersivit itaq; *Sapientem Judæum*, eumq; etiā de fide sua interrogavit.

XI. *Hebraus ille respondit ei*; Nos credimus in Deum Abrahami, Isaaci, & Jacobi, qui eduxit filios Israël ex Ægypto, [1.] cum signis, prodigiis, & miraculis; qui sustentavit eos in deserto, & hæreditate possidendam dedit ipsis terram Canaan, posteaquam illos traduxisset per Mare & Jordanem, cum prodigiis magnis; qui cum Lege sua misit Mosen, & tot mille postea Prophetas post ipsum, homines ad observationem Legis adhortantes, & præmia quidem observantibus promittentes, pœnas verò graves inobedientibus denuntiantes; credimus deniq; omnibus iis, quæ scripta sunt in Legge. Sed prolixiora illa sunt, (*quàm ut hîc recitari omnia queant*).

N O T Æ.

[1.] Respicit ad locum Deut. 4. v. 34. *Aut nunquid tentavit Deus aliquis, ut acciperet sibi gentem aliquam è medio gentis alterius, במסת באתת* cum miraculis, signis & portentis &c. Vocem *במסת* sumunt pro miraculis, sicut & Chaldæus transtulit, *בגשץ*.

אמר הכוזרי מסכים יב

הייתי שלא אשאל יהודי מפני שידעתי אבוד זכרם וחסרון עצת' כי השפלות והדלות לא עזבו להם מדה טובה והלא היה לך לומר היהודי כי אתה מאמין בבור' העולם ומסדרו ומנהיגו ובמי שבראך והטריפך והדומה

XII. *Cofri*; Constitueram antea, nullum Judæum interrogare, quòd scirem intercidisse pœnè memoriam ipsorum, & simul inopiam consilii ipsorum. Illorum enim Humiliatio, Depressio, & attenuatio, nullam relinquunt ipsis qualitatem bonam (*Virtutem laudabilem*). Annon verò, Judæe, dicendum tibi erat, quòd credas in Creatorem mundi, ejusq; Rectorem & gubernatorem, qui te creavit & alit,

quæque his sunt similia? Quæ est argumendi vel loquendi ratio uniuscujusque, qui fidem & religionem aliquam habet, propter quam ille sectatur Veritatis agnitionem, & Conformitatem (*cum ea in operibus*) ut quàm simillimus Creatori fiat in Justitia, & Sapientia.

XIII. *Judeus*: Quam tu dicis religionem, ea λογιστική est, h. e. rationalis, solâ speculatione nitens (*quæ nullis probationibus & demonstrationibus externis, veluti signis, prodigiis, miraculis, sensu perceptis, sed solis rationibus & speculationibus Intellectûs, confirmatur*), & plurimis adhuc dubitationibus obnoxia. Quod si enim de ea requires Philosophos, ne de unica quidem vel Actione vel Sententia eos consentientes invenies: quia scilicet illorum Argumenta sunt ex parte Demonstrativa, quædam ex parte satisfaciunt, ut mens in illis possit acquiescere (*h. e. probabilia, topica*); alia prorsus sunt insufficientia (*i. e. ne probabilia quidem*) multò minus demonstrativa.

XIV. *Cosri*; Judæe, video principium sermonis tui satis esse bonum. Pluribus itaque tecum agere constitui.

XV. *Judeus*; Sed principium verborum meorum est Demonstratio, & talis Probatio, quæ nullâ aliâ probatione & demonstratione indigeat.

N O T Æ.

R. *Jehuda Muscatus existimat, hanc sectionem 15. coherere cum 13. Judæi enim sermonem ibi fuisse à Cosri S. 14. interruptum, quem nunc continuet; opponens suas Probationes, probationibus & rationibus Philosophorum & aliorum.*

XVI. *Cosri*; Quî hoc?

XVII. *Judeus*; Si veniam mihi dederis præmittendi quædam, declarabo tibi hanc

והדומה לספורים האלה אשר היא טענת כל מי שיש לו דת ובעבורה הוא רודף האמת והשווי להדמות לבורא בצדקו ובחכמתו:

אמר החבר זה שאת' אומר היא הדת ההקשירה מביא אליה העיון ונכנסים בה ספקות רבות: ואם תשאל הפילוסופים עליה, אינך מוצא אותם מסכימין על מעשה אחד ולא על דעת אחד מפני שהם טענות יש מהם מה שהם יכולים להעמיד עליהם מופת ומהם מה שיספיקו גם דבר ש שתתיישב הדעת עליו ומהם מה שלא יספיקו גם כל שכן שיעמידו גם מופת:

אמר הכוזרי רואה אני דברך היהודי טוב מפתחתו ואני רוצה עתה שאוסיף לדבר עמך:

אמר החבר אבל פתיחת דברי היא המופת ועוד כי היא הראיה אין צריך עמה לא ראה ולא מופת:

אמר הכוזרי ואיך הוא זה?

אמר החבר אם תתן לי רשות להקדים לך הקדמות

rem. Vi-

אבאר לך כי אני רואה דבר
כבדים עליך ונקלים בעיניך:

אמר הכוזרי הקדום יח
הקדמותיך ואשמעם:

אמר החבר אלו היו יט
אומרים לך כי מלך הודו איש
חסד ראוי לרוממו ולתת
כבוד לשמו ולספר מעשיו במה
שיגיע אליך מצדק אנשי ארצו
ומדות הטובות ושמשאים
ומתנם באמונה ההיית
חייב בזה להגידו ולהאמינו:

rem. Video enim mea verba tibi esse diffi-
cilia, & levia in oculis tuis.

XVIII. *Cofri*; Age, profer tua princi-
pia, & audiam ea.

XIX. *Judeus*; Si quis tibi diceret, Re-
gem [1.] Indiæ esse virum Pium, laude,
honore, cujusq; facta celebrentur, dignissi-
mum; eò quòd videas, subditos illius esse
viros justos, virtutibus præditos, in nego-
tando integros & fideles; an existimares, te
hinc obligatû fore ista profiteri & credere?

N O T Æ.

[1.] R. *Jebudah dicit, illum idèò India meminisse, quòd ea longissimè abfue-
rit à terra Regis Cusar: quamvis enim utraq; sit Orientalis, in latitudine ta-
men esse differentiam. Terram enim Cusar esse in Climate sexto, Indiam verò par-
tim in secundo, partim in tertio.*

אמר הכוזרי ואיך הייתי י
חייבנו ואני מסופק אם צדק
אנשי הודו מעצמם ואין להם
מלך או צדקתם נחמת מלכם
או אם משני הפנים יחד:

XX. *Cofri*; Quomodo obligari possem
ad hanc rem, cùm dubius essem, an Justi-
tiam illam haberent Indi à seipsis, sine Re-
ge? an verò eam haberent à Rege? an deniq;
utroque modo?

אמר החבר ואם היו כב
באים אליך שלוחיו בתשורות
הודיות אינך מסתפק שאינם
נמצאים אלא בארץ הודו
בארמנות המלכים בכתב
מפורסם שהוא מאתו ועמו
רפואות שהם רופאות אותך
מחלייך ושומרות עליך ב
בריותיך וסמי מות לשונאיך
והנלחמים בך שאתה יוצא
להם בהם וממית אותם
מבלי כלי מלחמה ההיית
confirmarent, & conservarent; aromata denique lethifera pro inimi-
cis & hostibus tuis, quibus instructus, contra eos exire posses, eosque
sine ullis armis bellicis devincere; (vide Exod. 23.25. & seqq.) an jam
חייב C

XXI. *Judeus*; Quod si verò ad te veni-
rent Legati ipsius cum muneribus Indicis,
de quibus indubium esset, quòd nullibi nisi
in India reperirentur in Palatiis Regum;
(*Respicit ad Dationem Legis & Tabularum, qui-
bus Decalogus insculptus erat*) cum literis item,
(*vel; Cum Scriptura. Respicit ad Descriptionem
Tabularum, de qua dicitur; Et Scriptura erat
Scriptura Dei*) quæ manifestè evincerent,
illas ab eo (Rege) venire, & presentissima in
se continerent pharmaca, quæ te tùm à mor-
bis tuis curarent, tùm valetudinem tuâ tibi

De gentili et tribus sapientibus

Many religious or philosophical books are, at least in part, polemical and apologetic. In this aspect, the Jewish and Christian bibles, the Talmud, and the Qur'an do not disappoint. Some philosophical works can be included in this category too. Plato, for instance, uses the dialogue form as an extremely vivid literary vehicle to simulate the real-life intellectual exchanges of pros and cons that one may have in one's own mind or in friendly intercourse with others. This technique is also used in the Bhagavad Gita, and in many masterpieces of Chinese philosophy, such as the Zhuangzi.

Plato's
dialogues

The main purpose of religious and philosophical works of a polemical nature can be merely didactic, or proselytist, or reactive to a perceived or actual attack. One of the earliest examples of the last kind within the Jewish tradition is the work of Josephus Flavius (37-100 CE), written in Greek and known by its Latin name *Contra Apionem*, in defense against pagan attacks. Justin Martyr (100-165) is considered the first Christian apologist. His *First Apology* (addressed to the emperor Antoninus Pius) and his *Second Apology* (addressed to the Roman senate) were written to defend Christians against attacks for supposed lack of loyalty and immorality. He is also the author of a work contraposing Christianity to Judaism, written in the form of a dialogue with a Jew named Trypho. These works were written in Greek. Also in Greek, Origen

Josephus'
Contra
Apionem

Justin Martyr's
Apologies

of Alexandria (184-253) wrote an apologetic work known in Latin as *Contra Celsum*, in defense of Christianity against attacks from Celsus, a Greek Epicurean philosopher. Celsus' work (*The True Word*) is lost, but many of his arguments are preserved from quotes in Origen's rebuttal.

Origen's
Contra Celsum

Most Church fathers, both Greek, such as Irenaeus (130-202), and Latin, such as Tertulian (160-225), wrote against heretics in general and Jews in particular. The genre was raised to new heights by John Chrysostom (347-407) in his *Adversus Judaeos*, a collection of homilies, which added a dire dimension that transcended doctrinal issues, accusing the Jews of immoral behaviour and eternal collective guilt in the crucifixion. His younger and more important contemporary Augustine of Hippo (354-430) shows a more conciliatory tone, allowing the Jews to continue to exist as witnesses of the original Mosaic law.

Irenaeus

Tertulian

John
Chrysostom

St. Augustine

The entry of Islam introduced a new factor in the development of the apologetic genre, particularly after the accession of the Abbasid dynasty in 758, with its considerably territorial extent and its more liberal attitude towards open dialogue, as epitomized by the *Bayt al-Hikma*. The picture is also much more complex than before on account of the abundance of subgroups in Judaism (such as the Qaraites), Islam (such as Sunnis, Shi'ites, Ahl al-Kalam, Mu'tazilites), and Christians (such as Nestorians, Monophysites, Arianists, Melkites).³⁶ Under the

Abbasid period

Sects

³⁶ For a general picture of this initial period of Islamic-Christian apologetics see Ehinger J L (2012), *Was anyone listening? Christian apologetics against Islam as a literary genre*, *Studies in Church History* 48, pp 35-46.

Abbasids, a new period of revival of philosophy and the natural sciences was launched, one of whose aims was the attempt at reconciling the tenets of revealed religion with the Greek philosophical heritage.

The century 1050-1150 gives us Peter Abelard (1079-1142), al-Ghazali (1058-1111), and Judah ha-Levi (1071-1141), each of whom wrote apologetic works. Abelard's delightful *Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum*, written from a Christian perspective but emphasizing the value of Aristotelian Logic, is remarkably benign and balanced in both style and content. Al-Ghazali's *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, proclaiming the demise of philosophy as a method to arrive at absolute truth, is preceded by *Maqasid al-Falasifa*, a clear presentation of philosophy as understood by Avicenna, without any hint of its perceived weaknesses. Judah ha-Levi's *Kuzari*, although devoting most of the book to an exposition of Jewish principles and practices, starts with a Muslim and a Christian making their case in front of the gentile king of Khazar who is supposedly looking for an ethical system to adopt.

Peter Abelard

Al-Ghazali

Judah Halevi

By 1233 the Papal Inquisition was established by Pope Gregory IX, and physical persecution of heretics was thus given official approval. At the same time, the literary dialectical adventures of ages past became tragically enacted in the form of actual disputations, with predictable results. The first such encounter took place in Paris in 1240, effectively a trial and burning of the Talmud. Nevertheless, there was still enough inspiration left to produce at least one more

Gregory IX

Trial of the
Talmud

masterpiece in the apologetic-dialectic style. This work is Ramón Llull's *Liber de Gentili et Tribus Sapientibus*.

Ramón Llull (Raimundus Lullus, 1232-1316) was a Catalan polymath, whose contributions range from philosophy to mathematics, and to literature. His book *Blanquerna* is the first Catalan novel and one of the first of its genre in European literature, preceding *Don Quijote* by more than 300 years. Married, with children, and leading a life of material pleasures, he had an epiphany at the age of about 30, which prompted him to devote the rest of his life to convert nonbelievers, starting with his own immediate conversion to Christianity. He devoted some years to upgrade his education, importantly including the study of Arabic. The bulk of his missionary work was directed to attract Muslims to the Christian faith. His major philosophical work, the *Ars Magna*, comprises a system of thought that can be applied as a missionary tool that employs rational means evolving from common principles shared by all monotheistic religions. His system is formulated in terms of geometrically representable diagrams. These ideas are in part put to work in the *Liber de Gentili*. It was written originally in Arabic and translated by Llull himself into Catalan and Latin. A telling detail in this work is that, after hearing and questioning each of the sages representing Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the Gentile's choice is not recorded, and the three sages decide to continue their friendly conversation elsewhere.

Ramón Llull

Blanquerna

Ars Magna

*Liber de
Gentili*

1
Deo excellentissime cuius imperium quod terrarum non mensuratur
nec tempore. cuius nunquam honoris materia deficit nec
consistit in tempore. cuius unum benedictione et gratia unumque auxilio
interiorum quae uere magestati celsitudinis. honorum dilec-
tio et famularum. non uera metum infinita dignitas. per
se creaturam insidatoris punita tribuat. Incipit liber
de gentibus et tribus sapientibus super rationibus cum legimus:-

Qum loqui ipse preparare infidelium gustationem. et eorum falsas opinionem ac errorem
cognouimus. ut ipse excellentissimum deum
ditore omnium laudare ualeat et cognoscere
et ad usum salutem eterne peruenire. Ego pauper peccator cum
pabili mudamque gentibus usque eius nomen in huius
libri recto ut aliter indignum exemplum fore reor. Sequitur
modum libri arabici de gentibus totius mundi huius nomen
olo. primum in gentibus ualuit punitas tollere. confidens
auxilio sum opificum adiuuari. inuestigare nouum
modum nouasque res quibus possint errare ab errore
sententia reuocari. et infinitos labores efugere ac glo-
ria quae sine fine. Quae siquidem factas. appata re-
quirit uocabula quibus manifestetur melius. hec autem scia cum de
mostriam ac intellectuali sic. in scriptis uocabulis indi-
ges et obscuris. quae plebei et vulgaris homines intelligere
non ualere. cum tamen bonum esse desideras. hunc librum
scilicet disponam. tam laicis et rudibus quam subtilibus et pue-
ris. prout in principio breuiter planissime uocabulis. hac sciam
appalabo. confides de illius gratia et in media in cuius comple-
mento proficiat de bonum. quod hoc in. huius libri materia
prologem in postquam magis apparet uocabulis. licet tamen homi-
bus diligentibus ad apicem spectatione scie suos ascendere
intelligam. quod ultimam quae derogat hunc scie in uocabulis

*Liber gentium
est alius
ab isto. Vide
illum citatum
in fine. sicut
dicitur de Gen-
tibus, et huius
sapientibus.*



prima gdnō

Virtutes create sunt in
 nobilitate quo fuerunt et per
 factum virtutum creatur maxi-
 ma nobilitate et p̄fectio. sig-
 ficat et demonstrat.

scda gdnō

Virtutes icreate et cre-
 ate nullo modo sibi inuice
 aduersantur.

Arbor de virtutib' icant' / z caris.

RAYMUNDI LULLI DOCTORIS ILLUMINATI ET MARTYRIS *Augustini & Tomellæ* OPERUM TOMUS II.

In quo continentur sequentes Tractatus:

Liber de Gentili & tribus Sapien- tibus.	§ Liber de quinque Sapientibus.
Liber de Sancto Spiritu.	Liber Mirandarum Demonstrationū.
	§ Liber de XIV. Articulis Fidei.



*Cum Privilegio Sacræ Cæsareæ Majestatis, & Permissu Superiorum.
Anno Salutis Domini M DCC XXII.*

MOGUNTIAE,
EX OFFICINA TYPOGRAPHICA MAYERIANA,
Per JOANNEM GEORGIUM HÄFFNER.



A
 Prima Conditiō est, quod quilibet semper debeat ad DEO, & in ipso agnoscere omnem maiorem aem in Essentia & Virtutibus & in Operatio-
 na Conditiō est, quod Flores hujus Arboris nulli in iocundum opponantur, nec quidem earum sunt seu minores, quāvis alii.

B
 Prima Conditiō est, quod Virtutes creatae sunt tantis maioribus & nobilitatibus, quāvis perfectioribus & fortibus significat & demonstrat maximam nobilitatem & perfectiōnem Virtutum increatarum.
 Secunda Conditiō est, quod Virtutes increatae & creatae nullis modis suis invicem contrariantur.

C
 Prima Conditiō est, quod Virtutes increatae divinae nullatenus conveniunt aliis adcoisitor.
 Secunda Conditiō est, quod Virtutes increatae divinae esse maiore omni illud, per quod demonstrantur humanis intellectibus, quāvis illud, quod sit contrarium predictarum virtutum, esse verum, & eius contrarium esse falsum, saltem antecedenti Conditiōibus aliarum Arborum.

D
 Prima Conditiō est, quod nulla ipsarum Virtutum aliquatenus aliis adcoisitor.
 Secunda Conditiō est, quod illud, in quo predictae Virtutes cum majori esse melius conveniunt, & illud, in quo homo per ipso acquirit motum meritorium, affirmatur, esse verum, & eius contrarium esse falsum, saltem antecedenti Conditiōibus aliarum Arborum.

E
 Prima Conditiō est, quod Virtutes & vitia aliquatenus ad invicem non contrariantur.
 Secunda Conditiō est, quod Virtutes, quae vitis sunt, magis contrariantur, magis & fortius diliguntur, & vitis, quae magis opponantur Virtutibus, magis deficiunt & magis odium atrahunt.

De Narratione

Divina Ordinatione contigit, quod in quadam terra fuerit homo quidam Gentilis valde peritus in philosophicis scientiis, et semel considerans celsitudinem³⁷ sui status et scientiam, coepit etiam cogitare in³⁸ morte et in opulentia bonorum delectabilium hujus mundi. Iste vero Gentilis nullam notitiam habebat de Deo, nec de resurrectione, nec etiam credebatur post mortem cujuslibet animalis³⁹ aliud quid esse posse.

Dum Gentilis in hac consideratione existeret,⁴⁰ obortis lachrymis oculorum de suo corde alte suspirans labitur in planctum, tristitiam et dolorem; tantum namque placebat Gentili muliebris delectatio vitae mundanae, et mors ei fuit tantum timorosa⁴¹ et horribilis (ideo maxime quod opinabatur se nihil fore post mortem) quod nec poterat se consolari, nec tristitiam sui cordis pellere, nec etiam lachrymas oculorum cohibere. Cum Gentilis in labore hujus considerationis persisteret, intra se decrevit relinquere natale solum, et ad aliquas extraneas partes se transferre, si forte posset invenire remedium suae afflictionis, et existimavit ire *ad quoddam inhabitabile nemus, quod erat abundans multis formosis fontibus, et multis arboribus copiose ferentibus diversos fructus, per quarum recreationem vita humani corporis posset prolongari*. Hanc autem sylvam inhabitabant plurimae aves diversorum generum, et multa

³⁷ Elevation, height. Although more in use in Ecclesiastical Latin, it appears in Classical sources (e. g., Velleius Paterculus, *Historiae Romanae*, II/2-94).

³⁸ Cogitare in (instead of de) is an obvious derivation from Spanish or Catalan.

³⁹ Living being.

⁴⁰ Exsisteret, esset.

⁴¹ Frightening. Not in Classical Latin.

sylvestria animalia diversarum specierum. Itaque Gentilis opinabatur in hac eremo⁴² odoratu florum et aspectu pulchrarum arborum, atque amoenitate fontium et fluviorum habere refrigerium et quietem suae laboriosae cogitationis, quae suum corpus graviter affligebat.

...

Dum Gentilis sic vagabatur per eremum de loco in loco, sicut homo positus extra sensum, devenit in quendam tramitem valde pulchrum, et proposuit in illo tramite progredi, quousque videret ad quem finem labor suae cogitationis posset terminari. Contigit autem quod, dum Gentilis gradiebatur per illud iter, tres Sapientes obviaverint sibi invicem in exitu cujusdam civitatis nobilis ac valde magnae. Unus horum Sapientes erat *Judaeus*, alter *Christianus*, tertius vero *Saracenus*. Cum vero essent extra civitatem, videntes se mutua salutatione grater⁴³ exceperunt, et se invicem comitabantur, et quilibet alterum interrogabat de suo statu et salute, et qualis esset sua voluntas seu propositum faciendi. Et omnes tres concordaverunt quod tenderent ad aliquem locum, ubi anima cujuslibet eorum, quae fatigata erat magno labore studii, in quo steterat, aliqua recreatione posset resumere suas vires. Tantum vero quaesiverunt hi tres sapientes, quilibet loquendo de fide, quam tenebat, et de scientia, quam docebat suos scholares, quousque devenerunt in illam sylvam, per quam supradictus Gentilis perturbatus oberrabat. Tantumque isti tres Sapientes per illam sylvam processerant, quod devenerint in quoddam pratum pulcherrimum, *ubi erat quidam*

⁴² From the Greek heremos, desert, solitude. See Vulgate, Deut. 1:19.

⁴³ Joyfully.

fons valde decorus, cujus aqua rigabat quinque Arbores, quae significantur per quinque Arbores, quae depinguntur in principio hujus libri. Ad fontem fuit quaedam Domina mirabilis pulchritudinis et formae, pretiosissimis vestibibus induta, equitans palafrenum⁴⁴ quendam pulcherrimum, cui in praedictum fonte dabat potum. Praedicti vero Sapientes, dum viderent illas quinque Arbores, quae fuerunt valde placidae ad videndum, et conspicerent Dominam, quam similiter aspicere erat oculis valde gratatura, accesserunt ad fontem et salutaverunt Dominam humiliter et devote. Domina vero iterum verbis placidis dabat eis salutem. Sapientes autem interrogaverunt Dominam quod esset ejus nomen. Respondit eis Domina quod ipsa esset *Intelligentia*. Quo audito, Sapientes deprecantur Dominam quod placeret ei docere ipsos naturam et proprietatem illarum Arborum, quid etiam significarent litterae quae erant scriptae in floribus cujuslibet Arboris.

...

Lady Intelligence proceeds to give the three sages a detailed explanation of the symbolic meaning of each of the trees and their respective flowers, as depicted in the illustrations at the beginning of the book. The first tree, with its 21 flowers, signifies God as the creator of all things. His eternal virtues are written in the flowers. The lengthy explanation of the trees and their attributes is masterfully summarized by the well-known Lull scholar Anthony Bonner as follows:⁴⁵

Abridging greatly, the system of the book is based on the seven attributes of God (goodness, greatness, eternity, etc), the seven virtues (faith, hope, charity, etc) and the seven mortal sins (gluttony, lust, avarice, etc). She then makes them into binary combinations that she writes on the “flowers” of the trees;

⁴⁴ Palfrey, a tame horse used by ladies attending public functions. Spanish palafrén, Catalan palafré. Derived supposedly from Medieval Latin paraveredus, a post horse.

⁴⁵ Bonner A (2008), The interreligious disputation, Ramon Llull’s ingenious solution, *Quaderns de la Mediterrània* 9, pp 150-155 (English), pp 362-368 (Spanish).

that is, the first tree combines a divine attribute with another, so that on its first flower is written the two words “goodness” and “greatness”, on the second “goodness” and “eternity”, etc. The second tree combines divine attributes with virtues, so that on the flowers we find “goodness” and “faith”, “goodness” and “hope”, etc. On the third tree we find the divine attributes combined with sins, on the fourth the virtues combined with each other, and on the fifth the virtues combined with the sins. After describing these binary combinations of the “flowers”, the Lady of Intelligence explains that each one of these five trees has two conditions. Of the first tree, for example, a condition is that we always attribute to God the greatest nobility in essence, in virtues and in works. The second is that the flowers do not contradict each other, and there is the same number of each. The conditions of the other trees give a kind of spiritual and moral classification, in which the positive concepts (here the divine attributes and the virtues) must agree with each other and oppose the negative (the sins). Llull adds that it is necessary to affirm anything that best shows these concordances or contrarieties. Finally, there are two general supplementary conditions, the first of which says that it is necessary for the ten aforementioned conditions to “agree on an end. The other is that they should not oppose that end, [which] is to love and know and fear and serve God.”

...

Cum vero Domina dixisset illis tribus Sapientibus omnia supra dicta, tunc accepit commeatum⁴⁶ ab ipsis, et arripuit suum iter. Remanserunt autem illi tres Sapientes juxta fontem sub illis quinque Arboribus; quorum unus fortiter suspirans dixit aliis : ha Deus, quam magnum bonum foret istud, si per scientiam istarum Arborum possemus esse in una lege et in una fide omnes, qui vivimus in hoc mundo, ita ut quod rancor et odium non essent inter homines, qui se invicem odiunt propter diversas fides et contrarias leges diversorum populorum, et quod, sicut est tantum unus Deus, Pater et Dominus et Creator omnium rerum, ita omnes populi, qui sunt positi sub diversitate,

⁴⁶ Took her leave.

convenirent esse unus populus, et quod ille esset in via salvationis perpetuae, et sic, quod omnes haberemus unam fidem et legem, per quam possemus reddere gloriam et debitas laudes nostro Domino Deo Creatori omnium bonorum. Considerate, Domini, dixit ille Sapiens suis sociis, quot sunt damna quae sequuntur eo quod omnes homines non habent tantum unam fidem, quot etiam sunt bona quae forent si omnes eandem legem concordanter teneremus.

Cum hoc igitur sit verum, si videretur vobis esse bonum, quod sederemus sub istis Arboribus juxta istum fontem, et disputarem super hoc quod quilibet nostrum credit, secundum quod doctrina istorum florum nobis significant, et secundum conditiones supradictarum Arborum, *et eo quod per auctoritates non possumus convenire, tentarem utrum possemus concordare demonstrativis et necessariis rationibus*. Alii vero Sapientes consentiunt praedicto Sapienti et approbant hoc quod dixit.

Consederunt ergo Sapientes sub illis Arboribus et coeperunt intueri flores illarum arborum, et recolebant conditiones et verba quae Domina retulerat, et proposuerunt in sua disputatione prosequi modum et doctrinam, secundum quod per Dominam eis prius erat demonstrandum.

Quamprimum Sapientes voluerunt incipere sibi invicem proponere quaestiones, viderunt Gentilem venientem, qui per illam forestam errabat ut stolidus proluxa barba, longis et incomptis crinibus. Veniebat enim sicut debilis homo discolorata facie, macilenta habitudine propter laborem suarum cogitationum et longitudinem itineris, quod fecerat per forestam,

a suis oculis quamplurimae lachrymae continuo emanabant, suum cor crebro dabat suspiria doloris, et ex suo ore non cessabat emittere planctus et gemitus, et propter maximum laborem suae cogitationis sitiebat, ac oportuit ipsum prius in fonte bibere, quam illis Sapientibus posset loqui.

Cum vero Gentilis bibit in fonte, et vires ac anhelitus sui pectoris aliquantulum virtutem resumpserunt cessante impetu spiritus, tunc Gentilis illos tres Sapientes in suo idiomate⁴⁷ salutat secundum consuetudinem suae terrae. Sapientes autem reddentes ei salutes dixerunt quod ille Deus, qui esset Rex Glorae et Pater ac Dominus omnium, quae sunt, et creaverat totum mundum de nihilo, qui etiam resuscitabit bonos et malos, ei esset propitius, et consolaretur eum, et ipsum in suis necessitatibus adjuvaret.

Cum gentilis audivit salutationem, quam ipsi reddiderant Sapientes, inspexitque praedictas quinque Arbores, legit etiam in floribus Arborum, et vidit extraneum modum illorum Sapientum, et eorum extranea vestimenta, tunc cogitans exterritus incepit admirari plurimum de verbis, quae a Sapientibus audierat, ac de his quae videbat in Arboribus et in extraneo habitu Sapientum.

Unus vero illorum Sapientum ait Gentili: Amice, unde venitis? Vel quod est vestrum nomen? Satis videtur vestrum corpus desolatum et afflictum propter aliqua quae patimini. Vel quare venitis in hunc locum? Exponatis nobis vestrum factum, siqua

⁴⁷ Language.

causa est in qua possimus consolari vos vel dare vobis aliquod remedium seu auxilium.

Gentilis vero respondit dicens quod ipse esset Gentilis et veniret de longinquis partibus et vagaretur per illam forestam sicut homo positus extra sensum, atque a fortuna in illum locum devenisset. Refert itaque dolorem et tormenta in quae ipsum duxerat tentatio timorosae mortis. Et cum in salutatione, quam mihi reddidistis, audiverim vos dicentes quod ille Deus adjuvaret et consolaretur me, qui creavit mundum et resuscitabit omnes homines, propter hanc salutationem valde miror; et hujus meae admirationis est haec: nam non recolo quod toto tempore meae vitae unquam aliquid audiverim de Deo, quem vos dicitis, nec audivi fieri mentionem de resurrectione, quam dicitis; et qui mihi posset demonstrare resurrectionem vivis et necessariis rationibus, bene posset remove a mea anima dolorem et tristitiam, quos patitur.

Alter vero Sapientum dixit Gentili: Amice, non creditis in Deum Patrem et Creatorem omnium, nec speratis resurrectionem fieri in futuro?

Gentilis autem respondit illi: Domine non; et si est aliqua res per quam possitis mihi Deum demonstrare, et cujus demonstratione mea anima valeat inclinari ad notitiam resurrectionis, deprecor ut hoc velitis facere. Nam firmiter vobis constet quod vobis verbo exprimere non valeam maximam afflictionem ac maximum dolorem quem patior, pro eo quod videam me quotidie morti appropinquare, et existimem me nihil fore post portem. Tunc vero praedicti Sapientes audiverunt et intellexerunt erroneam opinionem in qua Gentilis erat, et

passionem quam propter errorem sustinebat, propter quod pia devotio charitatis eos movebat; itaque ordinauerunt qualiter⁴⁸ praedicto Gentili demonstrarent Deum esse, et in eodem Bonitatem, Magnitudinem, Aeternitatem, Potestatem, Sapientiam, Amorem, Perfectionem existere, et quod per illos flores, qui in illis quinque Arboribus continentur, probarent haec omnia, ut ponerent ipsum in cognitione Dei et suarum virtutum, ac etiam in spe resurrectionis, ut cor reciperet gaudium et eius anima dirigeretur in viam salvationis ac gloriae sempiternae.

Unus autem illorum Sapientium dixit aliis: quem modum tenebimus in probando haec omnia? Melius consilium quod nos habere intellego est quod sequamur doctrinam et modum in quam *Domina Intelligentia* nos direxit. Veruntamen, si per quemlibet florem huiusmodi res vellemus probare, sermones essent prolixi et materia nimis longa. Igitur, videretur expedire quod aliquibus floribus investigaremus ac probaremus Deum esse et praedictas septem virtutes in eodem existere, atque resurrectionem debere fieri in futuro. Ita, quod unus nostrum a prima Arbore incipiat, probetque per ipsam, alius vero postea per secundam Arborem probet, et sic deinceps per has quinque Arbores per ordinem probemus et demonstremus Gentili hoc, ad quod sciendum necessario est obligatus.

Duo vero Sapientes hoc quod tertius dicebat approbabant. Unus autem illorum dixit aliis : quis nostrum imprimis incipiet? Quilibet enim Sapientum honorabat alios, alternatimque⁴⁹ volebant sibi tradere praeerrogativam incipiendi. Gentilis autem

⁴⁸ How, in what way.

⁴⁹ One after the other, interchangeably.

videns qualiter Sapientes inter se contendebant, et principium probandi differebant, deprecabatur alterum eorum ut inciperet. Nam multum affligebatur ejus anima, eo quod differebant incipere hoc quod ipse ferventissimo desiderio cupiebat intelligere.

...

A whole chapter of the book is now devoted to a philosophical exposition on the existence of God according to the rules established by Lady Intelligence. This proof is presented on behalf of all three sages, without any reference to religious differences among them. The proof is very convincing and the Gentile wonders how he was able to lead his life in obscurity. At the end of this chapter, however, the Gentile realizes that the three sages, though agreeing in principle, do not necessarily share in the details.

...

Postquam Gentilis dixit haec verba, quilibet trium Sapientum singulariter respondens ait Gentili quod converteretur ad suam fidem et legem, et sic quilibet Sapientum in responsione contradicebat alteri. Tunc dixit Gentilis: nunquid estis omnes tres in una fide et sub una lege? Sapientes responderunt quod non, imo sumus diversi in fide et sumus sub diversis legibus, nam unus nostrum est Judaeus, et alter Christianus, et alter Saracenus.

...

Gentilis valde diu erat desolatus, et ejus anima fuit longo tempore tormentata gravibus cogitationibus; veruntamen precabatur illos Sapientes, quanto humiliter et devotius potuit, quod coram ipso inter se disputarent, et quisque diceret suam

rationem, sicut melius posset et sciret, ut ipse posset videre, quis ipsorum esset in via salutifera veritatis.

...

Gentilis interrogavit quaenam lex fuerit prima. Sapientes vero dixerunt quod lex Judaeorum. Unde Gentilis rogabat Judaeum ut ipse primo inciperet. Antequam autem Judaeus vellet incipere, quaesivit a Gentili et a suis sociis utrum esset eorum intentio reprehendere sua verba. Et per voluntatis Gentilis inter tres Sapientes fuit ordinatum ne unus contradiceret alteri dum alter diceret suam rationem. *Nam per contradictionem interdum oritur odium in cordibus hominum, et per odium impeditur operatio intellectus.* Veruntamen Gentilis supplicabat tribus Sapientibus ut ipse solus posset respondere eorum rationibus, secundum quod sibi melius videretur, ut ipse posset perfectius inquirere veritatem verae legis, quam ipse tantum desideraret intelligere. Et hoc fuit ipsi concessum per quemlibet Sapientum.

...

In the three rather long subsequent chapters, each of the sages in turn presents the basic tenets of his faith and elaborates the proofs required by the method agreed upon by the three sages in accordance with the rules of Lady Intelligence. The Gentile alone is allowed to interrupt and ask further clarification of the arguments. There is no debate among the sages.

...

DE FINE HUIUS LIBRI

Cum Gentilis audivisset omnes rationes trium Sapientum, ipse incepit narrare omnia quae Judaeus dixerat; postmodum narrabit omnia quae Christianus dixerat; et hoc idem fecit de omnibus

quae Saracenus dixerat. Ita quod, omnes tres Sapientes videntes, Gentilem adeo bene retinere et intelligere eorum verba, exultaverint magno gaudio; qui omnes una voce dixerunt Gentili quod bene cognoscerent se non locutos fuisse homini non sensate seu non habenti rationabilem intellectum.

...

DE VERBIS QUAE TRES SAPIENTES DIXERUNT IN REGRESSU

Dixit unus trium Sapientum: si Gentilis, qui longo tempore fuit in errore, concepit adeo magnam devotionem et fervorem in dando laudes Deo, et dixit quod non dubitet se submittere quantumcunque gravibus tribulationibus et tormentis, imo etiam morti, quanto magis nos, qui tanto tempore habuimus notitiam de Deo, deberemus habere valde magnam devotionem et fervorem ad laudandum nomen Dei; et maxime, cum Deus nos voluerit tantum obligare pro tot bonis et honoribus quae nobis dedit, et quotidie dat. Igitur, bonum et utile videretur quod praevia disputatione investigaremus quis nostrum sit in veritate et quis in errore; ut sicut apud omnes manifestum est quod sit unus Deus, unus Creator, et unus Dominus tantum, ita haberemus unam fidem, unam legem et unum modum laudandi et honorandi altissimum Creatore, et ut alternatim⁵⁰ praestaremus amorem et auxilium, et ut inter nos nulla esset differentia nec contrarietas fidei nec consuetudinum; propter quam differentiam et contrarietatem homines ad invicem sunt inimici, et praeliantur⁵¹ et interficiunt se invicem, etiam alii ab

⁵⁰ By turns.

⁵¹ Read proeliantur.

aliis ad invicem captivantur;⁵² et ex tali guerra,⁵³ occisione et captivitate impeditur divina laus, reverentia et honor, ad quorum exhibitionem tenemur omnibus temporibus nostrae vitae.

...

Quilibet duorum Sapientum approbavit id quod tertius dixit, et ordinaverunt locum et horam qua disputarent et modum quomodo in disputatione sibi exhiberent servitium et honorem, ut in una fide et lege possent concordare et percurrerent mundum dando laudem et gloriam de nomini nostri Dei. Quilibet trium sapientum recessit ad proprium hospitium et servavit omnia quae promisit.

⁵² Not found in Classical Latin, but with an obvious meaning.

⁵³ Guerra, -ae, Medieval Latin adoption of the Frankish word for war.

The autodidact

The great Persian Philosopher Ibn Sinna (Avicenna) spent part of his life in Hamadan, a city built on the ruins of the ancient city of Ecbatana. In Hamadan Avicenna was appointed Vizier (minister) to the local Emir Shams al-Daula. In the year 1023, Avicenna was imprisoned for a period of four months in the nearby fortress of Fardajan, whose ruins have been recently excavated in Iran. As can be expected from a philosopher, Avicenna used this period to write, among other works, three philosophical tales, or Qişaş, in Arabic. Exactly 500 hundred years earlier, in 523, the Roman philosopher Boethius had been sent to jail in Pavia, a misfortune that gave him the opportunity to write his major work *De Consolatione Philosophiae*. Boethius was executed shortly thereafter. Avicenna was more fortunate: having been freed from jail but kept under house arrest, he managed to escape Hamadan and settle in Isfahan, a much more important cultural centre. As an advisor to the Emir of Isfahan, he found himself ill during an attack on Hamadan, where he died in 1037.

Avicenna in Hamadan

In prison

Philosophical tales

Boethius' precedent

The above mentioned Qişaş are known as Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzan, The Story of Salaman and Absal, and The Epistle of the Bird. Apparently, some aspects of these stories and the characters therein are not original,⁵⁴ but Avicenna imbues them with his own brand of philosophy. In Avicenna's tale, Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzan, or Alive son of Awake, is a wise old man

Avicenna's three Qişaş

Avicenna's Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzan

⁵⁴ See: Stroumsa S (1992), Avicenna's philosophical stories: Aristotle's Poetics reinterpreted, *Arabica* 39/2, pp 183-206.

from Jerusalem who declares: “My profession is to be forever journeying, to travel about the universe so that I may know all its conditions.”⁵⁵ Avicenna’s tales found favour in Spain. The Spanish Hebrew poet and exegete Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) translated the story into Hebrew verse, and other translations and adaptations followed.

Abraham Ibn
Ezra’s
translation

The case of the Andalusian philosopher, physician, and polymath Abu Bakr Ibn Tufayl (1105-1185) is different. A follower of Avicenna, he composed what is considered the first novel in Arabic. It was written partly in response to al-Ghazali’s *Tahafut al-Falasifa* (The Demise of the Philosophers). He called his novel *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓan*, and he also used in it the names Absal (or Asal) and Salaman, clearly to pay homage to the master. In style and content, however, there is little connection with Avicenna’s homonymous characters.

Ibn Tufayl

Ibn Tufayl’s
novel

In Ibn Tufayl’s novel, *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓan* appears on an uninhabited island, either spontaneously or by having been abandoned, like Moses, as a newborn in a floating basket. He is raised by a gazelle. The gist of the novel is that having started as a *tabula rasa* he nevertheless arrives by sheer observation, experimentation, and reasoning at all the tenets of philosophy, science, and morality that the great philosophers of the past have propounded. He grows

Birth and
childhood

Observation
and logic

⁵⁵ This version is taken from Corbin H (1960), *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. This book (translated from the original French) is devoted entirely to the analysis of these philosophical stories. It also contains a Persian commentary found by the author in Istanbul. The first available publication of these tales (with the original Arabic and a French translation) appears in: Mehren M A F (1899), *Traité Mystiques ... d’Avicenne*, Vol 1, Brill, Leyde.

up completely unaware of the existence of beings of his own species. At the age of 50, he meets Asal, a disaffected inhabitant of a nearby island, who has landed in search of a life of solitude and meditation. He teaches Ḥayy how to speak and they find that they share similar thoughts and beliefs. A visit at Asal's native island and a meeting with Asal's friend Salaman, now the ruler of the island, convince Ḥayy and Asal to return to their solitary abode.

Maturity

This highly original book had an immediate impact on the Arabic speaking milieu. It was translated into Hebrew and commented upon by Moses of Narbonne in the 14th century,⁵⁶ and it inspired a similar work by the Syrian-born physician Ibn al-Nafis (1213-1288), who is credited with the accurate description of the role of the heart and the lungs in the circulation of blood. Ibn Tufayl's original Arabic book, however, remained untranslated into any European language for a long time.⁵⁷

Moses of Narbonne's Hebrew translation

Ibn al-Nafis

Unavailability

Five hundred years after Ibn Tufayl, in 1630, the English biblical scholar Edward Pococke (1604-1695), future holder of the newly created Chair of Arabic Studies at Oxford, traveled to Aleppo, Syria, where he became acquainted with the Arabic language and where he purchased several

Edward Pococke

⁵⁶ A manuscript of this translation is preserved in the Bodleian Library MS Bodley Or. 116.

⁵⁷ Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) had the Hebrew version translated into Latin. This translation is preserved in the Biblioteca Universitaria di Genova, cod. A, IX, MS29, folios 79v-116r. For more details see: Bacchelli F (1993), Pico della Mirandola traduttore di Ibn Tufayl, *Giornal Critico della Filosofia Italiana*, 13/1, pp 1-25. A more elaborate discussion of this topic in the general European cultural landscape is the book: Ben-Zaken A (2011), *Reading Hayy Ibn-Yaqzan: A Cross-Cultural History of Autodidacticism*, The Johns Hopkins University Press.

manuscripts, among which was Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓan, now at the Bodleian library.⁵⁸ It is probable that Pococke himself undertook its translation into Latin,⁵⁹ but this feat was eventually published under his son's name in 1671 under the title *Philosophus Autodidactus*. The choice of Latin, rather than English, turned out to be conducive to the rapid propagation of the book throughout continental Europe.

Philosophus
Autodidactus

The first translation of the *Philosophus Autodidactus* into a European language was published anonymously⁶⁰ as early as a year later, that is in 1672, in Dutch. The first English translation (from the Latin) appeared in 1674. The impact of these editions was momentous. From the literary point of view, this work created two new sub-genres of the novel (and film): the *Bildungsroman*, and the stranded-on-an-island model, both of which continue to thrive in our own days. *Robinson Crusoe*, by Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), appeared in 1719. *Emile* (or *On Education*) was published by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) in 1762. Hermann Hesse and

The Dutch
version

Literary
models

Defoe

Rousseau

⁵⁸ MS Pococke 263, Bodleian Library.

⁵⁹ Nahas M (1985), A translation of Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓan by the Elder Edward Pococke (1604-1691), *Journal of Arabic Literature*, **16**, pp 88-90.

⁶⁰ This edition did not include any information about the translator from Latin into Dutch. A second edition, published in 1701, indicates the translator's initials as S. D. B. These initials have been interpreted as corresponding to the philosopher Baruch Spinoza (Benedictus de Spinoza, 1632-1677). This circumstance is not to be taken very seriously. Clearly, Spinoza was impressed by the idea of *Philosophus Autodidactus* since it is consistent with his own view of nature. It is quite probable that the later edition (which appeared long after Spinoza's death) intentionally made this connection in an enigmatic way which will keep experts occupied for centuries to come. See Kruk R and Vrolijk A (2021), The First Dutch Translation of Ḥayy Ibn Yaqẓan, Reland's Annotated Version and the Mysterious Translator S. D. B., in *The Orient in Utrecht*, Brill, Leiden-Boston, pp. 109-145.

William Golding are examples of Nobel-prize winning authors in the twentieth century.

The philosophical impact was equally significant. Its first product is manifest in John Locke's (1632-1704) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, published in 1690, which revived the Aristotelian concept of *tabula rasa*, emphasized also by Avicenna's mental experiments. Locke's work was, in turn, influential on the development of modern social and political theory, as well as on the theory of knowledge.

Philosophical
impact

John Locke

Tabula rasa

PHILOSOPHUS AUTODIDACTUS
SIVE
EPISTOLA
ABI JAAFAR,
EBN TOPHAIL
DE
HAI EBEN YOKDHAN.

In quâ

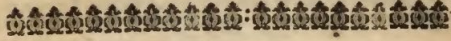
Ostenditur quomodo ex Inferiorum con-
templatione ad Superiorum noticiam
Ratio humana ascendere possit.

Ex Arabicâ in Linguam Latinam versa
Ab EDVARDO POCOCKIO A.M.,
Adis Christi Alumno.



OXONII,
Excudebat H. Hall Academicæ Typographus. 1671

التشويق والحش على دخول التاريخ فانا واصف لك قصة حي
 * al. ابن يقظان * وابسال وسلمان الذين سماهم الشيخ ابو علي
 اسال ففي قصصهم عبرة لاولي الالباب ونكوي لمن كان له قلب او
 القى النعم وهو شهيد



ذكر سلفنا الصالح رضي الله عنهم ان جزيرة من جزائر
 الهند التي تحت خط الاستوا في الجزيرة التي يتولد بها الانسان
 من غدير ام ولا اب ودها شجر ينمر دسا وهي التي ذكر المسعودي
 انها جزير الوقواق لان تلك الجزيرة اعدل بقاع الارض هوا
 واتمها لشروق النور الذي عليه استعدادا وان كان ذلك
 علي خلاف ما جراه جمهور الفلاسفة وكبار اطبا فادهم ديون
 ان اعدل ما في المأمورة اقليم الرابع فان كانوا قالوا ذلك لانه صريح
 عندهم انه ليس علي خط الاستوا مارة لسبب مانع من المواضع
 ارضية فلقولهم ان اقليم الرابع اعدل بقاع الارض وجهها
 ان ما في * وان كانوا ادبا ارادوا بذلك * ادما علي خط الاستوا شديد
 احلرة كالزبي بصرح به اكثرهم فهو خطا بقوم البرهان
 علي خلافه وذلك انه قد تبهرهن في العلوم الطبيعية انما
 لا يسبى

desiderio accendam, & ad ingrediendum vim incitem, dum
 * alibi Tibi describam Historiam Hai Ebn Yokdhan, & * Abfali &
 Afali. Salamani, quibus nomina imposuit Altheich Abu Ali, in quor-
 um historia exemplum est intelligentibus, & monitio ei cui
 cor fuerit, vel qui aurem adverteit, atque ipse testis sit.



R Etulerunt pii Majores nostri inter Insulas Indiae unam
 esse sub linea Aequinoctiali sitam, in qua absque matre
 aut patre nascuntur homines, & in ea arborem esse quae
 fructus loco feminas producit, atque ea sunt quas vocat
 Almasudi poellas Wakwakientes. Est enim ea Insula ex om-
 nibus terrae plagis aeris maxime temperati & perfectissimi,
 ita ipsam disponente luminis supremi quod super ipsam orit-
 tur [influxu]: quanquam ita asserere contrarium sit ei quod
 persuasum est plerisque Philosophorum ac Medicorum praeci-
 puiis, quorum sententia est maxime temperatam terrae par-
 tem esse quartum Clima. Quod si hoc ideo asserant, quod ipsis
 certè constet partes juxta Aequinoctialem sitas esse inhabita-
 biles ob aliquod quod à terrâ est impedimentum, & disto
 ipsorum quod quartum Clima ex terrae plagis maxime tem-
 peratum sit, faveret ratio aliqua: Quod si hoc velint partes
 juxta lineam Aequinoctialem sitas intensè calidas esse (quod ple-
 rique ipsorum manifestè asserunt) falsum est & ejus contrari-
 um certa demonstratione probatur. Demonstratum enim est
 E 2 in

Cum autem eam ita se habere videret puer, valde percussus est, ita ut fere prae dolore animam efflaret. Ipsam ergo eadem voce invocabat qua audita solebat ipsi respondere, et quanto poterat clamore [ipsam ciebat], nullum autem motum aut mutationem in ea percepit. Coepit itaque aures ipsius oculosque inspicere, in quibus nullam conspicuam noxam reperit; eodemque modo omnia corporis membra intuens, nihil in iis perperam vidit. Maxime autem avidus erat locum illum inveniendi in quo defectus erat, ut ipsum ab ea amoveret, quo ad pristinum statum rediret. Nihil autem huiusmodi ipsi in promptu fuit, neque illud praestare potuit.

Still a child of age 7, Ḥayy finds that his beloved gazelle has died

Ḥayy investigates

He tries to find the place at fault

Quod ipsum ad hoc considerandum adegit, erat quod in seipso prius anidmadverterat. Vidit enim cum oculos clauderet aut re aliqua ipsos obvelaret, se nihil cernere posse donec amoveretur illud obstaculum. Ita etiam cum digitos auribus immiteret et obturaret illas, se nihil audire, donec eos amoveret. Pari etiam modo cum manu nasum comprimeret, nullum omnino odorem olfacere potuit, donec nares recluderet. Unde colligebat omnes sensus suos et actiones obstaculis obnoxias esse, quae ipsas impedirent, et amotis obstaculis illis redire illas actiones.

He compares with his own sensorial experience

Temporary interruption of the individual senses

Cum itaque omnia exteriora ipsius membra perlustrasset, neque in illis conspicuum aliquod vitium reperiret, cerneret autem interea universam totius cessationem quae non magis uni membro quam alteri attribui poterat, tandem subiit animum ipsius noxam, quae illi contigerat, esse in membro aliquo a visu semoto, atque in interiori corporis parte recondito. Tale autem esse membrum illud, ut sine eius ope nullum membrorum exteriorum posset suo munere fungi; atque ita morbo aliquo in illud incidente, damnum esse universum, et cessationem toti communem.

He arrives at a conclusion

Cupivit itaque si forte [fieri posset] ut membrum illud offenderet, et amoveret quod ipsi contigerat; ita in integrum rediturum statum eius et inde bonum toti corpori redundaturum, et actiones in pristinum statum reversuras. Prius autem adverterat in corporibus fetarum aliorumque animalium mortuis, omnia membra solida esse absque ulla cavitate, praeter cranium, pectus, et ventrem. Suspiciatus est itaque membrum, quod ita se haberet, non alibi esse, quam in uno trium horum locorum, maxime autem apud eum invaluit opinio, esse ipsum in loco horum trium medio, cum iam animo eius penitus infixum esset omnia alia membra illo indigere, atque inde necessario consequi, ut in medio esset sedes ipsius.

He must remove the culprit

Three hollow candidates

The most probable choice

Insuper cum ad se respiceret, tale aliquod membrum in pectore suo sensit. Et ubi alia membra perpenderet, veluti manus, pedes, aures, nasum, oculos, [vel caput] supponere poterat haec sibi adimi posse, ipsique visum est se posse absque illis subsistere. Quinetiam idem de capite supponebat, putabatque se absque capite esse posse, at ubi de re illa cogitabat, quam in pectore suo reperiebat, non videbatur ipsi se posse absque eo subsistere vel ad nictum oculi. Pari modo ubi cum ferarum aliqua certaret, summo studio pectus suum ab illarum armis defenderet, ex sensu quem habebat rei quae in illo erat.

A very good reasoning

Cum itaque certo statuisset membrum illud quod haec noxa corripuisset esse in ipsius pectore, destinavit illu inquirere et perscrutari, si forte illud reperire poterat, et cum percepisset quid mali ipsi contigerat, illud amoveret. Tunc autem metuit ne hoc ipsum suum conamen gravius esset noxa quae prius illi contigerat, et quicquid ageret in ipsius damnum cederet. Deinde secum perpendit, num ferarum aliquam aut animalium aliorum, ubi semel ita affecta fuerant, vidisset ad pristinum statum rediisse. Cum autem nullum reperisset, inde factum est, ut de ipsius reditu ad statum pristinum desperaret, si omitteret ipsam. Spes autem ei aliqua supererat ipsam ad

A fear that the cure may be worse than the disease

statum illum redire potuisse, si comperto illo membro, morbum ab eo amoveret. Statuit ergo pectus ipsius recludere, et quid in eo esset inquirere.

Some hope

[Huic operi] durorum lapidum fragmenta comparavit, et aridarum cannarum schidia cultris similia, quibus inter costas incisuram fecit; donec scissa carne, quae inter costas est ad operculum illud pertingeret, quod intra costas est. Quod cum validum cerneret, maxime suspicatus est tale operculum non nisi ad eiusmodi membrum pertinere, et persuasum habuit, ubi illud pertransiisset, se reperturum quod quaerebat.

Preparing for an autopsy

Cutting between the ribs

Finding a hard cover (the intercostal muscles?)

Illud itaque discindere aggressus est, quod ipsi prae instrumentorum inopia difficile erat, et quod non alia ipsi suppeterent, nisi ex lapidibus canisque confecta. Haec itaque cum secundo instaurasset, et acuisset, summam artem adhibuit in operculo illo perforando, donec tandem illud dirupisset, et ad pulmones pervenisset, quos primo aspectu arbitrarius est esse membrum illud quod quaerebat, eosque revolvere non destitit ut ubi morbi sedem reperiret. Primum vero in dimidium illud incidit quod ex uno latere erat, et sensit illud in unum latus propendere. Secum vero ante statuerat non posse illum membrum nisi in

Difficulty due to poor quality of tools

Tools sharpened for second attempt

Arriving at the lungs

Discarding the lung because it is not at the centre of the body

medio corporis esse respectu latitudinis, sicut erat respectu longitudinis.

Non omisit itaque ulterius in medium pectoris inquirere, donec cor invenisset, quod cum esset valido admodum operculo tectum, et firmissimis ligamentis fixum, pulmonibus etiam ipsum ambientibus ex ea parte, qua aditum ad illud patefacere inceperat, apud se dixit, si ita ex altera parte huic membro sit, ac ex hac parte, revera in medio est, atque ita proculdubio est illud quod quaerebam.

Praesertim cum eo quod videam de situs opportunitate, figurae elegantia, firmitate et soliditate carnis, et quod tali operculo tectum sit, quale in nullo alio membro reperio. In aliam itaque pectoris partem inquisivit, ubi cum operculum intra costas reperisset, et pulmones eodem modo, quo in hac parte se habere. Statuit secum illud esse membrum quod quaerebat.

He finds the heart

“This must be it”