HEBREW SCHOLASTICISM IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

A HISTORY AND SOURCE BOOK

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HEBREW SCHOLASTICISM IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

A HISTORY AND SOURCE BOOK

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FOREWORD

This book was written in the summer and autumn of 2003 and revised in 2004; therefore, it reflects the state of research on its subject at that time. Its major aim is to show the knowledge of Scholastic philosophical literature or, better, the use of Latin sources by some fifteenth century Jewish philosophers; therefore, it does not deal with Scholasticism *per se*. For this reason, the bibliographical references to Latin authors and Scholastic doctrines are limited to what is strictly necessary for identifying the sources read and used by those Jewish authors. In writing this book, I have used materials (mostly manuscripts, incunabula and sixteenth century printed works) which I have found in many libraries, namely the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Biblioteca Corsiniana e dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, the Biblioteca Angelica, the Biblioteca Casanatense and the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome, the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan, the Biblioteca Universitaria in Pavia, the Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria in Turin, the Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana in Florence, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, the Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek in Cologne, the University Library in Cambridge, the Bodleian Library in Oxford. I am obliged to the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts of the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, and to its director, Mr. Binyamin Richler, for their kind help in procuring me microfilmed copies of some manuscripts which I have not been able to see.

I owe many thanks to Dr. Resianne Fontaine (University of Amsterdam) and Professor Reinier Munk (Leiden University and Universiteit, Amsterdam) for having promoted the publication of this book in the series *Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Thought*, and to Dr. Paolo Baracchi for revising the English text.

Pavia and Rome — M. Z.
September 2005

INTRODUCTION

A number of philosophers active in some of the most important Jewish cultural centres of the second half of the fifteenth century (the kingdom of Aragon in North-Eastern Spain; Florence, Mantua and Padua in Central and Northern Italy) seem to have grown increasingly unsatisfied with one of the main traits that characterised Spanish and Provençal Jewish philosophy during the previous two centuries—namely its reliance upon Averroes's interpretation of Aristotle and, in general, upon traditional Jewish Aristotelianism, mainly based upon medieval Arabic-Islamic philosophy.

In their pursuit of a renewal of Jewish philosophy, these authors turned to the doctrines and methods of contemporary Latin Scholasticism. Thus, after three centuries, Scholasticism partly replaced Arabic-Islamic philosophy's role as a guide in the development of European Jewish thought. These philosophers, who apparently read Latin very well, were impressed by the new theories formulated by their Latin colleagues, from Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas onwards. They tried to assimilate these theories in two ways. In the first place, they produced a wave of translations of Latin Scholastic texts into Hebrew, intended to replace the old translations of Arabic Aristotelian texts produced between 1200 and 1350. Secondly, they composed original works in Hebrew (mainly commentaries and questions on Aristotle), in which they faithfully reproduced the techniques and terminology of late Scholasticism, and explicitly quoted and discussed Scholastic texts and doctrines. Some of these authors—possibly also in order to avoid being accused of interest in non-Jewish doctrines—declared that a deeper understanding of the subtleties of contemporary Scholasticism was not only useful for updating Jewish philosophy and theology, but was also necessary for engaging in religious controversies with Christian scholars.

Thus, in fifteenth century Italy and Spain there came into being what we may call a "Hebrew Scholasticism": Jewish authors composed philosophical treatises in which they discussed the same questions

and used the same methods as contemporary Christian Schoolmen. These thinkers were not simply influenced by Scholasticism: they were real Schoolmen who tried to participate (in a different language) in the philosophical debate of contemporary Europe. Although these "Hebrew Scholastic" works depended heavily (as we shall see) on Latin sources, they were not mere translations or compilations: their authors, adopting a technique employed also by their Christian colleagues, mixed words and doctrines taken from these sources with words and doctrines that were, instead, original. Consequently, the relationship of "Hebrew Scholasticism" to its Latin counterpart, rather than one of mere dependence, is one of "parallelism", involving the independent elaboration of similar conclusions from the same premises.[1]

[1] A history of "Hebrew Scholasticism" in the fifteenth century is yet to be written. As a matter of fact, the phenomenon of "Hebrew Scholasticism" is usually neglected even in general studies about the relationship of Christian and Jewish cultures in the late Middle Ages (cf. e.g., the recent book by H. Santiago Otero [ed.], *Diálogo filosófico-religioso entre Cristianismo, Judaísmo e Islamismo durante la Edad Media en la peninsula iberica*, Turnhout 1994, where only a very short mention of it can be found on pp. 376–377). Generally speaking, as Daniel Lasker correctly points out, "the study of the Christian impact on late medieval, especially Iberian, Jewish philosophy remains in its infancy" (D.J. Lasker, *The Impact of Christianity on Late Iberian Jewish Philosophy*, in B.D. Cooperman [ed.], *In Iberia and Beyond. Hispanic Jews Between Cultures*, Newark 1998, 175–190, p. 175). However, some of the most recent historical sketches of fifteenth century Jewish philosophy and of its relationship with Scholastic philosophy contain timely references to "Hebrew Scholasticism" and to the role played by its chief figures: H. Tirosh-Rothschild, *Jewish Philosophy on the Eve of Modernity*, in D.H. Frank and O. Leaman (eds.), *History of Jewish Philosophy*, London–New York 1997, 499–573, especially pp. 504–505, 514–516; T.M. Rudavsky, *The Impact of Scholasticism upon Jewish Philosophy in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, and A. Ackerman, *Jewish Philosophy and the Jewish-Christian Philosophical Dialogue in Fifteenth-Century Spain*, in D.H. Frank and O. Leaman (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press 2003, 345–390, especially pp. 348–350, 380–382. A sketch of "Hebrew Scholastic logic" has been recently published by Ch.H. Manekin, *Scholastic Logic and the Jews*, "Bulletin de philosophie médiévale" 41 (1999), 123–147. For a short, tentative bibliographical overview of "Hebrew Scholasticism", see M. Zonta, *The Relationship of European Jewish Philosophy to Islamic and Christian Philosophies in the Late Middle Ages*, "Jewish Studies Quarterly" 7 (2000), 127–140, especially pp. 138–140; see also Id., *The Autumn of Medieval Jewish Philosophy: Latin Scholasticism in Late 15th-Century Hebrew Philosophical Literature*, in J.A. Aertsen and M. Pickavé (eds.), "*Herbst des Mittelalters"? Fragen zur Bewertung des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*, "Miscellanea Mediaevalia" 31, Berlin–New York 2004, 474–492—part of which has been recast in this introduction.

The Influence of Scholasticism on Fourteenth Century Jewish Philosophy: An Overview

"Hebrew Scholasticism", however, was not a totally new phenomenon in the history of medieval Jewish thought. It is well-known that a group of Jewish philosophers, active in Central and Southern Italy (especially in Rome) between 1250 and 1350, had been in close contact with their Christian colleagues: Christian doctrines and methods were absorbed and applied to the questions peculiar to Judaism. Moses of Salerno, in his commentary on Maimonides's *Guide of the Perplexed*, written around 1270, often refers to his previous co-operation, in Naples, with the Christian scholars Nicholas of Giovinazzo and Peter of Hibernia (one of the teachers of Thomas Aquinas).[2] Some of these Jewish philosophers composed philosophical-theological writings in which Thomas Aquinas was one of their main sources. This is the case with Hillel of Verona's *The Book of the Retributions of the Soul* (*Sefer tagmuley ha-nefesh*), written between 1287 and 1291; in this work, Thomas's *De unitate intellectus contra Averroim* is literally (although not explicitly) quoted, as well as Domingo Gundisalvi's *De anima*.[3] The most important thinker in this group, and the first true "Hebrew Schoolman", was Judah Romano, active in Rome and at the court of Robert of Anjou, probably between 1310 and 1330. Judah translated into Hebrew passages of various lengths explicitly taken from Latin philosophical and theological treatises. His Latin sources include Domingo Gundisalvi (Judah translated into Hebrew the whole text of his *De uno et unitate*, falsely ascribed to Boethius),[4] Albert the Great (Judah translated the complete text of his *De spiritu et respiratione*, and knew and employed Albert's *De anima*, *De intellectu et intelligibili*, *De causis et processu universitatis*, part of his *Summa de creaturis*, and, very probably, his lost *Summa de bono*, of which he has transmitted to us some otherwise unknown

[2] See C. Rigo, *Per un'identificazione del "sapiente cristiano" Nicola da Giovinazzo, collaboratore di rabbi Mošeh ben Šelomoh da Salerno*, "Archivum fratrum praedicatorum" 69 (1999), 61–146.

[3] See J.B. Sermoneta (ed.), *Book of the Retributions of the Soul by rabbi Hillel ben Samuel of Verona* (in Hebrew), Jerusalem 1981, pp. 4–26 (for passages from Gundisalvi), 35–145 (for passages from Thomas).

[4] Cf. M. Steinschneider, *Die hebraeischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher*, Berlin 1893 (reprint Graz 1956), p. 467.

fragments),[5] Thomas Aquinas (Judah quoted his commentaries on the *De anima* and the *De causis*, translated into Hebrew his treatise *De ente et essentia* and an apocryphal treatise *On the Difference of the Soul's Faculties*, as well as passages from the *De fallaciis*, the *Summa theologica*, the *Summa contra Gentiles* and the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*),[6] Giles of Rome (Judah translated parts of his commentaries on the *Posterior Analytics*, the *Rhetoric*, the *Physics* and the *De anima*, as well as parts of his original writings *Quaestiones metaphysicales*, *Quodlibeta*, *De regimine principum*, *Theoremata de esse et essentia* and parts of a number of minor works, some of which possibly not by Giles),[7] and two minor representatives of contemporary Italian Thomism, namely Angel of Camerino (Judah quoted his commentaries on the *Categories* and the *De interpretatione*) and Alexander of Alexandria (Judah quoted his commentary on the *Metaphysics*).[8] Moreover, in some of his original works—e.g., in his commentary on Averroes's *De substantia orbis*[9]—Judah tried to reproduce the techniques used

[5] See C. Rigo, *Un passo sconosciuto di Alberto Magno nel* Sefer 'eṣem ha-shamayim *di Yehudah b. Mosheh Romano*, "Henoch" 11 (1989), 295–318; J.-P. Rothschild, *Un traducteur hébreu qui se cherche: R. Juda b. Moïse Romano et le* De causis et processu universitatis, II, 3, 2 *d'Albert le Grand*, "Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age" 59 (1992), 159–172; C. Rigo, *Yehudah b. Mosheh Romano traduttore di Alberto Magno (commento al* De Anima III, II, 16), "Henoch" 15 (1993), 65–91; Ead., *Yehudah b. Mosheh Romano traduttore degli Scolastici latini*, "Henoch" 17 (1995), 141–170, pp. 157–161.

[6] See G. Sermoneta, *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Opusculum de ente et essentia a Rabbì Jehudàh ben Mošèh ben Dani'èl Romano primum hebraice redditum (saec. XIV incipiente)* (in Hebrew), in A.Z. Bar-On (ed.), *From Parmenides to Contemporary Thinkers: Readings in Ontology* (in Hebrew), Vol. 1, Jerusalem 1978, pp. 184–214; Id., *Jehudah ben Moše ben Daniel Romano, traducteur de Saint Thomas*, in G. Nahon and Ch. Touati (eds.), *Hommage à Georges Vajda. Études d'histoire et de pensée juive*, Louvain 1980, 235–262 (some complements to the latter work are found in Rigo, *Yehudah b. Mosheh Romano traduttore degli Scolastici latini,* pp. 165–169).

[7] See C. Rigo, *Egidio Romano nella cultura ebraica: le versioni di Yehudah b. Mosheh Romano*, "Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale" 5 (1994), 397–437. Among the above mentioned Egidian or pseudo-Egidian minor works, there are the *De plurificatione intellectus possibilis*, and two short writings on the faculties of the human soul and on the generation of syllogisms.

[8] See Rigo, *Yehudah b. Mosheh Romano traduttore degli Scolastici latini*, pp. 161–164.

[9] An edition of this work is found in C. Rigo, *Il* De substantia orbis *di Averroè: edizione della traduzione latino-ebraica con commento di Yehudah b. Mosheh Romano*, doctoral thesis (unpublished), 2 vols., Università di Torino 1992.

by Latin Schoolmen.[10] These facts led Giuseppe Sermoneta to speak of the existence of a sort of "Hebrew Thomism" in Italy in the years around 1300,[11] and possibly extending to the second half of the century. This hypothesis is corroborated by the existence of a complete Hebrew translation of Thomas's *Sententia libri De anima*, probably composed in Italy after 1350.[12]

However, an explicit "Hebrew Thomism" appears to be limited to Italy and to constitute an isolated phenomenon within European Jewish philosophy of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is true that some new doctrines in physics and metaphysics set forth by Provençal Jewish philosophers in the fourteenth century display surprising similarities with analogous theories developed at the same time within Scholastic philosophy. In fact, these philosophers seem to be influenced by the most discussed themes in Provençal Scholasticism during the first half of the fourteenth century—namely the "new physics" of William Ockham and John Buridan, the theology of Duns Scotus and his doctrine of individuation and, perhaps, early fourteenth century debates about universals. However, it is not yet clear whether these doctrines were the result of a historical development internal to Jewish thought, or whether they were also somehow stimulated by contemporary discussions of the same questions among Christian thinkers.

Scholars have tried to point out parallels with contemporary Scholasticism in the works of several Jewish authors active in Provence between the end of the thirteenth century and the Black Death (1348–1349).[13] Georges Vajda was the first to remark on the

[10] Cf. C. Rigo, *Un'antologia filosofica di Yehuda b. Mosheh Romano*, "Italia" 10 (1993), 73–104.

[11] Cf. G. Sermoneta, *Pour une histoire du Thomisme juif*, in G. Verbeke and D. Verhelst (eds.), *Aquinas and Problems of His Time*, "Mediaevalia Lovaniensia" s. 1, Vol. 5, Leuven–The Hague 1976, 130–135, and Id., *Per una storia del Tomismo ebraico*, in *Tommaso d'Aquino nella storia del pensiero*, 2 vols., Napoli 1976, Vol. 2, 354–359. On Judah Romano as representative of this "Hebrew (or "Jewish") Thomism", cf. G. Sermoneta, *La dottrina dell'intelletto e la "fede filosofica" di Jehudàh e Immanuel Romano*, "Studi Medievali", s. III, Vol. 6, fasc. 2 (1965), 3–78; cf. also W.Z. Harvey, *Knowledge of God in Aquinas, Judah Romano and Crescas* (in Hebrew), "Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought" 14 (1998), 223–238.

[12] On this point, see M. Zonta, *La filosofia antica nel Medioevo ebraico. Le traduzioni ebraiche medievali dei testi filosofici antichi*, Brescia 1996, p. 233.

[13] The first, pioneering study on this topic is: S. Pines, *Scholasticism after Thomas Aquinas and the Teachings of Hasdai Crescas and His Predecessors*, first published

similarities between the "Averroistic" doctrines of the unique intellect and of the "double truth" propounded by Isaac Albalag (active either in Catalonia or in Provence at the end of the thirteenth century) and theories ascribed to Siger of Brabant and Boethius of Dacia.[14] Affinities have been detected between the physics of Gersonides (Levi ben Gershom, 1288–1344, who worked as an astronomer at the papal court in Avignon[15]) and a number of possible influences—namely pseudo-Siger of Brabant's questions on the *Physics* (relative to the concept of "now"),[16] Thomas Aquinas's commentary on the *Physics* (relative to the "absolute generation of first matter"),[17] William Ockham's doctrine of natural motion[18] and, most recently, Walter Burley's theory of the existence of indivisible magnitudes and a doctrine from the questions on the *Physics* possibly written by Marsilius of Inghen.[19] Moreover, Gersonides's discussions about the freedom of man, God's knowledge of future contingents and divine attributes, have been compared to similar discussions in contemporary

in Hebrew in 1967 (see the most recent and complete re-edition, in Alfred L. Ivry's English translation, in S. Pines, *Studies in the History of Jewish Thought*, eds. W.Z. Harvey and M. Idel, "The Collected Works of Shlomo Pines" V, Jerusalem 1997, pp. 489–589); this study, however, focuses its attention *not* on "Hebrew Scholasticism", but on looking for implicit traces of Latin Scholasticism in the works of some major Jewish philosophers of the fourteenth century.

[14] Cf. G. Vajda, *Isaac Albalag, averroïste juif, traducteur et annotateur d'al-Ghazâlî*, Paris 1960, pp. 246–266.

[15] On Gersonides's contacts with the papal court (which are certain in the last decade of his life, but might have started earlier), see J.L. Mancha, *Gersonides' Astronomical Work: Chronology and Christian Context*, in C. Sirat, S. Klein-Braslavy and O. Weijers (eds.), *Les méthodes de travail de Gersonide et le maniement du savoir chez les scolastiques*, Paris 2003, 39–58.

[16] See Pines, *Scholasticism*, pp. 497–500.

[17] See S. Harvey, *Did Gersonides Believe in the Absolute Generation of First Matter?* (in Hebrew), "Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought" 7 (1988), 307–318, especially pp. 317–318.

[18] See R. Glasner, *Gersonides's Theory of Natural Motion*, "Early Science and Medicine" 1 (1996), 151–203, especially pp. 201–203.

[19] See R. Glasner, *On the Question of Gersonides' Acquaintance with Scholastic Philosophy*, in Sirat, Klein-Braslavy and Weijers (eds.), *Les méthodes de travail de Gersonide*, pp. 281–287. The *Quaestiones in octo libros Physicorum* that Glasner ascribes to Duns Scotus (p. 285 and note 6) are certainly not by Scotus; they are possibly the work of Marsilius of Inghen (cf. Pines, *Scholasticism*, p. 495 note 7).

Scholasticism (where resemblances with Gersonides's "indeterministic" positions have been detected).[20] Shlomo Pines has tentatively traced back to William Ockham and other Scholastics (Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas) some new interpretations of Aristotle's physics set forth by a contemporary and countryman of Gersonides, Yedayah Bedershi ha-Penini (c. 1285–1350)—namely the doctrine of "discrete and continuous" and the doctrine of a "force" exerted by heavenly bodies upon terrestrial ones.[21] However, Ruth Glasner has recently questioned this hypothesis. In her view, Yedayah may have had some knowledge of the physical doctrines upheld by contemporary Christian philosophers (John Buridan, William Ockham, John Duns Scotus);[22] but, since he did not know Latin, what knowledge he had must have depended exclusively upon personal contacts with Christian scholars. Furthermore, some of his doctrines may reflect conclusions drawn independently from Greek and Arabic sources.[23] Bedershi's oral contacts with Christians may also explain his interest for the principle of individuation, a topic much debated in fourteenth century Scholasticism. This interest is apparent in the unpublished *Treatise on Personal or Individual Forms*, where Bedershi—without ever mentioning Scotus or any Scotist author—seems to adopt a solution similar, if not identical to Duns Scotus's doctrine of the existence of "individual forms" as principles of

[20] Cf. Pines, *Scholasticism*, pp. 493–496, 519–524, 582–584 (where Pines compares Gersonides's and Thomas Aquinas's views about determinism). S. Möbuss, *Die Intellektlehre des Levi ben Gerson in ihrer Beziehung zur christlichen Scholastik*, Frankfurt a.M.–Bern–New York–Paris 1991, especially p. 133, notes a relationship between the theology of Gersonides and theories found in contemporary Latin "Averroism" (Siger of Brabant, John of Jandun) and in some representatives of the Franciscan School (William Ockham); in particular, Möbuss tries to highlight the relationship between Gersonides' and Ockham's doctrines of universals (see pp. 77–82).

[21] Cf. Pines, *Scholasticism*, pp. 547–553.

[22] For example, Glasner has shown the similarity between Yedayah's doctrine of void and that found in two works ascribed to Duns Scotus: the authentic *Quaestiones quodlibetales* and the *Quaestiones in octo libros Physicorum* (by Marsilius of Inghen? See above, note 19). See R. Glasner, *Yeda'aya ha-Penini's Unusual Conception of Void*, "Science in Context" 10 (1997), 453–470, especially pp. 466–468.

[23] See R. Glasner, *A Fourteenth Century Scientific Philosophic Controversy. Jedaiah Ha-Penini's Treatise on Opposite Motions and Book of Confutation* (in Hebrew), Jerusalem 1998.

individuation.[24] Finally, the radical nominalist doctrine of universals that characterises the critique of Gersonides's logic by Samuel of Marseilles (1294–1340) has recently been compared to the thought of some early fourteenth century Latin authors (Peter Aureol, Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, Ockham).[25]

More compelling evidence has been presented for the knowledge of Latin sources by Joseph Ibn Caspi and Nissim of Gerona. Joseph Ibn Caspi (1279–1340), in his Biblical commentary *Pure Silver* (*Tam ha-kesef*), explicitly discusses the problem of God's knowledge of "possible future occurrences"—in Hebrew, *ha-'atidot ha-efshariyyot*. This appears to be a literal rendering of the Latin expression *contingentia futura*; and *contingentia futura* were the object of the contemporary "Pelagian" controversy in Latin Scholasticism.[26] Warren Z. Harvey argues that the Catalan thinker Nissim of Gerona (c. 1310–1375) read directly, and quoted the doctrines about the creation of a unique first matter common to heavens and earth in William Ockham's physics. Harvey also believes that Nissim may have known something of John Buridan's doctrine of creation.[27]

As a matter of fact, none of the fourteenth century Jewish Provençal scholars directly or indirectly involved in this "renewal" refer explicitly to Latin Scholastic sources or use them directly. As a rule, these philosophers show no knowledge of the most important topics discussed in contemporary Scholastic philosophy and

[24] The *Treatise on Personal Forms* is preserved in the ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, hébreu 984, ff. 66r–93v. For a summary and discussion of its contents, with reference to Scotus's thought, see S. Pines, *Individual Forms in the Teaching of Yeda'aya Bedershi* (in Hebrew), in *Harry A. Wolfson Jubilee Volume*, Jerusalem 1965, Hebrew section, 187–201, as reprinted in S. Pines, *Studies in the History of Jewish Philosophy: The Transmission of Texts and Ideas* (in Hebrew), Jerusalem 1977, 263–276, especially pp. 270–274; cf. also the sketch in Rudavsky, *The Impact of Scholasticism*, pp. 356–357 and notes.

[25] See M. Zonta, *Una disputa sugli universali nella logica ebraica del Trecento. Shemuel di Marsiglia contro Gersonide nel* Supercommentario all'Isagoge *di Yehudah ben Ishaq Cohen*, "Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale" 11 (2000), pp. 409–458.

[26] See S. Pines, *Joseph Ibn Caspi's and Spinoza's Opinion on the Probability of a Restoration of a Jewish State* (in Hebrew), "Iyyun" 14 (1964), 289–317, as reprinted in S. Pines, *Studies in the History of Jewish Philosophy. The Transmission of Texts and Ideas* (in Hebrew), Jerusalem 1977, 277–305, especially p. 283.

[27] W.Z. Harvey, *Nissim of Gerona and William of Ockham on Prime Matter*, "Jewish History" 6 (1992), 87–98.

science, and seem to be acquainted only with some matters of detail. Besides, when they discuss the same topics as their Latin colleagues, they use different methods. For instance—if we exclude some possible echoes in Gersonides[28]—they seem to have totally ignored one of the most important Scholastic methods of discussion: the *quaestio disputata*.[29] The exception is Scholastic logic. Peter of Spain's *Tractatus* or *Summulae logicales* were translated into Hebrew more or less literally at least twice during the fourteenth century: by Shemariah the Cretan (ha-Ikriti), a philosopher from Negroponte active in Italy in the first half of the century, and by Abraham Avigdor, a Provençal Jewish author active between 1367 and 1393. Moreover, Peter's work was summarised and commented in Hebrew by Hezekiah bar Halafta, working in Provence around 1320.[30] In any case, the reason for this interest in Scholastic logic was probably of a practical nature: the *Tractatus* could provide Jewish physicians with a basic knowledge of logic useful for their studies in medical schools. Besides, knowledge of Peter's work was mostly limited to the parts dealing with the so-called *logica antiqua* (the same found in medieval Arabic philosophy), to the exclusion of the *logica modernorum* (as developed by Christian Scholasticism during the thirteenth century).[31]

From this overview, one can conclude that, although in some limited cases there may be substantial clues (in Ibn Caspi and Nissim of Gerona) or even solid evidence (in the case of the logical tradition) in favour of a direct knowledge of Scholastic philosophical literature, the influence of Scholasticism on fourteenth century Jewish Provençal thought seems to have been mostly indirect (not through the reading of Latin texts, but through conversations), limited (relative only to some particular points of Scholastic doctrine),

[28] Cf. C. Sirat, *Un recueil de questions*, in Sirat, Klein-Braslavy and Weijers (eds.), *Les méthodes de travail de Gersonide*, 149–157.

[29] These facts have been noted by Gad Freudenthal in the case of Gersonides, but they hold true for most of the authors in question: see G. Freudenthal, *Gersonide, génie solitaire. Remarques sur l'évolution de sa pensée et de ses méthodes sur quelques points,* in Sirat, Klein-Braslavy and Weijers (eds.), *Les méthodes de travail de Gersonide*, 291–317.

[30] See Ch.H. Manekin, *When the Jews Learned Logic from the Pope: Three Medieval Hebrew Translations of the* Tractatus *of Peter of Spain*, "Science in context" 10 (1997), 395–430.

[31] See Manekin, *Scholastic Logic*, pp. 123–129, 138–139.

and implicit (since it was not openly recognised in Hebrew literature).[32]

Generally speaking, what we have said holds true also for the Jewish culture that developed during the fourteenth century in the four Iberian kingdoms of Navarra, Aragon, Castilia and Portugal. It is very likely that the philosophical and theological works by Avner of Burgos (c. 1270–1344), most of which originally written in Hebrew, were heavily influenced by Scholasticism and Christian theology. On the other hand, these works were probably composed after Avner's conversion to Christianity (under the name of Alphonso of Valladolid), and so it is improbable that they played a direct role in the development of Jewish philosophy.[33] Besides Avner's isolated case, remarkable parallels, which may reflect a non-declared interest in contemporary Scholasticism, have been observed in Hasdai Crescas and in some philosophers of his circle, active in Catalonia between 1380 and 1411. Recent research, mostly after Pines's 1967 study, has detected in Crescas's writings—in particular in his *Lebenswerk*, *The Light of the Lord*—an impressive number of similarities with the "new physics" of the fourteenth century and the thought of Duns Scotus and his followers. Crescas was a student of Nissim of Gerona, and, like his master, probably had personal contacts with Christian scholars skilled in philosophy. Possible referents are the Catalan writer Bernat Metge (1345–1413)[34] as well as the teachers and students of the

[32] The "non-citation" of Christian sources in Jewish philosophical texts before the fifteenth century (with the exclusion of the Italian authors mentioned above) is traditionally explained as a sort of "literary custom": see Pines, *Scholasticism*, p. 51. Very recently, Gad Freudenthal has questioned this explanation, by pointing out that some fourteenth century Provençal Jewish authors did occasionally refer to Christian scholars as "the sages of the nations" or in similar ways (although they never called them by name, and mentioned them only in the context of personal oral contacts); consequently, the fact that some authors (in particular, Gersonides) did not even mention Christian scholars in these terms seems to indicate that either they had no real contacts with them *qua* philosophers and scientists, or, more plausibly, that such contacts were not determining for the development of their own thought: see Freudenthal, *Gersonide, génie solitaire*, pp. 314–315.

[33] On this point, cf. Rudavsky, *The Impact of Scholasticism*, p. 353.

[34] See W.Z. Harvey, *Hasdai Crescas and Bernat Metge on the Soul* (in Hebrew), "Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought" 5 (1986), 141–154; Id., *L'ànima: un tema comú a Rabí Hasday Cresques i Bernat Metge*, "Calls" 4 (1990), 53–68.

Franciscan school (*studium generale*) in Barcelona.[35] However, there is no evidence that Crescas directly read and literally quoted Latin philosophical works. Pines writes that "Crescas was a quite typical representative of certain trends in the Scholasticism of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries";[36] but in reality his "Scholasticism"—if any at all—is always implicit. Pines has compared Crescas's doctrine of the extension of matter to that of Ockham, his doctrine of time as a measure not only of motion but also of rest, to the doctrines of Gerald Odonis and Peter John Olivi, his doctrine of infinite space to that of Nicholas Oresme, his doctrine of the possibility of an infinite chain of causes to that of Nicholas Bonet, his proofs of the existence of God to those of Duns Scotus, his theory about the relationship between essence and existence to those of Scotus and Henry of Ghent, his doctrine of divine attributes (among which infinity) to that of Scotism, and his doctrine of divine will to a Christian doctrine reported by Scotus.[37] Other scholars have noted parallels between the ideas of faith of Crescas and Thomas and between the deterministic views of Crescas (in his *Sermon on the Passover*) and Scotus.[38] Further parallels have been pointed out concerning particular points of Crescas's physics and metaphysics. For instance, Crescas's discussion on the possibility of many worlds has been compared to similar discussions in Oresme[39] and in other thirteenth and fourteenth century Christian thinkers,[40] and Crescas's doctrine of time as a purely mental being has been traced back to Peter Aureol and William Ockham.[41] As for metaphysics, one of the two solutions of the problem of divine omniscience proposed by Crescas in *The Light of the Lord* seems related to the solution proposed by Duns Scotus.[42] In any case, Pines himself admits that "even if we accept the idea (. . .)

[35] W.Z. Harvey, *Physics and Metaphysics in Hasdai Crescas*, "Amsterdam Studies in Jewish Thought" 6, Amsterdam 1999, p. 138.
[36] Pines, *Scholasticism*, p. 501.
[37] Pines, *Scholasticism*, pp. 502–532. Cf. also Harvey, *Physics and Metaphysics*, pp. 118, 145–146, who claims that Crescas's doctrine of the divine will should be traced back to an evident Scotist influence.
[38] See A. Ravitzky, *Crescas' Sermon on the Passover and Studies in His Philosophy* (in Hebrew), Jerusalem 1988, pp. 49–60.
[39] See Harvey, *Physics and Metaphysics*, pp. 23–29.
[40] Cf. Rudavsky, *The Impact of Scholasticism*, p. 360 and note 81.
[41] See Rudavsky, *The Impact of Scholasticism*, p. 362.
[42] See Ravitzky, *Crescas' Sermon*, pp. 38–43.

that Crescas is to be placed within the scholastic framework, one must remember that he maintained a marked independence, and in discussing physical problems related explicitly (...) to another tradition—the Arabic-Jewish philosophical one".[43] Crescas is sure to have had first-hand and sound knowledge of only one field of Christian thought, namely dogmatic theology. Crescas argued against it in detail in his *Refutation of the Christian Principles* (this work, however, was probably composed in Catalan or in Aragonese rather than Hebrew).[44] It should be noted that even in this work Crescas does not explicitly quote his theological sources; nor does he always rely on orthodox interpreters of Christian dogmas.[45] Daniel J. Lasker suggests that Crescas's reluctance to reveal his Latin sources may reflect the general climate of hostility between Christians and Jews in late fourteenth century Spain;[46] it is clear, however, that, in the light of extant evidence, it is impossible to regard Crescas as a "Hebrew Schoolman" in the sense we have given to this expression.

Overt references to Latin sources—but always in the context of anti-Christian polemics—make their appearance at the end of the fourteenth century in the works of a younger contemporary of Crescas (and, possibly, a member of his circle), the Catalan author Profiat Duran, who died around 1414. In *Disgrace of the Nations*, he explicitly mentions and draws from Peter Lombard's theological work (the *Sententiae*), Nicholas of Lyra's Biblical commentary (the *Postillae*) and Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum historiale*. It is also possible that his discussion of Catholic dogmas reflects contemporary Christian criticisms.[47]

[43] Pines, *Scholasticism*, p. 510.

[44] R. Hasdai Crescas, *Sefer bittul iqqarei ha-Nozrim*, trans. by Joseph Ben Shem Tov, ed. D.J. Lasker, Ramat-Gan—Beer Sheva 1980. In the notes to this edition, Lasker gives many references to medieval Christian theological sources (mostly to passages of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologica* and *Summa contra Gentiles*); but none of these references corresponds to a literal quotation of a Latin text in Crescas's work.

[45] See, e.g., the unorthodox doctrine of Jesus' "glorified body", which Crescas might have taken from Bonaventure, Albert the Great or William of Auvergne (cf. Hasdai Crescas, *Sefer bittul*, ed. Lasker, p. 72 note 16), or the doctrine about the sin of the demons (cf. *ibidem*, p. 90 note 4). On this and other similar cases, cf. Lasker, *The Impact of Christianity*, pp. 178–180.

[46] Cf. Lasker, *The Impact of Christianity*, p. 179.

[47] Cf. Lasker, *The Impact of Christianity*, p. 181, quoting F. Talmage, *The Polemical Writings of Profiat Duran*, "Immanuel" 13 (1981), 69–85.

In the late fourteenth century, a sure case of knowledge of contemporary Latin Scholasticism is that of Leon Joseph of Carcassonne, a Provençal Jewish physician who worked at Perpignan from 1370 to 1418. He was well versed both in Latin (he read John of Tornamira's medical works) and in the method of the *quaestio disputata*. Rather significantly, he seems to have converted to Christianity some years before his death.[48]

However, a fully fledged "Hebrew Scholasticism"—characterised by the production of Hebrew philosophical works that use Latin Scholastic texts, doctrines and techniques in a way that is direct and clearly identifiable, systematic and mostly explicit—does not come into being before the late fifteenth century in Spain and Italy.[49] In its maturity, "Hebrew Scholasticism", with its extensive use of Aristotelian philosophy (metaphysics, psychology, physics, logic) and Christian theology (studied for the purpose of inter-religious debate), did not influence the whole of contemporary Jewish thought; it seems, however, to have constituted an important branch of it, one parallel to—and no less important than—the ongoing traditions of Jewish "Averroism", Kabbalah, and religious apologetics.

"Hebrew Scholasticism" in Fifteenth Century Spain

Scholars have identified a number of possible, implicit or occasional references to Latin Scholastic sources in some of the key works of fifteenth century Iberian Jewish theological and philosophical literature. These works comprise Joseph Albo's *Book of the Roots*,[50]

[48] See J. Shatzmiller, *Etudiants juifs à la faculté de médecine de Montpellier, dernier quart du XIVe siècle*, "Jewish History" 6 (1992), 243–255, pp. 248–252.

[49] However, some isolated traces of "Hebrew Scholasticism" have been recently discovered also in late fifteenth century Provence. Some instances of an "encounter between Arab and Scholastic logic in Hebrew writings" have been detected in a series of comments on Averroes's *Compendium* of the *Organon*, sometimes ascribed to Moses Narboni, but actually written by the Provençal physician Mordecai Natan (fl. 1450–1470): see Ch.H. Manekin, *Some Aspects of the Assertoric Syllogism in Medieval Hebrew Logic*, "History and Philosophy of Logic" 17 (1996), 49–71, pp. 66–67.

[50] See, e.g., R. Lerner, *Natural Law in Albo's* Book of Roots, in J. Cropsey (ed.), *Ancients and Moderns*, New York 1964, 132–147, who points out Albo's use of Thomas Aquinas's fourfold division of law (in his *Summa theologica* and in his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*); cf. also Lasker, *The Impact of Christianity*, p. 182 and notes 53–55.

Abraham Bibago's *The Path of Faith*,[51] Abraham Shalom's *The Abode of Peace*,[52] Isaac Arama's *The Binding of Isaac*[53] and Isaac Abravanel's Biblical commentaries and other works.[54] However, as we observed in the previous section, fifteenth century Spanish "Hebrew Scholasticism" constituted a far more systematic phenomenon and appears to reflect a surprisingly extensive absorption of Christian culture between 1430 and the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492. Indicators of this absorption—constituting necessary premises for the development of "Hebrew Scholasticism"—include a possible better knowledge of Latin among the Jewish cultural élite; the possible Jewish attendance at Christian schools; the possible existence of similar Jewish schools of philosophy; the evident employment of Scholastic methods by Iberian rabbis; the explicit references to Latin Scholastic authors by Jewish "Averroists"; and, last but not least, a number of Hebrew translations of Latin philosophical texts.

There is proof that knowledge of Latin among Iberian Jewish scholars improved after the middle of the fourteenth century, when increasing numbers of Jewish apologists were required to speak Latin fluently, so as to be able to take part in inter-religious debates. This does not mean that these scholars could necessarily *read* Latin.[55] However, marginal notes in some Hebrew manuscripts copied in that period and milieu suggest that a good reading knowledge of Latin was quite widespread. These notes prove that some copyists were

[51] See below, chapter 1, list of Bibago's works, on number 15.

[52] See below, chapter 3.

[53] See S. Heller-Wilensky, *The Philosophy of Isaac Arama in the Framework of Philonic Philosophy* (in Hebrew), Jerusalem–Tel Aviv 1956, pp. 64 note 7, 186 note 9, 190 note 13a, 218–219 note 69 (most of these references concern Thomas Aquinas).

[54] See, e.g., Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, p. 80 note 238 (on Abravanel's quotations of Paul of Venice) and p. 486, §297, no. 7 (on his quotations of Thomas Aquinas and other Christian authors); B.Z. Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel. Statesman and Philosopher*, Philadelphia 1982, pp. 295–316, various notes (on Abravanel's apparent dependence on Thomas's works, in particular on his *Summa theologica*); A. Melamed, *Abravanel and Aristotle's* Politics: *A Drama of Errors* (in Hebrew), "Daat" 29 (1992), 69–82 (on Abravanel's reading of Aristotle's *Politics* through the mediation of Scholastic commentaries on the *Politics*). For a general historical overview of this literature, see C. Sirat, *A History of Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge University Press 1985, pp. 345–397; Tirosh-Rothschild, *Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 500–512.

[55] See the many examples given by Lasker, *The Impact of Christianity*, pp. 176–177.

apparently able to correct Hebrew translations of Latin texts by direct comparison with the original or with similar Latin works.[56] Moreover, the Latin terms inserted in some of the works of the fifteenth century "Hebrew Schoolmen" Baruch Ibn Ya'ish and Eli Habillo presuppose a fairly good knowledge of Latin—at least in some of their readers.[57]

Possible evidence of attendance at Christian schools by members of the Jewish élite in fifteenth century Spain, or at least of their employing Christian private teachers, is found in some contemporary Hebrew sources: Meir Alguadez,[58] Solomon Bonafed,[59] Eli Habillo,[60] and perhaps Joseph Garçon.[61] If this were true, it would

[56] See, e.g., the marginal corrections of the Hebrew translation of pseudo-Aristotle's *Economics*, found in some fifteenth century Spanish manuscripts, pointed out in M. Zonta, *La tradizione ebraica degli scritti economici greci*, "Athenaeum" 84 (1996), 549–554; cf. also Id., *La filosofia antica*, pp. 135–136, 260–262.

[57] Cf. below, chapters 2 and 3. There still exists a Hebrew-Latin philosophical glossary, written in Spain in the fifteenth century and preserved in the ms. Moscow, Rossiskaia Gosudarstvennaia Bibliotheka, Günzburg 264, ff. 111–112: see J.-P. Rothschild, *Remarques sur la tradition manuscrite du glossaire hébreu-italien du commentaire de Moïse de Salerne au* Guide des égarés, in J. Hamesse and D. Jacquart (eds.), *Lexiques bilingues dans les domaines philosophique et scientifique (Moyen Age–Renaissance)*, Turnhout 2001, 49–88, pp. 59, 75 (number 27).

[58] Cf. the analysis of his introduction to the Hebrew translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (as published in L.V. Berman, *The Latin-to-Hebrew Translation of the* Nicomachean Ethics [in Hebrew], "Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought" 7 [1988], 147–168, pp. 157–158) in Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, pp. 83–85.

[59] See Manekin, *Scholastic Logic*, pp. 131–132: Bonafed wrote that a student of his contemporary and countryman Isaac Arondi employed a Christian scholar to teach him logic in Latin; he himself admitted the superiority of Scholastic logic over the old Arabic logic (see Sh. Rosenberg, *Logic and Ontology in Jewish Philosophy in the 14th Century*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem 1973, pp. 37–38). Cf. also M. Saperstein, *The Social and Cultural Context: Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries*, in Frank and Leaman (eds.), *History of Jewish Philosophy*, 294–330, p. 318 note 55, p. 320 note 79.

[60] See below, chapter 3.

[61] Garçon's ambiguous mention of attendance at the *yeshivat ha-ḥokmot ha-ḥiṣṣuniyyot*, lit. "the academy of external sciences" (quoted in J. Hacker, *On the Intellectual Character and Self-Perception of Spanish Jewry in the Late Fifteenth Century* [in Hebrew], "Sefunot" 17, n.s. 2 [1983], 21–95, pp. 55–56), may refer either to a Christian school, or to a Jewish academy where philosophy and other "profane" sciences were taught (as recently suggested by C. Sirat, *Looking at Latin books, understanding Latin texts. Different attitudes in different Jewish communities*, paper read at the international colloquium *Hebrew to Latin–Latin to Hebrew. The Mirroring of Two Cultures in the Age of Humanism*, The Warburg Institute, London, October 18th–19th, 2004).

help to explain the clear influence exerted on Spanish "Hebrew Scholasticism" by the different currents of contemporary Scholastic philosophy in Spain (Thomism, Scotism, Nominalism). Scholars have also tried to prove that in fifteenth century Spain there existed quasi-institutional Jewish establishments where philosophy was taught, and these were attended by a number of Jewish scholars: Harry A. Wolfson and others argue that this was the character of the "academies" *(yeshivot)* of Hasdai Crescas and Abraham Bibago.[62]

Evident influence of Scholastic methods has been recognised even in fifteenth century Iberian religious literature, in collections of rabbinical sermons. Marc Saperstein has noted that Isaac Aboab, Joel Ibn Shu'eib, and other rabbis active in the last decades of the century used the methods of the syllogism and the *quaestio disputata*, according to the habitual Scholastic schemes.[63] It should also be remembered that Aristotelian logic was already familiar to Spanish talmudists from 1400 onwards.[64]

This increasing interest in Scholasticism naturally influenced also the still living tradition of Jewish Aristotelianism based upon Averroes's commentaries on Aristotle. The commentaries (*expositiones*) on Aristotle's works by, or ascribed to, Thomas Aquinas (especially his *Sententia libri Ethicorum*) were among the most important channels for the knowledge of Scholastic philosophy. The importance of this particular text reflects the widespread interest in Aristotle's ethics in fifteenth century Iberian Judaism[65]—an interest

[62] Cf. the overview by Saperstein, *The Social and Cultural Context*, pp. 305–306, who, however, seems rather skeptical about the "institutional" status of these schools.

[63] See M. Saperstein, *"Your Voice Like a Ram's Horn": Themes and Texts in Traditional Jewish Preachings*, "Monographs of the Hebrew Union College" 18, Cincinnati 1996, pp. 83–86, 200–207. These sermons belong to the literary genre of the "collection of philosophical sermons", widespread in fifteenth century Spanish Judaism: see Ackerman, *Jewish Philosophy*, p. 382.

[64] Cf. Tirosh-Rothschild, *Jewish Philosophy*, p. 503 (quoting D. Boyarin, *Sephardi Speculation: A Study in Methods of Talmudic Interpretation* [in Hebrew], Jerusalem 1989, pp. 47–68).

[65] Cf. H. Tirosh-Rothschild, *Human Felicity—Fifteenth-Century Sephardic Perspectives on Happiness*, in Cooperman (ed.), *In Iberia and Beyond*, 191–243, pp. 205–206; cf. also J.-P. Rothschild, *Les philosophes juifs d'Espagne au XVe siècle, l'*Éthique à Nicomaque *et le projet philosophique de Joseph Ibn Shem Tob (étude preparatoire)*, in J.M. Soto Rabanos (ed.), *Pensamiento medieval hispano. Homenaje a Horacio Santiago Otero*, 2 vols., Madrid 1998, Vol. 2, 1289–1316.

shared, and probably influenced by contemporary Christian Spanish culture.[66] Lawrence V. Berman has drawn attention to the fact that, probably around 1400, there started to circulate a Hebrew supercommentary on Averroes's *Middle Commentary* on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. This text, originally ascribed to Thomas Aquinas, has been shown to be an original work, partly inspired by (but, as a rule, not literally taken from) Aquinas's authentic commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics*.[67] Two facts suggest a Spanish origin.[68] First, its most complete manuscript was copied in Spain (in the little town of Agramunt, in the kingdom of Aragon) in 1444.[69] Second, this work was known and used some years later by the Spanish philosopher, apologist and exegete Joseph Ibn Shem Tov (active about 1440–1460).[70] Jean-Pierre Rothschild[71] and Hava Tirosh-Rothschild have found traces of Scholastic philosophical and theological doctrines in the writings of Joseph Ibn Shem Tov, in particular in *The Glory of God* (*Kevod 'Elohim*). In this work, Ibn Shem Tov paraphrased book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, possibly drawing on Thomas's own commentary and, with greater certainty, on some passages of his *Summa contra Gentiles*.[72] Finally, it should be noted that some explicit

[66] Cf. on the latter A.R.D. Padgen, *The Diffusion of Aristotle's Moral Philosophy in Spain, ca. 1400–ca. 1600*, "Traditio" 31 (1975), 287–313.

[67] See L.V. Berman, *Ibn Rushd's* Middle Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics *in Medieval Hebrew Literature*, in J. Jolivet (ed.), *Multiple Averroès*, Paris 1978, 287–321.

[68] Berman, however, argues that the supercommentary was possibly written in a philosophical circle of followers of Samuel of Marseilles, active in Provence around 1350 (see A.Z. [L.V.] Berman, *A Manuscript Named "Shoshan Limmudim" and its Relationship to a Provençal "Circle of Scholars"* [in Hebrew], "Kiryath Sepher" 53 [1978], 368–372, p. 372).

[69] See A. Neubauer, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library*, Oxford 1886, c. 508, no. 1426 (Opp. 591); cf. also M. Beit-Arié and R. May, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library. Supplement of Addenda and Corrigenda to Vol. I (A. Neubauer's Catalogue)*, Oxford 1994, c. 237. The supercommentary is also preserved in the mss. Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, vat. ebr. 556, and Leiden Bibliotheek der Rijks Universiteit, Or. 4786 (Warner 48).

[70] Cf. L.V. Berman, *The Hebrew Versions of Book Four of Averroes' Middle Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* (in Hebrew), Jerusalem 1981, p. 16.

[71] Cf. J.-P. Rothschild, *Le dessein philosophique de Joseph Ibn Shem Tob (*flor. *1442–1455)*, "Revue des études juives" 162 (2003), 97–122.

[72] Cf. Tirosh-Rothschild, *Human Felicity*, pp. 212–224. Tirosh-Rothschild has pointed out striking similarities between Ibn Shem Tov's analysis of human felicity in the first pages of his work, and the *Summa contra Gentiles*, book III,

references to Thomas Aquinas (although not all of them clearly identifiable in Thomas's authentic works) are scattered in the numerous supercommentaries—on Averroes's *Middle Commentary* on the *Physics*,[73] on his *Middle Commentary* on the *De generatione*,[74] and on his *Middle Commentary* on book I–II of the *De Anima*[75]—written in the period 1478–1480 and ascribed to Joseph's son, Shem Tov ben Joseph Ibn Shem Tov, or to some of his students.[76]

The most solid proof of the popularity of Latin Scholasticism among fifteenth century Iberian Jews are the extant Hebrew translations of Latin philosophical works carried out in this period and milieu. Very often these translations were by the same authors who were engaged in the creation of "Hebrew Scholasticism", such as Baruch Ibn Ya'ish, Abraham Shalom and Eli Habillo. It is important to note that in fifteenth century Spain some of Aristotle's works were translated into Hebrew, not only from the old-fashioned medieval Latin versions by William of Moerbeke, but also from contemporary Humanistic translations (e.g., by Leonardo Bruni). These translations were mostly regarded as substitutes for the old Hebrew translations of Averroes's Arabic *Long* and *Middle Commentaries*, no longer adequate for the new study of Aristotle based upon Latin Scholastic sources. In two successive waves—between 1400 and 1430 and around 1480—the *Nicomachean Ethics* was translated twice (by Meir

chapters 18–25. Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, p. 487, had already noted traces of Ibn Shem Tov's apparently direct knowledge of Thomas Aquinas' works, as well as of Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*. On Ibn Shem Tov's critique of Scholastic casuistry, with references (not always correct!) to Ockham and Raymond Lull, see Manekin, *Scholastic Logic*, p. 131, who mentions a passage of Ibn Shem Tov's commentary on Profiat Duran's *Alteca Boteca* (as quoted in Rosenberg, *Logic and Ontology*, p. 45).

[73] See the text of the supercommentary in the ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, hébreu 967, ff. 205r–343v, in particular f. 341r, where a quotation of "Thomas" (*Ṭomas*) might refer to Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Physicorum*, book VIII, *lectio* 21, §2.

[74] See ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, hébreu 967, ff. 172r–204v, on f. 181v.

[75] See ms. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, hébreu 967, ff. 110r–171v, on f. 112r (the text of this supercommentary is also preserved in the ms. New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, microfilm 2341, ff. 317r–352r).

[76] On Joseph and Shem Tov Ibn Shem Tov's dependence on Scholastic literary genres for some of their philosophical works (a sort of *auctoritates* and a *tabula* of the *Nicomachean Ethics*), see also Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, p. 262.

Alguadez and Baruch Ibn Ya'ish); pseudo-Aristotle's *Economics* was translated twice (by an anonymous translator and, possibly, by Ibn Ya'ish himself); and books I–XII of the *Metaphysics* (those studied in Christian universities at the time)[77] were translated by Ibn Ya'ish.[78]

The translators of the original works of late medieval Latin Scholasticism, mostly active in the kingdom of Aragon between 1470 and 1490, seem strongly influenced by the two main philosophical and theological schools represented in contemporary Spanish universities (especially in the Aragonese area), namely Scotism and Thomism.[79] Significantly, the Scholastic texts translated or read by these authors were sometimes the same ones first published in late fifteenth century Spanish incunabula. Eli Habillo's translation of Antonius Andreas's questions on the *Metaphysics* and his planned translation of John the Canon's questions on the *Physics*[80] are clearly indicative of an attempt to lay the foundations of a sort of "Hebrew Scotism", since those two works seem to have been often regarded as belonging to a Scotist philosophical *corpus*[81] (Scotism was, at the time, officially adopted by the University of Lérida, not too distant from Monzón, where Habillo worked). On the other hand, Habillo and his colleagues seem to have attempted to create a "Hebrew Thomism". This endeavour is attested by their translations of Thomas Aquinas's works (the commentary on the *Metaphysics*, translated by Abraham Ibn Nahmias in Ocaña near Toledo in 1490,[82] and

[77] See L.M. de Rijk, *The Commentaries on Aristotle's* Metaphysics, in O. Weijers and L. Holtz (eds.), *L'enseignement des disciplines à la Faculté des Arts*, Turnhout 1997, 303–312, p. 312: in Christian universities, only books I–II, IV–X and XII of the *Metaphysics* were part of the official curriculum.

[78] On these fifteenth century translations, see the historical sketch in Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, pp. 258–262, 269–274.

[79] Cf. T. Carreras y Artau and J. Carreras y Artau, *Historia de la filosofia española. Filosofia cristiana de los siglos XIII al XV,* 2 vols., Madrid 1939–1943, Vol. 2, pp. 564–585.

[80] See below, chapter 3, list of Habillo's works, on numbers D.3.1. and D.3.2.

[81] I owe this observation to prof. Kent Emery, Jr. (University of Notre Dame, Indiana).

[82] The unique manuscript of this translation has been now rediscovered. See the Hebrew text of Ibn Nahmias's introduction as published by Senior Sachs in "Kerem Hemed" 8 (1854), pp. 110–111 note; see also Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, pp. 485–486, and Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, pp. 156–157. Ibn Nahmias's translation may be one of the sources of the anonymous Hebrew commentary on the *Metaphysics* in the ms. Leiden Bibliotheek der

the *Quaestiones disputatae de anima* and the *De ente et essentia*, translated by Habillo).[83] One should also not forget Baruch Ibn Ya'ish's liberal use of Thomas's commentaries on the *De anima* and on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as translations of some minor works falsely ascribed to Thomas (*De potentiis animae*, *De universalibus*).[84] However, this "return" to Thomas was apparently intended as a means to absorb contemporary Christian Thomism, as represented by Paris professors, such as Jean Letourneur (whose *corpus* of questions on Aristotle and Thomas was almost completely translated by Habillo in the 1470s)[85] and Thomas Bricot (whose *Textus abbreviatus philosophiae naturalis* was translated in Avignon shortly after 1492 by the Spanish exile, David Ibn Shoshan).[86] It is significant that interest in Thomism was undergoing a revival in Christian Spain, and particularly in Catalonia, during the last three decades of the fifteenth century. Of course, interest in Scotistic and/or Thomistic philosophy did not prevent some of these translators—whose philosophical interests, as usual with medieval Jewish philosophers, seem to have been rather eclectic—from paying attention to authors belonging to other philosophical schools: they translated into Hebrew minor works such as the *summae* on the natural sciences by Robert Grosseteste[87] and

Rijks Universiteit, Or. 4796 (Warner 58). The latter is almost completely preserved (only the beginning is lost) and was probably written in Spain in the fifteenth century (cf. M. Steinschneider, *Catalogus codicum Hebraeorum Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno-Batavae*, Lugduni Batavorum 1858, p. 264); it consists in a sort of Scholastic *expositio* of the *Metaphysics*, and includes several *quaestiones* in which "Thomas" (*Ṭomas*) is quoted as a source (cf. f. 29v, last line). A possible quotation from Ibn Nahmias's translation is contained in one of Isaac Aboab's rabbinical sermons, written in 1490–1493: see Saperstein, *"Your Voice Like a Ram's Horn"*, p. 79 note 17.

[83] See below, chapter 3, list of Habillo's works, on numbers D.1.1. and D.1.2.

[84] See below, chapter 3, on numbers D.1.4. and D.1.3. According to Moses Almosnino (Greece, sixteenth century), Isaac Abravanel translated into Hebrew Thomas's *Quaestio de spiritualibus creaturis*, but this translation is now apparently lost (see Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, p. 295 note 72; cf. Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, p. 487).

[85] See below, chapter 3, list of Habillo's works, on number D.2.

[86] See Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, p. 468.

[87] See Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, pp. 267–268 and note 25. This translation—undertaken by an anonymous scholar probably active in Spain before 1460–1470, and preserved in the mss. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, hébreu 1004, ff. 106r–117r, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Reggio 44, ff. 30r–39v—is different from the one found in the ms. Oxford, Bodleian Library,

Albert of Orlamünde, and a *corpus* of logical questions ascribed to Marsilius of Inghen (and whose real author has not yet been ascertained).[88] The anonymous fifteenth century Hebrew translation of Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* was possibly also written in Spain.[89] The choice of texts to translate might have depended in some cases on the geographical area where the translator was working: this seems to be the case for Habillo's translation of a work on universals by the Catalan preacher Vincent Ferrer.[90] Finally, it should be remembered that, well before the golden period of "Scholastic" translations, Samuel Benveniste, working in 1412 in Asentiu (Catalonia), had translated the Catalan Scholastic "translation-commentary" of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae* by the two fourteenth century Catalan authors, Pere Saplana and Antoni Ginebreda.[91]

This framework provides some important premises, which, however, are not *per se* sufficient to explain the development of "Hebrew Scholasticism" in fifteenth century Spain. Some scholars have wondered why this remarkable "duplication" of the currents of contemporary Latin philosophy (and, in particular, this blooming of interest in Scholasticism) occurred in Jewish cultural élites during

Michael 288, ff. 112r–126r, completed in 1537 in Italy by Elijah Nolano (see Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, p. 476): see Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, 269. The same translator translated into Hebrew a book *De anima* falsely ascribed to Robert Grosseteste, which has no parallel in the Latin tradition: see Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, p. 268 and note 26, and Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, pp. 476–477.

[88] As for Albert of Orlamünde and the (pseudo?)-Marsilius, both translated by Abraham Shalom, see below, chapter 3.

[89] On this translation, found in a unique manuscript, see A. Melamed, *The anonymous Hebrew translation of Aegidius'* De Regimine Principum*: an unknown chapter in medieval Jewish political philosophy*, "Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale" 5 (1994), 439–461. This translation was possibly produced in early-fifteenth century Spain, shortly after two previous Iberian translations of Giles's work (one in Castilian around 1350, and the other in Catalan at the end of the fourteenth century).

[90] See below, chapter 3, list of Habillo's works, on number D.4.3.

[91] See Zonta, *La filosofia antica*, pp. 262–267; Id., *Le origini letterarie e filosofiche delle versioni ebraiche del* De consolatione philosophiae *di Boezio*, in F. Israel, A.M. Rabello and A.M. Somekh (eds.), *Hebraica. Miscellanea di studi in onore di Sergio J. Sierra per il suo 75° compleanno*, Torino 1998, 571–604, especially pp. 572–585; cf. also F. Ziino, *The Catalan Tradition of Boethius's* De consolatione*: a New Hypothesis*, "Carmina Philosophiae. Journal of the International Boethius Society" 10 (2001), 31–37.

a period of evident inter-religious tension, on the eve of the traumatic expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492. Even more surprising is the fact that, in this same period and milieu, Scholasticism seems to have been successful also among some of the most conservative Jewish authors, whose attitude to philosophy was generally quite diffident—this is the case, for instance, with Abraham Bibago. Ari Ackerman and Hava Tirosh-Rothschild argue that the development of "Hebrew Scholasticism" in Iberia can be explained as an attempt to strengthen Jewish thought to enable it to fend off more effectively the two greatest threats to Judaism in fifteenth century Spain, namely Christian apologetics and theology on the one hand, and radical rationalism (as found in Jewish "Averroism") on the other.[92] This explanation, based upon the fundamental role that Jewish-Christian polemics indisputably played in fifteenth century Spanish Jewish culture, seems confirmed by some explicit statements by "Hebrew Schoolmen" about the reasons of their own adhesion to Scholastic philosophy. Eli Habillo declares that the new arguments of contemporary Scholasticism are necessary, both for fighting "Averroism" and for debating Christians.[93] It should also be recalled that fifteenth century Spanish Jewish authors had a strong interest in Scholastic logic, which they saw as a useful tool for constructing effective replies to Christian critiques in inter-religious disputes.[94]

It would seem reductive, however, to explain fifteenth century "Hebrew Scholasticism" merely as a kind of defence against the opponents of contemporary Judaism, and against Christianity in particular.[95] The need to update Jewish philosophy by absorbing Scholastic doctrines and methods was felt not only for religious reasons, but apparently also for philosophical reasons, in order to allow Jewish philosophers to fully partake in the development of contemporary European thought. (This is exactly what seems to have happened

[92] Cf. Ackerman, *Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 380–381; Tirosh-Rothschild, *Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 504–505.

[93] See below, chapter 3.

[94] See Manekin, *Scholastic Logic*, pp. 130–133.

[95] See, e.g., Lasker, *The Impact of Christianity*, p. 183, according to whom "the more involved a Jewish author was with anti-Christian polemics, the more impact Christianity had on his works". Lasker's thesis has been judged as "trop systematique" by Rothschild, *Remarques*, p. 63 note 18.

in the case of Judah Romano in early fourteenth century Italy.)[96] Of course, the appreciation of Scotist and Thomist Scholasticism by some hardline defenders of Jewish religious tradition against rationalism can be explained as a sort of alliance of "conservative" Judaism with "conservative" Christianity against radical philosophy.[97] But it is also difficult to dismiss the fact that some fifteenth century Iberian Jewish philosophers felt the need to study Scholasticism as something "new" and as a useful instrument for the advancement of Jewish thought.[98]

As a matter of fact, the major Iberian Jewish "Schoolmen" of the fifteenth century (Abraham Bibago, Baruch Ibn Ya'ish, Abraham Shalom, Eli Habillo) appear to have been most interested in the results reached by Scholasticism in the areas of philosophy more closely associated with theology, namely metaphysics, ethics and human psychology. These thinkers seem to have been emulators rather than mere imitators of their Christian sources: they used Scholastic doctrines and methods as points of departure for the independent discussion of philosophical and even theological matters (sometimes, of course, in contrast with their Christian colleagues).[99] Their general approach to Latin sources appears to be rather free and, even in translations, not slavishly literal. In a recent study on some aspects of

[96] Giuseppe Sermoneta (in his *La dottrina dell'intelletto*, pp. 75–76 note 159) has very aptly compared early fourteenth century "Hebrew Scholasticism" in Italy with late fifteenth century "Hebrew Scholasticism" in Spain, and has defined Habillo "the Spanish Judah Romano".

[97] See Ackerman, *Jewish Philosophy*, p. 381; Manekin, *Scholastic Logic*, p. 131: "One may even speak of a coalition of interests between Christian and Jewish philosophy, both increasingly theologically conservative, against the philosophical naturalism of an earlier age". On the "conservative" tendency of fifteenth century Jewish philosophy in Spain, see H.A. Davidson, *Medieval Jewish Philosophy in the Sixteenth Century*, in B.D. Cooperman (ed.), *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge, Massachusetts–London 1983, 106–145, p. 112.

[98] One can consider, e.g., some statements found in Abraham Ibn Nahmias's introduction to his translation of Thomas's commentary on the *Metaphysics*: Abraham criticises some contemporary Jews for their hostility to philosophy, and attributes it to their lack of understanding of the relationship between philosophy and religion. He praises Christian scholars *(ḥakmey ha-Noṣerim)* for their results in this field, thus emphasising the necessity of studying their philosophy (cf. Sachs's article cited above [note 82], p. 110; cf. Steinschneider, *Hebraeischen Übersetzungen*, p. 485).

[99] See the remarks in M. Zonta, *Einige Bemerkungen über "hebräische Scholastik" im 15. Jahrhundert in Spanien und Italien,* "Im Gespräch" 7 (2003), 52–60, pp. 53–56.