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PREFACE

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It is a pleasure to introduce a new journal for interchange of knowledge. Knowledge interchange on a global scale is essential these days for the functioning of society, and is facilitated by means of the world-wide web, satellite communication, and the ubiquitous mobile phone. But such exchange was also a core element of pre-Modern society, even if the means of communication were slower and more ponderous. People travelled the length of Euro-Asia, whether along the Silk routes and the Musk routes overland, or along the sea routes through the Persian Gulf, the Indian and China Sea, and later across the Atlantic. Circumnavigating Africa became a reality, and finding a Northwest passage through the Arctic was considered possible. A thirteenth-fourteenth century Christian (Marco Polo) could recount his experiences on his epic journey to China in the lingua franca of the Crusaders. An Iraqi visitor to South America in the early seventeenth century could write a history of the area in Arabic. This journal, however, will focus on the Mediterranean, the restless sea that was the home for Christians, Muslims and Jews, and provided a means for the transfer of knowledge, artefacts, and peoples, throughout history. It will cover the fertile period between Late Antiquity and Early Modernity, and pay attention especially to the fields of philology, philosophy, science, culture and religion. This period is characterized by common streams of thought and approaches to knowledge, which enabled the easy sharing of new ideas across religious and ethnic boundaries. But the adjective 'Mediterranea' implies more than the sea which lies at the heart of this common civilization. As 'Middle Earthly Studies' it implies also the flowing in and out of ideas from the peripheries: to and from Africa, Persia, Indian, and China, and eventually to and from the New World. China may have considered herself as the 'Middle Land', but the united states that bounded the Mediterranean Sea was another.

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Transfer of knowledge can be centrifugal or centripetal. Many streams can contribute to a common tradition (such as that referred to as modern universal science of today). But as John Henry Newman (1801-1890) said:

> 'It is indeed sometimes said that the stream is clearest near the spring. [but] in the history of a philosophy or belief, [the stream is] purer, and stronger, when its bed has become deep, and broad [...]'[1]

On the other hand one idea can give rise to many separate streams, such as that of there being a limited number of elements out of which whole systems can be built—such the 26 letters of the alphabet forming countless words, nine numerals forming an infinity of numbers, and seven pitches, a whole repertoire of music.

But transfer can also take place within societies, and without involving travel. The positive effects of different religious and ethnic groups within one community was as much noticeably in medieval and early modern societies as it is in modern societies.

The essays included in this first volume exemplify the range of subjects covered by Mediterranea. Sarah Stroumsa re-examines the idea of convivencia of Jews, Christians and Muslims in the 'Golden Age' of Islamic Spain in the light of the experience of several generations of the Jewish family of Banū Ḥasday, who held high positions as doctors and advisors in the Muslim courts, and wavered between conversion to Islam and adherence to the Jewish faith. Her conclusion is that the Jews in al-Andalus Arabized but did not Islamize.

Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala draws attention to the large variety of languages being used for religious and secular literature in Latin Antiquity, and gives an example of how an originally Jewish story of 'the descent of the Watchers', while probably written originally in Aramaic, passed through Syriac, Ethiopian, Greek, and Garshuni (i.e. Syriac written in Arabic characters). He points out the differences in the Syriac and Gharshuni versions and shows how Michael the Great, probably using a Greek version, enriched the story in his popular Syrian history.

Jules Janssens examines a particularly pervasive tradition of thought—that of mysticism. This, like pure philosophy, is a way of thinking and believing that goes deeper than the doctrines of any revealed religion, and penetrates to the roots of all religions. Ibn Sīnā's philosophy led to a mystical tradition which had a particularly long life in the Islamicate world. But was Ibn Sīnā a mystic? Janssens

[1] J.H. Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, London: Longmans, Greens and Co., 1909, p. 40.

concludes that 'in the final part of the *Ishārāt* (Ibn Sina) offers what may be labelled as a 'philosophical project that rationally interprets mystical terms, expressions, and phenomena', rather than as 'a philosophical mysticism'.

Nicola Polloni, in turn, shows a particular striking and important example of philosophical transfer from Arabic into Latin, in the person of Dominicus Gundissalinus. From the advantageous position of Toledo he was able both to translate into Latin texts by Arabic and Jewish philosophers (al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Gabirol), and to incorporate material from these works, together with works of the Medieval Latin tradition, into his own accounts of cosmology, psychology and metaphysics. Aside from Hermann of Carinthia, whose work was known to him, Gundissalinus was the first Latin to attempt this synthesis of often competing doctrines. But he was only able to do this because he understood what his sources meant, and was able to engage in dialogue with Muslims and Jews, using the common language of philosophy.

Rafael Ramón Guerrero addresses the philosophical elements in the *Secret of Secrets* (*Sirr al-asrār*). This regimen principum is typically regarded as a work of political and medical advice, with a lot of astrology and magic thrown in, given authority by being attributed to Aristotle and addressed to a king (Alexander the Great). And yet the heavily Neoplatonized Aristotelianism that the Arabs inherited from Hellenistic Greece and Alexandria shows through in the work's explanation of the universe, and its description of God's nature, and of man as the unifying element of all created essences.

This journal is the fruit of cooperation between the Córdoba Near Eastern Research Unit, of the University of Córdoba, The Warburg Institute, London, KU Leuven, Tel Aviv University, Syddansk Universitet, the Instituto de Filosofia of the Universidade do Porto and the Mediterranean Seminar based at the Center for Mediterranean Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and the department of Religious Studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder. This range of academic institutes, in itself, epitomizes the potential of academic research over continents and between languages. It is to be hoped that a high quality of articles will continue to be submitted to ensure the longevity of this new journal.

BETWEEN ACCULTURATION AND CONVERSION IN ISLAMIC SPAIN

THE CASE OF THE BANŪ ḤASDAY*

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Abstract

The High Middle Ages in Islamic Spain (al-Andalus) is often described as a golden age in which Jews, Christians and Muslims lived in harmony. The attested dynamics of conversions to Islam disturb this idyllic, static picture, revealing the religious and social pressures exerted on the religious minorities. The different reactions of the Jewish and Christian communities of al-Andalus to these pressures allow us to refine our understanding of conversion in the Medieval Islamic world. A close examination of the Jewish family of Banū Ḥasday shows more nuances and ambivalence than 'conversion' normally suggests.

Key Words

Coversion, acculturation, *convivencia*, al-Andalus, *dhimma*, Ibn Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī, Ibn Ḥasday.

Conversion is often used to describe a single dramatic event: a person had one specific identity and through a transformative experience, as if by the waving of a magic wand, this person has been transformed into another: the pagan became a Christian, the Christian became a Muslim, the skeptical philosopher was converted into an orthodox theologian.[1]

* Earlier versions of this paper were read in Berlin, on May 6, 2015, as part of the lecture series: *Konversionen: Erzählungen der Umkehr und Bekehrung. Mosse-Lectures and der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*; and in Ann Arbor, on September 16, 2015, as the Padnos Lecture, at the Jean and Samuel Frankel Center for Jewish Studies, University of Michigan. I wish to thank the conveners of both

Our main source of knowledge regarding conversion, however, lies in stories: stories presented as personal narratives, stories embedded in archival material and in historiographical, legal, or other types of literature. These stories, even those which intend to convey a very decisive, transformative picture of the conversion-event, reveal a complicated, dynamic conversion process.[2] The vast and quickly growing scholarly literature devoted to religious conversions highlights, beyond the personal, spiritual or experiential paradigm of conversion, other aspects of this phenomenon: social, economic or legal.[3] These aspects, the consideration of which renders even the conversion of individuals anything but a one-dimensional events, tend to take priority when we observe the conversion of whole societies.

In what follows I will first broadly describe in general terms the cultural and religious situation that prevailed in the Islamic Middle Ages in the Iberian Peninsula. I will also deal with conversions to Islam in this context, and then present one specific case of conversion from Judaism to Islam.

When the first Muslim conquerors entered the Iberian peninsula, in 92/711, the vast majority of the peninsula's inhabitants were Christians (with perhaps small groups of pagans still lingering in the northern, mountainous areas).[4] The minuscule Jewish community was on the verge of extinction, due to the Visigoth persecutions and forced conversion; and obviously, at this point the Muslim

events, as well as the participants therein, for their helpful comments. I also thank the anonymous reviewers for *Mediterranea* for their helpful comments on the draft of this article.

1 See, for example, Jason David BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma. 1. Conversion and Apostasy, 373-388 C. E.*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010, p. 193, where conversion is presented as 'a sudden, dramatic, and complete transformation of the self, instantly creating a new person changed to the core'. On the prevalence of the understanding of conversion as primarily this dramatic, personal transformation, despite many studies that present different or more nuanced understandings, see Arietta Papaconstantinou, 'Introduction', in A. Papaconstantinou, Neil McLynn and Daniel Schwartz (eds.), *Conversion in Late Antique Christianity, Islam, and beyond. Papers from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar. University of Oxford 2009–2010*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, pp. xv-xxxvii.

2 See Ryan Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative: Reading and Religious Authority in Medieval Polemics*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). On the merit of such anecdotal, non-quantifiable data, see *apud* n. 31.

3 For an overview of this literature, see, for instance, Szpiech, *Conversion and Narrative*, pp. 14-17; Papaconstantinou, 'Introduction', pp. xv-xxxvii, especially note 5.

4 See David J. Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings: Politics and Society in Islamic Spain 1002-1086*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985, p. 225; C.-E. Dufourcq, 'Le christianisme dans les pays de l'Occident musulman des alentours de l'an mil jusqu'aux temps almohades', *Études de civilisation médiévale (IX^{e}–XII^{e} siècles). Mélanges offerts à Edmond-René Labande à l'occasion de son départ à la retraite et du XXe anniversaire du C.E.S.C.M. par ses amis, ses collègues, ses élèves*, Poitiers: Centre d'études supérieures de civilisation mediévale, 1974, pp. 237–246, at p. 237.

conquerors themselves made up only a very small part of the population, as conquering armies do. We do not know exactly how the process of conversion to Islam advanced from this point of departure. We may assume that, in many ways, the conversion process in al-Andalus followed similar patterns to the conversion to Islam across the Muslim world, where the small community of Muslims lived at first in garrisons, separated from the rest of the population, on which they did not impose the adoption of Islam. The process of conversion was probably not steady and linear, and in many cases we can see a pattern of uncertain, unstable conversions, where individuals and even small communities converted, then repented and returned to their original religion.[5] But with the passing of time, the religious profile of the conquered areas changed, and the indigenous population gradually became predominantly Muslim. Genuine religious change of heart and true conviction in the veracity of the new religion must of course be taken into account as the primary drive for many conversions to Islam. But other considerations seem to have played at least as important a role: fiscal and agricultural policies which imposed higher taxes on non-Muslims; social practices which, together with conversion, attached the convert to an Arab tribe and family, promising to facilitate networking and perhaps the entrance to the ruling classes; and occasional discriminatory laws and practices which (gently or not so gently, depending on the specific regime) put pressure on the local populations to convert to Islam.[6]

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[5] See Uriel Simonsohn, 'Conversion, Apostasy and Penance: The Shifting Identities of Muslim Converts In the Early Islamic Period', in Papaconstantinou *et al*., *Conversion*, pp. 197–218, especially, p. 196.

[6] On the various reasons for conversion to Islam, see Richard W. Bulliet, 'Process and Status in Conversion and Continuity', Introduction to Michael Gervers and Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi (eds.), *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands, Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990, pp. 1--12, at pp. 4--8; David J. Wasserstein, 'Conversion and the Ahl al-Dhimma', in Robert Irwin (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of Islam, Volume 4: Islamic Cultures and Societies to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 184–208, at pp. 185–87; Arietta Papaconstantinou, 'Between Umma and Dhimma: The Christians of the Middle East under the Umayyads', *Annales Islamologiques* 42 (2008, pp. 127–156, at p. 151; Mercedes García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes dans la péninsule Ibérique: La conversion de juifs à l'islam (XII^{e}–XIII^{e} siècles)', *Minorités religieuses dans l'Espagne médiévale. Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 63–4 (1992, pp. 91–102, at p. 92). See also Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 87–120. The mixture of spiritual and practical reasons for converting is of course not unique to conversion to Islam; a similar admixture can be seen, for example, in the conversion of Muslims to Christianity in the Iberian peninsula; see Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, pp. 43-44.

Be that as it may, in the Iberian peninsula as in the rest of the Islamic world, a relatively short time after the dust of the conquests settles (that is to say, one or two centuries later), we find that the conquered area which came to be known as al-Andalus has become Muslim: under firm Muslim rule, with Islam as the dominant religion, and perhaps even more importantly, with Arabic as the predominant administrative and cultural language.[7] Statistics regarding this period are very conjectural, and we cannot say with any amount of certainty at what point the majority of the population did become Muslim.[8] But it seems safe to say that, by the tenth century, the Muslims of al-Andalus felt and behaved as an undisputed ruling majority.

The High Middle Ages in al-Andalus are often described as a golden age of inter-religious *convivencia* or harmonious symbiosis between the different communities, where Judaism, Christianity and Islam — *las tres culturas* — lived harmoniously under the aegis of Islam. Much has been written to explain the development of the terms used in this description and to correct the historical validity of their rosy interpretation, and we need not go into it here.[9] Suffice it to

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[7] This, as well as the observations regarding language in the following pages, is of course a crude, static and simplified summary of a very complex and shifting linguistic situation. For a summary of (some of) the complexities, see Robert I. Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the crusader kingdom of Valencia: Societies in symbiosis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 172–179; and see further below, n. 24.

[8] See Richard W. Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979, especially, pp. 114–127; Jean M. Fiey, 'Conversions à l'Islam de juifs et de chrétiens sous les abbassides d'aprés les sources arabes et syriaques', in Johannes Irmscher (ed.), *Rapports entre juifs, chrétiens et musulmans: Eine Sammlung von Forschungsbeiträgen*, Amsterdam: A.M. Hakkert, 1995, pp. 13–28, at p. 13 and n. 2; Michael Morony, 'The Age of Conversions', in Gervers and Bikhazi, *Conversion and Continuity*, pp. 135–50; Wasserstein, 'Conversion and the Ahl al-Dhimma', pp. 184–85. On the conversion process in al-Andalus, see A. G. Chejne, 'Islamization and Arabisation in al-Andalus: A general View', in Speros Vryonis (ed.), *Islam and Cultural Changes in the Middle Ages*, Wiesbaden: Harassowitz, 1975, pp. 59-86; Thomas F. Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. 33-35, 282–283; Thomas F. Glick, *From Muslim fortress to Christian castle: Social and cultural change in medieval Spain,* Manchester-New York: Manchester University Press, 1995, pp. 51–60; Mayte Penelas, 'Some remarks on Coversion to Islam in al-Andalus', *al-Qanṭara* 23/1 (2002), pp. 193-200; Cyrille Aillet, 'Islamisation et arabisation dans le monde musulman médiéval: une introduction au cas de l'Occident musulman (VII^{e}-XII^{e} siècle)', in Dominique Valérian (ed.), *Islamisation et arabisation de l'Occident musulman médiéval (VII^{e}-XII^{e} siècle)*, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2011, pp. 7-34; Ragnhild Johnsrud Zorgati, *Pluralism in the Middle Ages: Hybrid Identities, Conversion and Mixed Marriages in Medieval Iberia*, New York: Routledge, 2012, pp. 25-31; Alwyn Harrison, 'Behind the curve: Bulliet and conversion to Islam in al-Andalus revisited', *Al-Masāq* 24/1 (2012), pp. 35-51; David Wasserstein, 'Where have all the converts gone? Difficulties in the study of conversion in al-Andalus', *Al-Qanṭara* 33 (2012), pp. 325-42.

[9] As examples for the many discussions of this topic, see Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, p. 225; Manuela Marín and Joseph Pérez, 'L'Espagne des trois religions' du mythe aux

say that, to the extent that this description reflects some reality, as it does, Islamic Spain is only one of many examples of the inter-cultural effervescence under medieval Islam, across the Islamic world. And yet, while Islamic Iberia was as a rule more tolerant to its minorities than medieval Christian Europe, or even more precisely: than medieval Christian Spain, its presentation as a model of tolerance is highly anachronistic: in 459/1066 Islamic Granada was the scene of one of the rare anti-Jewish pogroms under medieval Islam, and the first expulsion from Spain, affecting both Jews and Christians, happened already in the twelfth century, under Islam.[10]

The attested gradual conversion of most of the conquered Christian population to Islam casts a shadow over the 'golden age' idyllic, static picture. The conversions reflect the religious and social pressures exerted on the subordinated Christians, pressures without which many if not most of them would probably not have converted.

Theoretically, the same pressures were brought to bear on Jews and Christians alike, and thus should have affected Jews and Christians equally. But in al-Andalus as elsewhere in Islamic territory, notwithstanding a continuous phenomenon of individual Jewish conversions to Islam, the Jewish communities survived for centuries, whereas the Christian communities progressively shrank,

réalités: Introduction', in Manuela Marín and Joseph Pérez (eds.), *Minorités religieuses dans l'Espagne médiévale* (*Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 63) (1993), pp. 23-27; Serafín Fanjul, *La Quimera de al-Andalus*, Madrid: Siglo XXI, 2004, especially pp. 21–53 ('el mito de las tres culturas'); M. García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes', p. 91; Alex Novikoff, 'Between Tolerance and Intolerance in Medieval Spain: An Historiographic Enigma', *Medieval Encounters* 11 (2005), pp. 7–36; Kenneth Baxter Wolf, 'Convivencia in Medieval Spain: A Brief History of an Idea', *Religion Compass* 3/1 (2009), pp. 72–85; Anna Akasoy, 'Convivencia and its Discontents', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 42 (2010), pp. 489-499, especially pp. 489-490, 495-497; Ryan Szpiech, 'The Convivencia Wars: Decoding Historiography's Polemic with Philology', in Susan Akbari and Karla Mallette (eds.), *A Sea of Languages: Rethinking the Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013, pp. 135-161, especially pp. 135–141; Nikolas Jaspert, 'Mendicants, Jews and Muslims at Court in the Crown of Aragon: Social Practices and Inter-Religious Communication', in Marc von der Höh, Nikolas Jaspert and Jenny Rahel Osterie (eds.), *Cultural Brokers at Mediterranean Courts in the Middle Ages*, Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013, pp. 107–147, at p. 125; Alejandro García Sanjuán 'La distorsión de al-Andalus en la memoria histórica española', *Intus-legere Historia* 7 (2013, pp. 61–76).

[10] There are several possible explanations for Spain's special place in modern historiography, prominent among them the fact that Spain is a European country. When Spain is associated with the non-European world, the European prejudice can have the opposite effect. Sylvain Gouguenheim, for example, who attempts to prove a direct link from Athens to Christian Europe, hardly mentions Spain in his discussion of medieval philosophy; see his *Aristote au Mont-Saint-Michel: Les racines grecques de l'Europe chrétienne*, Paris: Le Seuil, 2008); and see Jean-Christophe Attias, 'Judaïsme: le tiers exclu de l'Europe chrétienne', in Philippe Büttgen, Alain de Libera, Marwan Rashed, and Irène Rosier-Catach (eds.), *Les Grecs, les Arabes et nous: Enquête sur l'islamophobie savante*, Paris: Fayard, 2009, pp. 213–222, at p. 213.

in some areas up to their total disappearance. This difference is forcefully presented by David Wasserstein, who says that, if one considers what he calls 'the indeterminate amorphous mass of the community as a whole', one can observe that 'it is this group that, taken in its totality, converted to Islam among the Christians and it is this group, among the Jews, that seems not to have converted'.[11]

One conspicuous example of this difference, in the vicinity of al-Andalus and under a political rule that also controlled al-Andalus, will suffice. In the twelfth century the Berber dynasty of the Almohads took hold of North Africa and al-Andalus. The Almohads' peculiar religious interpretation of Sunni Islam is notorious for its deviation regarding the place granted to the religious minorities. As is well known, orthodox Islam — both Sunnite and Shiʿite — normally recognizes the Jews and the Christians as 'people of the book', that is to say, monotheists following revealed religions, and as such allowed to enjoy a state of protection (*dhimma*) as subordinated, tolerated religious communities. The Almohads, on the other hand, abolished the state of protection and compelled the local Jews and Christians to convert to Islam or go into exile.[12] Many of the Jews and Christians living under Almohad rule converted to Islam

[11] David J. Wasserstein, 'Islamisation and the Conversion of the Jews', in Mercedes García-Arenal (ed.), *Conversions islamiques: identités religieuses en islam méditerranéen (=Islamic Conversions: Religious Identities in Mediterranean Islam)*, Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2001, pp. 49-60, at p. 54. Fiey ('Conversions à l'Islam', pp. 13-14), who speaks of 'massive conversion to Islam by Jews and Christians' alike, seems to rely mostly on anecdotal testimonies regarding those who did convert (and incidentally, includes in his examples of Jewish converts to Islam also a Christian convert, ʿAlī b. Rabbān al-Ṭabarī; see Fiey, 'Conversions à l'Islam', p. 19 and p. 24).

[12] The Almohad policy towards the religious minorities received much scholarly attention, presenting different evaluations of its motivations, intensity, development and effects; see, for example, David Corcos, 'The Attitude of the Almohads towards the Jews', *Studies in the History of the Jews of Morocco*, Jerusalem: R. Mass, 1976, pp. 319-342 [in Hebrew]; translated by Elisheva Machlis, and with additional bibliographical notes, in David Corcos, 'The nature of the Almohad rulers' treatment of the Jews', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2/2 [2010], pp. 5-48); S. Stroumsa, *Maimonides in his World: Portrait of a Mediterranean Thinker*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 56–58; Amira K. Bennison and María Ángeles Gallego, 'Religious minorities under the Almohads: an introduction', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2/2 (2010), pp. 143–154; Maribel Fierro, 'Conversion, ancestry and universal religions: the case of the Almohads in the Islamic West (sixth/twelfth-seventh/thirteenth centuries)', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 2/2 (2010), pp. 155–173; Maribel Fierro, 'A Muslim land without Jews or Christians: Almohad policies regarding the 'protected people'', in Matthias M. Tischler and Alexander Fidora (eds.), *Christlicher Norden – Muslimischer Süden. Ansprüche und Wirklichkeiten von Christen, Juden und Muslimen* auf *der Iberischen Halbinsel im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter*, Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2011, pp. 231–247; Mohamed Chérif, 'Encore sur le statut de *ḏimmīs* sous les Almohades', in Maribel Fierro and John Tolan (eds.), *The Legal Status of* Ḏimmī*-s in the Islamic West (second/eight-ninth/fifteenth centuries,* Turnhout: Brepols, 2013, pp. 65–87. The scholarly positions regarding this question merit further discussion, which I intend to offer elsewhere.

under these conditions, but the long-term effects on the two communities were drastically different. For the Christian communities of North Africa this forced conversion meant a death warrant, and they were effectively wiped out. The Jewish communities, on the other hand, by and large survived the persecution. Jews managed to preserve their religious identity while simulating conversion, and even before the formal abolition of Almohad rule in 1230, the Jewish communities of North Africa surfaced again.[13]

The difference in this respect between these two groups becomes even clearer in the Iberian peninsula itself. Apart from their shared status as 'subordinated religions', the Jews and Christians of al-Andalus present two drastically different communities in their social fabric and consequently also in their religious behavior. The Jewish community was mostly made up of immigrants or their descendants. These immigrants came from the Orient or from North Africa and settled in al-Andalus, usually in the cities, after the Muslim conquest.[14] The number of Jews who made up these urban Jewish communities could not have been very high, but they seem to have been well integrated economically and culturally.[15] The Christians, by contrast, constituted at the beginning of this period, as mentioned above, the vast majority of the population, and the

[13] See H. Z Hirschberg, *A History of the Jews in North Africa*, Leiden: Brill, 1974, vol. I, pp. 193–96, and pp. 201–202; M. Talbi, 'Le christianisme magrébin de la conquête musulmane à sa disparition: une tentative d'explication', in Gervers and Bikhazi, *Conversion and Continuity*, pp. 313–351; Henri Teissier, 'La desaparición de la antigua iglesia de África', in H. Teissier and R. Lourido Diaz (eds.), *El Cristianismo en el norte de África*, Madrid: MAPFRE, 1993, pp. 37–54, especially p. 44; Thomas E. Burman, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs, c.1050*-1200, Leiden-New York: Brill, 1994, p. 191; J.-P. Molénat, 'Sur le rôle des Almohades dans la fin du christianisme local au Maghreb et en al-Andalus', *Al-Qanṭara* 18 (1997), pp. 389–413 See also García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes', pp. 95–97; Stroumsa, *Maimonides in his World*, pp. 56–58; and see below, n. 27.

[14] The urban character of the Jewish population was not uniform over time, and at least after the 13th century, and under Christian rule, Jews (who were still principally city dwellers) nevertheless owned land; see Jonathan Ray, *The Sephardic Frontier: The Reconquista and the Jewish Community in Medieval Iberia*, Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 2006, pp. 36–42.

[15] This situation is summarized by Wasserstein ('Islamisation and the Conversion of the Jews', p. 55) who states that 'Islam did... arrive and saved the Jews.' Wasserstein ('Islamisation and the Conversion of the Jews', pp. 55–56) argues that '[t]he conquests brought virtually all the Jews of the seventh-century into a single political system and made them part of a single cultural unit. They made possible contact between different parts of the Jewish world from Iran to Andalus, contact which would have been unimaginable before the rise of Islam'. On the size of the Jewish community in al-Andalus, see also S. D. Goitein, 'Jewish Society and Institutions under Islam', in H.H. Ben-Sasson and S. Ettinger (eds.), *Jewish Society Through the Ages*, New York: Schocken, 1969, pp. 170–184, at p.173. Goitein estimates that Jews 'did not amount to more than one percent of the total population — with the important qualification that in the cities and towns... they formed a far higher percentage of the inhabitants'. Regarding the various Jewish communities in the cities of al-Andalus, see already Henri Pérès, *La poésie andalouse en arabe classique au XIe siècle: Ses aspects généraux et sa valeur documentaire*, Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1937, pp. 264–268.

character of the community did not change drastically when their numbers began to shrink: they were mostly indigenous; and most of them lived in rural communities.[16]

One could have expected the big, ancient and well-established local Christian community to be more resilient to the pressure to convert to Islam than the small, newly established Jewish community. Furthermore, one would have expected the presence of the bordering Christian kingdoms in the North of the peninsula to serve as a source of religious strength, that could help keep the Christians under Muslim rules, known as the Mozarabs, from converting to Islam. In fact, the opposite occurred. The existence of the Iberian Christian kingdoms, and the ongoing state of war between them and the Muslims, exposed the Mozarabs to the suspicion of being a fifth column. Their typical profile as rural, and thus often religiously poorly educated, communities may have been also a source of vulnerability.[17] Mikel de Epalza thus suggested that the Christian rural population, isolated from the guidance of the urban clergy, converted more easily to Islam.[18] The opposite argument is put forward by Wasserstein, who cautiously says that 'it seems not unlikely that retention of Christianity may have been stronger in the rural areas and in the more isolated parts of the peninsula', and that 'much of the literate class of Christians in al-Andalus went over to Islam'.[19] But whether more in the cities or more in the countryside, the overall picture remains that conversion was a widespread phenomenon among the Christians, whereas among the Jews it seems to have remained restricted to individual cases.

Religious education in their own tradition may have been one reason for this difference between the two communities. A relatively high level of literacy among Jews, which meant a relatively high level of familiarity with the tenants of

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16 See Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, pp. 224–46.

17 The continuous impact of the profile of Visigoth Spain on the Christian ability to adapt to the cultural shock of the Muslim conquest is also noted by John Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2002, pp. 85–87.

18 Mikel de Epalza, 'Trois siècles d'histoire mozarabe', *Travaux et Jours* 20 (1966), pp. 25–40, at p. 29; see also Mikel de Epalza, 'Mozarabs: An Emblematic Christian Minority in Islamic al-Andalus', in Salma Khadra Jayyusi (ed.), *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, Leiden: Brill, 1992, vol. I. chap. 12, pp. 149–199. Tolan (*Saracens*, p. 96) also points to the 'conversion by slippage', a gradual disintegration of Christian communities as a passive reaction to the prevailing circumstances. Scholarly positions regarding the pace and historical context of the conversion of Christians to Islam in the Iberian peninsula are succinctly summarize in Burns, *Muslims, Christians, and Jews*, pp. 4-5.

19 Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, pp. 229–230 and p. 237. The predominance of provincial communities in preserving religious tradition is attested also in the Genizah documents, according to the analysis of which, as noted by Goitein (*Mediterranean Society* I, p. 15), 'Hebrew lingered on in the smaller towns of Egypt longer than in the larger centers'.

their own religion, and a strong, cohesive community, may well have strengthened the ability of Jews to withstand the pressures to convert to Islam.[20] But a more relevant difference between the two communities seems to be found in another aspect of their education, regarding not their own tradition but that of the surrounding society.

From the eighth century onwards, across the world of Islam, Arabic became the common language of the various ethnic and religious communities, used both for everyday life and for intellectual pursuits. The ubiquity of the use of Arabic created a common culture, covering everything from science and philosophy to *belles lettres* and personal correspondence. In the Orient, Jews and Christians preserved their religious language, and Hebrew and Syriac continued to be used in limited religious contexts. But both Jews and Christians also fully participated in the common Arabic culture, adopting the Arabic language both as a vernacular and as a cultural language. This meant that, more often than not, Arabic was their own mother tongue, and that they employed it also for their respective religious writings (although often retaining their own script).[21] Christians in the Orient played a decisive role in shaping this Arabic cultural *koiné* or common culture, transmitting to the Muslims the philosophical and scientific Greek heritage and translating it to Arabic. From the ninth century onwards, Jews too participated in this common culture and made it their own. Jews developed, in Arabic, new literary genres and new forms of Jewish religious expression. Biblical and Talmudic exegesis, Jewish philosophy, theology, mysticism, Jewish pietistic literature and Jewish law were developed in Arabic, using the same concepts and patterns of thought as their Muslim rulers used for Koran exegesis or for Muslim law.

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[20] See Haim Beinart, 'Hispano-Jewish Society', in Ben-Sasson and Ettinger, *Jewish Society*, pp. 220–238, at p. 221. According to Beinart, 'the Jewish public in the communities of Moslem Spain... kept to themselves, whether in matters of organization and social structure or in those outward form of life that they adopted in Spanish lands'.

[21] On the linguistic aspects of this culture, see Joshua Blau, *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic: A Study of the Origins of Middle Arabic.* Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 1981; Sidney H. Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic: the Scripture of the 'People of the Book' in the language of Islam*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013). See also David J.Wasserstein, 'A Family Story: Ambiguities of Jewish Identity in Medieval Islam', in Benham Sadeghi, Asad Q. Ahmed, Adam Silverstein, and Robert Hoyland (eds.), *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone,* Leiden: Brill, 2015, pp. 498–532, at pp. 511–514. See also Elaine R. Miller, *Jewish Multiglossia: Hebrew, Arabic and Castilian in Medieval Spain*, Newark, Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 2002), whose main focus is on later periods, under Christian rule. Miller's statement that Jews 'did not study classical Arabic' is probably correct as a general observation regarding the community as a whole. But the educated elite, which did study classical Arabic, may well have included not just courtiers and philosophers, but quite a few others. See also Esperanza Alfonso, *Islamic Culture through Jewish Eyes: Al-Andalus from the Tenth to Twelfth Century*, New York: Routledge, 2008, pp. 9–33.

In the Iberian peninsula, however, the difference which we noticed between the two communities, regarding the social-fabric of the communities and their patterns of behavior regarding conversion, is evident also in their level of acculturation.[22] Jews living in al-Andalus, as elsewhere, adopted Arabic and developed their own, Jewish version of Arabic culture. This applied to all levels of the Jewish community, with the community leaders, who often carried not only political but also religious authority, taking the lead in this process. Jewish intellectuals were active participants in the court culture. A creative Andalusian Judaeo-Arabic culture flourished, and even Hebrew poetry in al-Andalus was shaped in the mold of Arabic poetical styles. The Christians of al-Andalus, on the other hand, unlike their brethren in the Orient, played only a relatively marginal role in the intellectual, cultural and political life in Arabic (with the exception of medicine).[23] Adoption of the Arabic high literary culture in general among the Andalusi Christians seems to have been a more protracted and tortuous process.[24] When it finally seems to take root in the more urban segments of the Christian

[22] 'Acculturation' in this article refers primarily to the literary and verbal expression of culture, those associated with the use of the Arabic language; compare below, note 24.

[23] Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, pp. 244–245, says that Christians scarcely participated in Islamic political life, and attributes it to the fact that they lacked the necessary skills to do so. 'The majority of those who did acquire them seem to have ended up as converts to Islam', and the others probably entered the Church. See also Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, p. 264, who points out that the Jews 'apprécièrent mieux que les Chrétiens les avantages d'être soumis à de nouveaux conquérants', and that, although many Jews have surely converted to Islam, their favorable place in the Muslim courts must have slowed down the conversions.

[24] See Hanna Kassis, 'The Arabicization and Islamization of the Christians of al-Andalus', in Ross Brann (ed.), *Languages of Power in Islamic Spain*, Occasional Publications of the Department of Near Eastern Studies and the Program of Jewish Studies, Cornell University, 3; Bethesda, Maryland: CDL Press, 1997, pp. 136–155. On the continuous use of Latin and Romance by the Christians of al-Andalus, see, for example, Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, 'Espagne préislamique et Espagne musulmane', *Revue Historique* 237 (1967), pp. 295–338, at pp. 301–302; Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, 'Les chrétiens d'al-Andalus et leurs manifestations culturelles', in Guy Saupin, Rémi Fabre and Marcel Launay (eds.), *La Tolérance. Colloque international de Nantes (mai 1998)*, Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 1999, pp. 363–370, at p. 369; Federico Corriente, *Romania Arabica: Tres cuestiones básicas: arabismos, "mozárabe" y "jarchas"*, Madrid: Trotta, 2008, pp. 9-17; Juan Pedro Monferrer Sala, 'Somewhere in the 'History of Spain'. People, languages and texts in the Iberian Peninsula (13th-15th centuries)', in David Thomas *et al*. (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History, Volume 5 (1350–1500)*, Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2013, pp. 47-59, especially pp. 48-49. Wasserstein (*The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, p. 238) also notes the eventual Arabisation of the literate classes of the Christians. There were other aspects of acculturation which did have a profound impact on Iberian Christians under Islam, and which found their expression in the material culture, agriculture and water system, legal system, and the vocabulary pertaining to these aspects. See Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain*, for example pp. 51, 277–299; Thomas S. Glick and Oriol Pi-Sunyer, 'Acculturation as an Explanatory Concept in Spanish History', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 11/2 (1969), pp. 136–154; Novikoff, 'Between Tolerance and Intolerance', p. 29; and see above, notes 7 and 22.

community, in the first half of the ninth century, the community's religious leaders panic and react with alarm. The Church's resistance to Arabisation, and its attempts to reaffirm a genuinely Christian Latin culture, are evident in the writings of clergymen like Alvarus, Eulogius and Samson.[25]

The differences between the Jews and Christians of al-Andalus, and the connection between their respective level of acculturation and their respective level of conversion, have of course been noticed by scholars. Wasserstein points to the emergence of a distinct Judeo-Arabic culture and argues that, across the Islamic medieval world,

> 'it was the possession of a distinct and separate culture that gave the Jews an identity which enabled them to retain their distinct religion and to avoid absorption into the broader society'.[26]

David Abulafia addressed this issue specifically regarding the Iberian peninsula, noting the fact that 'Jews in al-Andalus and elsewhere did not follow the same path as the Mozarabic Christians in Islamicizing themselves. Or, more simply: the Jews Arabized but did not Islamize.' For Abulafia,

> 'the rather open society of Muslim Spain managed to undermine Christianity, while... strengthening Judaism. .... The mystery of why the Jews acculturated but did not assimilate to Islam, as did many Christians, finds its answer in the existence of [the] common ground that existed between Judaism and Islam in this society.'[27]

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[25] The anxiety caused by the accelerated pace of Arabisation is clearly expressed by Alvarus; see, for example, Francisco Javier Simonet, *Historia de los Mozarabes de España*, Madrid: Turner, 1983, vol. II, pp. 369–371; Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008, p. 152; Tolan, *Saracens*, pp. 86, 95–96.

[26] Wasserstein, 'Islamisation and the Conversion of the Jews', p. 57.

[27] David Abulafia, 'What Happened in al-Andalus: Minorities in al-Andalus and in Christian Spain', in Sadeghi *et al., Islamic Cultures,* pp. 533–50, at pp. 540–541. Abulafia adds another explanation, which relates to the different character of Islam and Judaism on the one hand and Christianity on the other. According to him, 'perhaps Christianity was less resilient because in the early Middle Ages it provided a spiritual and ritual framework, but did not provide a detailed code of religious practice to determine conduct hour by hour'. The central role played by steadfast intellectual identity and by having a common ground with Islam (or the lack thereof) is also noted by Thomas Burman (*Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs*). Another explanation for the disappearance of Christian communities and the survival of Jewish communities is offered by Goitein ('Jewish Society and Institutions under Islam', pp. 174–75), who points out 'the ecology of Jews under Islam, i.e. their topographical distribution'. Goitein, however, focuses on the example of Yemen, where the Jewish population was widely dispersed, and where the Christians were concentrated in the cities. In al-Andalus, as mentioned above, the opposite was the case. Another major difference between the two minority communities in

Up to this point, we focused on the conversion and acculturation patterns of the two communities as a whole. Putting it, again, bluntly: the Christians of al-Andalus converted to Islam, the Jews of al-Andalus became culturally arabicized but did not convert.[28] Communities, however, are made of individuals, and when we examine individuals, we find that the dichotomy between conversion and acculturation cannot be so neatly delineated. As noted in contemporary immigration studies,

> 'acculturation is something akin to conversion, i.e. a departure from one group and a discarding of signs of membership in it, lined to an attempt to enter into another.'[29]

The boundary blurring that occurs in this process creates blurred cases, and each such case deserves to be examined separately. The valiant attempts to offer statistics and draw curves that describe the conversion process cannot, I believe, replace the close examination of individual cases. This is so not only because of the reservations expressed by various scholars regarding the reliability of quantitative methods in our present state of knowledge.[30] Even if the quantitative method could rely on a larger relevant database than it currently does, individual, anecdotal cases highlight nuances that the quantitative method by its very nature obscures. It is one such case, or rather a cluster of cases, on which I would like to focus now.

This is the complex case of five generations of one Jewish family, five men all of whom can be considered to have belonged to the intellectual and social elite of the community. Although much has been written about them as individuals,

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al-Andalus was the possibility of moving to a neighboring coreligionist polity, which was available for Christians but not for Jews. This difference, however, can partly account for the disappearance of certain Christian communities, but not (or at least, not directly) for the conversion of those who remained under Islamic rule.

28 But see Hirschberg, *A History of the Jews in North Africa*, vol. I, p. 191; García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes', p. 94.

29 Richard Alba, 'Bright vs. Blurred Boundaries: Second-Generation Assimilation and Exclusion in France, Germany and the United States', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (2005), pp. 20–49, at p. 24; quoted in Jürgen Gerhards and Silke Hans, 'From Hasan to Herbert: Name-Giving Patterns of Immigrant Parents between Acculturation and Ethnic Maintenance', *American Journal of Sociology* 114 (2009), pp. 102–28, at p. 118. I am indebted to Jürgen Gerhards for bringing this study to my attention. On the 'permeable, fluid and constantly renegotiated' boundaries of religious groups in the period which concerns us here, see also Papaconstantinou, 'Between Umma and Dhimma', pp. 130–131.

30 See, for example, Penelas, 'Some remarks on Conversion'; Wasserstein, 'Where have all the converts gone?', p. 326, n. 1, and p. 327.

their very description as five generations of a single family is not unanimously agreed upon. As we will presently see, some scholars do not identify all five as belonging to the same family, while others skip one generation or identify two members as being one and the same person, thus telescoping the five generations to four or even three.[31] The family prided itself of being direct decedents of the Prophet Moses.[32] The first member of the family that concerns us here is the physician and statesman Ḥasday ibn Shaprūṭ (ca. 910–ca. 970).[33] Born into a wealthy and respectable Jewish family from Jaén, which then moved to Córdoba, he served as the court physician and vizier of the first Umayyad Caliph, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III, as well as of his son al-Ḥakam II. Due to Ibn Shaprūṭ's multilingual aptitude and political talents, he was employed in the Caliphs' service carrying out delicate diplomatic assignments, as well as in more specific academically oriented missions, such as the massive importation of books from the Orient, or the translation of Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica* into Arabic.[34] He was also the

[31] See below, nn. 32-33, 41.

[32] This ancestry is mentioned only regarding Abū'l-Faḍl Ḥasday, the third generation of the family; on the identity of his father and grandfather, see further below. Wasserstein regards the claimed Mosaic lineage as a mistake, the result of Ibn Ṣāʿid's presuppositions regarding what a noble Jewish line should be. Wasserstein further suggests that Moses should be corrected to David, since the claim for belonging to a Davidic line is by far more common in Jewish genealogies. As in the best practice regarding the edition of manuscripts, here too the rule of *lectio difficilior* should be adopted. In additions to this technical argument in favor of the name Moses, we should take into account Ibn Ṣāʿid's close connections with Abū'l-Faḍl Ḥasday, Ibn Shaprūṭ's grandson; see below, note 33. These connections make it more than probable that he knew the family well and was familiar with the family tradition of its Mosaic ancestry. Furthermore, it seems that, perhaps in al-Andalus in particular, Moses's name was invoked rather fondly. Thus Ibn Daud says about Joseph Ibn Megash that 'his personal traits testified that he was of the seed of our master Moses... since he was the most humble of man' (in reference to Num. 12.3); see Abraham Ibn Daud, *The Book of Tradition (Sefer ha-Qabbalah)*, ed. Gershon D. Cohen, Philadelphia: the Jewish Publication Society, 1967, p. 86. What appears to be the rather unusual name given to Moses Maimonides should perhaps also be seen in this context; see I. Yuval 'Moses Redivivus; Maimonides as the Messiah's Helper', *Zion* 72/2 (2007), pp. 161-188 (in Hebrew).

[33] Wasserstein, who mentions the Ibn Ḥasday family of Saragossa as one of two rare cases where we have records of Jewish dynasties in al-Andalus, does not connect them to Ḥasday Ibn Shaprūṭ; see David Wasserstein, 'Jewish Élites in al-Andalus', in Daniel Frank (ed.) *The Jews of Medieval Islam: Community, Society and Identity,* Leiden: Brill, 1995, pp. 101–110, at p. 109. For that matter, nor does Ibn Ṣāʿid, who does not mention at any point a family connection between Ḥasday Ibn Shaprūṭ and the Saragossan descendant of Moses, Abūʾl Faḍl Ibn Ḥasday. But as noted by Wasserstein, Ibn Shaprūṭ is the only Jew outside of Saragossa mentioned by Ibn Ṣāʿid. This fact is best explained as reflecting the information he had received from the young Abūʾ l Faḍl regarding his family, and, by the same token, corroborates Abūʾl Faḍl's connection to Ibn Shaprūṭ.

[34] On the role of Jews in medieval international diplomacy, see Nikolas Jaspert and Sebastian Kolditz, 'Christlich-muslimische Aussenbeziehungen im Mittelmeerraum. Zur räumlichen und

recognized head (*nassi*) of the Jewish community, and he used his international connections on behalf of Jewish communities across the Mediterranean.[35] Ḥasday ibn Shaprūṭ is thus an emblematic acculturated Jewish dignitary of al-Andalus, navigating at ease in the Muslim corridors of power and intellectual salons, and at the same time deeply rooted in his own tradition. Ángel Sáenz-Badillos thus describes him as 'one of the personalities... [who] contributed most directly to the emergence and rapid maturation of a genuinely Andalusi Jewish culture'.[36]

After Ḥasday ibn Shaprūṭ's death, and after the disintegration of the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba, the family left Cordoba and moved, via Granada, to Saragossa in the north of the peninsula. Ibn Shaprūṭ's offspring seem, at first sight, to follow in his footsteps, integrating the two worlds in which they lived. His eldest son, Abū al-Walīd Ḥasday, replaced him as head (*raʾīs*) of the Talmudic academy in Lucena.[37] Another son, Abū ʿAmr Yūsuf, served at the courts of Granada, then Sahla (Albarracín) and finally Saragossa, and is also known to have been a talented Hebrew poet.[38] Ibn Shaprūṭ's grandson, Abūʾl-Faḍl Ḥasday ibn

religösen Dimension mittelalterlicher Diplomatie', *Zeitschrif für historische Forschung* 41 (2014), pp. 1–88, at p. 39.

35 Further on Ibn Shaprūt, see, for example, Philoxène Luzzatto, *Notice sur Abou-Iousouf Hasdaï ibn Schaprout, Médecin juif du dixième siècle, ministre des khalifes omeyyades d'espagne 'Abd-al-Rahman III et al-Hakem II, et promoteur de la littérature juive en Europe*, Paris: Dondey-Dupré, 1852); Solomon Munk, *Mélanges de philosophie juive et arabe*, Paris: A. Franck, 1859; reprinted Paris: Vrin, 1988, pp. 480–481 and note 2; Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1961, vol. I, p. 16, and note 7 on p. 382; Jacob Mann, 'Ḥisdai Ibn Shaprūṭ and his Diplomatic Intervention on Behalf of the Jews in Christian Europe', *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature*, New York: Ktav, 1972, vol. I, pp. 3–30; Haim Beinart, *Los Judíos en España*, Madrid: MAPFRE, 1992, pp. 50–52; Ibn Ṣāʿid, *Ṭabaqāt al-Umam*, ed. Bū ʿAlwān, Beirut: Dār al-ṭalīʿa, 1985), p. 203, line 13–204, line 6; Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-Anbāʾ fī Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbāʾ* , ed. Nizār Riḍā, Beirut: *Maktabat al-ḥayāt*, n.d.), p. 498; Sarah Stroumsa, 'Thinkers of 'This Peninsula': An Integrative Approach to the Study of Philosophy in al-Andalus', in D. Freidenreich and M. Goldstein (eds.) *Border Crossings: Interreligious interaction and the exchange of ideas in the Islamic Middle Ages*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, pp. 44–53, at pp. 49–51.

36 Ángel Sáenz-Badillos, *Literatura Hebrea en la España Medieval*, Madrid: Fundación Amigos de Sefarad, 1991, p. 21.

37 See Moses Ibn Ezra, *Kitāb al-Muḥāḍara wa'l-Muḏākara*, ed. Montserrat Abumalham Mas, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, 1985, vol. I, p. 65.

38 Moses Ibn Ezra (*Muḥāḍara*, vol. I, pp. 74–75), who counts him among the inhabitants of *sharq al-andalus*, evaluates his output as 'little but to the point (*qawluhu qalīl lakinnahu jalīl*)'. He is said to have dedicated a *qaṣīda* to Samuel ha-Nagid, known as the '*shira yetoma*' (= *yatīma*); see Judah Alharizi, *Taḥkemoni or The Tales of Heman the Ezraḥite*, ed. Joseph Yahalom and Naoya Katsumata, Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute, 2010), III, pp. 112, 174; Eliyahu Ashtor, *the Jews of Moslem Spain*, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1984, vol. II, p. 258; Sáenz-Badillos, *Literatura Hebrea*, p. 113. See also Á. C. López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', *Biblioteca de al-Andalus*, ed. Jorge Lirola Delgado and José Miguel Puerta Vílches, Almería: Fundación Ibn Tufayl de Estudios Árabes, 2004, vol. III, pp. 303–309, at 304. Beinart, *Los Judíos en España*, p. 60, which mentions

Yūsuf, was thoroughly trained as a philosopher, and was also an accomplished poet in both Hebrew and Arabic;[39] but he also attended the court of the Banū Hūd of Saragossa, serving al-Muqtadir ibn Hūd (r. 438/1046–475/1082–83) as well his son al-Muʾtaman (r. 475/1082–478/1085) and grandson al-Mustaʿīn (r. 478/1085–503/1110) after him.[40] His own grandson, (the great-great-grandson of Ibn Shaprūt), Abū Jaʿfar Yūsuf bn. Aḥmad bn. Ḥasday, immigrated at some point to Egypt, from whence he kept a close correspondence with a Muslim friend, the Saragossan philosopher Ibn Bājja (d. 533/1138).[41] This Abū Jaʿfar is known to have specialized in the study of medicine, and was asked by al-Maʾmūn al-Baṭāʾiḥī, who served between 515/1122 and 519/1125 as the vizier of the tenth Fāṭimid Caliph, al-Āmir bi-aḥkām Allāh (d. 524/1130), to write commentaries on the writings of Hippocrates and Galen.[42] The record of the family members thus clearly testifies that they followed the example of their ancestor Ḥasday ibn Shaprūṭ in their cultural refinement and their interest in things intellectuals as well as in their connection to the Muslim ruling class.

But the religious identity of Ḥasday ibn Shaprūṭ's descendants is anything but clear. On the one hand, they are designated as Jews, by both Muslim and Jewish sources. On the other hand, for each one of them we also have sources reporting,

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Joseph as Ḥasday's son, is a slip of the pen, and should of course be corrected to Samuel ha-Nagid's son.

39 Ibn Ezra, *Muḥāḍara*, vol. I, p. 75: *'...aljama al-adawāt al-ʿilmiyya, al-kāmil al-ṣināʿa al-falsafiyya, al-muwaffī li-ʾl-aqāwīl al-shiʿriyya waʾl-khiṭabiyya fīʾl-ʿibrāniyya waʾl-ʿarabiyya.*' See also Ashtor, *The Jews of Moslem Spain*, vol. III, n. 117 on p. 295; Ibn Ṣāʿid, *Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, p. 205, line 8–p. 206, line 6; Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ*, p. 499; López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', pp. 304–305.

40 See Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, pp. 211–212,

41 Abū Jaʿfar Yūsuf is thus the grandson of Abūʾl-Faḍl Ḥasday (as noted correctly in the table drawn by López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', p. 306, and not his son (as mistakenly noted by López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', p. 307). On him, see also Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, pp. 266–267. A suggestion that Abū Jaʿfar actually was Abūʾl-Faḍl's son was put forward by Shlomo Pines, "La dynamique d'Ibn Bājja", *Mélanges Alexandre Koyré*, Paris: Hermann, 1964, vol. I, pp. 442–68; reprinted in *The Collected Works of Shlomo Pines*, Jerusalem: Magnes, 1986, vol. II, pp. 440–68. A still further telescoping of these three individuals, identifying Abū Jaʿfar Yūsuf with Abūʾl-Faḍl Ḥasday, as one and the same person, was suggested by Juan Vernet Ginés, *La transmisión de algunas ideas científicas de oriente a occidente y de occidente a oriente en los siglos XI–XIII*, Rome: Unione internazionale degli institute de archeologia, storia y storia dell'arte in Roma, 1992, pp. 25–31 (*non vidi*); see Miquel Forcada, 'Ibn Bājja and the Classification of the Sciences in al-Andalus', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 16 (2006), pp. 287–307, 296.

42 See *Rasāʾil falsafiyya li-Abī Bakr bn. Bājja: nuṣūṣ falsafiyya gayr manshūra*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn al-ʿAlawī, Casablanca: Dār al-nashr al-maghribiyya, 1983, p. 77 and note 1; Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ*, p. 500; López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū Ŷaʿfar', *Biblioteca de al-Andalus*, vol. III, pp. 309–310. On al-Maʾmūn al-Baṭāʾiḥī's scientific ambitions, see also P. E. Walker, 'Fatimid Institutions of Learning', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 34 (1997), pp. 179–200 (reprinted in P. E. Walker, *Fatimid History and Ismaili Doctrine*, Aldershot: Ashgate-Variorum, 2008, p. 198, n. 1).

or modern scholars arguing, that he was the one who broke away from Judaism and converted to Islam. It is not only that they themselves, despite their supposed conversion, continue to be designated as Jews, or as of Jewish origin.[43] What is really puzzling is the fact that despite their supposed conversion, their offspring, for three generations, are also said to have taken at some point the step of converting, implying that they were born and raised as Jews. Conversion in this family thus does not look as a one time transformative event, nor even as a process in the life of the individual that at some point reaches its end, but rather as a *perpetuum mobile*.

The examination of each of these cases shows contradictory information that does not help us clarify the picture. Let us quickly run through these cases:

2nd generation: Ḥasday ibn Shaprūṭ's son Abū ʿAmr Yūsuf is sometimes identified as the addressee of a satirical poem by Abūʾl-Rabīʿ Sulaimān bn. Aḥmad al-Quḍāʾī, directed at a certain Yūsuf al-Islāmī (an appellation that supposedly means 'the convert') and referring obliquely to 'he who joins a religious community'.[44] Yūsuf's conversion is supposed to have taken place when he reached old age, along with the conversion of his grown son Abūʾ l-Faḍl.[45] But the dates do not fit this scenario, since a note by the Jewish grammarian Ibn Janāḥ (written ca. 1048) refers to him with the blessing *raḥimahu ʾAllāh*, and it thus appears that Yūsuf must have died shortly after this son's birth.[46]

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[43] As Wasserstein points out, the appellation *al-Israʾīlī*, which is appended to names of Jews, could also be appended to that of converts from Judaism (unlike *al-yahūdī*, reserved for actual Jews); see D. J. Wasserstein, 'What's in a Name? ʿAbd Allāh b. Isḥāq b. al-Shanāʿa al-Muslimānī al-Israʾīlī and Conversion to Islam in Medieval Cordoba', in Arnold E. Franklin, Roxani Eleni Margariti, Marina Rustow, and Uriel Simonsohn (eds.), *Jews, Christians and Muslims in Medieval and Early Modern Times: A Festschrift in Honor of Mark R. Cohen*, Leiden: Brill, 2014, pp. 139–154, at p. 146. One should also note that, when the name of a person appears with his patronym or with a longer genealogical line, the epithet *al-Israʾīlī*, which appears at the end of the list, might refer to the Jewish forefather rather than to the person himself.

[44] '*Man dakhala fī millatin...*'; Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Santarīnī Ibn Bassām, *Al-Dhakhīra fī maḥāsin ahl al-jazīra*, ed. Sālim Muṣṭafā al-Badrī, Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmiyya, 1998, vol. III, pp. 314–317. See Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, p. 266, n.1; and, more explicitly, López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', p. 307. Ashtor, on the other hand, clearly regards this Yūsuf as unrelated to Ḥasday's son; see Ashtor, *The Jews of Moslem Spain*, p. 191. See also Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, p. 211; and apparently also García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes', p. 95. On the appellation '*al-Islāmī*' as the proper way to designate a convert, see also Penelas, 'Some remarks on Coversion', p. 199.

[45] See Ibn Diḥya, *Al-Muṭrib min ashʿār ahl al-maghrib*, ed. Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, Ḥamīd ʿAbd al-Majīd and Aḥmad A. Badawī, Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-āmīrīyya, 1954, pp. 196–97 (= ed. Muṣṭafā ʿIwaḍ al-Karīm [Khartum: Maṭbaʿat Miṣr, 1957], p. 179); López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', pp. 305-306; Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, pp. 211–212.

[46] Yonah Ibn Janāḥ, *Sefer ha-Riqma (Kitāb al-lumaʿ)*, ed. M. Vilenski, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1964, p. 319; Abūʾl-Walīd Marwān Ibn Janāḥ, *Kitāb al-lumaʿ*, ed.

3rd generation: That son, the young Abūʾl-Faḍl Ḥasday ibn Yūsuf, is described by the Muslim historian Ibn Ṣāʿid (who met him and apparently befriended him, despite their age-difference, in Saragossa) as a brilliant Jewish boy. Ibn Ṣāʿid counts him as one of the only three Andalusians in his knowledge who engaged in the study of physics and metaphysics.[47] He further declares that Abūʾl-Faḍl's level in the theoretical sciences was unequalled in al-Andalus.[48] But Ibn Ṣāʿid, writing in Toledo in 464/1067, knows nothing (yet?) about his conversion.[49] Another source, however, Ibn Diḥya (d. 633/1235–36, who follows Ibn Khaqān), says that he did convert, because being a *dhimmī* was a disadvantage among his Muslim peers.[50] Yet another medieval source, Ibn Bassām, reports that Abūʾl-Faḍl converted to Islam because he fell in love with a slave girl; when, however she

Joseph Derenbourg, Paris: E. Vierweg, 1886, p. 304; Ashtor, *The Jews of Moslem Spain*, n. 84 on p. 250.

47 Ibn Ṣāʿid, *Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, p. 185; compare the French translation of Régis Blachère, *Kitâb Ṭabaḳât al-Umam (Livre des Catégories des Nations)*, Paris: Larose, 1935, p. 142, and the English translation of Semaʿan I. Salem and Alok Kumar, *Science in the Medieval World: 'Book of the Categories of Nations' by Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996, p. 71 and pp. 198–199.

48 '*Maḥalluhu min al-ʿulūm al-naẓariyya al-maḥall alladhī lā yujārī ʿindanā fīʾl-andalus*'; Ibn Ṣāʿid, *Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, p. 172. Blachère, *Livre des Catégories des Nations*, p. 132, understands this last sentence as referring to Abūʾl-Ḥakam al-Kirmānī (d. 458/1066), mentioned shortly beforehand, and translates: 'Par contre, dans les sciences spéculatifs il n'avait point d'égale en Andalousi'. A similar understanding is reflected in the English translation of Salem and Kumar, *Science in the Medieval World*, p. 65: 'He knew him [scil. al-Kirmānī) well and he knew his level as a theoretical scientist'. Both translations thus assume al-Kirmānī's superior knowledge. But as Ibn Ṣāʿid's previous lines explicitely say, al-Kirmānī's *forte* was in the applied sciences, such as geometry and surgery, and not in the theoretical sciences, such as logics and mathematical astronomy. Ḥasday, on the other hand, is one of the only three Andalusians mentioned by Ibn Ṣāʿid as students of physics and metaphysics; see previous note.

49 See Ibn Ṣāʿid, *Ṭabaqāt al-Umam*, pp. 172, 205–206; cf. Wasserstein's translation of this last passage, 'The Muslims and the Golden Age of the Jews in al-Andalus', in U. Rubin and D. J. Wasserstein (eds.) *Dhimmis and Others: Jews and Christians and the World of Classical Islam. Israel Oriental Studies* 17 (1997), pp. 179–196, at p. 191; and see also Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-Anbāʾ*, who is dependent on Ibn Ṣāʿid. Wasserstein, 'What's in a Name', points out that Ibn Saʿīd (*al-Mughrib fī ḥulā al-Maghrib*, vol. II, p. 441, no. 627) calls him *al-isrāʾīlī*, but still assumes that he did convert to Islam. Abū'l-Faḍl's contemporary Ibn Ṣāʿid, however, specifically lists him among the philosophers of the Jewish community (*al-Yahūd*). When they last saw each other, in 1065, the young Abūʾl-Faḍl was clearly (still?) a Jew.

50 '*Wa-kānat al-dhimma tuqʿiduhu ʿan marātib akfāʾihi, wa-tajiddu fī ṭumūs rasmihi, ḥattā alḥaqahu ʾllāh bi-aqrānihi, wa-aqālahu min mutaʿaththir khusrānihi, fa-taṭahhara wa-aslama, wa-āmana bi-Muḥammad ṣlʿm*'; Ibn Diḥya, *Muṭrib*, pp. 196–99 (= p.179 in al-Karīm's edition); al-Fatḥ b. Muḥammad Ibn Khāqān, *Qalāʾid al-ʿIqyān*, Cairo: Būlāq, 1284H, p. 182. Ibn Diḥya does not say at what age he converted; compare Wasserstein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, pp. 211–212. See also Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, p. 267.

was given to him after his conversion, he rejected her because he did not want people to say that his conversion was wrongly motivated and disingenuous.[51] Ibn Bassām also recounts another anecdote, in which Abūʾl-Faḍl's rival, the vizier Abū al-Muṭarrif Ibn al-Dabbāgh, saw him at some point after his conversion to Islam leafing through a book in the presence of al-Muqtadir, and asked him deridingly if it was the Torah that he was reading. Unfazed, Abūʾl-Faḍl answered in the affirmative, and added a hint to his rival's low ancestry (Ibn al-Dabbāgh being the son of a simple tanner).[52] In yet another exchange, the same Ibn al-Dabbāgh asked Abūʾl-Faḍl sarcastically if he intended to inherit the office of Qāḍī of Saragossa.[53] In both anecdotes Ibn al-Dabbāgh obviously alluded to Abūʾl-Faḍl's Jewish origins, but whereas Henri Pérès and López y López interpret these allusions as just that — allusions to his origins, notwithstanding his conversion — Eliyahu Ashtor regards them as a proof that he was still a Jew. For Ashtor, the rumors that he had converted to Islam were the work of Muslim zealots 'who could not reconcile themselves to the elevation of a Jew to the rank of vizier'.[54]

4th generation: Of Abūʾl-Faḍl's son we know next to nothing. The Muslim historian al-Maqrīzī calls him '*al-isrāʾīlī*' and gives his name as Aḥmad, claiming that he converted to Islam (again, although supposedly his father and grandfather had already converted before he was born).[55] According to the theory of Richard Bulliet, converts tend to give their children typically Muslim names (although it is also common for converts to change their own names), which would suggest that this Aḥmad was already the son of a convert, and that it was his father, Abūʾl-Faḍl, who converted to Islam.[56] But Bulliet's theory is meant to describe a phenomenon that can be observed when examining developments on a large scale, and not as a categorical rule that applies to all individual cases. There can thus be cases of a convert choosing for himself a more Muslim name. On the other hand, as noted by Wasserstein, 'in Spain perhaps

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[51] Ibn Bassām reports that he 'discarded his religion for her sake (*khalaʿa ilayhā dīnahu*)' but then became ambivalent towards her, '*anafatan min an yaẓunna al-nāsu anna islāmahu kāna min ajlihā*'. As a result, his reputation remained good, and many people remained ignorant of his affairs ('*wa-khafiya ʿalā kathīr min al-nās amruhu*); *Dhakhīra*, vol. III, pp. 290–91; al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min ghuṣn al-andalus al-raṭīb*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1968, vol. III, pp. 293, 401. It seems that Ibn Bassām too is aware of rumors that deny his conversion, and tries to explain their persistence. The reliability of the story is rejected also by Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, p. 267.

[52] Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, vol. III, pp. 401–402; Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, p. 267; Perès, *Esplendor*, pp. 272, 371 n. 46, 454; López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', p. 306.

[53] Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, p. 267 and n. 5; García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes', p. 94.

[54] Ashtor, *The Jews of Moslem Spain*, p. 220.

[55] On the use of the appellation '*al-isrāʾīlī*', typically attached to the names of Jews only in a Muslim context, see Wasserstein, 'What's in a Name', pp. 142–146; and see above, nn. 43 and 49.

[56] See Bulliet, *Coversion to Islam*; Wasserstein, 'Where have all the Converts Gone?', pp. 338-339.

more than elsewhere, there is the additional phenomenon of Muslim names appearing among non-Muslims'.[57] Aḥmad's name in itself thus cannot help us determine whether he or his father converted to Islam. From an explicit marginal note by al-Maqrīzī, it appears that Aḥmad himself was the one who converted.[58]

5th generation: The most puzzling case is that of Aḥmad's son, Abū Jaʿfar Yūsuf bn. Aḥmad bn. Ḥasday (d. 517/1123). The historian of the physicians Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa says nothing about his religious identity,[59] whereas al-Maqrīzī describes him as a son of a convert, supposedly born already as a Muslim.[60] Yet for an unknown reason al-Maqrīzī's modern editors decided to add a word to al-Maqrīzī's text, so that in the published text he is said to have converted after arriving in Egypt.[61]

The two members of this family mentioned last are not present at all in Jewish sources, which suggests that their ties with the Jewish community were indeed weak, if not totally severed. In the case of those family members who are mentioned in Jewish sources, nothing is said about their undergoing an act of conversion. Jewish sources in general are loth to mention conversion or criticize the converts, especially in the case of forced conversion. But in our case, the silence is not complete: the fifteenth-century Jewish historian Saʿadya ibn Danan (d. ca. 1495) explicitly addresses the claim of the Muslim sources regarding the conversion of Ibn Shaprūṭ's grandson Abūʾl-Faḍl, and presents it as a baseless claim of the Muslims.[62] Nor can we neatly divide the sources to Jewish ones, for

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57 Wasserestein, *The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, p. 226.

58 See below, note 60.

59 Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-Anbāʾ*, pp. 499–500. Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa lists him immediately after his Jewish forefathers; but while in their case he depends on Ibn Ṣāʿid, here he seems to have quite a lot of first hand information.

60 See Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Ittiʿāz al-Ḥunafāʾ bi-Akhbār al-Aʾimma al-Fāṭimiyyīn al-Khulafāʾ*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl and Maḥmūd Ḥilmī Muḥammad Aḥmad, Cairo: al-Majlis al-aʿlā liʾl-shuʾūn al-islāmiyya, 1973, vol. 3, p. 94 and n. 1 (= *Ittiʿāz al-ḥunafāʾ of Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Maqrīzī*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid [London: Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2010], vol. 3, p. 110 and n. 1). The Istanbul manuscript is copied from an autograph manuscript which had a marginal note in al-Maqrīzī's hand, and which reads*: wa-aslama abūhu*.

61 This unexplained, and obviously erroneous addition, which was introduced first in the Egyptian 1973 edition of al-Maqrīzī (vol. 3, p. 94), was then repeated in Ayman's newer edition (see previous note). I am indebted to Paul Walker who brought this curious note to my attention, and generously put a copy of the relevant page of the Istambul manuscript at my disposal.

62 See '*She'ela ʿal dvar ha'anusim*', *Fas ve-Ḥakhameha*, Jerusalem: Beit ʿOved, 1969, vol. II, p. 7 (in Hebrew); Ashtor, *The Jews of Moslem Spain*, pp. 221–222. Wasserstein (*The Rise and Fall of the Party-Kings*, p. 212) dismisses this denial as 'inspired more... by horror at the idea of a distinguished member of a family which claimed priestly descent converting than by any real evidence to the contrary'. But there were other Jews of distinguished families who converted to Islam (some of whom mentioned by Wasserstein), and whose conversion Ibn Danan did not bother to contest,

whom the persons discussed here remained Jews, and Muslim sources, who maintain that they have converted to Islam. For, as we have just seen, the Muslim sources themselves are full of contradictions in this regard.

There are several possible explanations for this rolling confusion (in addition to the confusing effect of the similar names, what we may call an *embarras de* Ḥasdays). The simplest is to ignore the confusion and to say that one or another of this second, third, fourth and fifth generations of Arabicized Jews did indeed convert to Islam, in his own specific circumstances and for his own reasons. Conversion, then, becomes the final expression of acculturation and its concluding step.[63] This explanation is the one adopted by scholars like Henri Pérès, García-Arenal, López y López and Wasserstein.[64]

Another explanation of the contradictory information in our sources would be that, in that religious age, the religious identity of the highly acculturated Jewish dignitaries who did not convert to Islam presented a puzzle to their contemporary fellow Muslims or to later historians, and was misunderstood to mean that they actually converted. This is the approach adopted by Ashtor, Abraham Shalom Yahuda and Izhak Baer.[65] If we take this explanatory path, we would have to say that in some cases, conversion is in the eye of the beholder.

Both these explanations assume that some of the sources are right and others are wrong, and that a person can either remain a Jew or convert to Islam, but not both. There is, nevertheless, also a third possibility, which is suggested by the curious hybrid appellation '*al-Muslimānī al-Isrāʾīlī*' which we find attached to the name of a Jewish physician, a certain ʿAbd Allāh, in Ibn Ṣāʿid's *Annales*.[66] 'Hybridity' does not necessarily mean ambiguity; as noted by Wasserstein, in this

although his horror must have been just as great. Furthermore, Ibn Danan also mentions the North African eleventh-century Dūnāsh Ibn Tamīm as someone who, according to what the Muslims say, have converted to Islam, and in this case, Ibn Danan, rather than silencing a horrifying rumor, is the only source to record this claim.

63 See García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes', p. 92; M. Fierro, 'Cuatro preguntas en torno a Ibn Ḥafṣūn', *Al-Qanṭara* 16 (1995), pp. 221-257, especially p. 238.

64 Pérès, *La poésie andalouse*, pp. 264, 267; García-Arenal, 'Rapports entre les groupes', p. 94; M. García-Arenal, 'Jewish Converts to Islam in the Muslim West', in Rubin and Wasserstein, *Dhimmis and Others*, pp. 227–248, at p. 233; Wasserstein, 'What's in a Name'; López y López, 'Ibn Ḥasdāy, Abū l-Faḍl', pp. 305–306 (referring to Perès, *Esplendor*, p. 272).

65 Abraham Shalom Yahuda, 'Ḥisdai b. Joseph b. Ḥisdai', in *Ever ve-ʿArav,* New York: ʿOgen, 1946, pp. 113–18 (in Hebrew).

66 Ibn Ṣāʿid's, *Ṭabaqāt al-umam*, p. 192. The case is discussed in Wasserstein, 'What's in a Name?' pp. 139–154. As noted by Wasserstein ('What's in a Name?', pp. 140, 147–151), as the epithets follow the personal name as well as the patronym, it is impossible to determine whether the convert was the father or the son. The term *al-muslimānī*, although quite rare, clearly indicates a convert to Islam; see Wasserstein, 'What's in a Name?', p. 142 and note 9 on p. 146 (following Dozy, *Suppléments*, I:679). See also Zorgati, *Pluralism*, especially pp. 176–177.

case, the combination of the two appellations is precisely intended to be unambiguous in indicating a former Jew who converted to Islam.[67] But the insistence on mentioning these two appellations together, calling him '*al-Muslimānī al-Isrāʾīlī*', probably does not come from the wish to be precise, but rather as a put down. It seems indeed that, when high dignitaries like the Ibn Ḥasday family did convert to Islam, their Jewish origins were not forgotten and their identity remained colored, not to say tainted, by these origins. The contradictory information in our sources can thus reflect the ambivalent attitude, or the uncertainty, regarding a liminal religious identity.[68]

In describing the converts' position as 'liminal' I mean to indicate first of all the fact that their new coreligionists did not trust the sincerity of their conversion. They were treated, in some sense, as being on probation, hanging on the margin of their new community. To be sure, such mistrust of new converts was very common; it is reflected in the anecdote recounted above, regarding Abūʾl-Faḍl Ḥasday's anxiety lest his conversion be attributed to such base motives as the infatuation with a slave girl. It is also reflected in the insistence of some Muslim sources to clearly spell out the cases in which they did trust the sincerity of the conversion.[69] The lingering suspicion was particularly clear in the case of mass forced conversions.[70] In the period which concerns us here, a pertinent case is the ninth-century Christian Qūmis ibn Antunyān. Like the Jew Ḥasday ibn Shaprūṭ, Qūmis was a highly-Arabicised *dhimmī*, who reached a high position at court in Cordoba. Unlike Ḥasday, but perhaps like his descendants,

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67 Wasserstein, 'What's in a Name', p. 147.

68 This ambivalence or uncertainty goes, I believe, beyond the simple fact of recalling the convert's origins as an abuse. For such cases, see Wasserstein, 'What's in a name', p. 146 and note 27. Observations of similar state of uncertainty in other historical contexts were also dubbed by historians 'untidiness' (Thomas Sizgorich) or 'messiness' (Elizabeth Key Fowden); see Papaconstantinou, 'Introduction', p. 21. A similar 'untidiness' is noted by Fierro, 'Cuatro preguntas', pp. 237–239 and pp. 245–246.

69 Thus, for example, Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa, *ʿUyūn al-Anbāʾ*, p. 653, who says about Ibn al-Muṭrān: 'He converted to Islām, and he became a good Muslim (*aslama, wa-ḥasuna islāmuhu*)'. This, and other cases, are listed by Fiey, 'Coversions à l'Islam', p. 21 and note 36. See also Yohanan Friedmann, 'Conversion, Apostasy and Excommunication In the Islamic Tradition', in Yohanan Friedmann (ed.), *Religious Movements and Transformations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2016, pp. 109–177, at pp. 110–113.

70 See, for example, ʿAbd al-Wāḥid al-Marrākushī, *al-Muʿjib fī Talkhīṣ Akhbār al-Maghrib*, ed. R. Dozy, Leiden: Brill, 1881, p. 435; Stroumsa, *Maimonides in his World*, pp. 57–58; Fierro, 'Conversion, ancestry and universal religion', pp. 160-161, 165. Historians like Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa and Ibn al-Qifṭī do not present the forced converts as doubtful cases, but rather as clear cases of dissimulating conversion to Islam only as long as the religious persecution lasts; see, for example, Ibn al-Qifṭī, *Taʾrīkh al-Ḥukamāʾ*, ed. I. Lippert, Leipzig, 1903, p. 392. See also Fiey, 'Coversions à l'Islam', pp. 21–23. Further on the phenomenon of such mistrust, see Papaconstantinou, 'Introduction', p. 22; Zorgati, *Pluralism*, p. 149.

'when pressed by circumstances, he finalized the process of conversion by a formal profession of Islam'.[71] But typically, when his rivals question his political loyalty, his conversion is either forgotten, or its sincerity is challenged. For Jessica Coope, the characterization of Ibn Antunyān as a Christian even after his conversion suggests that for some of his Muslim rivals, a convert was not a real Muslim, or at least not real enough to be in a position of power.[72] Thus, although, as mentioned above, the Jewish and Christian communities of al-Andalus, *qua* communities, reacted very differently to the pressure to convert, we find that Jewish and Christian individuals who belonged to the same social class confronted the same socio-cultural challenges. In the highly acculturated upper echelons of Andalusian society both Christians and Jews could find themselves in this liminal religious position.

But by describing the religious state of the Banū Ḥasday as 'liminal' I do not mean to indicate only that the sincerity of their conversion was held in doubt, but also that there appears to have been some genuine, puzzling confusion regarding whether or not they converted at all. I agree with Arietta Papaconstantinou, that 'if we want to observe and understand the phenomenon we call 'conversion'... we need to pay attention to where contemporaries situated the ... break and how they construed it'.[73] It seems, however, that the contemporaries of the Banū Ḥasday, as recorded by Muslim historians or reflected in their writings, did not quite know where to situate the break and how to construe it.

Furthermore, the liminality does not refer only to the way others perceived these converts, but also to the position of the converts themselves (or, at least, what our sources tell us regarding this position). At times, the liminality designates a grey area of near conversion, or of recent but indecisive conversion. In some cases, this grey area could be seen in the 'shifting conversions' of one individual, that is to say: conversion, retraction, and (sometimes) then re-

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71 Jessica A. Coope, *The Martyrs of Córdoba: Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion*, Lincoln-London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995, p. 88. On Qūmis (or Qaumis) ibn Antunyān, kātib to Muḥammad I, see E. Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane*, Paris: Maisonneuve - Leiden: Brill, 1950, vol. I, pp. 289–291; Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *Christian Martyrs in Muslim Spain,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 14, 87; Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, *Taʾrīkh iftitāḥ al-andalus*: *Historia de la conquista de España de Abenalcotía el Cordobés*, ed. and trans. J. Ribera, La Coruña: Órbigo, 2014, pp. 67–69; al-Khushanī, *Historia de los Jueces de Córdoba por Aljoxaní*, ed. and trans. Julián Ribera, Madrid: Ibérica, 1914, pp. 159–164; Fierro, 'Cuatro preguntas', pp. 245–246; Maribel Fierro, *ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III: The First Cordoban Caliph*, Oxford: Oneworld, 2005, p. 23.

72 Coope, *The Martyrs of Córdoba*, p. 88. This, too, is not unique to the reception of converts in Islam. Christians, for example, reacted with similar antagonism to Muslim converts in the courts of the Norman Kings of Sicily; see Kedar, *Crusade and Mission*, p. 54

73 Papaconstantinou, *Conversion in Late Antiquity: Christianity, Islam and Beyond*, p. 11.

conversion, as was not unusual in the early stages of Islamic rule.[74] Such liminal, complex religious identity is attested in other moments in the history of the Iberian peninsula, especially in the case of forced conversions. Thus, after the expulsion of Jews by the Catholic kings, new Christians remaining on Iberian soil continued to have family and business contacts with Jews who had settled elsewhere in the Mediterranean basin and had returned openly to practice Judaism. The latter would be known as 'new Jews' when in Italy or in North Africa, but they would resume a Christian identity when trading in Spain or Portugal. Such a double religious identity does not seem to have remained a secret to the Christian authorities, and was also known to the Jewish community leaders. As a result, both Christians and Jews often regarded the 'new Christians/new Jews' with suspicion and mistrust.[75]

In the case of the Banū Ḥasday, however, we have no evidence of shifting conversions. We do have evidence for some mistrust regarding the conversion of Abū'l-Faḍl, if he did convert. But mostly, what we have are reports of a seemingly rolling conversion, repeated over several generations.

Let me conclude on an inconclusive note, as I believe befits our findings. It seems safe to say that Abū Jaʿfar Yūsuf bn. Aḥmad bn. Ḥasday died in Egypt as a Muslim. Beyond that, I admit that I find it impossible at this point to say which member of the Ibn Ḥasday family converted and when. But the accumulated information regarding their religion and the way their religious identity is discussed, both in the sources and in modern studies, draws the profile of religious liminality.

Between cultural assimilation and religious and social pressures, the choices available to members of the minorities covered a broad spectrum, allowing for more nuances and ambivalence than 'conversion' normally suggests. We tend to regard individual conversion as an act of breaking with one's past and choosing another 'life'. Whether described as a cutting, sometimes brutal act, or as a lengthy process of coming to terms with the decision to change one's religion, we expect the process to be over within the lifespan of the individual. The case of the Banū Ḥasday seems to indicate that individual cases of conversion could also be a protracted gradual move in the life of a whole family. In the context of

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[74] See Simonsohn, 'Conversion, Apostasy and Penance', pp. 197–218. The shifting conversions are probably a good example of what Arthur Darby Nock had suggested calling 'adhesion' rather than conversion; see A. D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933; reprinted Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998, p. 12.

[75] See Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009, pp. 47, 53, 68–69. The attitude of mistrust applied to both conversion and repentance; see Simonsohn, 'Conversion, Apostasy and Penance', pp. 208-221.

dignitaries in a highly acculturated community, as the Jewish community of al-Andalus was, the process that starts with distancing oneself from the old religion and ends with complete integration into the new one, could well span several generations.

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IBN SĪNĀ
A PHILOSOPHICAL MYSTICISM OR A PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTICISM?

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Abstract

It is a well-known fact that Ibn Sīnā in the final part of his work *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, *Pointers and Reminders*, extensively uses a mystical vocabulary. Given this fact some scholars have judged that he in this – in all likelihood rather late – work adheres to a kind of mysticism, either religious or, at least, philosophical. Based on a detailed analysis of some of the most significant passages, the present paper offers evidence that such an interpretation does not pay enough attention to the very way in which Ibn Sīnā interprets the mystical notions that are undeniably present in the last three sections of the *Ishārāt*. In fact, Ibn Sīnā's use of them reveals to have nothing, or almost nothing in common with the meaning attributed to them in Sufi-writings, or in (mainly Neoplatonic) 'mystical' philosophy. It is concluded that Ibn Sīnā, in the final part of the *Ishārāt*, offers what may be labelled a 'philosophical project that rationally interprets mystical terms, expressions, and phenomena', rather than as 'a philosophical mysticism'.

Key Words

Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, religious mysticism, philosophical mysticism, philosophical interpretation of mysticism.

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Ibn Sīnā (born ca. 980 - d. 1053), in the West known as Avicenna, is one of the leading scholars in the history of philosophy. As is the case with all great thinkers, his thought has given rise to a wide variety of interpretations. His relationship with mysticism is no exception to that. Recently, Gutas and Morewedge have presented two diametrically opposed views, the former rejecting the presence of any kind of pure mysticism in Ibn Sīnā, the latter clearly

defending it.[1] In what follows, I will try to grasp in a precise way how Ibn Sīnā uses mystical terms and to determine whether or not he adheres to any kind of mysticism, i.e., either a religious (Islamic) one or a philosophical (Neoplatonic) one. In this respect, I will mainly concentrate on the three last sections of his *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, *Pointers and Reminders*. This work has long time been considered as one of the very latest works of Ibn Sīnā – a fact that facilitated the view that Ibn Sīnā had evolved from an outspoken rationalism to a 'mystical' view. But this very late dating has been seriously challenged and scholars seem now to incline to date this work between 1027 and 1030, hence at least a few years earlier than traditionally believed.[2] Whatever be the case, there is clearly

[1] See Dimitri Gutas, art. 'Avicenna-Mysticism', in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, I, 79-83, and ID., 'Intellect without Limits: The Absence of Mysticism in Avicenna', in Maria Cāndida Pacheco and José F. Meirinhos (eds), *Intellect et Imagination in Medieval Philosophy*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2006, vol. I: pp. 351-72, respectively Parviz Morewedge, *The Mystical Philosophy of Avicenna*. Binghamton, New York: Global Publications, Binghantom University, 2001, *passim* (but especially pp. 12-16, where he severely criticizes Gutas' view). For other contemporary views, see my *An Annotated Bibliography on Ibn Sīnā* (1970-1989). Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1991, pp. 203-11; *First Supplement* (1990-1994). Louvain-la-Neuve: FIDEM, 1999, pp. 99-109. To the ones mentioned there, one may now add: Abdelali Elamrani-Jamal, 'Vision contemplative dans les *Ishārāt* et '*Philosophie orientale*' d'Ibn Sīnā', in *Journées d'études Avicenne*. Marrakech: G.E.I.S., 1999, pp. 145-52 ; Maha Elkaysi-Friemuth, 'Relationship with God through knowledge and love, *'ishq*, in the Philosophy of Ibn Sīnā ; Comparison and evaluation', in her *God and Humans in Islamic Thought*, *'Abd al-Jabbār, Ibn Sīnā and al-Ghazālī*. London-New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 74-118; Thomas E. Gaskill, 'The Complementarity of Reason and Mysticism in Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā)', in John J. Cleary (ed), *The Perennial Tradition of Neoplatonism.* Leuven : Leuven University Press, 1997, pp. 443-57; Pierre Lory, 'Avicenne et le soufisme : à propos de la *Risāla nayrūziyya*', *Études de philosophie arabe*, special issue of *Bulletin des études orientales*, 48 (1996) : 137-44 ; Rafael Ramón Guerrero, 'Avicena: sobre el amor. *Avicenna on Love*', *Anales del seminario de Historia de la Filosofía*, 25 (2008): 243-59 and Carlos A. Segovia, 'Del entendimiento al Ángel : en torno al lugar de la gnosis aviceniana', in *Intellect et Imagination...*(see supra), vol. I, pp. 563-69.

[2] Jean R. (Y.) Michot, 'La réponse d'Avicenne à Bahmanyār et al-Kirmānī. Présentation, traduction critique et lexique arabe-français de *Mubāḥatha* III', *Le Muséon*, 110 (1997) : 158-63 proposed a rather early date (before 1020), but afterwards revised his opinion, i.e., proposing as date of composition approximately 1027. See his *Avicenne. Réfutation de l'astrologie*. Beyrouth, Albouraq, 2006, pp. 32*-33* (esp. p. 32*, note 2). This later date is also suggested by David Reisman, *The Making of the Avicennan Tradition. The Transmission, Contents, and Structure of Ibn Sīnā's al-Mubāḥathāt (The Discussions)*. Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2002, p. 207. The actual redaction of the work most probably dates of that period, but that it seems not *a priori* excluded that some of the pointers or reminders had already been formulated at an earlier date.

no room to doubt Ibn Sīnā's rather encompassing use of a mystical – or, at least, mystically inspired – terminology in these sections. However, one may question whether his use corresponds exactly to that of the Islamic sufis, or, if one judges it more philosophically oriented, whether it corresponds with the 'mysticism' of the Neoplatonic philosophers. It has to be stressed, moreover, that the very nature of the *Ishārāt* – i.e., its being not a systematic exposition, but a collection of small fragments that 'hint' at the truth, but without fully expressing it – constitutes a particular difficulty in identifying Ibn Sīnā's precise ideas. Therefore, it is not possible to simply limit oneself to the very letter of the text. But this does not mean that no attention whatsoever has to be paid to that letter. Inside the eighth section of the *Ishārāt*, the main topic of which is 'happiness', Ibn Sīnā, in a 'Reminder', affirms:

> 'The attestation of a certain pleasure may be positively sure, but if the intention called *dhawq* ('taste') does not occur, it is possible that we do not experience a desire (*shawq*) for it. Similarly, the certainty of a certain harm may be positively sure, but if the intention called *muqāsāh* ('suffering') does not occur, it is possible that a full awareness regarding it does not happen. An example of the former is the state of the impotent in his inborn disposition (when he is) confronted with the pleasure of sexual intercourse; an example of the latter, is the state of the one who has not suffered the discomfort of illnessess (when he is) confronted with fever'.[3]

Of greatest interest is the use of the terminus technicus *dhawq*. This term designates the external sense of taste. However, in sufism it expresses a higher form of taste. In his famous *Book of definitions*, *Kitāb al-ta'rīfāt*, al-Jurjānī (d. 1413), articulates its mystical sense as follows:

> 'With respect to the (profound) knowledge (*ma'rifa*) of God, it is the expression of the light of a (mystical) knowledge (*'irfānī*) that the True [i.e., God] throws in the hearts of the 'saints' (*awliyā'*) by means of theophany (*tajallī*). Thanks to it, they distinguish between the true and the wrong, and this without deriving that (knowledge) from books or other (similar) things'.[4]

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[3] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget. Leiden: Brill, 1892, p. 193 ; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1971, t. IV, pp. 19-20. My English translation here differs in several respects from that given by Shams C. Inati, *Ibn Sina and Mysticism.* Remarks and Admonitions, part IV. London-New York: Kegan Paul International, 1996 (the same remark applies to most of the translations that are given later in the paper).

[4] Al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt*, ed. Gustavus Flügel. Leipzig, 1845. Reprinted Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1985, p. 112.

It is immediately striking that any reference to God, so typical of and so fundamental in al-Jurjānī's definition, is simply lacking in Ibn Sīnā's affirmation. The latter clearly does not deal with any other-worldly goal. On the contrary, its focus is explicitly on what one can experience in this world. Certainly, Ibn Sīnā deals with data that exceed the simple data of the external senses and the normal experiences, more particularly the expectations and feelings that they create in the human beings. He insists that a profound experience – either inborn or acquired – is needed in order to be attracted to the pleasurable or, inversely, to avoid the painfully. This is also the case on the physical level as shown by the given examples of the absence of sexual desire in the impotent individual, or a lack of concern for his having fever in a person who has no serious experience with illness. Given Ibn Sīnā's general low evaluation of physical pleasures, one may deduce that it is *a fortiori* also the case for higher, i.e., spiritual pleasures (and, inversely, spiritual pains). Hence, the *dhawq* is a kind of positive experience that permits the human being to strive to things that cause pleasure.

In the next reminder, Ibn Sīnā seems to move in a more mystical direction when he compares the intellectual pleasure of experiencing the clarity of the First Truth with the sensitive pleasure of experiencing sweetness of things such as, e. g., sweets. In both cases of pleasure one has to do with a perfection of the apprehender, although the attained perfection is far from being identical. Intellection, in sharp contrast with sensation, is not concerned with well-defined material things, but with things characterized by pure immateriality; consequently, the pleasure experienced in intellection is no longer restricted to a strictly limited item, as with regard to sensitive acts, but has almost no limitation. Even more important from a mystical point of view is perhaps the explicit mentioning of an experience of the divine clarity, *jallī* – a word of the very same root as the one signifying 'theophany', i.e., *tajallī*. Hence, it is almost natural to think that Ibn Sīnā alludes here to a divine light that illuminates the one who intellects. However, Ibn Sīnā clearly avoids the idea of any uniting with the Divine, or, to put it in other words, of any total obliteration of the self (*fanā'*). Indeed, he emphasizes that the perfection of the intellecting substance is such that the clarity of the First Truth is represented in it *according to its possibility* to receive from the First Truth the beauty that is proper to It.[5] In other words,

[5] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 194; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 22. The same limitation is present in a somewhat similar affirmation in his *Commentary on the Theology*, *Sharḥ Kitāb Uthūlūjiyā al-mansūb ilā Arisṭū*, in A. Badawi. *Arisṭū 'inda l-'Arab*. Cairo, 1947, repr. Kuwait: Wakālat al-maṭbu'āt, 1978, p. 52 : '...the clarity of the First Good's essence, its reception and (profound) knowledge insofar as is possible', rendered in a somewhat different way by Peter Adamson in his 'Non-

creatures only have a limited capacity to experience the divine Splendor. Certainly, this does not place Ibn Sīnā automatically outside sufism, but it makes clear that he can at best be allied with moderate Islamic sufism. Allāh's transcendence, so well expressed in the Qur'ān, is hardly compatible with the idea of a mystical union that implies the complete identity of the mystic and the Divine. Ibn Sīnā is strongly opposed to such an idea, as this affirmation in his commentary on book *Lambda* of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* shows:

> 'As to us, in spite of our weak representation of the powerful intelligibles and our being immerged in bodily nature, we nevertheless can arrive in a furtive manner to the point that a conjunction with the First Truth becoming present to us'.[6]

In using the notion of 'conjunction' (*ittiṣāl*), not of 'union' (*ittiḥād*), Ibn Sīnā makes clear that for him any kind of identification with the Divine has to be avoided. He unmistakenly opposes any kind of mysticism, which, in like manner as al-Ḥallāj, claims an identification between the 'I' and the 'Truth' – as expressed in the latter's famous saying *Anā l-ḥaqq*, 'I am the Truth'. However, it is striking that Ibn Sīnā, in the present commentary on *Lambda*, refers to a conjunction with God, whereas he normally reserves this expression to indicate the relationship between the actualized human intellect and the Agent Intellect, i.e., the last of the ten emanated Intelligences of the superlunar world. Indeed, the life in the Hereafter of the Blessed consists according to this more habitual view in a permanent conjunction with this Intellect. According to it, it looks as if there is no possiblity whatsoever for any direct contemplation of the Divine. However, in his Commentary on the *(pseudo-)Theology*, Ibn Sīnā speaks of a true direct vision (*mushāhada*), which 'follows perception when one's aspiration turns in contemplation toward the true One'.[7] As shown by Gutas, this direct vision deals

discursive Thought in Avicenna's Commentary on the *Theology of Aristotle*', in Jon McGinnis, with the assistance of David C. Reisman (eds), *Interpreting Avicenna: Science and Philosophy in Medieval Islam*. Leiden-Boston : Brill, 2004, p. 107.

6 Avicenne (Ibn Sīnā), *Commentaire sur le livre Lambda de la* Métaphysique *d'Aristote (chapitres 6-10)*, Édition critique, traduction et notes par Marc Geoffroy, Jules Janssens et Meryem Sebti (Études musulmanes, 43). Paris: Vrin, 2014, p. 59, lines 151-52; Ibn Sīnā, *Sharḥ Kitāb ḥarf al-lām*, in A. Badawi, *Arisṭū 'inda l-'Arab*. p. 27.

7 Ibn Sīnā, *Sharḥ Kitāb Uthūlūjiyā*, p. 44 (translation by Dimitri Gutas, 'Intellect Without Limits', p. 368). For a more detailed study of the notion of *mushāhada* in Ibn Sīnā, see now Meryem Sebti, 'La notion de *Mušāhada* dans la philosophie d'Avicenne', in Danielle Cohen-Levinas, Géraldine Roux et Meryem Sebti (éds.), *Lectures philosophiques de la mystique dans les trois monothéismes*. Paris: Hermann, 2015, pp. 187-211. It has to be stressed that Sebti expresses a somewhat different view that the one I present here. It

with the particular states of a universal, implying that they are accompanied by affective or emotive states, but, above all, it implies an intellectual knowledge that includes the middle term of a syllogism.[8] Consequently, for Ibn Sīnā there exists no non-syllogistic knowledge of God; therefore, there is no trace of any Neoplatonic mysticism in his thought.[9] But this seems to be contradicted by the following saying in the *Ilāhiyyāt*, *Metaphysics*, of the *Shifā'*:

> 'The perfection proper to the rational soul consists in its becoming an intellectual world (*'ālam'aqlī*) in which there is impressed the form of the whole ... It thus becomes transformed into an intelligible world that parallels the existing world in its entirety, witnessing that which is absolute good, absolute beneficence, [and] true beauty, becoming *united* (my emphasis) with it, imprinted with its example and form, affiliated with it, and becoming of its substance?'[10]

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is certainly worthy of most serious attention. If I do not discuss it here in any detail, it is because I felt unable to make an in-depth study of her arguments due to time restrictions.

8 Dimitri Gutas, 'Intellect Without Limits', pp. 368-71.

9 This fact is stressed by Peter Adamson, 'Non-discursive Thought in Avicenna's Commentary on the *Theology of Aristotle*', p. 111.

10 Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of the Healing*: *A parallel English-Arabic text*, translated, introduced, and annotated by Michael M. Marmura, Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2005, IX, 7, p. 350 (his translation, slightly modified) ; the same affirmation is also present in Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, ed. M. Dānesh-Pazhūh, Tehran : Dāneshgah-e Tehran, 1985, p. 686 and Ibn Sīnā, *Aḥwāl al-nafs* (a work that is known under different titles), in A.F. al-Ahwānī, *Aḥwāl al-nafs*. Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-kutub al-'arabiyya, 1952, pp. 130-31. It has to be observed that the wording of the chapter on *ma'ād* (resurrection) in the metaphysical sections of the *Shifā'* and the *Najāt* are (almost) identical, and largely also in the *Aḥwāl* – where one has to deal with one significant omission of a passage (see M. Sebti, 'La question de l'authenticité de l'*Épître des états de l'âme (Risāla fī aḥwāl al-nafs)* d'Avicenne', *Studia graeco-arabica*, 2 (2012), p. 354) and the presence of a few minor variants. The attribution of this latter work has been questioned by Sebti (in the paper referred to just before), but Dimitri Gutas, in the second, revised and enlarged edition of his *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition.* Leiden-Boston : Brill, 2014, pp. 477-79, offers, while admitting that the problem of attribution is in need of a detailed investigation, a few indications that make the attribution to Ibn Sīnā possible, and even plausible. Since this issue of attribution is in itself of no significance for the proper topic of the present paper, I will not further investigate it. For our actual purpose, it suffices to observe that in the wording of the present passage the very affirmation of 'becoming united' (*muttaḥid*^{an}) is present in the three works. But one looks in vain for this verb in the chapter on the life in the hereafter (III, 14) in Ibn Sīnā's (early) *Kitāb al-mabda' wa-l-ma'ād*, even if one there finds the idea the perfect pleasure of the soul consists in its becoming an 'intellectual world' (see Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-mabda' wa-l-ma'ād*, ed. 'Abd Allāh Nūrānī. Tehran: The

At face value, the present passage implies the acceptance of a complete union between the perfect rational soul and the divine Intellect. If this is the correct interpretation, one must admit with Gardet that Ibn Sīnā here presents a kind of ontological and pantheistic identity.[11] But, as Michot has stressed, the present affirmation is hardly compatible with what Ibn Sīnā says elsewhere in his works and, moreover, the idea of a total union is somehow corrected insofar as it is stressed that the soul becomes only an example (*mithāl*).[12] Rather than to speak of an union, Ibn Sīnā probably wanted to indicate a particular state of the soul, namely one where it, as a completely polished mirror, perfectly reflects the manifestation of the divine essence. It may perhaps be added that Ibn Sīnā, in the framework of the discussion of the divine attributes somewhat earlier, insists that intellect's apprehension of the intelligible is stronger than sensitive apprehension of the sensible because the intellect unites with the intellected object, i.e., the permanent, universal thing, and becomes identical with it, although only in a qualified way, namely 'in some manner'.[13]

Still in the eighth section of the *Ishārāt*, Ibn Sīnā ascribes the attainment of complete happiness in terms of a reaching the 'world of sanctity (*'ālam al-quds*)' and happiness to 'the Knowers who are above (moral) imperfection (*al-'ārifūn al-mutanazzihūn*)'.[14] Both the notions of 'world of sanctity' and 'knowers' could be easily understood in a mystical sense were it not that Ibn Sīnā adds a further qualification, namely that of 'happiness'. In other words, the world of sanctity is also that of happiness. Since for Ibn Sīnā true happiness consists in a complete conjunction of the soul with the Agent Intellect, the world of sanctity is that to which this Intellect belongs, i.e., the superlunar world. As to the 'knowers', it is specified that in addition to their 'knowledge' a moral perfection is needed in order to attain full happiness. One herein detects Ibn Sīnā's usual emphasis on

Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Tehran Branch, in collaboration with Tehran University, 1984, pp. 109-14, especially p. 110, lines 13-15). Note that Ibn Sīnā, in all likelihood, derived the notion of 'intellectual world' from the *Pseudo-Theology*, and thus ultimately from Plotinus' *Enneads* (see e. g., V.9.9.7).

11 See Louis Gardet, *La connaissance mystique chez Ibn Sīnā et ses présupposées philosophiques*. Le Caire: IFAO, 1952, pp. 20-21.

12 Jean R. (Y.) Michot, *La destinée de l'homme selon Avicenne*. Louvain: Peeters, 1986, pp. 99-100.

13 Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of* the Healing, VIII, 7, p. 298, lines 1-3 (= Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, p. 592, lines 1-4).

14 Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 195; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 32.

the absolute necessity for those who want to enjoy full happiness in the hereafter, to perfect themselves both on the theoretical and on the practical level.[15] So, it comes as no surprise that Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, in his commentary on this passage, remarks:

> 'I say: (when using) *'ārif*, 'knower', he means the one who is perfect in his intellectual power, while (when using) *mutanazz*, 'above (moral) imperfection', he means the one who is perfect in his practical power'.[16]

It is obvious that Ibn Sīnā is alluding to his common view of resurrection, which, although outspokenly intellectualistic, does not dismiss the practical life as completely insignificant. Note however that this practical life is never articulated by him in terms of mystical practices, but clearly in terms of respect of the prophet's Sharia.[17] Therefore, everything indicates that Ibn Sīnā presents here in a mystical terminology what he elsewhere articulates in purely rational terms. The human soul can come close(r) to God, namely when it perfects its theoretical as well as its practical intellection, but it never can experience directly the Divine Itself in any way whatsoever.

However, in the ninth section, Ibn Sīnā seems to distinguish between different degrees of 'knowers'. He opens the first 'Reminder' this way:

> 'In their lives in the present world, the knowers have stations (*maqāmāt*) and degrees through which they are distinguished to the exclusion of the others. It is as if, while (still) being in their bodily clothes, they had already taken off and removed them up to the point (to attain) (*ilā*) the world of sanctity'.[18]

In Sufism it was rather common practice to mention the existence of different 'stations'. As such, the present affirmation does not exclude a mystical meaning. Unfortunately, things get very complicated when in what follows Ibn Sīnā refers to a story, entitled *Salamān and Absāl*, where the former is 'an allegory of what is similar to you' and the latter 'an allegory for your degrees in 'knowledge' if you are among those who know'. In absence of Ibn Sīnā's original tale, one must trust

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[15] See e. g., *Shifā'*, *Ilāhiyyāt*, IX, 7, p. 352, lines 10-14 (theoretical perfection) and p. 354, lines 5-6 (regarding the practical, moral perfection of the soul as something that, in addition to theoretical perfection, is required for realizing true happiness).

[16] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 32-3 (beneath Ibn Sīnā's text).

[17] Most significant in this respect are the chapters 3-5 of book 10 of the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā'*.

[18] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 198 ; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 47.

al-Ṭūsī, who pretends to relate faithfully the story and then identifies Salamān with the rational soul and Absāl with the theoretical intellect.[19] If this is the correct interpretation – and there seems no serious reason to doubt it – it has to do with an allegory explaining the hierarchical structure of the faculties of the soul, including the continuous struggle between them in *order* to overpower each other (contrary to what one may expect, according to Ibn Sīnā's view the lower powers are in the vast majority of human beings victorious over the higher). Once again, this has nothing in common with mysticism.

Somewhat later, this time in a 'Pointer', Ibn Sīnā deals with the first stage in the degrees of 'knowledge':

> 'The first of the degrees of the knowers' movements is that which they themselves call 'the Will'. This is what overcomes the one who scrutinizes what is demonstratively certain, or whose soul is trusting in the holding of the faith, out of a longing for an attachment with the 'firm handhold' (*al-'urwa l-wuthqā*).[20] Hence, the procession of such person is towards (the place of) sanctity in order to obtain the refreshment of the conjunction. As long as one remains on this level, one is a *murīd*, a 'novice".[21]

Ibn Sīnā qualifies the person who belongs to this first degree in purely Sufi-terms as a *murīd*, a 'novice'. This term is of the same root, i.e., *w r d*, as the word *irāda*, 'will'. However, what exactly is involved in this will? For Ibn Sīnā, this is either sure knowledge, based on demonstration proper, *burhān* (i.e., demonstration as understood by Aristotle in the *Posterior Analytics*), or a genuine faith in the divine Revelation. Once again, one easily detects here the complementarity between theoretical and practical perfection. The former requires absolutely irrefutable knowledge, in other words one that is strictly demonstrative, not dialectical in nature; as to the latter, its basis lies in an unconditional trust in the prescriptions of the Sharia. Moreover, Ibn Sīnā identifies the object of this will not with the divine Will, but with the world of sanctity, where one finds the Agent Intellect, the proper object of the human soul's ultimate conjunction. All this sharply contrasts with genuine mysticism, especially of a religious kind as the following affirmation of Ibn al-'Arabī makes evident:

> 'The 'novice' is the one who in view of Allāh get separated from examination and scrutiny, who withholds from his (own) will. And then he knows that only what

[19] A good summary of the tale, and its explanation, as given by Ṭūsī is present in Shams C. Inati, *Ibn Sina and Mysticism*, pp. 31-33.

[20] This is a Qur'anic expression, see s. 2, v. 156 and s. 31, v. 22.

[21] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l'tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 202; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā. p. IV, 76-8.

> God, and nobody else, wills, occurs in existence. Thus, he abolishes his will, and, consequently, he does not will anything else than what the True wills'.[22]

In direct opposition to Ibn Sīnā, Ibn al-'Arabī stresses the need to abandon any kind of scrutiny and the complete absorption of one's own will in that of the Divine being. Any intellectual dimension has totally disappeared and the fullness of self-realization is directly linked with the Divine.

In the next pointer, Ibn Sīnā stresses the importance of *riyāḍa*, 'exercise':

'Exercise' is directed toward three goals:

a. the removal of what is other than the truth (*al-ḥaqq*) from the path of predilection ;
b. to submit the commanding soul (*al-nafs al-ammāra*) to the tranquil soul (*al-nafs al-muṭma'inna*)[23] in order to attract the powers of imagination and estimation to 'ideas' (*tawahummāt*) related to the holy reality (*al-amr al-qudsī*), (while) leaving the 'ideas' related to the lower reality;
c. render subtle the innermost center (of the soul) (*al-sirr*) in view of (its being) alert.[24]

The expression of the first goal is not free from some ambiguity insofar as the Arabic word *al-ḥaqq* can refer to the truth in its epistemological sense, but also to Allāh.[25] This ambiguity does not disappear when Ibn Sīnā, inside the same 'Pointer', indicates 'true asceticism' – which he had previously described as consisting in the abstinence of whatever one distracts in one's innermost self from the 'truth' – as the best 'exercise' for this goal. As to the second goal, it clearly expresses the necessity of the submission of the animal soul, with its many passions, to the rational soul. In this respect, the powers of imagination and estimation, which largely abstract the data of the senses from materiality and thus prepare to the grasp of the 'pure ideas' by the intellect, must be directed to what is essentially higher, in other words have to be put at the complete service of the intellect. This is part of the basics of Ibn Sīnā's noetics. Certainly,

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22 Quoted in Al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-ta'rīfāt*, p. 221.

23 This double characterization of the soul might have been inspired by the Qur'an, s. 12, 53, respectively s. 89, v. 27.

24 Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 202 ; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 78-80.

25 See my 'Ibn Sīnā's ideas of ultimate realities: Neoplatonism and the Qur'ān as problem-solving paradigms in the Avicennian system', *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 10 (1987), p. 268.

he specifies that acts of worship can contribute to have the right attitude in this respect, but he immediately adds that they have been accompanied by *fikr*, 'discursive thought'. What looks more mystical is the mention of listening to 'melodies' as a possible 'way' to perfect oneself – a clear reference to the well-known, and in mystical circles very popular, phenomenon of *samā'*. Also in this case Ibn Sīnā emphasizes that this constitutes a means put at the disposal of the powers of the soul in order to perfect this latter in itself, not to reach a state of complete ecstasy. Finally, when Ibn Sīnā points out the eloquence of the preacher as a third contributing element to the realization of the second goal, he clearly has in mind that rethorics is needed for the guidance of the masses, since they are unable to understand correctly some of the most profound truths regarding God and the world, especially when they are straightforwardly expressed. As to the third goal, it particularly insists on the fact that one has to open one's innermost being to the reception of the 'truth'. This is realized by subtle (discursive) thought (*al-fikr al-laṭīf*), as well as by righteous love which Ibn Sīnā contrasts with the dominion of the appetite faculty. In all this, one cannot but see the expression of Ibn Sīnā's theory of the acquisition of knowledge. Therefore, as Goichon has already observed, the mystical attitude has become a natural one, i.e., one of intellection, and there is no longer mysticism.[26]

In the following 'Pointer', Ibn Sīnā stresses that the 'novice', thanks to his 'exercises', can arrive at a limit where the light of the 'truth' discloses to him furtive glances, which are pleasant as a short lightning that glows up and then extinguishes. Then, he continues:

> 'This is what they call 'moments' (*awqāt*). Two ecstatic emotional states (*wajdān*) surround each moment: one that is (leading) to it, and another that (follows) upon it'.[27]

Again, the terminology used is highly mystical, but once again one looks in vain for meanings typical of Sufi writings. Regarding the notion of 'moment', it is obvious that for the Sufis this implies a strong emphasis on the present state of being in touch with the Divine, and thus excluding any attention whatsoever to the past or the future. Moreover, it is stressed that experiencing it is outside human power, and therefore does not result from any efforts on the part of

[26] Anne-Marie Goichon, *Avicenne. Livre des directives et des remarques.* Paris: Vrin, 1951, p. 492, note 1.

[27] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 202-03; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 86.

human beings.[28] As to the notion of 'ecstatic emotional state', it expresses in Sufism above all a very furtive state of encounter with the Divine, which befalls the heart of the seeker in a mysterious way.[29] Certainly, taken in itself, one can interpret Ibn Sīnā's affirmation in line with the common Sufi-understanding, but one must then neglect the fact that he has presented this experience as the result of 'exercise(s)'. Moreover, it is striking that he, when dealing with the notion of 'moments', does not say 'we call', but 'they call'. This way of speaking suggests a certain distance to the concerned way of expression and, anyhow, indicates that it is not the terminology preferred by Ibn Sīnā for talking about these issues. What strikes above all is that the whole passage can easily be interpreted in such a way that it remains completely in line with his usual philosophical account. What Ibn Sīnā seems to refer to can indeed be worded as follows: when one has sufficiently detached oneself from matter, one may open one's soul to an illumination from the Agent Intellect, and thus become fully able to grasp the universal as universal. However, in the beginning, one's conjunctions with the Agent Intellect are of a very short time, especially insofar as one still is much preoccupied with the things of this material world. Only afterwards, through exercise, one may multiply the connections with the Agent Intellect, and receive more easily the related 'illuminations'. Gradually, after a period of time, the reach of illumination will become an habit, so that one will be able to connect with the Agent Intellect whenever one wishes. To attain the truth is then no longer dependent upon a wish, but becomes a permanent disposition. All this finds further support in the 'Pointers' that follow the above quoted one. As to the very final station, Ibn Sīnā expresses it as follows:

> 'If someone passes over (the stadium of) 'exercise' and arrives at (*ilā*) (complete) achievement, his innermost center (*sirr*) becomes a polished mirror, thanks to which he faces the direction of the 'truth'. The highest pleasures overflow him and he is delighted with his soul, due to what is (present) in it of the trace (*athar*) of the 'truth'. To him belongs a glance at the 'truth' and a glance at himself (or: his soul), while he is still wavering.
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> Then, he withdraws from his soul and he looks only at the side of (the reality of) sanctity (*al-quds*), even if he (continues to) look at his soul, but then (*fa-*) insofar as

[28] See al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-ta'rīfāt*, p. 274; see also 'Alī b. Uthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, translated by Reynold A. Nicholson. London, 1911. New Edition, London: Luzac, 1976[5], pp. 367-70.

[29] See *ibid.*, p. 270, respectively pp. 413-16.

his soul is looking (as such at the side of sanctity), not insofar as it is embellished by (this looking). At this point, the arrival becomes true'.[30]

Ibn Sīnā uses the analogy of the mirror in order to describe not only the highest destiny of the human soul, but also the fundamental receptivity of the human intellect with respect to the Agent Intellect. It occupies a central place in his noetics since it permits thinking to take place as a specific kind of noetic receptivity, which is different from that of form in matter.[31] In absence of a proper 'intellectual' memory, the human soul can only enjoy the traces that the intelligibles leave in it when the soul makes itself fully receptive to them. This means that the soul has to direct its attention to the higher world of 'sanctity', given that in itself it has a double glance, i.e., one – upwards – toward the 'truth' and another – downwards – toward itself. One easily detects here an allusion to Ibn Sīnā's doctrine of the two faces of the soul, a Neoplatonically inspired doctrine but which he, in all likelihood, derived from Ismailite sources.[32] Most important with respect to a possible mystical dimension, or absence of it, is his observation that even when the soul regards the higher world, it never becomes completely disconnected from itself. On the contrary, it always has a kind of self-perception, but this disappears at the background as soon as it is profoundly concentrating itself on the higher world of the intelligibles. Note however that it is never completely destroyed. Even in this ultimate stadium, the soul keeps a minimum of its own identity. It may be noted that the term used for 'arrival', i.e., *wuṣūl*, is of the same root as that by which the 'conjunction' is expressed, i.e., *ittiṣāl*. One has here clearly to do with the noetic perfection of the soul, which for Ibn Sīnā consists in a permanent state of being illuminated thanks to a conjunction of the human soul with the Agent Intellect. One is here far away from any close intimacy with, let alone any extinction in, the divine. Certainly, in detaching oneself gradually from the multiplicity of the material things, one will more and more be enabled to come to a closer grasp of the highest 'truth', i.e., the divine oneness. But this is exclusively by way of intellectual 'contemplation', not by any kind of unification with the divine. In what follows Ibn Sīnā

[30] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 204 ; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 91-3 (2 pointers).

[31] These ideas have been well expressed and analyzed into great detail in Meryem Sebti, 'Réceptivité et spéculation dans la noétique d'Avicenne', in Daniël De Smet, Meryem Sebti et Godefroid de Callataÿ (éd), *Miroir et savoir. La transmission d'un thème platonicien, des Alexandrins à la philosophie arabo-musulmane*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2008, pp. 145-71.

[32] See Daniël De Smet, 'La doctrine avicennienne des deux faces de l'âme et ses racines ismaéliennes', *Studia Islamica*, 93 (2003), pp. 77-89.

enumerates many practical qualities of the 'knower', such as, e. g., being bright-faced, magnanimous, courageous, etc. He notes moreover that between 'knowers' the attitude toward material things may be opposite – depending on whether they do, or do not distract him from the 'truth'. Finally, he stresses that whenever the 'knower' attains the state of conjunction, i.e. theoretical perfection, the 'knower' is no longer subject to religious duties. In fact, these latter only concern the practical life and its perfection. Note that this does not mean that Ibn Sīnā simply dismisses religious duties for those who are in search of the truth. As already indicated above, in this life they clearly remain valid for them since they are far from being all the time in conjunction with the Agent Intellect.[33]

In the tenth and last section, Ibn Sīnā concentrates on the so-called extra-ordinary powers of the 'knowers', i.e., abstinence from food for a long time, unusual capacity for action, and knowledge of hidden things. In all three cases he tries to show that they can be explained according to the 'roads' (*madhāhib*), i.e., the laws, of nature.[34] Nowhere is there any special divine gift involved. They simply result from the perfection of knowledge present in the 'knower'. Consequently, there is absolutely no place for any supernatural intervention or experience. That some of these acts are perceived as extraordinary is only due to a lack of knowledge. Their naturalness comes to the fore when one sees how greater or lesser long periods of abstinence are related with such phenomena as fear and illness, how we perform extremely powerful acts when excited by anger or joy, or how dreams reveal to us things of the invisible world. Hence, it comes as no surprise when Ibn Sīnā concludes:

> 'Extraordinary things are dispatched in the natural world out of three principles:
> -first, the already mentioned psychic dispositions;
> -secondly, properties of the elementary bodies, as, for example, the attraction of iron by a magnet, namely by means of a force proper to it;
> -thirdly, celestial powers – the adequate correspondence between them and the mixtures of terrestrial bodies that are singled out by positional dispositions, or between them and terrestrial psychic powers that are singled out by astronomical conditions, whether active or passive, result in the origination of extraordinary effects.

[33] Same kind of remark in Anne-Marie Goichon, *Avicenne. Livre des directives et des remarques*, p. 501, note 2.

[34] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 207-09; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 111, 116 and 119.

> Magic is of the first kind; prophetic miracles, miracles of saints and incantations are of the second kind, and, finally, talismans of the third'.[35]

In all three cases he simply evokes natural causes, i.e., the basic powers of the human soul, natural powers present in elementary bodies and the natural influence of the stars on terrestrial phenomena, among which the human soul is also included.[36]

From what precedes it is obvious that Ibn Sīnā certainly does not adhere to any kind of religious mysticism. Even when he makes use of classical Islamic mystical terminology, he clearly interprets it in a way that accords with his own philosophical system. Insofar as he seems to naturalize radically each 'mystical phenomenon', one may also seriously doubt that he is an adept of a philosophical mysticism à la Plotinus.[37] Hence, I think one best qualifies his approach as a 'philosophy of mysticism', or to put it more accurately: a 'philosophical project that rationally interprets mystical terms, expressions, and phenomena', rather than as 'a philosophical mysticism'.

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[35] Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. J. Forget, p. 221 ; ed. Sulaymān Dunyā, p. IV, 158-59.

[36] It has to be noted that Ibn Sīnā strongly opposes the science of astrology, see Yaḥyā Michot, *Avicenne. Réfutation de l'astrologie*. Beyrouth : Albouraq, 2006, *passim*.

[37] In this context, it is perhaps worthwhile to note that when Ibn Sīnā qualifies God as 'above perfection' (*fawqa l-tamām*) in his metaphysics, this looks as if he simply agrees with the author of the *Theology of Aristotle*, a work that is largely based on Plotinus' *Enneads*. However, as Peter Adamson has rightly observed, Ibn Sīnā uses it in a different sense: not to safeguard God's transcendence, but to mark God's causation in addition to His self-sufficiency (see Peter Adamson, 'From the necessary existent to God' in Peter Adamson (ed), *Interpreting Avicenna. Critical Essays*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 187.

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ELEMENTOS NEOPLATÓNICOS EN EL *SIRR AL-ASRĀR* (*SECRETUM SECRETORUM*) ATRIBUIDO A ARISTÓTELES

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Resumen

Herederos de la tradición helenística de las escuelas de Alejandría y Atenas, los árabes partieron de un Aristóteles neoplatonizado, sistematizado en diversas obras que le fueron atribuidas. Entre ellas destaca el muy difundido *Sirr al-asrār* o *Secretum secretorum*, según el título de la versión latina, en la que algunas de las doctrinas genuinas de Aristóteles se encuentran mezcladas con elementos platónicos, neoplatónicos, neopitagóricos y herméticos. Presentada como una carta de Aristóteles a Alejandro, ofrece en uno de sus capítulos una explicación del universo de carácter neoplatónico: afirma la realidad de Dios como sustancia simple espiritual de la que emana jerárquicamente el resto de la creación, siendo el hombre el elemento unificador de todas las esencias creadas.

Palabras clave

Pseudo-Aristóteles, *Secreto de los secretos*, neoplatonismo, emanación, universo, hombre.

Abstract

Inheritors of the Alexandrian and Athenian Hellenistic tradition, the Arabs drew from a Neoplatonized Aristotle systematized through different attributed works, among them, the *Sirr al-asrār*, the *Secretum secretorum* in the Latin translation in which some genuine Aristotle doctrines are blended with Platonic, Neoplatonic, Neopythagorean and Hermetic elements. Brought in as a letter from Aristotle to Alexander, one of its chapters provides a Neoplatonic explanation of the Universe: while claiming that God's nature is a simple spiritual substance from which the rest of the creation arisen, man is viewed as the unifying element of all created essences.

Keywords

Pseudo-Aristotle, *Secret of secrets*, Neo-Platonism, Emanation, Universe, Man.

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La aportación de la filosofía neoplatónica en la formulación y desarrollo de gran parte de las doctrinas filosóficas árabes ha sido suficientemente destacada a lo largo de la historia. La filosofía que se constituyó en el mundo islámico tuvo su punto de partida en el neoplatonismo, recibido con doctrinas aristotélicas, cuya razón está en que el Islam se había instalado en un ámbito cultural donde el neoplatonismo era la filosofía reinante, la cual, además, ofrecía afinidades con el pensamiento islámico. Doctrinas religiosas como las de la Unidad divina y la creación del mundo encontraron explicación filosófica en la consideración neoplatónica del Uno y en la doctrina de la emanación de la multiplicidad a partir del Uno originario, que permitía salvar la unicidad e inmutabilidad divinas y establecer un abismo ontológico entre Dios y sus criaturas. El neoplatonismo que los árabes recibieron venía impregnado del sentido de la unidad filosófica representada por las doctrinas de Platón y Aristóteles, coincidentes en sus puntos más esenciales: la escuela de Atenas había impulsado la enseñanza de Aristóteles creyendo que el estudio de éste preparaba la comprensión de los diálogos platónicos y la escuela de Alejandría siguió la misma directriz. Fue una idea que mantuvieron los mismos filósofos en el mundo islámico. Así lo expresó al-Fārābī:

> 'Cuando he visto a la mayoría de las gentes de mi tiempo excitarse y disputar vivamente en torno a la temporalidad del mundo o a su eternidad y pretender que entre los dos más renombrados filósofos de la antigüedad existe divergencia en cuanto a la demostración del Creador primero y a la existencia de las causas segundas, en las doctrinas del alma y del entendimiento, en lo que toca al premio o castigo de las buenas y malas acciones y en otros problemas de ética, política y lógica, me propuse en este tratado armonizar las opiniones de ambos filósofos y explicar lo que conduce a ello, yuxtaponiendo sus doctrinas a fin de que aparezca su mutua correspondencia, cese toda perplejidad e indecisión en quienes leen sus libros y quede fijamente determinado el origen de tales dudas. La explicación de todo esto es de lo más importante que se puede proponer y su comentario y clara exposición lo más útil que se puede desear. La filosofía es la ciencia de los seres en cuanto tales: Platón y Aristóteles son sus fundadores y los que han desarrollado sus primeros principios y alcanzado sus últimas consecuencias. A ellos hay que acudir

> en toda cuestión filosófica, grande o pequeña, fácil o difícil. Sus opiniones en esta materia constituyen un principio indiscutible, por exentas de oscuridad y confusión'.[1]

La búsqueda de una doctrina que armonizara los pensamientos de los dos grandes maestros griegos fue uno de los motivos por los que se neoplatonizó el pensamiento de Aristóteles y por los que aparecieron obras atribuidas a éste, cuyo contenido podía servir para explicar las principales cuestiones que interesaban a los musulmanes, presentando a Aristóteles como autor de una doctrina que coincidía con la religión. Ello tuvo como consecuencia que la filosofía fuera completamente aceptada en el mundo religioso islámico. Por esta razón, cobraron gran importancia escritos pseudo-aristotélicos, en los que algunas doctrinas genuinas del filósofo de Estagira están claramente mezcladas con elementos platónicos, neoplatónicos, neopitagóricos y herméticos.

Los biógrafos citan algunos de estos apócrifos. Ibn Ŷulŷul, que escribió en al-Andalus a fines del siglo X, cita cuatro de los más importantes: la *Teología,*[2] los *Testamentos*, el *Secreto de los secretos* y el *Libro de la manzana,*[3] que prueban que estas obras pseudo-aristotélicas habían adquirido gran difusión, al menos en su referencia externa.[4] A éstas hay que añadir el llamado en el mundo latino *Liber de causis*, conocido en el mundo árabe con el título *Kitāb al-jayr al-maḥḍ* (*Libro del Bien puro*), que ha tenido su propia historia en lo que se refiere a su posible autor. Sin embargo, ya en el siglo X, el autor oriental Ibn al-Nadīm cita en su *Fihrist* (*Catálogo*) un *Kitāb al-jayr al-awwal* (*Libro del Bien Primero*) entre las obras de

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1 Fārābī: *Kitāb al-ŷam' bayn ra'y al-ḥakīmayn Aflāṭūn al-ilāhī wa-Arisṭuṭālīs* (*Armonía entre los sabios Platón el divino y Aristóteles*), ed. en *Al-Fārābī's philosophischen Abhandlungen aus Londoner, Leidener und Berliner Handschriften*, ed. F. Dieterici, Leiden: J. Brill, 1890, p. 1. Trad. española: Manuel Alonso: 'Al-Fārābī. Concordia entre el divino Platón y el sabio Aristóteles', *Pensamiento*, 25 (1969) pp. 21-70. Trad. francesa: *Deux traités philosophiques. L'harmonie entre les opinions des deux sages, le divin Platon et Aristote. De la religion*, Introduction, traduction et notes par D. Mallet, Damasco, 1989. *L'armonia delle opinioni dei due sapienti, il divino Platone e Aristotele*. Introduzione, testo arabo, traduzione e commento di C. Martini Bonadeo. Prefazione di G. Endress, Pisa: Edizioni Plus - Pisa University Press, 2008.

2 El texto árabe de la *Teología* fue editado por Friedrich Dieterici: *Die sogennante Theologie des Aristoteles*, Leipzig, 1882, y, más recientemente, por Abdurrahmān Badawi: *Plotinus apud arabes. Theologia Aristotelis et fragmenta quae supersunt*, collegit, edidit et prolegomenis instruxit A. Badawi, El Cairo: al-Nahda, 1955. Hay traducción española: Pseudo-Aristóteles: *Teología*, traducción, introducción y notas: Luciano Rubio, Madrid: Ediciones Paulinas, 1978.

3 Cf. traducción castellana de la *Vida de Aristóteles* de este autor en José A. García-Junceda y Rafael Ramón-Guerrero: 'La vida de Aristóteles de Ibn Ŷulŷul', *Anuario del Departamento de Historia de la Filosofía y de la Ciencia*, U.A.M., curso 1984-85, pp. 109-123.

4 Una descripción de estas obras puede encontrarse en Francis E. Peters: *Aristoteles Arabus. The Oriental translations and commentaries on the Aristotelian Corpus*, Leiden: Brill, 1968.

Proclo,[5] que fácilmente puede identificarse con el *Liber de Causis,* porque éste no es sino un compendio de los *Elementos de Teología* de Proclo, como ya fue puesto de manifiesto por Santo Tomás de Aquino por vez primera, cuando conoció la traducción latina del texto griego realizada por Guillermo de Moerbeke en 1268, al decir lo siguiente:

> 'Se encuentran diversos escritos sobre los primeros principios; estos escritos están divididos en diversas proposiciones. En griego se encuentra uno: es el libro que contiene 211 proposiciones del platónico Proclo y que se titula *Elementatio theologica*. Por otra parte, en árabe existe este libro, que entre los latinos se llama *Liber de causis*; consta que ha sido traducido del árabe y que no existe griego. Parece que ha sido extraído por algún filósofo árabe del susodicho libro de Proclo, porque todo lo que en éste está contenido está también, de manera detallada, en aquél'.[6]

Además de contener un resumen de los *Elementos de teología* de Proclo, hay también una presencia de otras fuentes evidentes, como la propia *Teología* y, quizá también, el pseudo-Dionisio.[7]

Pero no es el momento de tratar de estos textos. Quiero ocuparme ahora de otra de las obras atribuidas a Aristóteles, una de las más difundidas en el mundo árabe y en Europa medieval, la que lleva por título *Kitāb Sirr al-asrār* y en latín *Secretum Secretorum*. Parece que esta obra fue uno de los primeros textos atribuidos a Aristóteles en el mundo árabe y se inscribe dentro de la tradición del género literario conocido por el nombre de 'Espejos de príncipes', que consisten en un conjunto de apólogos y proverbios con ejemplos político-morales,[8] que utilizan la metáfora del espejo.

El texto original árabe se presenta como una carta de Aristóteles a Alejandro en la que le ofrece consejos políticos e información sobre ciencias diversas, incluidas las ocultas. Es en realidad un texto compuesto a partir de obras

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5 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. G. Flügel, Leipzig: Verlag von F. C. W. Vogel, 1872, p. 252.

6 *In librum De causis expositio*, ed. C. Pera, Turin-Roma, Marietti, 1955, Lectio I, Proemium 9, pp. 4-5. Ed. H. Saffrey, Fribourg-Louvain : Société Philosophique - Éditions E. Nauwelaerts, 1954, p. 3.

7 No es cronológicamente impensable. El *corpus* areopagítico era conocido en Siria en el siglo VI y parece que la versión siriaca remonta a Sergio de Reshaina (m. 536). Cf. Cristina D'Ancona: *Recherches sur le Liber de Causis*, París : Vrin, 1995.

8 Ha estudiado las condiciones histórico-sociales en que surgieron estos 'Espejos' medievales José A. Maravall: 'La concepción del saber en una sociedad tradicional', en *Estudios de Historia del pensamiento español. Serie Primera. Edad Media*, Tercera edición ampliada, Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1983, pp. 201-254. Algunas de las tesis expuestas por Maravall necesitan ser revisadas, como, por ejemplo, la que sostiene que la tarea intelectual de los árabes se limitó a copiar y coleccionar textos de la antigüedad.

anteriores, reconocidas e identificadas por M. Grignaschi.[9] Una de ellas sería la *Risāla fī l-siyāsa al-ʿāmmiyya* (*Epístola sobre el gobierno del pueblo*), que es una de las *Epístolas de Aristóteles a Alejandro*,[10] conjunto de cartas que remontan a una novela epistolar clásica, aunque aquella *Risāla* contiene añadidos de época árabe, por lo que podría ser el más antiguo 'Espejo de príncipes' del mundo islámico conocido, compuesto quizá en la primera mitad del siglo VIII.[11]

Esta *Epístola* fue el modelo sobre el que se formó un *Kitāb al-siyāsa* (*Libro de la política*), exposición sistemática de las enseñanzas de la *Epístola*, con adiciones tomadas de la tradición política sasánida; este *Kitāb* apenas debió tener difusión, puesto que sólo se ha conservado en una paráfrasis turca hecha por un sabio del siglo XVI, Manū Nawālī, quien añadió un florilegio de leyendas sobre Aristóteles y Alejandro.

De este *Kitāb al-siyāsa* derivó, a su vez, el *Sirr al-asrār*,[12] publicado por A. Badawi,[13] al que se le han añadido un conjunto de ciencias ocultas y curiosidades que apenas tienen interés. Pretende ser una traducción del griego al siríaco y del siríaco al árabe, hecha por Yuḥannā ibn al-Biṭrīq, tal como se lee en la introducción y tal como recoge la biografía de este traductor dada por el historiador andalusí Ibn Ŷulŷul en su *Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā'*,[14] obra escrita en el año 987, lo que permite suponer que una primera redacción del *Sirr* ya era conocida antes de esa fecha en al-Andalus; además, el mismo historiador lo cita entre las obras de Aristóteles, compuesta de ocho capítulos. Según Grignaschi, el texto conocido por Ibn Ŷulŷul sería el arquetipo inicial sobre el que luego se formaron las dos redacciones hoy conocidas del texto, la corta, compuesta de estos ocho capítulos, que dataría del siglo XI o primera mitad del siglo XII y la más próxima al arquetipo,[15] y la larga, dividida en diez tratados y conservada en la mayoría de los manuscritos árabes.[16]

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[9] Pueden verse sus artículos: 'L'origine et les métamorphoses du *Sirr al-asrâr*', *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age*, 43 (1976), pp. 7-112. 'Remarques sur la formation et l'interprétation du *Sirr al-Asrār*', en *Pseudo-Aristoteles The Secret of Secrets. Sources and Influences*, edited by W. F. Ryan and Charles B. Schmitt, London: The Warburg Institute, 1982, pp. 3-33.

[10] Mario Grignaschi: 'Les «Rasā'il Arisṭātālīs ilà-l-Iskandar» de Sālim Abū-l-'Alā' et l'activité culturelle à l'époque Omayyade', *Bulletin d'Études Orientales*, 19 (1965-1966), pp. 7-83.

[11] Mario Grignaschi: 'Le Roman épistolaire classique conservé dans la version arabe de Sālim Abū-l-Alā'', *Le Museon*, 80 (1967), pp. 211-264.

[12] Cf. Mahmoud Manzalaoui: 'The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Kitāb sirr al-asrār*', *Oriens*, 23-24 (1970-71), pp.147-257.

[13] *Al-uṣūl al-yūnāniyya li-l-naẓariyyāt al-siyāsiyya fī l-Islām [Fontes Graecae doctrinarum politicarum islamicarum]*, El Cairo, ex typis Bibliothecae Aegyptiacae, 1954, pp. 65-171.

[14] *op. cit.*, p. 67.

[15] Mario Grignaschi: 'Remarques sur la formation...', pp. 6-7.

[16] Es la que corresponde al texto árabe editado por Badawi.

El *Sirr* tuvo una amplia difusión en el mundo occidental.[17] Fue traducido al latín por dos veces, una en el siglo XII, en versión fragmentaria de Juan Hispalense, con el título *Poridat de poridades*, para una reina hispana, quizá la hija de Alfonso VI, Teresa de León (m. 1130), madre de Alfonso Enríquez, el primer rey de Portugal (1109-1185), de la que se conservan unas ciento cincuenta copias manuscritas,[18] y otra en el siglo XIII, por Felipe de Trípoli,[19] de la que existen más de trescientos manuscritos. Fue traducido también al hebreo en la península Ibérica, a comienzos del siglo XIII, por un judío oriundo de Granada.[20] Luego al inglés, al francés, al italiano, al alemán, al ruso, al checo e, incluso, al aragonés,[21] entre otras lenguas. Todas ellas dan testimonio del interés que, a pesar de todo, tuvo para muchos lectores, movidos en primer lugar, por la popularidad de la leyenda de Alejandro, puesto que los latinos estaban al tanto de la correspondencia entre Aristóteles y Alejandro, como se deduce de una cita de la *Disciplina clericalis* de Pedro Alfonso en la que se copia un párrafo de una carta de Alejandro a su discípulo, que parece remitir al *Sirr al-asrār*,[22] y, en segundo lugar, por los aspectos éticos y políticos que en él se ofrecen.

Aunque el texto fue comentado por Roger Bacon,[23] sin embargo los autores latinos de los siglos XIII y XIV apenas mencionan esta obra, quizá porque fue sospechosa de nigromancia para las autoridades eclesiásticas, hasta el punto de que el mismo Bacon se quejó de la *stulticia aliquorum*, por las mutilaciones que hicieron al texto.[24] Un florilegio medieval, el *Parvi flores*, compuesto entre los años 1267-1325 y cuyo autor pudo ser Marsilio de Padua, extrae un cierto número de

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17 Cf. Mario Grignaschi: 'La difussion du «Secretum secretorum» (*Sirr al-Asrār*) dans l'Europe Occidental', *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age*, 47 (1980), pp. 7-70.

18 *Secreto de los secretos. Poridat de las poridades. Versiones castellanas del Pseudo-Aristóteles Secretum secretorum*, estudio y edición de Hugo O. Bizarri, Valencia: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2010.

19 Cf. Mahmoud Manzalaoui: 'Philip of Tripoli and his Textual Methods', en *Pseudo-Aristoteles The Secret of Secrets*, pp. 55-72.

20 Moshe Gaster, 'The Hebrew Version of the *Secretum secretorum*', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (1907), pp. 879-912; (1908) pp. 1065-1084. Cf. Amitai L. Spitzer: 'The Hebrew Translation of the *Sod ha-Sodot* and its place in the transmission of the *Sirr al-asrār*', en *Pseudo-Aristoteles The Secret of Secrets*, pp. 34-54.

21 Juan Fernández de Heredia, Grand Master of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem: *The Aragonese Version of the Secreto Secretorum*, (From the Unique Escorial MS. Z.I.2). Edited by Lloyd Kasten, Madison: The Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1999.

22 Cf. *Disciplina clericalis*, introducción y notas de María Jesús Lacarra, traducción de Esperanza Ducay, versión española con texto latino, Zaragoza, Guara Editorial, 1980, p. 54; texto latino en p. 116; nota 10 en pp. 101-102.

23 Cf. Robert Steele, *Opera hactenus inedita Rogeri Baconi*. Fasc. V: *Secretum secretorum*, Oxford, 1920.

24 Cf. Mario Grignaschi, 'La diffusion...', pp. 13 y ss.

sentencias del *De regimine principum Aristotelis eruditio*, identificado por la editora de este texto con el *Secretum secretorum*.[25]

El contenido de la obra es muy diverso. Para exponerlo me sirvo de la edición larga, correspondiente al texto árabe editado por A. Badawi. Tras varias introducciones (del compilador anónimo, del supuesto traductor, Yaḥyā ibn al-Biṭrīq, y de Aristóteles), comienzan los diez libros, en los que el autor o autores exponen las clases de Reyes, recomendaciones de política y de preceptiva moral, astrología, una amplia sección sobre la salud, sobre fisiognomía, sobre la justicia, sobre los escribas, sobre los embajadores, sobre el ejército, sobre la guerra y sobre las ciencias ocultas (onomancia, talismanes, alquimia, lapidario y herbario). En los dos primeros libros se hallan doctrinas sobre la virtud emparentadas con la *Ética nicomaquea* de Aristóteles.

Pero es el libro cuarto de la versión larga y del texto árabe el que llama nuestra atención. Su título reza de la siguiente manera: *Sobre los ministros* (wuzarā'*), el número de ellos, cómo deben gobernar, la experiencia de sus consejos y el aspecto [o cualidad]* (ṣūra*) del intelecto que hay en ellos.* Parecería que se va a ocupar de los ministros o visires de los reyes. Pero no. Su contenido es bastante heterogéneo y es en su comienzo donde encontramos la materia filosófica: Es una breve exposición de ideas neoplatónicas: la concepción del universo y la doctrina sobre la analogía entre el macrocosmos y el microcosmos. Es curioso señalar que esta parte del *Sirr al-asrār* fue ignorada por algunos traductores o comentadores de la obra así como por los metafísicos medievales que pudieron haber leído la obra,[26] quizá porque consideraron que esta doctrina no era aristotélica. Se afirma por una parte la realidad de Dios y su creación como emanación jerárquica y, por otra, la realidad del hombre como elemento unificador de todas las esencias creadas. El concepto de 'emanación' (*fayḍ*) describe la relación que se da entre los diversos miembros de la jerarquía y significa literalmente 'derramarse', 'inundarse'.

He aquí el texto con el que comienza el capítulo:

> '¡Oh Alejandro! Comprende este tratado y sabe que su valor es grande. Para ti ciertamente he puesto en él una gran parte de la ciencia de la filosofía y la esencia (*māhiyya*) y constitución del intelecto. He revelado en él secretos divinos (*asrār ilāhiyya*) que necesariamente hay que exponer para tu información sobre la realidad del intelecto, cómo lo puso Dios en sus siervos y cómo alcanzan el conocimiento de todo esto. Esto es algo muy necesario para ti. Sé afortunado con ello, si Dios quiere.

[25] Jacqueline Hamesse: *Les auctoritates Aristotelis. Un florilège médiéval*. Étude historique et édition critique, París: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1974, p. 22, n. 19; textos en pp. 271-273.

[26] Cf. Steve J. Williams: *The* Secret of Secrets. *The Scholarly Career of a Pseudo-Aristotelian Text in the Latin Middle Ages*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003, pp. 320-321.

¡Oh Alejandro! Sabe que la primera cosa que el Creador, loada sea su grandeza, produjo fue una sustancia simple espiritual en el límite de la perfección, de la plenitud y de la excelencia, en la que se hallan las formas de todas las cosas. Se llama el Intelecto (*al-'aql*). Sabe que de esta sustancia procedió otra, inferior en rango, que se llama el Alma Universal (*al-nafs al-kulliyya*). Y que de esta Alma procedió otra sustancia que se llama la Materia (*al-hayūlà*). Por ser susceptible de recibir magnitudes, longitud, anchura y profundidad, llega a ser Cuerpo Absoluto. Después, el cuerpo recibe la forma (*al-šakl*) esférica, que es la más excelente de las formas, la de mejor posición y la más perdurable. De esta [forma esférica] son las esferas celestes y los astros, siendo la más pura y sutil de ella la primera. La esfera primera es la circundante y ellas llegan al límite extremo de la esfera de la luna; son nueve esferas, cada una de ellas en el interior de la otra. La primera y más superior de ellas es la esfera circundante. Luego está la esfera de las estrellas fijas; luego, la esfera de Saturno; luego, la esfera de Júpiter; luego, la esfera de Marte; luego, la esfera del Sol; luego, la esfera de Venus; luego, la esfera de Mercurio; luego, la esfera de la Luna; luego, la esfera de los elementos (*arkān*),[27] que son: fuego, aire, agua y tierra. La tierra está en el centro de todas ellas. Es la más densa de los cuerpos en cuanto a sustancia y la más espesa en cuanto al cuerpo.

Cuando estas esferas fueron ordenadas unas dentro de otras, tal como lo había decidido la sabiduría del Creador, loada sea su grandeza, con una disposición admirable y con una hermosa distribución, las esferas giraron con sus cuerpos y sus estrellas alrededor de los cuatro elementos antes mencionados. Entonces comenzaron a sucederse la noche y el día, el verano y el invierno, el calor y el frío. Unos [elementos] se mezclaron con otros y entonces se combinó lo sutil con lo denso, lo pesado con lo ligero, lo caliente con lo frío, lo húmedo con lo seco. A lo largo del tiempo surgieron diversas clases de composiciones: los minerales, los vegetales y los animales.

Los minerales son todas aquellas cosas que se han condensado en el interior de la tierra, en lo profundo de los mares y en las concavidades de las montañas a partir de los vapores acumulados, de los humos ascendentes y de los vahos que se han contraído en las cuevas y en la atmósfera. Las tierras están compuestas en su mayor parte de ellos, como el oro, la plata, el hierro, el cobre, el estaño,[28] las gemas, el corindón,[29] el coral, el cinc, el vidrio y otros distintos de estos, que son conocidos y existen.[30]

Animal es todo cuerpo que se mueve, que siente y que se traslada de un lugar a otro con su propio cuerpo; lo aéreo es lo que predomina en él. Los vegetales son más nobles en composición que los minerales y los animales son más nobles en composición que los vegetales.

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27 Término usado en la religión para designar los *arkān al-dīn*, los pilares de la religión, frente a *ustuqus*, el más usual como transliteración del griego *estoijeion*.

28 Leyendo *qaṣdīr* y no *qazdīr*.

29 En plural en el texto árabe, *al-yawāqīt*, de *yāqūt*, que también significa el jacinto.

30 Sobre la cuestión de los minerales, cf. J. A. García-Junceda: 'Los *Meteorologica* de Aristóteles y el *De Mineralibus* de Avicena', en *Milenario de Avicena*, Madrid: IHAC, 1981, pp. 37-63.

El hombre es el más noble en composición de todos los animales; el elemento fuego[31] es el que domina en él. En la composición del hombre se han unido todas las realidades[32] de los seres simples y compuestos, porque el hombre está compuesto de un cuerpo denso y voluminoso y de un alma que es sustancia simple y espiritual.

Oh Alejandro, si estás decidido a conocer las realidades de los seres (*ḥaqā'iq al-mawŷūdāt*), te conviene comenzar por el conocimiento de tu alma, puesto que es la cosa más cercana a ti mismo; después, conoce las restantes cosas.

Sabe que el Alma Universal es una potencia espiritual que ha emanado (*fāḍat*) del Creador, loada sea su grandeza. Sabe que ella tiene dos potencias[33] que se difunden en todos los cuerpos, tal como la luz del sol en las partes del aire: la primera de sus dos potencias es la referente al conocimiento y la segunda es la referente a la acción. Dios Altísimo la ha fortalecido con siete facultades: la apetitiva, la retentiva, la digestiva, la expulsiva, la nutritiva, la formativa y la de crecimiento. La acción de estas facultades en la composición del cuerpo del hombre consiste en hacer que el esperma llegue al útero y en disponerlo en él durante nueve[34] meses. Cuando se ha completado este plazo que Dios Altísimo ha dispuesto, entonces se transmite la facultad del alma corpórea animal (*quwwa al-nafs al-ḥayawāniyya al-ŷusmāniyya*), si Dios Altísimo quiere, desde ese lugar al espacio de esta casa[35] y obtiene así otra disposición que se completa a los cuatro años. Después adquiere la facultad racional[36] por la que interpreta los nombres de las cosas sensibles y obtiene así otra disposición que se completa a los quince años. Luego adquiere la facultad intelectiva (*al-quwwa al-'āqila*) por la que discierne los significados de las cosas sensibles (*ma'ānī al-maḥsūsāt*) y obtiene así otra disposición que se completa a los treinta años. Luego adquiere la facultad sapiencial (*al-quwwa al-ḥikamiyya*) por la que percibe los significados de las cosas inteligibles y obtiene así otra disposición que se completa a los cuarenta años. Después adquiere la facultad angelical (*al-quwwa al-malakiyya*) que le ayuda y con ella obtiene otra disposición que se completa a los cincuenta años. Adquiere después la facultad propia de la ley (*al-quwwa al-nāmūsiyya*)[37] que le prepara para el lugar del retorno (*al-ma'ād*) y con ella obtiene otra disposición para la otra vida. Si el alma se ha completado y se ha perfeccionado antes de separarse del cuerpo, entonces desciende (hasta ella) la facultad del Alma Universal, asciende con ella

31 Literalmente, la igneidad (*al-nāriyya*).

32 Las ideas, conceptos o significados (*al-ma'ānī*).

33 La versión latina señala tres: 'et habet tres vires', ed. Steele, p. 130,17.

34 En la versión latina: 'septem', p. 130,24.

35 Es decir desde el útero al cuerpo del hombre.

36 *Al-quwwa al-nāṭiqa*. Podría ser también la facultad del lenguaje, aunque tanto la versión latina, p. 131,4, como la inglesa, p. 73,19, la traducen por 'racional'.

37 Obsérvese que utiliza el término *nāmūs*, trasliteración del griego *nomos*, y no el término islámico *šarī'a*.

> hasta los ángeles[38] y obtiene con ello otra disposición hasta que se une con la esfera del Intelecto, que le complace mucho'.[39]

Se ha dicho[40] que esta emanación jerárquica del universo es propia del peripatetismo árabe, en especial de la lectura aviceniana de Aristóteles. Sin embargo, la jerarquía de Creador, Intelecto, Alma y Materia no se encuentra ni en al-Fārābī ni en Avicena, quienes establecen la siguiente jerarquía: Uno, que es el Ser primero, Ser necesario e Intelecto Primero; en segundo lugar, los diez Intelectos o Motores celestes con sus esferas, compuestas de intelecto y alma; finalmente, el mundo de la generación y corrupción. Este sistema de los diez Intelectos sólo se encuentra por vez primera en al-Fārābī.[41]

En cambio, la emanación jerárquica del *Sirr al-asrār* es la que se encuentra en los textos de los llamados Ijwān al-Ṣafā' o Hermanos de la Pureza, conjunto de autores del siglo X, que compusieron cincuenta y dos *Epístolas* (*Rasā'il*)[42] que constituyen una enciclopedia del saber, catalogado en tres grandes grupos: ciencias prácticas, ciencias religiosas y ciencias filosóficas, que incluyen desde las matemáticas a la filosofía, pasando por la música, la mineralogía, la botánica y la alquimia, con elementos herméticos que debieron influir también en el texto del *Sirr al-asrār*. Repárese en el siguiente texto de los Ijwān, que se asemeja enormemente a lo expuesto al comienzo de la cita anterior del *Sirr*. Dicen los Ijwān:

> 'La primera cosa que el Creador produjo y llamó a la existencia es una sustancia simple, espiritual extremadamente perfecta en la que la forma de todas las cosas está contenida. Esta sustancia es llamada el Intelecto. De esta sustancia procede luego una segunda que en jerarquía está por debajo del primero y es llamada el alma Universal. Del Alma Universal procede otra sustancia que está bajo el Alma y que es llamada Materia Original.[43] Ésta última es transformada en el Cuerpo

[38] Literalmente 'la asamblea superior' (*al-malā' al-a'là*).

[39] Ed. A. Badawi op. cit., pp. 130-132.

[40] Cf. Steve J. Williams: *The* Secret of Secrets., op. cit., p. 320.

[41] Cf. Al-Fārābī, *Kitâb mabâdi' ârâ ahl al-madîna al-fâḍila*, ed. R. Walzer, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985; trad. española: Al-Fârâbî: *La ciudad ideal*, trad. M. Alonso, Madrid: Ed. Tecnos, 1985. *Al-Fârâbî's The Political Regime (Al-siyâsa al-madaniyya also known as the Treatise on the Principles of Beings)*, Arabic text, edited with an introduction and notes by F. M. Najjar, Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1964; trad. española, Al-Farabi: *Obras filosóficas y políticas*, traducción con texto árabe, introducción y notas de R. Ramón Guerrero, Madrid: Trotta, 2008.

[42] Ijwān al-Ṣafā': *Rasā'il*, Beirut: Dâr Sâdir, 4 vols., 1957.

[43] La jerarquía esbozada hasta aquí sigue en gran parte la de Ŷābir, salvo que éste en su *Kitāb al-jamsīn* sitúa la Naturaleza después del alma. Kraus: *Jabir ibn Hayyan*, II, 150.

> Absoluto, es decir, la Materia Segunda que tiene longitud, anchura y profundidad'.[44]

> 'Has de saber, hermano, que la primera cosa que el Creador, exaltado sea, originó y creó a partir de la luz de su unidad fue una substancia simple, que se llama Intelecto Agente, de la misma manera que produjo el dos a partir del uno por repetición. Luego produjo el Alma celeste universal a partir de la luz del Intelecto, de la misma manera que creó el tres por adición del uno al dos. Luego produjo la Materia Primera a partir del movimiento del Alma, de la misma manera que produjo el cuatro por adición del uno al tres'.[45]

Hay que señalar también el carácter religioso que se le da al proceso emanativo, puesto que el Primer Principio no es el Uno, como en los neoplatónicos griegos, ni el Ser necesario, Ser Primero, Causa primera o Intelecto de los filósofos árabes como al-Fārābī y Avicena, sino 'el Creador', como también se encuentra a veces en los textos de los Ijwān al-Ṣafā'.

El sistema filosófico que se encuentra en esas *Epístolas* es una mezcla de doctrinas pitagóricas, platónicas y neoplatónicas, en lenguaje aristotélico, en el que el núcleo es la jerarquía descendente del Uno, según la doctrina de la emanación, realizada según combinaciones numéricas procedentes del pitagorismo, y la exposición del origen celeste del alma y de su retorno a la Unidad, tras la purificación de la materia.

La creación y el universo entero son presentados dentro de los esquemas de la revelación coránica, interpretados con los paradigmas neoplatónicos de tipo emanantista. Por eso, al Uno neoplatónico lo llaman el Creador, identificado con el Dios de la revelación. Conociéndose a sí mismo, creó, por el hecho mismo de conocerse, o hizo emanar de una sola vez y de repente, fuera del tiempo y del espacio, al Intelecto, el cual, a su vez, conociéndose a sí mismo y a Dios, engendró el Alma Universal del mundo. Es entonces cuando el mundo del espíritu quedó constituido. El mundo material, por su parte, es producto sucesivo del Alma Universal ya mencionada, la cual, en su parte inferior, va engendrando a través de 'largas eras infinitas' de tiempo al mundo material o 'Materia Primera'.

Éste surge según el siguiente orden: primero, se engendra la Naturaleza que es una 'potencia del Alma Universal', o, en otros términos, 'un acto' de esa misma alma. Por la acción del Alma Universal surgen en la naturaleza los cuatro elementos (tierra, agua, aire y fuego), apareciendo así la Materia Segunda o

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[44] La cita aparece en S. H. Nasr: *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, Cambridge (MA): The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1965, p. 52, donde remite a F. Dieterici: *Die Lehre von der Weltseele*, p. 15; y señala *Rasā'il*, II, 4-5, de la edición de El Cairo. No corresponde en nada a la edición de Beirut.

[45] *Rasâ'il*, vol. I, p. 54.7-11.

Cuerpo del Mundo. Aquí se interrumpe todo el proceso emanativo neoplatónico que explica filosóficamente la creación. Los cuatro elementos se combinan y forman, primero, los minerales, luego, los vegetales, a continuación, los animales y, finalmente, como culminación y resumen de todo el proceso, el hombre. El ser humano es, de este modo, un compuesto de elementos minerales, vegetales, animales y de alma espiritual. En consecuencia, resulta ser una síntesis perfecta de toda la creación, un cosmos en pequeño. Enseñan así la idea del hombre como microcosmos, como reflejo del universo creado por Dios, que conociéndose a sí mismo llega al conocimiento de su creador: 'Quien mejor se conoce, conoce mejor a su Creador'.[46]

La idea del microcosmos se encuentra en el texto del *Sirr al-asrār* expuesta de la siguiente manera:

> 'Cuando Dios creó al hombre y lo estableció como el más noble de los animales, le dio mandatos y prohibiciones, castigos y premios. Constituyó su cuerpo como una ciudad, de la que el intelecto era el rey. Estableció para él cinco ministros (*wuzarā'*) para que lo ayudaran a gobernarla y le presentaran todo lo que necesitara y le fuera útil, y lo guardaran de todo lo que le fuera nocivo. Él no puede subsistir ni perfeccionarse sin ellos. Estableció para cada uno de ellos un aspecto exclusivo distinto del de su compañero y una cualidad propia que no fuera compartida por ningún otro. Por la unión de las opiniones de ellos en él, se estableció la perfección de sus asuntos y la constitución de sus obras. Los cinco ministros son los cinco sentidos: ojos, oídos, lengua (*lisān*), nariz y manos (*al-yad*)'.[47]

> 'Sabe, oh Alejandro, que Dios Altísimo y Glorioso no ha creado un ser más noble que el hombre,[48] ni ha reunido en ningún animal lo que ha reunido en el hombre. Tampoco hay en ninguno de los animales una cualidad innata que no se encuentre también en el hombre. Pues es valiente como el león, tímido como la liebre, generoso como el gallo, cauto como el cuervo... En resumen, Alejandro, no hay animal ni vegetal ni mineral ni esfera ni astro ni ninguno de los seres del universo que tenga alguna propiedad que no se encuentre en el hombre. Por eso se le llama microcosmos (*'ālam sagīr*)'.[49]

El hombre es designado por el término 'hijo de Adán' (*Ibn Ādam*) y los Ijwān se ocupan del Adán celeste y del Adán terrestre.[50] Es descrito como un compuesto de dos sustancias, una física, el Cuerpo, y la otra espiritual, el Alma. Está en condiciones de simbolizar el Universo entero, compuesto también, como se ha

[46] *Rasā'il*, vol. III, pp. 178-179.

[47] Ed. A. Badawi citada, p. 132.

[48] Literalmente: el hijo de Adán.

[49] Ed. A. Badawi, pp. 139-140.

[50] Cf. Yves Marquet: *La philosophie des Iḫwān al-Ṣafā'*, Alger: Études et Documents, 1975, pp. 208-218.

visto, de Cuerpo (las cosas sensibles) y Alma (el Alma Universal). El texto del *Sirr* utiliza la comparación del cuerpo del hombre con una ciudad y de su alma con el rey de ella tal como hacen los Ijwān, y se sirve de los mismos ejemplos al establecer las correspondencias entre el hombre y los animales. Así dice el texto de los Ijwān, después de reconocer la asimilación de cuerpo y alma con una ciudad y su rey:

> 'Sabe, oh hermano, que todas las especies de animales tienen una propiedad que les es innata y que todas ellas se encuentran en el hombre, pues él es valiente como el león, tímido como la liebre, generoso como el gallo, avaro como el perro... En resumen, no hay animal ni vegetal ni mineral ni esfera ni astro ni ninguno de los seres del universo que tenga alguna propiedad que no se encuentre en el hombre.... Por causa de esto, los sabios han dicho que el hombre es uno después de toda multiplicidad, de la misma manera que el Creador es uno antes de toda multiplicidad... y lo llaman microcosmos (*'ālam sagīr*)'.[51]

En conclusión, aunque el texto del *Sirr al-asrār* no haga más explícito lo que afirma, es posible sin embargo deducir que en él, siguiendo el modelo establecido por los Ijwān al-Ṣafā', pretende explicar el proceso creativo de Dios.

De la Unidad absoluta (Dios como Uno que no tiene par ni compañero con que pueda equipararse) sólo procede el Intelecto, que constituye el primer ser emanado, con el que se inicia la multiplicidad. Este Intelecto, supremo y perfecto, al conocer la Unidad de Dios de la que procede, conoce también la dualidad de sí misma respecto de Dios, y, por tanto, está abierto y capacitado para conocer cualquier multiplicidad, como la de las formas arquetípicas que de manera unitaria e indivisa Dios ha puesto en él, arquetipos que tienen que ver con las ideas-paradigma de Platón. El Intelecto, al engendrar al Alma, genera simultáneamente en dicha alma los arquetipos que ya no están fundidos en una unidad, como en el Intelecto, sino que se despliegan en una multitud de modelos y paradigmas, a través de los cuales (y a través del mismo Intelecto y Alma) Dios hace todas las cosas del mundo.

Este proceso es reversible: desde la multiplicidad de las cosas se puede llegar a la unidad *(tawḥīd)* por el camino de la eliminación de dicha multiplicidad y, por tanto, de la materialidad. Es la vuelta del mundo y del hombre al Dios-Uno, eliminando por completo no sólo la multiplicidad corporal, sino también la espiritual del Alma y del Intelecto. Todo este proceso, el descendente y el ascendente, ha de tener sus pasos, sin que sea posible saltar ninguno de ellos: así, el hombre llegará a la unidad de Dios solamente a través de la Naturaleza, del Alma y del Intelecto. Es el camino de vuelta a la unidad, tanto en el orden cósmico como en el humano.

[51] Ijwān al-Ṣafā': *Rasā'il*, vol. III, pp. 474-475.

Volviendo a la estructura del mundo en su totalidad y dejando aparte la formación de los seres particulares (elementos, minerales, vegetales, animales y hombre), el cosmos está constituido a la manera de la ciencia neoplatónica y griega, en general por una serie de gigantescas esferas celestes concéntricas que el texto del *Sirr al-asrār*, siguiendo el neoplatonismo de al-Fārābī y de Avicena en este caso, cifra en nueve, que son las de la Luna, Mercurio, Venus, Sol, Marte, Júpiter, Saturno, Esfera de las Estrellas Fijas, y la Esfera circundante. Del esquema de los Ijwān al-Ṣafā' eliminan la Esfera de los signos del Zodíaco. La vida del hombre y los acontecimientos de su existencia discurren por debajo de la esfera de la Luna, influyendo todos los demás astros superiores y a través de ella en su manera de ser y en su destino.

Este conjunto de esferas del universo, ensambladas unas dentro de otras y en perfecto contacto mutuo,[52] constituyen una total unidad jerárquica, sometida a la unidad del mundo espiritual del Intelecto y del Alma, los cuales están sometidos a la unidad del Dios único.

Este esquema neoplatónico, tan vivo, profundo y coherente, venía a subrayar la presencia de los otros neoplatonismos ya existentes, tanto el de los filósofos propiamente dichos, como el expuesto por algunos místicos o sufíes, en quienes también es posible hallar elementos tomados de la doctrina neoplatónica y utilizados para la exposición de sus experiencias místicas.

[52] Esta idea de un universo compuesto de esferas concéntricas que se tocan unas a otras, sin dejar vacío alguno entre ellas, es propio de la cosmología platónica y aristotélica, para quienes la nada no existe, debiendo estar todos los seres del universo en contacto mutuo.

GUNDISSALINUS AND THE APPLICATION OF AL-FĀRĀBĪ'S METAPHYSICAL PROGRAMME

A CASE OF PHILOSOPHICAL TRANSFER

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Abstract

This study deals with Dominicus Gundissalinus's discussion on metaphysics as philosophical discipline. Gundissalinus's translation and re-elaboration of al-Fārābī's *Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm* furnish him, in the *De scientiis*, a specific and detailed procedure for metaphysical analysis articulated in two different stages, an ascending and a descending one. This very same procedure is presented by Gundissalinus also in his *De divisione philosophiae*, where the increased number of sources –in particular, Avicenna– does not prevent Gundissalinus to quote the entire passage on the methods of metaphysical science from the *Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm*, with some slight changes in his Latin translation. The analytical procedure herein proposed becomes an effective 'metaphysical programme' with regards to Gundissalinus's onto-cosmological writing, the *De processione mundi*. The comparative analysis of this treatise with the procedure received by al-Fārābī shows Gundissalinus's effort to follow and apply this metaphysical programme to his own reflection, in a whole different context from al-Fārābī's and presenting doctrines quite opposed to the theoretical ground on which al-Fārābī's epistemology is based, like ibn Gabirol's universal hylomorphism. Nevertheless, thanks to the application of the 'metaphysical programme', one can effectively claim that Gundissalinus's metaphysics is, at least in the author's intentions, a well-defined metaphysical system. In appendix to this article the three Latin versions of al-Fārābī's discussion on metaphysics are reported, e.g., Gundissalinus's quotations in *De scientiis* and *De divisione philosophiae*, and Gerard of Cremona's translation in his *De scientiis*.

Key Words

Gundissalinus; Toledo; Metaphysics; al-Fārābī; Epistemology.

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Dominicus Gundissalinus (1120 ca. - post 1191) was a Spanish translator and philosopher, active in Toledo in the second half of the twelfth century.[1] Over twenty Arabic-Latin translations are ascribed to him[2] and his circle's work,[3] translations which played a crucial role for the subsequent Latin philosophical speculation. Gundissalinus also wrote five original philosophical treatises in which he receives, develops, and sometimes criticizes the outcomes proposed by the Islamic and Jewish authors he translated.

This contribution will focus on one aspect of Gundissalinus's reflection: his well-known discussion of the division of sciences, and in particular, the treatment of metaphysics as *scientia divina* and *philosophia prima*. In order to analyse this peculiar aspect, I will briefly introduce Gundissalinus's overall philosophical production and the *divisio scientiarum* he proposes. Then, I will focus on the analysis of metaphysical science Gundissalinus offers in his *De scientiis* and *De divisione philosophiae*,[4] examining the stages in which research on first philosophy

1 For an updated biography of Dominicus Gundissalinus, see Nicola Polloni, 'Elementi per una biografia di Dominicus Gundisalvi', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 82 (2015), pp. 7-22.

2 The list of translations traditionally ascribed to Gundissalinus has been recently updated by the remarkable work of Dag N. Hasse. See Dag N. Hasse, 'Twelfth-Century Latin Translations of Arabic Philosophical Texts on the Iberian Peninsula', Villa Vigoni, June 27th 2013.

3 The fundamental studies by Charles Burnett clarified many aspects of the modalities of translation and scientific elaboration carried out in Toledo in the second half of the twelfth century. Burnett demonstrates that many anonymous works can be ascribed to Gundissalinus and his 'circle', e.g., the team of translators and philosophers that worked with him. Among them, the most important member was surely Abraham Ibn Daud, a Jewish translator and philosopher, whose key role regarding the very genesis of the Toledan translation movement has been shown by Amos Bertolacci. See Charles Burnett, 'Euclid and al-Fārābī in ms. Vatican, Reg. Lat. 1268', in Rüdiger Arnzen and Jörn Thielmann (eds.), *Words, Texts and Concepts Cruising the Mediterranean Sea. Studies on the Sources, Contents and Influences of Islamic Civilization and Arabic Philosophy and Science*, Leuven-Paris-Dudley: Peters, 2004, pp. 411-436; and Amos Bertolacci, 'A Community of Translators: The Latin Medieval Versions of Avicenna's Book of the Cure', in Constant J. Mews and John N. Crossley (eds.), *Communities of Learning: Networks and the Shaping of Intellectual Identity in Europe 1100-1500*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2011, pp. 37-54. In reference to Ibn Daud's influence on Gundissalinus's philosophical thought, see N. Polloni, 'Toledan Ontologies: Gundissalinus, Ibn Daud and the Problems of Gabirolian Hylomorphism', in Alexander Fidora and Nicola Polloni (eds.), *Apropriation, Interpretation and Criticism: Philosophical and Theological Exchanges Between the Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Intellectual Traditions*, forthcoming.

4 Gundissalinus's epistemology and gnoseology have been thoroughly studied by Alexander Fidora, and I would like to express my gratitude to him for his help with this article. For an overall analysis of Gundissalinus's theory of knowledge, see Alexander Fidora, *Die Wissenschaftstheorie des Dominicus Gundissalinus. Voraussetzungen und Konsequenzen des zweiten Anfangs der aristotelischen Philosophie im 12. Jahrhunder*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003, translated into

must be pursued, e.g., the metaphysical programme. The last part of this contribution will focus on Gundissalinus's application of this programme, as seen in *De processione mundi*.

Gundissalinus's New Organization of Scientific Knowledge

Gundissalinus' five treatises, written during his Toledan years, share many similarities regarding both style–textual collections of a number of quotations and excerpts from Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin authors, never quoted by name– and the philosophical tradition on which they are based–Arabic and Hebrew Neoplatonism, as expressed by Avicenna or Ibn Gabirol. Gundissalinus covers three main philosophical themes in his production: psychology (*De anima*), epistemology (*De scientiis* and *De divisione philosophiae*), and metaphysics (*De unitate et uno* and *De processione mundi*), although the questions to which Gundissalinus responds cover a greater range of disciplines.[5]

The main source from which Gundissalinus's treatise *On the Soul*[6] draws is Avicenna's homonymous work *De anima*,[7] translated in Toledo by Gundissalinus and Ibn Daud. Ibn Gabirol's *Fons vitae* and Qusṭā ibn Lūqā's *De differentia spiritus et animae* also greatly influenced the work, along with Augustine,[8] Isidore of Seville and Boethius (medieval authorities who also influenced Gundissalinus's overall production.[9]) The first part of the treatise deals with the existence[10] and the

Spanish as Alexander Fidora, *Domingo Gundisalvo y la teoría de la ciencia arábigo-aristotélica*, Pamplona: EUNSA, 2009. See also the German critical translation of the *De divisione philosophiae* by Alexander Fidora and D. Werner, D. Gundissalinus, *Über die Einteilung der Philosophie*, Freiburg - Basel – Wien: Herder, 2007.

5 The *Liber mahamalet*, a treatise dealing mainly with mathematics and arithmetics offers a good example of the various interests and approaches of Gundissalinus's milieu. See Anne M. Vlasschaert, *Le Liber mahamaleth*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010, pp. 25-32 in particular; Jacques Sesiano, *The Liber Mahamalet. A 12th-Century Mathematical Treatise*, New York: Springer, 2014; and Charles Burnett, 'John of Seville and John of Spain: A Mise au Point', *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 44 (2002), pp. 59-78.

6 Two different critical edition of Gundissalinus's *De anima* have been published. Cf. J. T. Muckle, 'The Treatise De anima of Dominicus Gundissalinus', *Mediaeval Studies* 2/1 (1940), pp. 23-103; and Concepción Alonso del Real and María J. Soto Bruna, *El* Tractatvs de anima *atribuido a Dominicvs Gvundissalinvs*, Pamplona: EUNSA, 2009, pp. 64-318.

7 Dag N. Hasse underlines that Gundissalinus uses version A of Avicenna's *De anima* translations. See Dag N. Hasse, *Avicenna's De Anima in the Latin West*, (Warburg Institute Studies and Texts, New Series, vol. 1), London: Warburg Institute, 2000, p. 8.

8 Alonso del Real y Soto Bruna, *op. cit*, pp. 1-63.

9 See Alexander Fidora, 'La recepción de San Isidoro de Sevilla por Domingo Gundisalvo (ca. 1110-1181, Astronomía, Astrología y Medicina en la Edad Media', *Estudios eclesiásticos* 75 (2000), pp.

qualities of the soul, in which Gundissalinus notably claims the soul is composed of matter and form.[11] Contrarily, the second part of the *De anima* is an examination of the mental faculties,[12] and this treatment is strongly dependent on Avicenna's theory of senses and intellect.[13]

Gundissalinus's metaphysical reflection is presented in two writings, the *De unitate et uno*[14] and the *De processione mundi*.[15] The former is a short work on the ontological value of metaphysical unity,[16] while the latter is an elaborate and dense discussion of cosmology and ontology that problematizes the position previously expressed in the *De unitate*. The metaphysics presented in the *De*

663-677; Alexander Fidora, 'La metodología de las ciencias según Boecio: su recepción en las obras y traducciones de Domingo Gundisalvo', *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval* 7 (2000), pp. 127-136; and Nicola Polloni, 'Il *De processione mundi* di Gundissalinus: prospettive per un'analisi genetico-dottrinale', *Annali di Studi Umanistici* 1 (2013), pp. 25-38.

10 Gundissalinus, *De anima* (ed. Alonso del Real and Soto Bruna), pp. 68,1-82,22.

11 Ibid., pp. 102,18-103,3: «Restat igitur ut sit substantia quae est spiritus rationalis. De quo si constiterit quod sit compositus ex matera et forma, tunc non erunt nisi tres substantiae, scilicet materia et forma et compositum ex utroque, ut substantiae talis recte fiat divisio. Substantia, alia est simplex, alia composita; simplex, alia materia, alia forma; sed composita, alia est corpus, alia est spiritus. Cui enim advenit forma corporeitatis et fit substantia corporea, eidem procul dubio advenit forma spiritualitatis et rationalitatis et fit substantia rationalis spiritualis».

12 Ibid., pp. 178,1-318,13.

13 See Herbert A. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect*, Oxford - New York: Oxford University Press, 1992; Luís X. López-Farjeat and Jörg A. Tellkamp (eds.), *Philosophical Psychology in Arabic Thought and the Latin Aristotelianism of the 13th Century*, Paris: Sic et non, 2013. It has to be noted that Gundissalinus's *De anima* is the first Latin writing in receiving the doctrine of separated active intellect.

14 The new edition of the text recently prepared by Alonso del Real and Soto Bruna must be added to the two 'traditional' critical editions of Gundissalinus's *De unitate et uno*, the first edited by Correns, and the second by Alonso Alonso. See Paul Correns, *Die dem Boethius fälschlich zugeschriebene Abhandlung des Dominicus Gundisalvi De unitate*, (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, 1/1), Münster: Aschendorff, 1891, pp. 3-11; Manuel Alonso Alonso, 'El 'Liber de unitate et uno'', *Pensamiento* 12 (1956), pp. 65-78; and María J. Soto Bruna and Concepción Alonso del Real, De unitate et uno *de Dominicus Gundissalinus*, Pamplona: EUNSA, 2015.

15 The commonly used text of Gundissalinus's *De processione mundi* is the critical edition by G. Bülow, even if a newer, more problematic critical edition has been proposed by Alonso del Real and Soto Bruna. See Georg Bülow, *Des Dominicus Gundissalinus Schrift Von dem Hervorgange der Welt*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters 24/3, Münster, 1925, pp. 1-56; and María J. Soto Bruna and Concepción Alonso del Real, De processione mundi. *Estudio y edición crítica del tratado de D. Gundisalvo,* Pamplona: EUNSA, 1999.

16 For a summary illustration of the features presented in the *De unitate*, see María J. Soto Bruna, 'La 'causalidad del uno' en Domingo Gundisalvo', *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval* 21 (2014), pp. 53-68.

processione is extremely out of character for Gundissalinus. In this treatise, the author receives and melds together doctrines and positions, derived from both Arabic and Latin writings, which are often very divergent, if not directly opposing each other.[17] Using these speculative materials, Gundissalinus builds a mature and original theoretical system, the keystone of which is the union of the theory of universal hylomorphism with the doctrine of necessary and possible being.

The third theme covered by Gundissalinus's reflection is the theory of knowledge. The Toledan philosopher dedicates two treatises to the discussion of this topic, the *De scientiis*[18] and the *De divisione philosophiae*.[19] The *De scientiis* is deeply indebted to its main source text, al-Fārābī's *Kitāb Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm*;[20] the textual relationship between these two writings is so strong that one could consider the *De scientiis* a translation of al-Fārābī's text.[21] Nevertheless, Gundissalinus makes some important modifications in regards to the original Arabic text, as M. Alonso Alonso[22] and J. Jolivet[23] have shown, constituting a certain degree of originality.

Notwithstanding the peculiar textual and stylistic nature of this treatise, the division of sciences presented in the *De scientiis* and the *De divisione philosophiae* is similar, though the latter shows a greater problematization of the features

[17] Examples of Gundissalinus's attitude toward the Arabic and Latin sources have been presented in Nicola Polloni, 'Gundissalinus on Necessary Being: Textual and Doctrinal Alterations in the Exposition of Avicenna's Metaphysics', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 26/1 (2016), pp. 129-160; and Nicola Polloni, 'Thierry of Chartres and Gundissalinus on Spiritual Substance: The Problem of Hylomorphic Composition', *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale*, 57 (2015), forthcoming.

[18] Gundissalinus, *De scientiis*, critical edition by Manuel Alonso Alonso, Granada: CSIC, 1956. See also Jakob H. J. Schneider, *De scientiis secundum versionem Dominici Gundisalvi*, Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2006.

[19] Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae*, critical edition by Ludwig Baur, (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters vol. 4/2), Münster, 1903, pp. 3-142.

[20] Al-Fārābī, *Kitāb Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm (Enumeration of the Sciences)*, critical edition by U. Amin, Cairo: al-Qahirah, 1968.

[21] This is the perspective adopted by N. Kinoshita, who refuses to ascribe the *De scientiis* to Gundissalinus's philosophical production (accepting, instead, the *De immortalitate animae*). Cf. Noboru Kinoshita, *El pensamiento filosófico de Domingo Gundisalvo*, Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1988, at pp. 47-90.

[22] See the introduction by Alonso Alonso to Gundissalinus, *De scientiis*, p. 17: 'la versión de Gundisalvo omite muchas frases y muchos pasajes y altera otros con nuevo sesgo gramatical y aun añade párrafos enteros y hace expresa referencia a textos de otros autores distintos de al-Fārābī'.

[23] See Jean Jolivet, 'The Arabic Inheritance', in P. Dronke (ed.), *A History of Twelfth-century Western Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 113-148.

exposed and a higher degree of complexity, both in relation to the theoretical contents and the sources used. The Latin background from which the Toledan philosopher develops his speculation is crucial; Gundissalinus builds his scientific organization upon features derived from the Chartrean masters, William of Conches[24] and Thierry of Chartres,[25] and the more traditional Boethius[26] and Isidore of Seville,[27] selecting passages and statements that could be included in his gnoseological schematization.

In the *De scientiis*, the overall gnoseology on which Gundissalinus's discussion is based is derived from Arabic philosophy. H. Hugonnard-Roche[28] has shown how deep is Gundissalinus' indebtedness to al-Fārābī, Avicenna, and al-Ghazālī. From their texts Gundissalinus develops an organization of sciences that originates from the Alexandrian *curricula studiorum*. Avicenna's presence and influence in this treatise is even deeper than al-Fārābī's, testified by the large quotation at the end of the treatise, taken from a long Avicennian excerpt called the *Summa Avicennae de convenientia et differentia subiectorum*.[29] This quotation is fundamental to Gundissalinus's exposition of the epistemological core of his scientific organization, e.g., the theory of subordination of sciences regarding their subject.[30] Aside from these three Arabic sources, Gundissalinus also uses the works of Isaac Israeli (*Liber de definitionibus*), al-Kindi (*Liber de quinque essentiis*)

[24] See Karin M. Fredborg, 'The Dependence of Petrus Helias' Summa super Priscianum on William of Conches' Glosae super Priscianum', *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen Âge grec et latin* 11 (1973), pp. 1-57; and Alexander Fidora, 'Le débat sur la création: Guillaume de Conches, maître de Dominique Gundisalvi?', in Barbara Obrist and IIrène Caiazzo (eds.), *Guillaume de Conches: Philosophie et science au XII siècle*, Firenze: SISMEL-edizione del Galluzzo, 2011, pp. 271-288.

[25] See Nikolaus M. Häring, 'Thierry of Chartres and Dominicus Gundissalinus', *Mediaeval Studies* 26 (1964), pp. 271-286; Karin M. Fredborg, *The Latin Rhetorical Commentaries by Thierry of Chartres*, Toronto, 1988, pp. 14-20; and K. M. Fredborg, 'Petrus Helias on Rhetoric', *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen Âge grec et latin* 13 (1974), pp. 31-41.

[26] Fidora, 'La metodología de las ciencias según Boecio', op. cit.

[27] Fidora, 'La recepción de San Isidoro de Sevilla', op. cit.

[28] See Henri Hugonnard-Roche, 'La classification des sciences de Gundissalinus et l'influence d'Avicenne', in J. Jolivet and R. Rashed (eds.), *Études sur Avicenne*, Paris : Belles Lettres, 1984, pp.41-75.

[29] Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae* (ed. Muckle), 124,5-133,27.

[30] See Alexander Fidora, 'Dominicus Gundissalinus and the Introduction of Metaphysics into the Latin West', *The Review of Metaphysics* 66 (2013), pp. 691-712. For the important dissemination of this Avicennian theory in the Latin West, see Pascuale Porro, 'Assistance, Service and Subalternation: Theology, Philosophy and the Liberal Arts in Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Ghent', in G. Kapriev (ed.), *Nomina essentiant res. In Honour of Prof. Tzotcho Boiadjiev (60th Anniversary)*, Sofia, 2011, pp. 259-281.

and the Ikhwan aṣ-Ṣafa' (*Liber introductorius in artem logicae demonstrationis*.[31]) Notwithstanding the large number of Arabic sources, one should highlight the fundamental value Latin speculation has for Gundissalinus. As Fidora[32] has shown, Latin philosophy, particularly that of Boethius, plays the role of 'hermeneutical condition' for Gundissalinus's elaboration of his theory of knowledge.

The *divisio scientiarum* illustrated in the two treatises is quite similar, if not completely consistent. In the *De scientiis*, Gundissalinus exhibits a scientific organization very close to al-Fārābī's *Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm*.[33] The treatise is composed of five chapters and a prologue. Each chapter analyses a different discipline, beginning with the *scientia linguae*, e.g., grammar, composed of seven parts,[34] and the logic, subdivided into eight parts.[35] Grammar and logic are different, since the former always refers to a spoken language, while the latter has a universal value expressed through three intentions: *exterior cum voce*, *fixa in anima*, and *virtus creata in homine*.[36] Unlike in the *De divisione*, Gundissalinus affirms the instrumental character of logic in the *De scientiis*; its value is for checking the validity of philosophical arguments, without itself being a part of philosophy.

Logic offers passage to the theoretical sciences: the *scientia doctrinalis*,[37] the *scientia naturalis*,[38] and the *scientia divina*. The first, mathematics, is divided into seven parts, corresponding to the *quadrivium* and three new sciences, which are

31 See Henry G. Farmer, 'Who Was the Author of the *Liber introductorius in artem logicae demonstrationis*?', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3 (1934), pp. 553-6; and Carmela Baffioni, 'Il *Liber introductorius in artem logicae demonstrationis*: Problemi storici e filologici', *Studi filosofici* 17 (1994), pp. 69-90.

32 Fidora, *Domingo Gundisalvo y la teoría de la ciencia arábigo-aristotélica*, op. cit., pp. 103-25.

33 Regarding al-Fārābī's 'divisio', see Mauro Zonta, 'La *divisio scientiarum* presso al-Fārābī', in G. D'Onofrio (ed.), *La divisione della filosofia e le sue ragioni. Lettura di testi medievali (VI-XIII secolo)*, Cava de' Tirreni: Avagliano, 2001, 65-78.

34 Gundissalinus, *De scientiis* (ed. Alonso Alonso), pp. 59-65. The seven parts in which the *grammatica* is composed are: «scientia dictionum simplicium»; «scientia orationum»; «scientia regularum de dictionibus simplicibus»; «scientia regularum de dictionibus quando componuntur»; «scientia regularum ad recte scribendum»; «scientia regularum ad recte legendum»; «scientia regularum ad versificandum».

35 Ibid., pp. 67-83 and pp. 72,9-76,9.

36 Ibid., pp. 70,8-71,9.

37 Ibid., pp. 85-112.

38 Ibid., pp. 113-131.

absent from the traditional Latin scientific divisions: the *scientia de aspectibus*[39] (e.g., optics), the *scientia de ponderibus*,[40] and the *scientia de ingeniis*.[41]

Natural science studies the natural bodies and their accidents and is composed of eight parts. Each part deals with the analysis of bodies through two different approaches, '*vel secundum quod ex eis est sensibile, vel probando quod ex eis est intelligibile*'.[42] The final part of Gundissalinus's treatment of natural science is dedicated to metaphysics. The Toledan philosopher provides a brief examination of its purposes and methods. The last chapter[43] of the treatise is focused on *scientia civilis* and *scientia legum*, aspects of practical philosophy whose treatment is bonded to Aristotle's *Politica*.

The schematization of scientific disciplines presented in the *De scientiis* is restated and expanded upon in the *De divisione philosophiae*. The scientific organization exposed herein was widely popular during the Middle Ages, as it presents two fundamental innovations. In fact, as Jolivet[44] has noted, this new theory of knowledge introduces sciences that were previously unknown or whose epistemological status was uncertain and provides a justification of logic as part of philosophy. With these additions and the adherence of this new system to the upcoming Aristotelian corpus, Gundissalinus's theory of knowledge would become the general structuration of scholastic knowledge.[45]

The *De divisione* is comprised of two parts: a large prologue where Gundissalinus exposes the principles of his *divisio*, and a specific treatment of the different sciences, their species and their parts. The point of departure is the distinction between divine and human science, and the articulation of the latter in the sciences of eloquence and wisdom.[46] Only wisdom corresponds to philosophy, since philosophy[47] is formed by those disciplines that lead to the achievement of

39 Ibid., pp. 93,9-99,4.

40 Ibid., p. 108,1-8.

41 Ibid., pp. 108,9-112,6.

42 Ibid., p. 119,4-13.

43 Ibid., pp. 133-140.

44 See Jolivet, *The Arabic Inheritance*, p. 137.

45 See Michela Pereira, *La filosofia nel Medioevo,* Roma: Carocci, 2008, p. 162.

46 Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae* (ed. Muckle), pp. 9,22-10,17.

47 Following the Neoplatonic tradition of *didaskaliká*, Gundissalinus proposes six definitions of philosophy: 'assimilatio hominis operibus creatoris secundum virtutem humanitatis'; 'taedium et cura et studium et sollicitudo mortis'; 'rerum humanarum divinarumque cognitio cum studio bene vivendi'; 'ars artium et disciplina disciplinarum»; «integra cognitio hominis de se ipso'; 'amor sapientiae'. See Fidora, *Domingo Gundisalvo y la teoría de la ciencia arábigo-aristotélica*, op. cit., pp. 90-103.

truth and love of goodness. Philosophy itself is divided into theoretical and practical philosophy, both of which show a threefold articulation, parallel to that exposed in the *De scientiis*. While practical philosophy is always bound to human action, the context of theoretical philosophy is always speculative and intellective.[48]

As previously stated, these two parts of philosophy are proposed hierarchically following Avicenna's theory of *subalternatio* through the different ontological value of the subject studied by each discipline. In this way, Gundissalinus describes the three sciences composing theoretical philosophy through a discussion of the materiality and mobility of their subject by combining the doctrines of Avicenna,[49] al-Ghazālī,[50] and Boethius.[51] In this system, *scientia physica* deals with mobile objects found in matter, which are studied in terms of their movement and in their matter, while *scientia mathematica* deals with mobile objects found in matter, studied without their movement and their materiality. Finally, *scientia metaphysica*[52] deals with objects without movement or matter and studied without any reference to movement and matter.

A similar articulation is proposed for practical philosophy, comprised of *scientia politica*, *scientia oeconomica*, and *scientia moralis*.[53] The entire wisdom of philosophy is concretized in these six disciplines,[54] and their purpose is the achievement of the perfection of the soul and, thereby, future beatitude.

The second part of the text describes each science through the examination of its subject, utility, and dependence on the overall articulation of knowledge. First,

48 Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae* (ed. Muckle), pp. 11,9-18.

49 For an overall examination of Avicenna's theory of knowledge, see M. Maroth, 'Das System der Wissenschaft bei Ibn Sina', in Burchard-Sonja Brentjes (ed.), *Avicenna-Ibn Sina, II, Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, Halle – Wittenberg: , 1980, pp. 27-34; and Michel M. Marmura, 'Avicenna on the Division of the Sciences in the 'Isagoge' of His 'Shifa'', *Journal for the History of Arabic Science* 4 (1980), pp. 239-251.

50 See Alexander Treiger, 'Al-Ghazālī's Classifications of the Sciences and Descriptions of the Highest Theoretical Science', *Dîvân: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi* 16/1 (2011), pp. 1-32.

51 See Alexander Fidora, *Domingo Gundisalvo y la teoría de la ciencia arábigo-aristotélica*, op. cit., pp. 54-90; Henri Hugonnard-Roche, *La classification des sciences de Gundissalinus et l'influence d'Avicenne*, op. cit., p. 45; and Clemens Baeumker, 'Les écrits philosophiques de Dominicus Gundissalinus', *Revue Thomiste* 5 (1897), pp. 723-745.

52 Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae* (ed. Baur), pp. 35,10-43,3.

53 Ibid., pp. 16,3-17,9.

54 Ibid., p. 17,10-13: «in his sex scientiis continetur, quicquid potest sciri et debet fieri: et idcirco dictum est, quod intentio philosophiae est comprehendere, quicquid est, quantum possibile est».

Gundissalinus deals with the theoretical sciences,[55] then passing to the sciences of eloquence[56] (grammar, poetics, and rhetoric), logic[57] –doubling as a part of philosophy and *instrumentum*–,[58] and certain natural sciences (mainly medicine.[59]) Next, Gundissalinus examines the mathematical disciplines,[60] mirroring what he previously stated in the *De scientiis*. Finally, the Toledan philosopher introduces the large quotation of Avicenna's *Summa Avicennae de convenientia et differentia subiectorum*, after which the treatise ends with a short examination of practical philosophy.[61]

Following N. Kinoshita,[62] one could summarize Gundissalinus's articulation of sciences as follows:

1) Scientia eloquentiae

a) Grammatica

I. Scientia dictionum simplicium

II. Scientia orationum

III. Scientia regularum de dictionibus quando sunt simplices

IV. Scientia regularum de dictionibus quando sunt compositae

b) Scientiae civiles

I. Poetica

II. Rhetorica

2) Scientia intermedia (logica)

55 Ibid., pp. 19,12-43,3.

56 Ibid., pp. 43,5-69,7.

57 Ibid., pp. 69,9-83,6.

58 Ibid., pp. 18,1-19,2

59 Ibid., pp. 83,8-89,22.

60 Ibid., pp. 90,2-124,4.

61 Ibid., pp. 134,2-142,20.

62 See Kinoshita, *El pensamento filosófico de Domingo Gundisalvo*, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

a) Perihermenias

b) Cathegoriae

c) Analytica priora

d) Analytica posteriora

e) Topica

f) Sophistica

g) Rhetorica

h) Poetica

3) Scientia sapientiae (philosophia)

a) Theorica

I. Physica

1. Medicina
2. De iudiciis
3. Nigromantia
4. De agricultura
5. De imaginibus
6. De navigatione
7. De speculis
8. De alchimia

II. Mathematica

1. Arithmetica
2. Geometria
3. Musica

4. Astronomia

5. De aspectibus

6. De ponderibus

7. De ingeniis

III. Divina, philosophia prima seu metaphysica

b) Practica

I. Politica

II. Oeconomica

III. Moralis

This schema foregrounds Gundissalinus' great development of the articulation of science. The new systematization of scientific knowledge includes many disciplines that were previously absent from the traditional division on *trivium* and *quadrivium* and will will be widely spread throughout Europe during the Middle Ages.

A 'New' Metaphysical Programme

As A. Fidora[63] has noted, Gundissalinus is the first Latin philosopher to use the term *metaphysica* for the discipline dealing with the principles of being, rather than as merely a reference to the Aristotelian work. As I have mentioned before, metaphysics or divine science is the third and highest part of theoretical sciences in both of his epistemological treatises.

The *De scientiis* states that *scientia divina* is divided into three parts. The first deals with essences and their accidents, through the consideration of their being,[64] while the second is focused on the demonstration and verification of the

[63] See Fidora, 'Dominicus Gundissalinus and the Introduction of Metaphysics into the Latin West', op. cit..

[64] Gundissalinus, *De scientiis* (ed. Alonso Alonso), p. 127,6-8 : «Scientia divina dividitur in tres partes: quarum prima inquirit de essentiis et de rebus que accidunt eis, secundum hoc quod sunt essentiae».

principles used by physics and mathematics, rejecting the errors concerning them.[65] The final part of divine science[66] deals with beings which are neither bodies nor can be detected in bodies (e.g., accidents), and the study pursued by this discipline is described in detail, beginning with the description of the essences themselves:

> 'De quibus in primis inquirit, an sint essentie, an non. Et demonstratione probat quod sunt essentie. Deinde inquirit de eis, an sint plures, an non. Et demonstrat quod sunt plures. Postea inquirit an sint finitae, an non. Et demonstrat quod sunt finitae. Deinde inquirit an ordines earum in perfectione earum sint aequales, an inaequales. Et demonstrat quod inaequales. Deinde probat quod ipsae secundum suam multitudinem surgunt de minore ad perfectiorem et ad perfectiorem, quousque perveniunt ad postremum perfectum, quo perfectius nihil esse potest, nec in esse potest ei aliquod esse simile, nec equale, nec contrarium, usquequo pervenitur ad primum, quo nihil potest esse prius, et ad praecedens quo nihil potest esse magis praecedens, et ad esse quod impossibile est adquiri ab alia re; et quod illud esse est unum absolute, praecedens et primum'.[67]

The first assertion proven by metaphysics is the existence of the essences. Once their existence is demonstrated, the survey must show that there exist many essences many and that those essences are not equal regarding their ontological value. This assertion stems from a minor or major perfections of these principles of being, that is, a hierarchical order from the first principle, which is completely perfect, absolutely one and the first cause of everything. Ascending the hierarchy of essences, the metaphysical analysis arrives at the pure One that causes the existence of every following being. This first ascending stage of the survey is followed by the examination of the first principle itself:

> 'Et demonstrat quod reliqua posteriora sunt eo in esse, et quod ipsum esse primum est illud quod confert omni quod est praeter ipsum, esse; et quod ipsum primum unum est illud quod confert omni quod est praeter ipsum, unitatem; et quod ipsum primum verum est illud quod omni habenti veritatem praeter ipsum, confert veritatem; et quomodo conferat illud; et quod impossibile est aliquo modo in eo

[65] Ibid., pp. 127,8-128,6: «Secunda inquirit de principiis demonstrationum in scientiis speculativis particularibus. Inquirit enim de principiis dialectice scientie, et de principiis doctrinalis scientie, et principiis scientie naturalis. Et inquirit verificationem eorum et substantias et proprietas ipsorum. Et destruit errores qui accidunt antiquis in principiis harum scientiarum, sicut error illius qui putavit punctum et numerum et lineam et superficiem esse substantias et esse separatas».

[66] Ibid., pp. 128,7-131,15.

[67] Ibid., pp. 128,8-129,11.

> esse multitudinem; immo illud est quod supra omnia dignius est nomine et significatione unius et entis et veri et primi. – Deinde ostendit quod illud tantum quod est istarum proprietatum, debet credi quod sit Deus, cuius gloria sublimis'.[68]

After having climbed from the caused essences to the first Cause, divine science, Gundissalinus must demonstrate that the first and absolute being is the ontogonic cause of every subsequent being and every derived unity that proceeds from his pure Unity. At the same time, his trueness is the source of every truth, and any kind of multiplicity is absent from his simple being, since he is true and first Being and One. The analysis must show that these properties can be properly said only of him, and it must be believed that the first Cause is God himself.

The last stage of Gundissalinus' programme is a descending analysis that proceeds from God back to the essences and then toward a further analysis of creatural ontology, in light of the knowledge of the first principle:

> 'Postea docet qualiter essentiae proveniunt ab eo, et qualiter adeptae sunt esse ab eo. Deinde inquirit de ordinibus essentiarum, et qualiter adveniunt eis illi ordines, et quomodo meretur unaqueque esse in eo ordine in quo est, et declarat qualis est connexio illorum ad se invicem, et quibus rebus fit illa connexio. Deinde progreditur ad comprehendendas reliquas operationes Dei in essentiis, quousque compleat omnes eas.
>
> Ostendit etiam quod in nulla earum est defectus neque discordia, neque malitia ordinis sive compositionis, nec diminutio, nec superfluitas. Postea destruit errores quorumdam de Deo et de operibus eius opinatium superfluitatem et diminutionem in eo et in operibus eius et in essentiis quas creavit'.[69]

Divine science must deal with the genesis of essences, their order and derivation, as well as their mutual connection. In other words, the demonstration of God's existence and attributes must be followed by the analysis of the instauration of the world, a cosmogenesis whose knowledge can be assured only by the precedent *ratio* regarding its origin. God acts in the essences, causing their actual being, as perfect and harmonic existence as one can recognise in the world. The final part of the survey is ultimately focused on the rejection of possible errors regarding God's causation and ontological instauration.

[68] Ibid., p. 130,1-13.

[69] Ibid., pp. 130,14-131,15.

This twofold procedure, composed of a first ascending moment and a second descending stage, is clearly indebted to al-Fārābī's reception of Aristotle's treatment in *Posterior Analytics.* This method was familiar to Gundissalinus,[70] thanks to Calcidius'[71] and Thierry of Chartres's use of *compositio* and *resolutio*.[72]

The discussion of metaphysical science undergoes a substantial development in the *De divisione philosophiae*. Gundissalinus's treatment herein is articulated by the aforementioned didactic method derived from Neoplatonic *accessi* and *didaskaliká*, and it is therefore characterised by a progressive discussion of what divine science is, what its *genera*, subject, parts, species, *officium* and purpose are, and what its instrument, *artifex*, name, order, and utility are.[73]

As I have previously mentioned, in the prologue Gundissalinus states that divine science deals with those beings that lack matter and movement, regarding both the ontological and gnoseological considerations.[74] Following Avicenna,[75] Gundissalinus clarifies that this discipline is called *scientia divina*, *philosophia prima*, *metaphysica*, and *causa causarum*, regarding the manifold aspects with which it deals.[76] The Toledan philosopher also exposes three converging

[70] Gundissalinus uses the speculative method of *compositio/resolutio* at length in his *De processione mundi*. For example, cf. Gundissalinus, *De processione mundi* (ed. Bülow), p. 4,8-10; pp. 24,20-25,2; and p. 50,10-13.

[71] See Calcidius, *Commentaire au Timée de Platon*, critical edition by B. Bakhouche, Paris, Vrin, 2011, pp. 530,4-532,27.

[72] See Thierry of Chartres, *Commentum super Boethii librum* De Trinitate, in Nikolaus M.. Häring, *Commentaries on Boethius by Thierry of Chartres and his School*, Toronto: Pontificial Institute of Medieval Studies, 1971, pp. 75,29-76,6.

[73] Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae* (ed. Muckle), p. 35,10-14: «Circa divinam quoque scientiam illa eadem requiruntur, scilicet: quid sit ipsa, quod genus eius, quae materia, quae partes, quae species, quod officium, quis finis, quod instrumentum, quis artifex, quare sic vocetur, quo ordine legenda et docenda sit, et quae eius utilitas et quis sit modus agendi».

[74] Ibid., p. 36,9-17.

[75] Avicenna, *Liber de philosophia prima* (ed. Van Riet), op. cit., pp. 15,86-16,1

[76] Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae* (ed. Muckle), p. 38,7-23: «Multis modis haec scientia vocatur. Dicitur enim 'scientia divina' a digniori parte, quia ipsa de Deo inquirit, an sit, et probat, quod sit. Dicitur 'philosophia prima', quia ipsa est scientia de prima causa esse. Dicitur etiam 'causa causarum', quia in ea agitur de Deo, qui est causa omnium. Dicitur etiam 'metaphysica', e.g., 'post physicam', quia ipsa est de eo, quod est post naturam. Intelligitur autem hic natura virtus, quae est principium motus et quietis: immo est virtus et principium universorum accidentium, quae proveniunt ex materia corporali. Unde, quia haec scientia dicitur 'post naturam', haec posteritas non est quantum in se, sed quantum ad nos. Primum enim, quod percipimus de eo, quod est, et scimus eius dispositiones, natura est; unde quod meretur vocari haec scientia considerata in se, hoc est, ut dicatur, quod est scientia de eo, quod est ante naturam. Ea enim, de quibus inquiritur in illa, per essentiam et per scientiam sunt ante naturam».

definitions of metaphysics, as '*scientia de rebus separatis a materia definitione*',[77] '*philosophia certissima et prima*',[78] and '*sapientia certissima*'.[79] By this, metaphysics corresponds to *sapientia*, as they are both are the noblest sciences for the certitude of their truths, dealing with the highest things to be known, e.g., God and his causality.[80]

Metaphysics certifies the principles of the other sciences[81] – an epistemological relevance which corresponds to what Gundissalinus has already stated in the *De scientiis* – through demonstration as its main theoretical instrument.[82] Its *materia* is constituted by the four Aristotelian causes,[83] and since metaphysics is the highest science that must make the principles of the subsequent sciences certain, it must deal with what is most evident and common, e.g., being.[84] At the same time, since *Posterior Analytics* clearly states that a science cannot inquire into what its own matter is, God and the causes cannot be considered as the subject of metaphysics, for metaphysics is an inquiry on the first principle and His causation.[85] Thus, divine science examines the first natural and mathematical causes of being and therefore the *causa causarum* and *principium principiorum* of existence, or, God.[86]

Gundissalinus distinguishes four different aspects of the parts in which metaphysics is composed: 1) beings that are completely devoid of matter; 2) beings that are mingled with matter due to a preceding and constituting cause, but whose matter is not an essential constituent; 3) aspects that are common to

77 Ibid., p. 35,16.

78 Ibid., p. 35,17.

79 Ibid., p. 35,18.

80 Ibid., 35,18-36,8.

81 Ibid., p. 38,1-2: «Officium autem huius artis est certificare principia omnium scientiarum. Finis eius est acquisitio certitudinis principiorum ceterarum scientiarum». This aspect is directly related to metaphysics's *utilitas*, cf. Cf. Ibid., 41,17-43,3.

82 Ibid., p. 38,5: «Instrumentum eius est demonstratio».

83 Ibid., p. 36,18-19: «Materiam huius artis quidam dixerunt esse quattuor causas: materialem et formalem, efficientem et finalem».

84 Ibid., p. 37,3-9: «Sed quia in omni scientia id, quod materia ponitur, necessario in alia probatur, post hanc autem nulla restat scientia, in qua materia eius probatur, ideo necessario materia huius scientiae est id, quod communius et evidentius omnibus est, scilicet ens, quod siquidem non oportet quaeri, an sit vel quid sit, quasi in alia scientia post hanc debeat hoc certificari, pro eo quod inconveniens est, ut aliqua scientia stabiliat suam materiam».

85 Ibid., pp. 36,19-37,2: «Alii vero materiam huius artis dixerunt esse Deum. Qui omnes decepti sunt. Teste enim Aristotele nulla scientia inquirit materiam suam; sed in hac scientia inquiritur, an sit Deus. Ergo Deus non est materia eius. Similiter de causis».

86 Ibid., p. 36,10-17.

material and immaterial beings, as causality and unity; and finally 4) aspects that are proper of material beings, like movement and rest.[87] This fourfold distinction is accompanied by a division into species, whose number is not specified by Gundissalinus. These species are compared to the peculiarities of the examination of *esse in quantum esse*, like substance and accident, universality and particularity, cause and effect, act and potency.[88]

The longest part of Gundissalinus's treatment of *metaphysica* in the *De divisione philosophiae* is centred on the *ordo* through which this science develops its inquiry.[89] Within the order of theoretical sciences, metaphysics follows physics and mathematics, and uses their results in order to pursue its own research.[90] Regarding the progression of metaphysics itself, Gundissalinus presents a large quotation, with some discrepancies and modifications, of his *De scientiis* (see Appendix), derived from al-Fārābī's *Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm*.

Metaphysics first deals with the essences and their ontological correlates and then analyses the principles of demonstration proper of the other theoretical sciences and logic, removing the errors made by the *antiqui*.[91] One could note

87 Ibid., p. 37,10-16: «Partes autem huius scientiae sunt quattuor: quoniam eorum, quae inquiruntur in hac scientia, quaedam sunt separata omnino a materia et ab appendiciis materiae; et quaedam sunt commixta materiae, sed ad modum, quo commiscetur causa constituens et praecedens, materia enim non est constituens illa; et quaedam, quae inveniuntur in materia et in non-materia, ut causalitas et unitas; et quaedam sunt res materiales, ut motus et quies».

88 Ibid., p. 37,18-22: «Species vero huius artis sunt consequentia entis, in quae scilicet dividitur ens. Ens enim aliud est substantia, aliud accidens, aliud universale, aliud particulare, aliud causa, aliud causatum, aliud in potentia, aliud in actu et cetera, de quibus sufficienter tractatur in eadem scientia».

89 Ibid., pp. 39,1-41,16.

90 Ibid., p. 39,1-14: «Ordo etiam huius scientiae est, ut legatur post scientias naturales et disciplinales. Sed post naturales ideo, quia multa de his, quae conceduntur in ista, sunt de illis, quae iam probata sunt in naturali, sicut generatio et corruptio et alteritas et locus et tempus et quod omne, quod movetur, ab alio movetur, et quae sunt ea, quae moventur a primo motore, et cetera. Post disciplinales autem ideo, quia intentio ultima in hac scientia est cognitio gubernationis Dei altissimi et cognitio angelorum spiritualium et ordinum suorum et cognitio ordinationis in compositione circulorum. Ad quam scientiam impossibile est perveniri nisi per cognitionem astrologiae; ad sientiam vero astrologiae nemo potest pervenire nisi per scientiam arithmeticae et geometriae. Musica vero et ceterae particulares disciplinarum, et morales et civiles, utiles sunt, non necessariae, ad hanc scientiam».

91 Ibid., p. 39,15-24: «Hoc autem ordine ipsa tractatur: In primis inquirit de essentiis et de rebus, quae accidunt eis secundum hoc, quod sunt essentiae. Deinde inquirit de principiis demonstrationum in scientiis speculationis vel partibus specialibus. Deinde inquirit de principiis scientiae logicae et principiis scientiae doctrinalis et principiis scientiae naturalis; et inquirit iustificationem eorum et substantias et proprietates eorum et destruit errores

that, while in the *De scientiis* these two aspects of metaphysical science were *partes*, in *De divisione* they are considered first stages of the *scientia divina*. Nevertheless, the continuation of the discussion regarding the third stage of metaphysical research mirrors the passage in the *De scientiis*. The slight changes detected when comparing the two versions are most likely due to Gundissalinus's wish to polish and quote from the translated text, which is characteristic of the author. Moreover, the comparison of these texts with Gerard of Cremona's translation of al-Fārābī's *Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm* (see Appendix), highlights the peculiarities of Gundissalinus's operation. Gerard's version is indeed more literal and, in light of the deeper connection to the original Farabian text, the discussion is longer than in Gundissalinus's treatises.

Coming back to the textual analysis, the *De divisione* presents the same *ordo* in metaphysical analysis we have already seen. Metaphysics must deal with those essences that are neither bodies nor in bodies, demonstrating that these are essences, plural in number, but not infinite. Finally the inquiry states that the essences are different from each other regarding their own perfection.[92] From the recognition of the differences concerning the ontological status of the essences, one must admit they all are hierarchically ordered, and through this order, one arrives to the first Being that precedes everything. Thus, metaphysics demonstrates that everything caused by this First cause receives its being, unity, and truth from what is absolute Being, One, and Trueness and analyses the ways by which the caused beings come to be. Finally, divine science states that there is no multiplicity in the One and examines the attributes of the first Cause that must be believed to be God.[93] Once all of this is achieved, the inquiry descends back to the caused beings:

antiquorum, qui erraverunt in principiis istarum scientiarum, sicut error illius, qui putavit punctum et unum et lineam et superficiem esse substantiam et esse separata».

92 Ibid., p. 39,24-40,7: «Postea inquirit de essentiis, quae nec sunt corpora nec in corporibus. De quibus in primis inquirit, an sint essentiae an non, et demonstratione probat, quod sint essentiae. Deinde inquirit de eis, an sint plures an non, et demonstrat, quod sint plures. Postea inquirit, an sint finitae numero an non, et demonstrat, quod sint finitae. Deinde inquirit, an ordines eorum in perfectione sint aequales vel inaequales, et demonstratione probat, quod inaequales».

93 Ibid., pp. 40,8-41,4: «Deinde probat, quod ipsae secundum suam multitudinem surgunt a minore ad perfectiorem et a perfectiore, usquequo perveniunt ad postremum perfectum, quo perfectius nihil esse potest, nec in esse potest ei aliquid esse simile nec aequale nec contrarium, et quousque pervenitur ad primum, quo nihil potest esse prius, et ad praecedens, quo nihil potest esse praecedens magis, et ad esse, quod impossibile est acquiri ab alia re; et quod illud esse est unum et primum et praecedens absolute; et demonstrat, quod reliqua esse posteriora sunt eo in esse et quod ipsum esse primum est illud, quod confert omni, quod est praeter ipsum, esse; et quod ipsum unum primum est illud, quod confert omni, quod est praeter ipsum, unitatem; et quod ipsum verum primum est illud, quod omni habenti veritatem praeter ipsum confert

> 'Postea docet, qualiter essentiae proveniunt ab eo et qualiter adeptae sunt esse ab eo. Deinde inquirit de ordinibus essentiarum, et qualiter adveniunt eis illi ordines, et quomodo meretur unaquaeque esse in eo ordine, in quo est; et declarat, qualis est connexio eorum ad invicem et quibus rebus sit ipsa connexio. Deinde progreditur ad comprehendendas reliquas operationes Dei in essentiis, usquequo comprehendat eas omnes. Ostendit etiam, quod in nulla earum est defectus neque discordia neque malitia ordinis sive compositionis nec diminutio neque superfluitas. Postea destruit errores quorundam de Deo et operationibus eius opinantium infinitatem et diminutionem in eo et in operationibus eius et in essentiis, quas creavit'.[94]

Again mirroring *De scientiis*'s treatment, the descending phase of metaphysical speculation is developed as a cosmological analysis of the world's instauration. Divine science inquires into the proceeding of essences from God, their causal order and their mutual connection regarding this order, and God's operations on the essences. After, metaphysics deals with the demonstration of the completeness of God's instauration of the world, showing that there is no lack or superfluity in divine action and eventually destroys the errors regarding God and his ontogonic and cosmological causation.

Thus, in the *De divisione*, Gundissalinus accepts and uses al-Fārābī's *Kitab Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm* for his description of the metaphysical procedure, translated and re-adapted into the *De scientiis*. One should consider that the discussion of the order of the inquiry pursued by divine science shows the traits of a specific metaphysical programme, characterized by a twofold ascending/descending method. This metaphysical programme can be summarized as follows:

Ascending part:

1) analysis of the caused essences, their ontological characteristics, and accidents;

2) verification of the principles of the subsequent theoretical sciences (physics and mathematics) and logic, rejecting any possible error;

3) analysis of those essences that are not bodies or that do not exist in a body (accidents), demonstrating:

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veritatem – et quomodo conferat illud; et quod impossibile est aliquo modo in eo esse multitudinem, immo illud est, quod supra omnia dignius est nomine et significatione unius et entis et veri et primi. Deinde ostendit, quod illud tantum, quod est istarum proprietatum, debet credi, quod sit Deus, cuius gloria sublimis».

94 Ibid., pp. 41,5-16.

a) what are these essences;

b) whether they are many or not, stating that they are many;

c) whether they are finite or infinite: demonstrating that they are finite;

d) whether they are equal or not in existence, the answer to which is that the essences have a different ontological status;

e) that from the analysis of order of the essences one arrives at the first Cause of the essences;

4) analysis of the first Cause, demonstrating that:

a) it is the absolute One, Being, and Trueness, that causes the existence, unity, and truth of every subsequent being;

b) the One has no multiplicity, definition, or similarity to other beings;

c) the first Cause is God.

Descending part:

1) examination of the essences in regards to their causation by God;

2) analysis of the order and the mutual relations among essences;

3) the question regarding God's further operations on the essences, e.g., divine causation besides ontogony;

4) demonstration of the completeness of the world's instauration and order;

5) refutation of errors regarding God and his operations.

This procedure is defined by detailed passages that actually mirror the metaphysical discussion proposed by al-Fārābī in his metaphysical works. Nevertheless, one should note that Gundissalinus only had access to a very limited part of al-Fārābī's philosophical production, since in addition to the 'translation' of the *De scientiis*, he only translated the following works into Latin: *De intellectu et intellecto*, *Expositio libri quinti Elementorum Euclidis*, *Fontes quaestionum*, and the *Liber exercitationis ad viam felicitatis*. It seems quite clear then, that Gundissalinus accepts al-Fārābīs's metaphysical programme as intrinsically valid by an epistemological point of view and thus, potentially applicable to metaphysical speculation in general.

An Application of al-Fārābī's Metaphysical Programme?

In the *De processione mundi*, Dominicus Gundissalinus deals with the fundamental problems of ontology and cosmology, proposing his own original solutions. This writing is quite different from the *De unitate et uno*, for the latter is characterised by its very concise treatment of just one main metaphysical feature: unity as an ontological primary concept.

The *De processione* begins by stating the purpose of the examination with which Gundissalinus is dealing: '*Invisibilia dei per ea, quae facta sunt, a creatura mundi intellecta conspiciuntur. Si enim vigilanter haec visibilia conspicimus, per ipsa eadem ad invisibilia dei contemplanda conscendimus*'.[95] The metaphysical analysis cannot simply assume the existence of God, but must deal exhaustively with the attributes of his existence through the examination of its effects, that is, the study of the composition and the disposition of created things as they are caused by God. The analysis of this causative process is based on three speculative powers of the human mind: *ratio*, *demonstratio*, and *intelligentia*. These powers are the intellectual modalities of the inquiries into physics, mathematics, and theology (e.g., metaphysics), respectively and are hierarchically ordered and specular to these theoretical disciplines.[96]

After exposing an *a posteriori* justification of his examination and the epistemological basis on which the latter is grounded, Gundissalinus presents four demonstrations for the existence of a first cause. The first is based on the opposition between heavy and light elements, specifically on their tendency to move toward their natural place. Since the sublunary world is constituted of heavy and light elements, it is necessary to admit a cause composing their contrariety.[97] The second proof deals with the hylomorphic composition of bodies. Matter and form have opposing properties and cannot be joined without an external cause that composes their opposition. For this reason, and considering the ontological composition of bodies, one must admit the existence of a first composing cause.[98]

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95 Gundissalinus, *De processione mundi* (ed. Bülow), p. 1,1-4.

96 Ibid., p. 2,4-16.

97 Ibid., p. 3,10-17: «Totus hic mundus, quem lunaris circulus ambit, ex gravibus et levibus integraliter consistit. Sed motus gravium est ire deorsum, et motus levium est ire sursum. Cum igitur gravia et levia de natura sua habeant ire in oppositas partes, tunc nequaquam in compositione huius corruptibilis mundi convenirent, nisi aliqua causa cogens illa componeret. Mundus igitur sublunaris ab alio compositus».

98 Ibid., pp. 3,17-4,7: «Omne corpus constat ex materia et forma. Omne enim corpus substantia est et alicuius quantitatis et qualitatis est. Forma vero et materia oppositarum proprietatum sunt; nam altera sustinet, et altera sustinetur; altera recepit, et altera recipitur; altera format, et

The third and the fourth proofs of the existence of the first cause are both cosmological demonstrations. The former examines the corporeal being as subject to degeneration and corruption, stating that everything that begins to be cannot be the cause of its own being. However, an external cause of its existence is necessary, and that is the first cause.[99] Even so, every movement is the actualization of a previous potency realized by something already actualized, that is, its mover. However, since an infinite regress is not admissible, one must admit the existence of a first and eternal mover, e.g., an efficient cause of every being.[100]

Once he has demonstrated the existence of the first cause through these four proofs, Gundissalinus begins the examination of divine being through the doctrine of necessary and possible being. This treatment is developed by a large quotation from Avicenna's *Liber de philosophia prima*, which covers almost two chapters of the first book.[101] With this quotation, Gundissalinus can expose the ontological difference between the necessary Existent, whose existence is

altera formatur. Quae autem oppositarum proprietatum sunt, nunquam ad aliquid constituendum per se conveniunt. Forma igitur et materia in constitutione corporis per se non conveniunt. Quae autem per se non conveniunt, profecto, cum in aliquo sibi opposita inveniuntur, quod compositorem habeant, evidenter ostendunt. Omne igitur corpus compositorem habet. Sic itaque totus mundus».

[99] Ibid., p. 4,8-22: «Omne, quod est, aut coepit esse aut non coepit esse; aut habet initium aut caret initio. Quod autem aliqua habeant initium, manifeste indicat resolutio huius sensibilis mundi. Multa enim videmus hic desinere esse, quae, nisi aliquando incepissent, non desinerent unquam. Nihil enim occidit, quod non oritur, nec solutio nisi compositionem sequitur. Quicquid enim intellectus dividit et resolvit in aliquid, compositum est ex his, in quae resolvitur. Cum ergo multa ex tam diversis composita assidue corrumpi et dissolvi videamus, nihil autem corrumpitur nisi quod generatum est, sed omne, quod generatur, incipit fieri, quod non erat: profecto necesse est, ut quaecumque corrumpi videamus, ea aliquando incepisse dicamus. Omni autem incipienti esse aliqua res sibi dedit esse. Et omne, quod incipit esse, antequam sit, possibile est illud esse, quia, quod impossibile est esse, nunquam incipit esse, sed quod possibile est esse».

[100] Ibid., pp. 4,23-5,14: «Item, cum incipit esse, de potentia exit ad effectum, de possibilitate ad actum. Exitus autem de potentia ad effectum motus est. Quicquid ergo incipit esse, movetur ad esse. Omne autem, quod movetur, ab alio movetur. Omne igitur, quod coepit esse, non ipsum sibi, sed aliqua alia res dedit esse. Ipsum enim, cum non erat, sibi dare esse non poterat. Quod enim non est, nec sibi, nec alii rei dare esse potest. Impossibile est etiam, ut aliquid sit causa efficiens sui ipsius. Omnis enim causa efficiens prior est eo, quod efficit. Si igitur aliquid daret sibi esse, tunc illud esset prius et posterius se ipso, quod est impossibile. Quare omni incipienti aliquid aliud dedit esse. Item illud aliud aut coepit esse aut non coepit esse. Si vero et illud incipit esse, tunc aliquid aliud sibi dedit esse. Et ita inquirendo aut in infinitum itur, aut aliquid occurret, quod incipientibus dedit esse, ipsum vero nullatenus coepit esse. Quod autem est et non incepit esse, hoc aeternum est: illud ergo, quicquid sit, prius est omnibus habentibus initium, et sic est principium et prima causa omnium».

[101] Avicenna, *Liber de philosophia prima*, critical edition by S. Van Riet, op. cit., pp. 43,21-55,55.

uncaused and sufficient, the possible being, that is, the potential existence not yet caused by the necessary Existent, and finally the necessary existent *per aliud*, the ontological state of the actual existence of possible beings.[102] God's existence is therefore necessary and uncaused, and he is the first cause of everything. At this highest level of ontology and efficient causality, the necessary Existent stands alone: Gundissalinus presents five proofs of the Unicity and Unity of God's being that is completely unrelated in his highest form of existence. This One, pure Being, is the efficient cause of every subsequent being that receives its existence and unity from the first cause, God:

> 'Constat ergo, quod necesse esse neque est relativum, neque est mutabile, nec multiplex, sed solitarium, cum nihil aliud participat in suo esse, quod est ei proprium; et hoc non est nisi solus deus, qui est prima causa et primum principium omnium, quod unum tantum necesse est intelligi, non duo vel plura. Unum enim duobus prius est; omne enim illud prius est alio, quod destructum destruit et positum non ponit. [...] Unum igitur est principium, una est causa efficiens omnium'.[103]

The first part of the *De processione mundi* is thus focused on three main points: 1) the justification of the metaphysical analysis presented herein; 2) the demonstration of the existence of the first Cause through four proofs; 3) the examination of God's being by the doctrine of necessary and possible being. The ascending course of this speculative analysis is quite clear, and after having claimed the necessity of divine existence, Gundissalinus passes to the study of the principles of caused beings: matter and form.

The Toledan philosopher is one of the most fervent supporters of universal hylomorphism, which asserts that every created being is composed of matter and form, and its possible existence is first explained as the potentiality of the two hylomorphic principles before their union. Since they are the first principles of caused being, matter and form are also the first effects of God's creation. In fact, Gundissalinus differentiates between four different typologies of cosmogonic causation:

> 'Motus igitur primae causae, quo scilicet prima causa movet, alius dicitur creatio, alius compositio; sed primus est creatio, secundus est compositio. Motus vero secundariae causae cuiusdam tantum est compositio, cuiusdam et generatio. Nam compositio alia est primaria, alia secundaria. Primaria est ex simplicibus,

[102] Gundissalinus, *De processione mundi* (ed. Bülow), op. cit., pp. 5,19-17,1.

[103] Ibid., pp. 16,23-17,10.

> secundaria est ex compositis; et secundaria alia naturalis, alia artificialis. Et creatio, quidem est a primordio primorum principiorum ex nihilo. Compositio vero est primarum rerum ex ipsis principiis, quae semel factae nunquam occidunt, utpote ex prima conformatione compactae. Generatio vero est ex eisdem principiis eorum, quae nascuntur et occidunt usque, non per ea, quae composita sunt, reparatio, tamquam de residuis minutiis denuo confecta rerum protractio'.[104]

God's causation is twofold. On the one hand, God creates matter and form and on the other hand, he joins them through the *primaria compositio*, whose outcome is the secondary cause. The causation of this secondary cause is the *secundaria compositio* and, through further causative mediations, generation and corruption.

After having clarified the typologies of cosmogonic causality, Gundissalinus continues to the specific analysis of matter and form as ontological principles. Both matter and form have a potential being in themselves, whose actuation derives from their union into the hylomorphic compound; this is Gundissalinus's main justification of contingency as the most intrinsic characteristic of creatural being, as none of the ontological principles are themselves sufficient to be without their hylomorphic partner.

The examination of the ontological status of matter and form is followed by Gundissalinus's refutation of the theory of primordial chaos.[105] The criticisms presented derive mainly from William of Conches's discussion of the same topic and are directed against Hughes of Saint Victor,[106] an author directly quoted by Gundissalinus.[107] By assuming an elemental chaos as primary effect of God's causation, the Toledan philosopher claims that the theory of primordial chaos is based on a contradiction. In fact, the existence of matter and form precedes that of the elements, and moreover, the latter are characterized by their intrinsic tendency toward their natural place.

The discussion of primordial chaos leads Gundissalinus to the analysis of the causative modality that first follows creation: primary composition. Matter is first joined with the forms of unity and substantiality, which turn the matter into one substance.[108] This first 'absolute' substance is then specified by the forms of

[104] Gundissalinus, *De processione mundi* (ed. Bülow), op. cit., pp. 19,14-20,2.

[105] Ibid., pp. 36,9-38,21.

[106] Hughes of Saint Victor, *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, critical edition by R. Berndt, Münster: Aschendorf, 2008, I, I, VI, p. 40,4-27.

[107] Gundissalinus, *De processione mundi* (ed. Bülow), op. cit., pp. 36,10-37,14.

[108] Ibid., 41,10-42,7.

spirituality and corporeality that produce the first two species of substance: spiritual and corporeal substances.[109]

It is through this hierarchical order that the first composed beings, the angelic creatures, the celestial spheres, and the corporeal elements, come to be. These three species of beings perform the role of secondary causes, administering God's will:

> 'In generatione vero et commixtione et conversione et aliorum compositione, quae secundae vel tertiae dignitatis sunt, aliud sibi artifex adaptavit instrumentum, scilicet secundariam causam, ita quidem, ut per se ipsum prima efficeret, scilicet creando materiam et formam de nihilo et componendo ea inter se, secunda vero atque per ordinem tertia et quarta ministrae suae causae secundariae moderatione eius et instituto exequenda committeret'.[110]

The operations pursued by the secondary causality are reciprocally bonded. Developing his theory through an Avicennian perspective, Gundissalinus states that the angels create new souls daily and move the spheres, while the latter's movement is transmitted from sphere to sphere to the elements that constitute the earth, where nature orders this movement into the natural and biological changes we experience.[111]

Gundissalinus's analysis of cosmological causation ends here, as the author does not deal with secondary composition and generation. The reason for this absence is quite evident; the Toledan philosopher is offering a metaphysical examination of God and creatural being, so the examination of *secundaria compositio* and *generatio* must be pursued by physics rather than metaphysics. The *De processione mundi* ends with a general recapitulation of the previously developed analysis:

> 'Sic igitur processit totius mundi constitutio de nihil esse ad possibiliter esse, de possibiliter esse ad actu esse et de actu esse ad corporeum et incorporeum esse; et hoc totum simul, non in tempore. Ratio enim exigebat, ut institutio mundi universalis hoc modo progrederetur, videlicet ut primum materia et forma de nihilo crearentur, deinde de materia et forma elementa et cetera praedicta componerentur, de elementis vero commixtis et conversis elementata omnia generarentur; videlicet ut primum prima simplicia fierent de nihilo per creationem et de simplicibus composita fierent per primam simplicium coniunctionem, deinde de compositis fierent elementata per generationem. Et sic

[109] Ibid., 43,8-21.

[110] Ibid., 51,6-12.

[111] Ibid., pp. 51,24-52,24.

de nihilo ad simplicia, de simplicibus ad composita, de compositis ad generata facta est progression'.[112]

The instauration of the world followed a rational order, a progressive complication of reality from the simplest being to the multiplicity of corporeal beings. This reference to the *ratio* and the ontogonic progression must be read as a plea for the completeness of the cosmic instauration, and this is proven by the last lines of *De processione*. Here, Gundissalinus presents two curious numerological syntheses[113] of his metaphysics, where the rationality and exhaustiveness of God's instauration are justified by their reference to the greatest example of those characteristics: numbers. In this perspective, the first progression is particularly exemplary of what the author has in mind. Since '*omnia enim secundum rationem numerorum sapientissimus conditor instituere voluit*'[114] one can easily see that number one is like God, the pure One that causes everything, while number two is like the first effect of God, e.g., matter and form. Number three, then, refers to the first being composed by matter and form, since this kind of creature is characterized by perpetuity and stability, similar to number three. Finally, number four is like the corporeal beings derived from secondary composition and generation that suffer a twofold division (into elements and into matter and form) and are composed by the four elements. In this way, Gundissalinus concludes, '*secundum haec disposita consistit omnis creatura*'.[115]

From this cursory exposition of the discussion in the *De processione mundi*, the progression of the features presented herein can be summarized by the following table:

Topic:	*Pages:*
Preliminary demonstrations of the existence of the first cause	1,1-5,14
Demonstration of the unrelated and first unity of God's being	5,15-17,10
Analysis of matter and form as primary effects of divine causality, and their mutual relations	17,11-36,8
Rejection of the error regarding primordial chaos	36,9-38,21

[112] Ibid., p. 54,9-18.

[113] Ibid., pp. 55,6-56,12.

[114] Ibid., p. 55,6-7.

[115] Ibid., 56,1.

Examination of the order of substances and forms during the first composition	38,22-51,12
Analysis of the secondary causality on the instauration of the world	51,12-55,5
Final justifications regarding the rationality and completeness of creative order	54,5-56,12

At first glance, the thematic articulation of the discussion of *De processione* seems to only partially correspond to what has been exposed in *De scientiis*. A few remarks can be made about this purpose. First, one can underscore that the first two aspects metaphysics must take into account, that is, the analysis of the caused essences and the verification of the principles of physics and mathematics, are absent from Gundissalinus's discussion in *De processione*. This fact can be justified considering that the first two stages of the metaphysical programme are quite autonomous, and the same programme exposed by Gundissalinus is focused mainly on the development of the following stages of metaphysics. Thus, one could possibly explain the absence of a treatment of these first stages in the *De processione* supposing that Gundissalinus wanted to deal with the third, and properly analytical stage, of metaphysical articulation. This consideration seems to be correct. We have seen that the *De scientiis* claims that these stages are properly *partes* of metaphysics, and by these it is quite probable that the Toledan philosopher had the last part of metaphysics in greater consideration, leaving the other two aside. Moreover, the short discussion of the relations among intellective powers and discipline, derived from Boethius, can be read as an implicit reference to the second Farabian stage of metaphysical analysis, which cannot be said about the first stage.

Even admitting this hypothesis, there exist obvious discrepancies between the metaphysical programme exposed in the *De scientiis*, *De divisione*, and the discussion presented in the *De processione,*which also examines the third stage of divine science. As we have seen, this stage deals with the examination of incorporeal substantial essences, stating their multiplicity, finiteness, inequality in existence, and ontological order.[116] Yet, in the *De processione* Gundissalinus presents his four proofs of the existence of the first cause in a discussion that seems distant from what is claimed in the *De scientiis* and the *De divisione philosophiae*.

[116] Ibid., 3,10-5,14.

An apparent proximity can perhaps be detected in regards to some of the outcomes and features presented in the *De processione.* Gundissalinus deals with some substantial characteristics of corporeal beings which he uses as points of departure for his demonstrations, but this does not seem sufficient enough to link this discussion to the analysis of the essences stated in the epistemological writings. However, the outcomes of Gundissalinus's proofs appeal to the finiteness, multiplicity, and ontological differences between bodies and their principles (matter and form). These characteristics are listed in *De scientiis*, but it seems difficult to assume a direct link between *De processione* and *De scientiis* regarding these issues. The only aspect one can properly claim as a sign of coherence between the two treatises is the common ascending course from the effects of divine causality to God himself. This ascending and descending progress is a peculiar trait of the Farabian programme, where it is expressed by the examination of the order by which the essences are caused (their *dispositio,*in the terminology used in the *De processione*). Through this examination one arrives at admitting God's existence. This feature is clearly stated in the metaphysical treatise, since the *a posteriori* demonstrations proposed by Gundissalinus 'ascend' from the effects to the efficient cause of every being, departing from four different preliminary considerations, as we have seen.

The highest point in this ascending procedure is the analysis of the first cause itself. Regarding this aspect, the programme states that one has to demonstrate that the first cause is the cause of existence, unity, and truth of every subsequent being, that it has no multiplicity, definition, or similarity to other beings, and that the first cause is God.[117] The discussion of God's being in the *De processione mundi* parallels this course. By quoting Avicenna, Gundissalinus demonstrates, through five proofs, the unrelated unicity and oneness of the first cause, who is the necessary Existent, ontological and efficient cause of every subsequent being. Therein, Gundissalinus clarifies that God's unity is complete and cannot imply any kind of multiplicity or similarity to caused creatures. The primary consequence of this position is that, in his transcendent unity, it is not possible to provide a definition of God.

De scientiis, *De divisione* and *De procession* also share parallels regarding the descending course of the metaphysical method. The following analytical step presented by al-Fārābī is the examination of the essences regarding their causation by God, and the analysis of their order and mutual relations. Gundissalinus exposes this feature through the examination of matter and form, e.g., the ontological constituents of every caused being and the only things directly created by God. In dealing with this topic, the Toledan philosopher

[117] Ibid., pp. 16,23-17,10.

analyses the mutual relation between matter and form and their derivation from God's being, stating that matter is progressively informed by the forms of unity and substantiality, and by those of spirituality and corporeality. The consistency of the epistemological treatises with the *De processione mundi* regarding these two stages of the metaphysical programme is thus complete.

The same outcome results from the comparison of the following stage, e.g., the examination of divine operations on the essences. Clearly, these operations are the causal mediation in the instauration of the world, expressed by the secondary cause. This feature is central to the *De processione*, as it is only through the instrumental causality of angels, spheres, and elements that the sensible world is caused and ordered.

Finally, the *De processione* ends with the two arithmological syntheses that are briefly mentioned herein and by stating the completeness and rationality of the divine order. Here too, Gundissalinus follows the procedure presented in *De scientiis* and *De divisione*, where the analysis of secondary causes is followed by these two demonstrations.

One should note that the metaphysical programme ends with a peculiar final stage which examines the refutation of the errors regarding God and the creative process. It is true that *De processione* does not end by dealing with this issue. Nevertheless, Gundissalinus's discussion of the most important error regarding cosmogony is presented a few pages earlier, where the Toledan philosopher rejects the theory of primordial chaos. This section is surely related to the specular stage of the epistemological treatises, and as has been shown by D. Poirel,[118] this problem had great relevance during the twelfth-century. Gundissalinus anticipates the discussion of primordial chaos, presenting this issue after the treatment of matter and form and before the exposition of secondary causes. The reason for this anticipation is that Gundissalinus' solution to the problem of primordial chaos is exactly the doctrine of universal hylomorphism, and thus he affirms the priority of matter and form with regard to the elements of the supposed primordial chaos. Aiming at a more coherent doctrinal system, this solution needed to be posed before the discussion of secondary causes (one modality of which is expressed by the elements) and is directly linked to the overall examination of hylomorphism.

[118] See Dominique Poirel, 'Physique et théologie: une querelle entre Guillaume de Conches et Hugues de Saint-Victor à propos du chaos originel', in B. Obrist - I. Caiazzo (eds.), *Guillaume de Conches*, op. cit., pp. 289-327.

Conclusion

The outcomes of this doctrinal comparison between *De scientiis*, *De divisione*, and *De processione mundi* can be summarized by the following table:

De scientiis - De divisione philosophiae	*De processione mundi*
- Ascending part -	*- Ascending part -*
Analysis of the caused essences, their ontological characteristics, and accidents.	[Absent from Gundissalinus's discussion]
Verification of the principles of the subsequent theoretical sciences (physics and mathematics) and logic, rejecting possible errors.	Reference to Boethius's division of science and intellectual powers (?)
Analysis of those essences which are not bodies or that do not exist in bodies (accidents); demonstrating what these essences are; that they are many, finite, with a different ontological status; through the examination of the order of the essences, one arrives at the first Cause of the essences.	Preliminary demonstrations of the existence of the first cause (?)
Analysis of the first Cause, demonstrating that it is the absolute One, Being, and Trueness, that causes the existence, unity, and truth of every subsequent being; that the One has no multiplicity, definition, or similarity to other beings; and that the first Cause is God.	Demonstration of the unrelated and first unity of God's being
-Descending part -	*- Descending part -*
Examination of the essences in regards to their causation by God.	Analysis of matter and form as primary effects of divine causality, and their mutual relations.

Analysis of the order and the mutual relations among essence.	Examination of the order of substances and forms during the first composition.
Question regarding God's further operations on the essences, e.g., divine causation besides ontogony.	Analysis of the secondary causality in the instauration of the world.
Demonstration of the completeness of the world's instauration and order.	Final justifications regarding the rationality and completeness of creative order.
Refutation of errors regarding God and his operations.	Rejection of the error regarding primordial chaos

From the doctrinal comparison, Gundissalinus's attempt to pursue and apply the metaphysical programme derived from al-Fārābī's *Kitab Iḥṣā' al-ʿulūm* results is clear. On the one hand, it is evident that the Toledan philosopher does not seem to be completely consistent regarding this methodological procedure, at least in relation to the first steps of its application. In fact, the first stage is absent from *De processione*, while traces of the second can be detected in Gundissalinus's reference to Boethius's division of science and intellectual powers.[119] On the other hand, we have already seen that the discrepancies between the consideration of these two first steps of the metaphysical programme as *partes* in the *De scientiis* and as methodological stages in the *De divisione* can partially justify the scarce relevance ascribed to them in *De processione*.

Similar difficulties arise from the comparison with the third stage of the programme. This lack of consistency is attenuated by the consideration of the outcomes produced by Gundissalinus's demonstrations of the existence of the first cause, which are very close to what is stated in the two epistemological treatises.

[119] Regarding this reference to Boethius, Fidora demonstrated that Gundissalinus's exposition of the Boethian *divisio scientiarum* in this place is different in many points of view from the same articulation presented in the *De divisione philosophiae*, and that could be the result of a possible changing of mind of the Toledan author. But it is undoubted that by this quotation Gundissalinus clearly makes reference to his epistemological treatise and to the division of theoretical sciences: a fact that can possibly be linked to the application of the same metaphysical programme. See Fidora, 'La metodología de las ciencias según Boecio', op. cit.

The subsequent stages of the programme are pursued in explicit conformity with the epistemological texts. God's description as absolute One and pure Being and the arguments in favour of his unrelated condition are in absolute conformity with them. The same is true regarding the whole descending phase of the progression, apart from the refutation of primordial chaos, as we have already seen. By all this, Gundissalinus's will to apply the Farabian metaphysical programme seems quite evident, even if not completely developed and carried out, which is significant. Gundissalinus's philosophical production is aimed at providing new solutions to many key epistemological, psychological, and metaphysical problems through the development and application doctrines derived from the Islamic and Jewish writings he translated.

Appendix: Three Versions of 'scientia divina'

al-Fārābī, *De scientiis*[120] (translatio Gerardi)	Gundissalinus, *De scientiis*[121]	Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae*[122]
Pars **prima** inquirit de existentibus et rebus que accidunt eis per hoc quod sunt existentia. Et **secunda** inquirit de principiis demonstrationum in scientiis speculativis particularibus. Et sunt ille que omnis scientia earum singularia facit per considerationem in esse proprio, sicut dialectica et	Scientia divina dividitur in tres partes: Quarum **prima** inquirit de essentiis et de rebus que accidunt eis, secundum hoc quod sunt essentiae. **Secunda** inquirit de principiis demonstrationum in scientiis speculativis particularibus. Inquirit enim de principiis dialecticae scientiae, et de principiis doctrinalis scientiae, et principiis scientiae naturalis. Et	**In primis** inquirit de essentiis et de rebus, quae accidunt eis secundum hoc, quod sunt essentiae. **Deinde** inquirit de principiis demonstrationum in scientiis speculationis vel partibus specialibus. Deinde inquirit de principiis scientiae logicae et principiis scientiae doctrinalis et principiis scientiae naturalis; et **inquirit iustificationem eorum**

120 Al-Fārābī, *De scientiis* (transl. Gerardi), ed. Schupp, pp. 104,24-113,10.

121 Gundissalinus, *De scientiis*, ed. Alonso Alonso, pp. 127,6-131,15.

122 Gundissalinus, *De divisione philosophiae*, ed. Baur, pp. 39,15-41,16.

geometria, et aritmetica, et relique scientie particulares que simillantur istis scientiis. Inquirit ergo de principiis scientie dialectice, et principiis scientiarum doctrinalium, et principiis scientie naturalis, et **inquirit verificationem eorum**, et docet eorum substantias, et ipsorum proprietates, et comprehendit estimationes corruptas que acciderunt antiquis in principiis harum scientiarum, sicut estimatio eius qui estimavit in puncto et uno et lineis et superficiebus, quod sunt substantie, et quod sunt separata, et opiniones que simillantur istis in principiis reliquarum scientiarum, destruit ergo eas, et ostendit, quod sunt corrupte. Et **in parte tertia** inquirit de	**inquirit verificationem eorum** et substantias et proprietas ipsorum. Et destruit errores qui accidunt antiquis in principiis harum scientiarum, sicut error illius qui putavit punctum et numerum et lineam et superficiem esse substantiam separatam. **Tertia vero pars** inquirit de essentiis, que nec sunt corpora, nec in corporibus. De quibus in primis inquirit, an sint essentie, an non. Et demonstratione probat quod sunt essentie. Deinde inquirit de eis, an sint plures, an non. Et demonstrat quod sunt plures. Postea inquirit an sint finitae, an non. Et demonstrat quod sunt finitae. Deinde inquirit an ordines earum in perfectione earum sint aequales, an inaequales. Et demonstrat quod inaequales. **Deinde probat** quod ipsae secundum suam	et substantias et proprietates eorum et destruit errores antiquorum, qui erraverunt in principiis istarum scientiarum, sicut error illius, qui putavit punctum et unum et lineam et superficiem esse substantiam et esse separata. **Postea** inquirit de essentiis, quae nec sunt corpora nec in corporibus. De quibus in primis inquirit, an sint essentiae an non, et demonstratione probat, quod sint essentiae. Deinde inquirit de eis, an sint plures an non, et demonstrat, quod sint plures. Postea inquirit, an sint finitae numero an non, et demonstrat, quod sint finitae. Deinde inquirit, an ordines eorum in perfectione sint aequales vel inaequales, et demonstratione probat, quod inaequales. **Deinde probat**, quod ipsae secundum suam multitudinem surgunt a

existentibus que non sunt corpora neque in corporibus. Inquirit ergo de eis imprimis, an sint existentia an non, et demonstratione probat quod sunt existentia. Deinde inquirit de eis an sint plura an non. Et demonstrat quod sunt plura. Postea inquirit an sint finita in numero an non. Et demonstrat quod sunt finita, deinde inquirit an ordines eorum in perfectione sint uni an ordines eorum in perfectione sint uni an ordines ipsorum sint superfluentes. Et demonstratione **probat** quod ipsa quamvis sint multa, tamen surgunt ex minore ipsorum ad perfectius, et perfectius usque quo perveniunt in postremo illius, ad perfectum quo perfectius non est	multitudinem surgunt de minore ad perfectiorem et ad perfectiorem, quousque perveniunt ad postremum perfectum, quo perfectius nihil esse potest, nec in esse potest ei aliquod esse simile, nec equale, nec contrarium, usquequo pervenitur ad primum, quo nihil potest esse prius, et ad praecedens quo nihil potest esse magis praecedens, et ad esse quod impossibile est adquiri ab alia re; et quod illud esse est unum absolute, praecedens et primum. **Et demonstrat** quod reliqua posteriora sunt eo in esse, et quod ipsum esse primum est illud quod confert omni quod est praeter ipsum, esse; et quod ipsum primum unum est illud quod confert omni quod est praeter ipsum, unitatem; et quod ipsum primum verum est illud quod omni habenti veritatem praeter ipsum, confert veritatem; et quomodo	minore ad perfectiorem et a perfectiore, usquequo perveniunt ad postremum perfectum, quo perfectius nihil esse potest, nec in esse potest ei aliquid esse simile nec aequale nec contrarium, et quousque pervenitur ad primum, quo nihil potest esse prius, et ad praecedens, quo nihil potest esse praecedens magis, et ad esse, quod impossibile est acquiri ab alia re; et quod illud esse est unum et primum et praecedens absolute; **et demonstrat**, quod reliqua esse posteriora sunt eo in esse et quod ipsum esse primum est illud, quod confert omni, quod est praeter ipsum, esse; et quod ipsum unum primum est illud, quod confert omni, quod est praeter ipsum, unitatem; et quod ipsum verum primum est illud, quod omni habenti veritatem praeter ipsum confert veritatem – et quomodo conferat illud; et quod impossibile est aliquo modo in eo esse

possibile aliquid esse, neque est possibile ut sit aliquid penitus in similitudine ordinis esse eius, neque sit ei compar, neque contrarium, et ad primum ante quod non est possibile invenire prius, et ad precedens quo nichil est possibile magis esse precedens, et ad esse quod non est possibile acquisivisse suum esse a re alia penitus, et quod illud esse est unum, et primum, et precedens, absolute solum. **Et demonstrat** quod reliqua esse posteriora sunt eo in esse, et quod ipsum est esse primum quod acquirit omni existenti quod est preter ipsum esse, et quod est unum primum quod acquirit omni rei uni preter ipsum, unitatem, et quod est verum primum quod acquirit	conferat illud; et quod impossibile est aliquo modo in eo esse multitudinem; immo illud est quod supra omnia dignius est nomine et significatione unius et entis et veri et primi. – Deinde ostendit quod illud tantum quod est istarum proprietatum, debet credi quod sit Deus, cuius gloria sublimis. **Postea docet** qualiter essentiae proveniunt ab eo, et qualiter adeptae sunt esse ab eo. Deinde inquirit de ordinibus essentiarum, et qualiter adveniunt eis illi ordines, et quomodo meretur unaqueque esse in eo ordine in quo est, et declarat qualis est connexio illorum ad se invicem, et quibus rebus fit illa connexio. Deinde progreditur ad comprehendendas reliquas operationes Dei in essentiis, quousque compleat omnes eas. **Ostendit etiam** quod in nulla earum est defectus	multitudinem, immo illud est, quod supra omnia dignius est nomine et significatione unius et entis et veri et primi. Deinde ostendit, quod illud tantum, quod est istarum proprietatum, debet credi, quod sit Deus, cuius gloria sublimis. **Postea docet**, qualiter essentiae proveniunt ab eo et qualiter adeptae sunt esse ab eo. Deinde inquirit de ordinibus essentiarum, et qualiter adveniunt eis illi ordines, et quomodo meretur unaquaeque esse in eo ordine, in quo est; et declarat, qualis est connexio eorum ad invicem et quibus rebus sit ipsa connexio. Deinde progreditur ad comprehendendas reliquas operationes Dei in essentiis, usquequo comprehendat eas omnes. **Ostendit etiam**, quod in nulla earum est defectus neque discordia neque

omni habenti veritatem preter ipsum, veritatem, et secundum quem modum acquirit illud, et quod penitus non est possibile in ipso esse multitudinem neque aliquo modorum, immo est dignius nomine unius et eius intentione, et nomine entis et eius intentione, et nomine veri et eius intentione, omni re de qua dicitur quod est una, et ens, aut vera preter ipsum, deinde declarat quod illud quod est cum istis proprietatibus, est illud de quo oportet credi quod est Deus cuius est fama sublimis, postea procedit post illud in reliquis quibus narratur Deus gloriosus et sublimis, ut compleat ea omnia. **Deinde docet** qualiter provenerunt existentia ab eo, et	neque discordia, neque malitia ordinis sive compositionis, nec diminutio, nec superfluitas. Postea destruit errores quorumdam de Deo et de operibus eius opinatium superfluitatem et diminutionem in eo et in operibus eius et in essentiis quas creavit.	malitia ordinis sive compositionis nec diminutio neque superfluitas. Postea destruit errores quorundam de Deo et operationibus eius opinantium infinitatem et diminutionem in eo et in operationibus eius et in essentiis, quas creavit.

qualiter adepta sunt ab eo esse. Postea inquirit de ordinibus existentium, et qualiter advenerunt eis illi ordines, et quare meretur unumquodque ut sit in ordine suo in quo est, et declarat qualis <est> ligatura eorum ad invicem, et eorum connexio, et quibus rebus fit eorum ligatura et ipsorum connexio, deinde procedit ad comprehendendas reliquas operationes eius cuius sublimis est fama, et in existentibus usque quo compleat eas omnes. **Et ostendit** quod non licet in aliqua earum ut sit falsitas neque error neque effugatio, neque malicia ordinis, neque malicia compositionis, et ad ultimum, non est diminutio penitus in aliqua earum, neque additio manifesta		

omnino, estimantur de Deo cuius sublimis est fama, et de operationibus eius, ex illis que intromittunt diminutionem in eo et in operationibus eius, et in existentiis que creavit, et destruit eas omnes per demonstrationes que faciunt adipisci scientiam certam in qua non est possibile ut homini ingrediatur hesitatio, neque alteratio in ipsa, et neque est possibile ut redeat ab ea penitus.		

WANDERING MYTHICAL STORIES
ONCE AGAIN ON ENOCH 6:1-6 AND MICHAEL THE GREAT*

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Abstract

Our aim in the present paper is to study a brief fragment preserved in Michael the Great's *Cronography*. The fragment, far from being a simple heading reference to the contents of the chapter, fulfils a proleptic narrative function, anticipating a synthetic summary of the whole text of the 'Descent of the Watchers' that the author includes on the next page.

Key Words

Enoch 6:1-6, Michael the Great, Watchers, Fallen Angels, Syriac, Arabic.

A preliminary note

Texts travel across the lands and languages throughout the centuries to enrich people and cultures. This is the case of a number of texts of Jewish origin,[1] like an Enochic fragment on the 'Descent of Watchers' (6:1-7), belonging to the cycle of the 'Fall of the Angels', which was included by Michael the Great in his *opus magnum*, the *Chronography*.[2] This Syriac fragment was later translated into

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1 See Ronny Vollandt, 'Ancient Jewish Historiography in Arabic Garb: *Sefer Josippon* between Southern Italy and Coptic Cairo', *Zutot* 11 (2014), pp. 70-80 (Arabic translation: ' 'Ilm al-ta'rīkh al-yahūdī fī mā ba'du al-zaman al-kitābī "Kitāb Yūsuf b. Kuryūn" bi-ṣīghatihi al-'arabiyyah wa-ṣadāhu fī l-awsāt al-yahūdiyyah wa-l-masīḥīyyah', *Al-Mashreq* 89 (2015), pp. 249-267.

2 On Michael the Great and his work, see Dorothea Weltecke, 'Les trois grandes chroniques syro-orthodoxes du XII[e] et XIII[e] siècles', in *L'historiographie syriaque*, ed. Muriel Debié (Études

Arabic,[3] in Arabic handwriting and in the *Gharshūnī* writing system.[4] The motif, which was very productive in ancient literatures, knew interesting developments in several fields of knowledge, such as philosophical works,[5] and echoing even in the text of the Qur'ān.[6]

The original text, perhaps written in Aramaic, was later translated into Greek, whose text was further transmitted in two other versions: an Ethiopic translation (*Gə'ez*) and a Greek recension. Michael the Great, also known as Michael the Syrian, wrote a *Chronography*, one of the largest universal history that begins with the creation of the world and ends in 1195 CE. Michael's version probably came from the aforementioned Greek recension through a Syriac text possibly by Jacob of Edesssa († 78 CE)[7] or John the Stylite of Līt̄ārbā († 737).[8]

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syriaques 6), Paris: Geuthner, 2009, pp. 111-118 and Jan van Ginkel, 'A man is not an island. Reflections of the historiography of the early Syriac Renaissance in Michael the Great', in *The Syriac Renaissance*, Herman Teule et al. (Eastern Christian Studies 9), Louvain: Peeters, 2010, pp. 113-121.

3 Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, 5 vols, Vatican City: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, 1947-53, II, pp. 265-267. Cf. Sebastian Brock, 'Syriac historical writing: a survey of the main sources', *Journal of the Iraqi Academy* (Syriac Section) V (1979-80), pp. 309-310.

4 On the *Gharshūnī* system, see Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, 'L'arabe *karšūnī*', in Francisco del Río Sánchez, *Manuscrits en arabe karšūnī conserves dans la bibliothèque des maronites d'Alep (Syrie)*, Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011, pp. v-xii. See also Joseph Moukarzel, 'Maronite Garshuni Texts: On Their Evolution, Characteristics, and Function', *Hugoye. Journal of Syriac Studies* 17:2 (2014), pp. 237-262, and Samir Khalil, 'La tradition árabe chrétienne. Etat de la question, probléme et besoins', in *Actes du Ier Congrès international d'Études arabes chrétiennes (Goslar, septembre 1980)*, ed. Samir Khalil (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 218), Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1982, pp. 43-45.

5 Richard Vauckham, 'The Fall of the Angels as the Source of Philosophy in Hermias and Clement of Alexandria', *Vigiliae Christianae* 39:4 (1985), pp. 313-330.

6 Patricia Crone, 'The Book of the Watchers in the Qur'ān', in *Exchange and Transmission Across Cultural Boundaries: Philosophy, Mysticism and Science in the Mediterranean World. Proceedings of an International Workshop Held in Memory of Professor Shlomo Pines at The Institute of Advanced Studies, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 28 February – 2 March 2005*, ed. Haggai Ben-Shammai, Shaul Shaked and Sarah Stroumsa, Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2013, pp. 16-51.

7 On Jacob of Edessa's *Maktbānut zabnē*, see Witold Witakowski, 'The Chronicle of Jacob of Edessa', in *Jacob of Edessa and the Syriac Culture of His Day*, ed. Bas ter Haar Romeny (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 18), Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2008, pp. 25-46. See also Dorothea Weltecke, *Die «Beschreibung der Zeiten» von Mōr Michael dem Großen (1126-1199). Eine Studie zu ihrem historischen und historiographiegeschichtlichen Kontext* (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 594; Subsidia 110), Leuven: Peters, 2003, pp. 183-194.

8 For John of Līt̄ārbā's chronographical work, cf. Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur mit Ausschluß der christlich-palästinensischen Texte*, Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Wevers Verlag (rep. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968), pp. 258-259 § 41d, 273 § 43h.

Be that as it may, Enoch 6:1-6, both in its Syriac and Arabic *Karshūnī* versions, is of great significance for literary critics and the reception history of texts in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, since the text and its translation constitute another link in the textual tradition.[9]

The fragment contained in Michael the Great's *Chronography* was the focus of a luminous study by Sebastian Brock more than fifty years ago.[10] Forty years later, Siam Bhayro did the same with the Arabic *Karshūnī* version of the text,[11] by paying attention to the textual relation between the *Karshūnī* version and other adaptations of the *Book of Enoch* that have survived, as well as to some redactional features of interest present in the Arabic translation.

The summary and its analysis

Michael the Great's summary gathers a series of interesting narrative, lexical and traductological features, as shown in the textual analysis we offer below from its Syriac *Vorlage* in comparison with Aramaic, Greek and Ethiopic texts of Enoch 6:1-6. Our aim is to show the relationships, direct and indirect, with the surviving version exhibited by the summary to better understand both the rich textual and literary tradition of this mythical legend.

As the Syriac text can be consulted in both Chabot and Kiraz's editions, in the former with its French translation,[12] we offer below the Arabic-*Karshūnī* summary,[13] together with its English version.

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[9] Cf. Siam Bhayro, 'A Karshuni (Christian Arabic) Account of the Descent of the Watchers', in *Biblical Hebrew, Biblical Texts. Essays in Memory of Michael P. Weitzman*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert and Gillian Greenberg, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001, pp. 366-367.

[10] Sebastian P. Brock, 'A Fragment of Enoch in Syriac', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 19 (1968), pp. 626-631.

[11] Bhayro, 'A Karshuni Account', pp. 365-374, with a plate of the manuscript text in p. 373.

[12] *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)*, ed. and trans. Jean-Baptiste Chabot, 4 vols, Paris: E. Leroux, 1899, 1901, 1905, 1910 (vols. I-III French translation, vol. IV Syriac text), IV, p. 2b, lines 3-8 (Syriac), I, p. 5 (French); *The Edessa-Aleppo Syriac Codex of the Chronicle of Michael the Great*, ed. Gregorios Youhanna Ibrahim. Text summary by Sebastian P. Brock, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009, p. 3, col. b, lines 3-10.

[13] Ms. Brit. Mus. Or. 4402, fol. 2v[a], lines 23-29; *The Sadad Arabic Garshuni Codex of the Chronicle of Michael the Great*, ed. Silwanos Boutros Issa al-Nemeh, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008, fol. 6bm cols. a (lines 29-31) b (lines 1-3); *The Jerusalem Arabic Garshuni Codex of the Chronicle of Michael the Great*, ed. George Anton Kiraz, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009, fol. 2[r], col. b, lines 28-33; *The Mardin Arabic Garshuni Codex of the Chronicle of Michael the Great*, ed. Philoxenos Saliba Özmen, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2009, p. 2, col. a, lines 16-23.

Siglae

S^g	*Sadad Arabic Garshuni Codex*
J^g	*Jerusalem Arabic Garshuni Codex*
M^g	*Mardin Arabic Garshuni Codex*

[fol. 2v^a] ܗܘ ܒܗܢ ܫܢܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܚܫܒܘ ܒܢܝ ܐܠܗܝܡ[14] ܕܗܘ ܡܢ ܛܘܪܐ ܕܐܫܬܡܥ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܗܘܢ[15] ܕܟܕ ܚܙܘ ܕܠܐ ܫܒܩ ܠܗܘܢ ܕܢܗܘܘܢ ܒܓܢܬ ܥܕܢܐ[16] . ܕܐܫܬܒܩ ܠܗܘܢ ܠܡܬܒ ܥܠ ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[17] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[18] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[19] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[20] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[21] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[22] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[23] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ[24] ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒܗ ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ

"In that year the *Benē 'Elōhīm*, whose number was two hundred, descended from the mount, because when they saw that they would not be allowed to return to Paradise, which they had neglected, they abandoned the angelical rule and lighted with fleshly lusts. And they appointed a king whose name is Semyaza".

ܗܘ ܒܗܢ ܫܢܬܐ

Most significant in the beginning of the passage is the chronological formula وفي تلك السنة ("in that year"), equivalent to Syriac ܒܗ ܫܢܬܐ ܗܕܐ ("in this year"), although with a change in the deixis (that > this). In the Arabic *Karshūnī* version of the Enochic cite we read وكان لمّا (< ܗܘ ܒܗܢ),[25] corresponding to Syriac ܘܗܘ ܒܕ ("and it came to pass when"),[26] which coincides with the Greek (καὶ ἐγένετο)[27] and Ethiopic (ወከነ፡ እምዘ) texts of Enoch 6:1 from a probable Aramaic הווא כד.[28]

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14 S^g J^g M^g ܗܡ

15 S^g J^g M^g ܐܠܗܝܡ ܒܢܝ

16 ܦܘ has been written over the writing line for lack of space.

17 S^g ; J^g ; ٢٠٠

18 S^g J^g ܐܠ؛

19 S^g J^g ܐ

20 S^g J^g ܕܐܬܪܟ ܒܗ

21 S^g J^g ܕܐܬܪ

22 S^g omits ܒܪܝܫ ܐܠ ܥܕܢܐ J^g ؛ ܓܢܬ

23 S^g J^g ܫܒܩ

24 J^g ܗܘ ܘܐܬܕܒܩ ܒ

25 Ms. Brit. Mus. Or. 4402, fol. 3r^b, line 9.

26 Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 3a, line 38 (Syriac), I, p. 7 (French).

ܒܢܝ ܐܠܗܐ

The syntagm بني الوهيم is a calque of Syriac ܒܢܝ ܐܠܗܐ (< בני אלהים).[29] The expression used by Michael the Great in the Enochic cite is the semi-Arabisation بنو الوهيم (< ܒܢܘ ܐܠܗܐ),[30] which is an adaptation of Syriac ܥܝܪܐ ("the Watchers" < עירין).[31] However, it should be noted that the readings offered by the versions of Enoch 6:1 are different, e.g. "the angels, the sons of heavens": Greek οἱ ἄγγελοι υἱοὶ οὐρανοῦ,[32] and Ethiopic መላእክት፡ ውሉደ፡ ሰማያት.[33]

Both denominations, "angels" and its explanatory apposition "sons of heaven" represent a double version of the syntagm בני האלהים ("the sons of God" = LXX οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ) within the mythical story narrated in Gn 6:1-4 as an explanation for the flood.[34] In this context, the author of Jubilees used the formula መላእክት፡

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27 R. H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Book of Enoch*. Edited from twenty-three Mss. Together with the Fragmentary Greek and Latin Versions (Anecdota Oxoniensia), Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), p. 13 (henceforth *Book of Enoch*; id., *The Book of Enoch or 1 Henoch*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912, p. 278 (henceforth *1 Henoch*).

28 Michael A. Knibb, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch. A new edition in the light of the Aramaic Dead Sea fragments*. In consultation with Edward Ullendorf, 2 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978, I, p. 13 (Ethiopic), II, p. 67 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 12.

29 Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 2b, line 5 (Syriac), I, p. 5 (French). On the expression בני אלהים (בני אלים and בני עליון) see , pp. S. B. Parker, Sons of (the) God(s)', in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible (DDD)*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking and Pieter W. van der Hoorst, Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 1999 (2nd extensively revised ed.), pp. 794-800. On the reception of the concept in the 'Book of Watchers', see Archie T. Wright, *The Origin of Evil Spirits* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 198), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013, pp. 97-140.

30 Ms. Brit. Mus. Or. 4402, fol. 3r^{b}, line 11.

31 Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 2b, line 43 (Syriac), I, p. 7 (French). On Syriac *'īrē*, see Robert Murray, 'The Origin of Aramaic *'îr*, Angel', *Orientalia* 53 (1984, pp. 303-317, and id. 'Some Themes and Problems of Early Syriac Angelology', *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 236 (1990), pp. 143-153. See also J. J. Collins, 'Watcher', in *DDD*, pp. 893-895.

32 Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 13.

33 Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, I, p. 13 (Ethiopic), II, p. 67 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 12.

34 For an explanation, see Charles, *1 Henoch*, pp. 14-15. See also J. P. Monferrer-Sala, 'One more time on the Arabized nominal form *Iblīs*', *Studia Orientalia* 112 (2012), p. 59, and the references cited. See also Yoshiko Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity. The Reception of Enochic Literature*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 116-118, Adela Yarbro Collins, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism*, Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 2000, pp. 9-10, and Ryan E. Stokes, 'Flood Stories in 1 Enoch 1-36: Diversity, Unity, and Ideology', in *Opening Heaven's Floodgates. The Genesis Flood Narrative, its Context, and Reception*, ed. by Jason M. Silverman, Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013, p. 236. On the Rabbinical and Christian tradition, see Emmanuela Grypeou and Helen Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity. Encounters between Jewish and Christian Exegesis* (Jewish and Christian Perspectives 24), Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2013, pp. 150-151, 166-175, 185-188.

እግዚአብሔር ("the angels of the Lord").[35] As for the Christian authors, like Eusebius of Emesa[36] or the Nestorian Ibn al-Ṭayyib († CE 1031),[37] it is well recognized that they interpreted the syntagm οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ of Gn 6:2 as the Sethites instead of angels or mythical beings.[38]

ወረዱ

The perfective ወረዱ ("[they] descended") renders Syriac ܢܚܬ.[39] This verb refers to Enoch 6:6, for which both the Arabic *Karshūnī* version and its Syriac *Vorlage* use the same verbal form (ወረዱ/ܢܚܬ).[40] In the case of Enoch 6:6[41] we have the following correspondences with the same verbal meaning: καταβάντες (Greek),[42] ወረዱ (Ethiopic),[43] and the reconstructed *lectio* in Aramaic נחתו,[44] which is the cognate of Syriac ܢܚܬ.[45] Greek καταβαίνω is used in the Septuagint to translate Aramaic *qal* and *peal* נחת.[46]

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35 Vanderkam, *The Book of Jubilees*, I, p. 29 (Ethiopic), II, p. 31 (English).

36 Sebastian Brock, 'Jewish traditions in Syriac sources', *Journal of Jewish Studies* XXX (1979), p. 226. See also R. B. Ter Haar Romeny, *A Syrian in Greek Dress: The Use of Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac. Biblical Texts in Eusebius of Emesa's Commentary on Genesis* (Traditio Exegetica graeca 6), Leuven: Peeters, 1997, pp. 242-244.

37 Ibn aṭ-Ṭaiyib, *Commentaire sur la Genèse*, ed. and trans. J. C. J. Sanders, 2 vols (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 274-275), Leuven: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1967, I, p. 47 (Arabic), II, p. 45 (French).

38 Cf. Grypeou and Spurling, *The Book of Genesis*, pp. 170-173. Cf. Natalio Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, Leiden – Boston – Köln: Brill, 2000, p. 131.

39 Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 2b, line 4 (Syriac), I, p. 5 (French).

40 Ms. Brit. Mus. Or. 4402, fol. 3r^{b}, line 21.

41 For an explanation of this passage, see Charles, *1 Henoch*, p. 15 *app. ad locum*.

42 Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 13.

43 Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, I, p. 15 (Ethiopic), II, p. 68 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 12 and *app.* on 43 in p. 13.

44 Josef T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch. Aramaic fragments of Qumrân Cave 4*. With the collaboration of Matthew Black, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976, pp. 150 and 341, lines 3-4 (Aramaic), 151 (English) (henceforth *Enoch Aramaic fragments*).

45 Cf. R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus syriacus*. Collegerunt Stephanus M. Quatremere et al., 2 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1879, 1901, II, col. 2343a. The use of נחת was spread in Aramaic-speaking areas, cf. W.J. Jobling, *Nablex: Nabataean-Aramaic. A Provisional Lexicon*, Kensington, ML: dp Dunwoody Press, 1995, p. 53; Stanley A. Cook, *A Glossary of the Aramaic Inscriptions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1898 (rep. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), p. 81; Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, 2 vols, Jerusalem: Ḥôreb, s.d. = New York: Pardes House, 1959, II, 897b; Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period*, Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1992 (2nd rep.), pp. 346b-347a-b; id., *A Dictionary of Judaean Aramaic*, Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press,

ܡܢ ܐܠܓܒܠ

The prepositional phrase من الجبل translates the Syriac ܡܢ ܛܘܪܐ ("on the mount") with *contaminatio* of the preposition *men* (> *min*), which would have required in Arabic *fī*. While the Arabic *Karshūnī* version omits the name of the mount,[47] the name appears in the Syriac text (ܚܪܡܘܢ),[48] as occurs in Enoch 6:6:[49] Ἑρμών (Greek)[50] and חרמון (Aramaic).[51] In turn, the Ethiopic text, which also includes the name (አርሞን),[52] exhibits the *lectio mendosa* አርዲስ (*'Ardis*),[53] probably a misreading of Ἰάρεδ εἰς, which offers a significant variant.[54]

ܘܟܐܢ ܥܕܕܗܡ ܡܐܝܬܝܢ

The sentence وكان عددهم مائتين ("whose number was two hundred") translates the Syriac ܕܗ̈ܘܘ ܗܘܘ ܡܢܝܢܐ ܪ̈ ("who were in number of two hundred").[55] This reading refers to Enoch 6:6, which says "and they were in all two hundred": ἦσαν δὲ οὗτοι

2003, p. 65b; id., *A Dictionary of Christian Palestinian Aramaic* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 234), Leuven – Paris – Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2014, p. 261a-b.

46 Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Greek-Hebrew/Aramaic Two-way Index to the Septuagint*, Leuven –Paris – Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2010, pp. 62b (Greek), 276b (Aramaic). Cf. Massimo Pazzini, *Lessico concordanziale del Nuovo Testamento siriaco* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Analecta 64), Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 2004, p. 256, and Edward M. Cook, *A Glossay of Targum Onkelos*. According to Alexander Sperber's Edition, Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2008, p. 176.

47 Cf. Ms. Brit. Mus. Or. 4402, fol. 3r[b], line 21; cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 3a, line 60 (Syriac), I, p. 7 (French).

48 *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 2b, line 4 (Syriac), I, p. 7 (French).

49 The name appears in 2 Enoch 18:4 (J and A), cf. F. I. Andersen, '2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch', in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. Volume 1. Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983, pp. 132-133.

50 Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 13; Id., *1 Enoch*, p. 15 *app. ad locum*.

51 Milik, *Enoch Aramaic fragments*, pp. 150, 341, line 4, and the commentary in p. 152. See also James H. Charlesworth, 'The Parables of Enoch and the Apocalypse of John', in *The Pseudepigrapha and Christian Origins. Essays from the Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, ed. Gerbern S. Oegema and J. H. Charlesworth (Jewish and Christian Texts 4), New York – London: T & T Clark, 2008, p. 224. Cf. [51] Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography*. Facsimile edition and Englsih translation by Ernest A. Wallis Budge, London: Oxford University Press, 1932 (rep. Piscataway NJ: Gorgias Press, 2003), II, p. 2r, col. b (Syriac), I, 3 (English).

52 Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, I, p. 15 (Ethiopic), II, p. 68 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 14.

53 Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, I, p. 15 (Ethiopic), II, p. 68 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 12.

54 Charles, *Book of Enoch*, pp. 13-14 *app.* on 43; id., *1 Enoch*, p. 15 *app. ad locum*; Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, II, pp. 68-69 *app. ad locum*. See also R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament. II. Pseudepigrapha*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913, p. 191 *app. ad locum*.

55 Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 2b, line 6 (Syriac), I, p. 5 (French).

διακόσιοι (Greek),[56] ወኮኑ፡ ክለሎሙ፡ ፪፻፡ (var. ክልኤ፡ ምእት፡) (Ethiopic),[57] and the reconstructed text in Aramaic: והוו כלהן מאתין.[58] In the Slavonic Enoch (2 Enoch) we are told that the *Grigori* (Slav. Григори, i.e. ἐγρήγοροι, 'Watchers') were 200 myriads (2 Enoch 18:3 J) or 200 princes (2 Enoch 18:3 A):[59]

'J' (longer recension)	'A' (shorter recension)
"These are the Grigori, who turned aside to the Lord, 200 myriads together with their prince Satanail"	"These are the Grigori, 200 princes of whom turned aside (*vacat*)"

ܗܘ̈ܝ̈ܟ̈ܐ ܡܢ ܕܚܠ ܥܠ ܡܪܝܐ ܘܫܒ̈ܘ ܠܦܪ̈ܕܝܣܐ

The Arabic sentence لأنّهم حين نظروا بأن قد عدم رجوعهم الفردوس, which does not come from the Enochic text, is almost a literal translation of Syriac ܠܡܚܙ̈ܝ̈ܗܘܢ ܕܠܐ ܗ̈ܘ̈ܘ ܕܢܬ̈ܦ̈ܢ̈ܘ ("because when they saw that they would not return to Paradise").[60]

ܘܫܒ̈ܘ ܒܚ̈ܫ̈ܒ̈ܐ ܕܡ̈ܬ̈ܪ̈ܥ̈ܝ̈ܬ̈ܐ ܕܡ̈ܠ̈ܐ̈ܟ̈ܐ

As in the previous case, Arabic فتهاونوا وتركوا التدبير الملائني renders Syriac ܒܛ̈ܠ̈ܘ ܘ̈ܫ̈ܒ̈ܘ ܡ̈ܫ̈ܚ̈ܬ̈ܗ ("they were seized with discouragement and abandoned the angelic rule"). It should be noted the use of *maṣdar tadbīr*, a cognate o Syriac *dūbarō*.[61] This coordinate clause is not included in the Enochic text.

ܘܫ̈ܒ̈ܚ̈ܘ ܒ̈ܬ̈ܫ̈ܗ̈ܘ̈ܬ̈ ܓ̈ܫ̈ܡ̈ܢ̈ܝ̈ܬ̈ܐ

Arabic sentence وضربوا بشهوات الجسدانيّة ("they were struck with bodily pleasures") corresponds to Syriac ܡ̈ܫ̈ܚ̈ܝ̈ܢ̈ܘ ("they were struck [...]"). The Syriac Ms exhibits a *lacuna* that can be restored with the Arabic text.[62] The sentence is an *amplificatio*

[56] Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 13; Id., *1 Enoch*, p. 15 *app. ad locum*.

[57] Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, I, p. 15 (Ethiopic), II, p. 68 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 12.

[58] Milik, *Enoch Aramaic fragments*, pp. 150, 341, line 3.

[59] Andersen, '2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch', in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. I*, pp. 130-131. Cf. Andrei A. Orlov, 'The Watchers of Satanail: The Fallen Angels Traditions in 2 Enoch', in *New Perspectives on 2 Enoch, No Longer Slavonic Only*, ed. A. A. Orlov and Gabriele Boccaccini, with Jason Zurawski (Studia Judaeoslavica 4), Leiden: Brill, 2012, pp. 163-164.

[60] Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 2b, lines 6-7 (Syriac), I, p. 5 (French).

[61] Cf. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus syriacus*, I, col. 815.

[62] Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 2b, line 8 (Syriac), I, p. 5 (French), and n. 2.

of ܐܬܬܘ (“and they went astray”)[63] that appears in Enoch 6:2 “and they desired them”: ἐπεθύμησαν αὐτάς (Greek),[64] ወፈተውዎን (Ethiopic).[65]

ܘܐܩܝܡܘ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܫܡܗ ܫܡܝܚܙܐ

Arabic وأقاموا لهم ملكًا اسمه سميازوس is a literal translation of Syriac ܘܐܩܝܡܘ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܫܡܗ ܫܡܝܚܙܐ (“and they appointed a king named Semyaza”). The sentence is obviously an interpretation of Enoch 6:3 “Semyaza, who was their archon/leader”: Σεμειαζᾶς ὃς ἦν ἄρχων αὐτῶν (Greek),[66] ስምያዛ፡ ዘ ውእቱ፡ መልአኮመ (Ethiopic).[67] Michael the Great reads ܫܡܝܚܙܐ ܕܗܘ ܪܫ ܠܗܘܢ (“Semyaza, their chief”),[68] of which the Arabic *Karshūnī* version is a literal rendition ܫܡܝܚܙܐ ܕܗܘ ܪܫ.[69] On the other hand, Arabic سميازوس is a calque of Syriac ܫܡܝܚܙܐ, which is, in turn, an adaptation of Greek Σεμειαζᾶς, from an Aramaic original שמיחזה (*Shemîḥazah*).[70]

By way of conclusion

The attractiveness of the fragment represented by Enoch 6:1-6 lies not just in itself, but in the small summary contained on fol. 2v[a] (lines 23-29) that Michael the Great included in his *Chronography*. This summary fulfils a proleptic narrative function that anticipates the text of the ‘Descent of the Watchers’,[71] the complete text provided by the author on the next page (fol. 3r[b], lines 8-26).

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63 Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 3a, line 44 (Syriac), I, p. 5 (French).

64 Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 13.

65 Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, I, p. 13 (Ethiopic), II, p. 67 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 12. On Ethiopic *fatawa*, see Wolf Leslau, *Comparative Dictionary of Ge‘ez (Classical Ethiopic)*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1991, p. 171a-b.

66 Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 13.

67 Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, I, pp. 13-14 (Ethiopic), II, p. 67 (English); cf. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, p. 12.

68 Cf. *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, IV, p. 3a, lines 48-49 (Syriac), I, p. 7 (French).

69 Cf. Ms. Brit. Mus. Or. 4402, fol. 3r[b], line 14.

70 Knibb, *Book of Enoch*, II, p. 67-68 *app. ad locum*, and Milik, *Enoch Aramaic fragments*, p. 152. Cf. Charles, *1 Enoch*, p. 16 *app. ad locum*, who claimed for either two possible nominal forms: שׁמעזיז or שׁמחזאי. Cf. also Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, II, p. 191 *app. ad locum*, and Moïse Schwab, *Vocabulaire de l’angélologie d’après les manuscrits hébreux de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1897, p. 256, who explains the name like a synonym of עוזא. On the origin of the name, see Wright, *The Origin of Evil Spirits*, pp. 122-125.

71 A version of the ‘Descent of the Watchers’ appears in Jubilees 5:1-2, see James C. Vanderkam, *The Book of Jubilees. A Critical Text* (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 510), 2 vols, Leuven: Peeters, 1989, I, p. 28-29 (Ethiopic), II, p. 31-32 (English). On this account, see Annette Yoshiko Reed, *Fallen Angels*, pp. 90-91.

Despite its briefness, the interest of the summary lies in the use of identical terms that constitute the story. This compositional technique tells us, first, Michael the Great's capability to summarize the content of his work, and second his skill in using sources. Thus, right after concluding the brief summary, as a colophon Michael the Great refers to one of his main sources, Annianus, who also gave a small piece of information on the Enochic text of the 'Descent of the Watchers'.

We are, therefore, seeing a new case of medieval transmission of texts from Antiquity, although on this occasion involving interferences from several languages. The reference to the 'Descent of Watchers' in Gn 6:1-7 gave rise to a number of receptions from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages which enabled a particular narrative enrichment and development of this legendary motif up to the summary written by Michael the Great.

Reviews

Behnam Sadeghi, Asad Q Ahmed, Adam Silverstein and Robert Hoyland (eds.) *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone*, Leiden: Brill, 2015. 631 pp. ISBN 9789004252011 (hbk)

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Many a collection of essays in posthumous honour to a celebrated expert in a given field, seem less a true memorial and more an excuse to publish or a mere venue to expose one's work.

This most certainly does not seem to be the case with this volume honouring the life and work of Patricia Crone. Many of the essays within the tome's covers start with a note of thanks to the late historian, or an anecdote describing work with her. All the essays acknowledge or use her work as, at the very least, a starting point. Most important, the reader gets the sense that the articles submitted are work that would have interested Crone.

Perhaps this impression is begat due to the clear links from article to article, which allow the idea of internal coherence within the book to form. This impression is further emphasised by the fact that the different chapters are put together with an excellent sense of narrative. What by all accounts need not be more than a disjointed collection of essays gives the appearance of following some manner of order. Minor aspects of one essay will be the main focus of the next, texts with commonalities will be placed next to each other.

It is but an impression, yet it allows the book to be read as a whole with greater ease, and consequently those who are interested primarily in one chapter and wish merely to consult the book are recommended to, at the very least, examine the chapters immediately adjacent to those consulted.

Though aspects of consecutive chapters give an impression of continuity the truth is that we *are* still discussing a collection of essays. As such the topics vary

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widely, and it is impossible to adequately describe the book without including brief summaries of each of the texts.
The tome starts with a quick justification of the collection, and a brief memoir describing Crone's life and accomplishments, as well as a copy of her outstanding Curriculum Vitae, which veritably gives a glimpse into an amazingly busy life.

The first chapter 'Varient Traditions, Relative Chronology, and the Study of Intra-Quranic' Parallels, by Joseph Witztum, examines different traditions of scholarly approaches to the Quran, discussing, amongst other variations, differing ways of using and incorporating context, the utility of parallel texts and the use of diachronic methods of analysis. The long text is full of examples and analysis thereof.

Chapter two –'The Earliest Attestation of the Dhimma of God and His Messenger and the Rediscovery of P. Nessana 77 (60s AH/680 CE)'- by Robert Hoyland, delves into the study of some unusual written sources, specifically a bilingual Greek-Arabic two-sided tax-demand note, of which only one side was a photographic copy available in the Rockefeller museum, and thereafter published, the original, *Nessana 77* also known as *Lena 153*, had been lost. The story of the rediscovery of this text, allowing the Arabic side to be studied, is detailed in an appendix written by the discoverer, Hannah Cotton. Included, we also find a transcript of the text and a copy of the document, as well as contextualising information, including the fact that we are before the first known use of *Dhimma* outside the Quran.

Guy G. Stroumsa's 'Jewish Christianity and Islamic Origins' offers an account of what is generally known as Jewish Christianity's -though Stroumsa acknowledges how flawed the term is- role in the origins of Islam. The ideas are in his own admission seemingly old fashioned, and in this way, and perhaps ironically, controversial. In spite of this, it seems like a conception worth exploring, given the dearth of evidence for or against theories concerning this origin story.

In 'A note on the Relationship between *tafsīr* and Common Understanding with Reference to Contracts of Marriage' Karen Bauer takes on a linguistic analysis of Tafsir texts so as to discover the ways in which they were used and understood.

Gerald Hawting and David M. Eisenberg discuss the conception of what is commonly known as *Earnest Money* -money given in advance for a service or commodity, and which is not to be returned if either side of the deals backs down- in Islamic Law; where it is denominated *Bay' al-'arabūn*, in "Earnest Money' and the Sources of Islamic Law'. The authors do so by examining its multifarious origins, its use inside and outside the Islamic world, as well as the *hadith* where it is reported to have been prohibited by the Prophet.

An analysis of Qur'ān verses dealing with inheritance and bequests takes place in Pavel Pavlovich and David S. Powers' text ''A Bequest May Not Exceed One-Third'. An *Isnād-cum-Matn* Analysis and Beyond'. It includes a wonderful diagram describing the Transmission history and reconstructed wording of the *Saʿd*-will tradition via *ʿAmr b. al-Qārī*, describing the evolution of authors discussing the tradition, which is very useful while reading the rest of the article.

Chapter seven, by Christopher Melchert, titled 'Basra and Kufa as the Earliest Centers of Islamic Legal Controversy' examines proof in favour of Patricia Crone's idea that the main difference within Islamic Law is that between Kufan and Basran schools on the one hand, and Medinese and later schools on the other, and not, as often believed, a division along Sunni- non-Sunni lines. They conclude that it is quite likely the original division is actually that between Kufan and Basran schools. Possibly, later Medinese law was based on the original Basran law- which was later heavily changed by Kufan schools.

D.G. Tor does a great job describing political and religious change in the Abbassid caliphate in 'God's cleric: Al-Fuḍayl b. 'Iyāḍ and the Transition from Caliphal to Prophetic Sunna'. In this text we discover in what way the hadith folk, or proto-Sunnites took over religious duties that had until then been the prerogative of the Caliph. The *ahl al-ḥadīth* become important in the reigns of Abbasid Caliphs al-Mansur and Harun al-Rashid. Whereas the Caliph was supposed to be the Imam, an example for his subjects and the most important religious figure of the caliphate, these Caliphs consulted the pious *ahl al-ḥadīth* on religious matters because they recalled unwritten stories about the prophet-traditions, or hadiths- and they were quite clearly dedicated to God. The article describes the interactions recorded between Fuḍayl, an important proto-Sunnite, and Hārūn al-Rashīd, as an example demonstrating the shift in religious authority during the Abbasid caliphate.

'Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn and the Politics of Deference', Matthew S. Gordon's piece, offers answers to the question of why ibn Tūlūn -governor of Egypt for 16 years for the Abbasid caliphate- continued to defer to Baghdad while having resources to act in stronger and more independent ways. Gordon concludes that to do so would have forced the governor to overthrough the very establishment upon which his prominence rested. He could seek more power within the Abbasid framework, but not break with it.

Kevin van Bladel's 'Eighth-Century Indian Astronomy in the two Cities of Peace' describes the link between Abbasid interest in Sanskrit science predating and leading to the interest in Greek science, and a similar presence in Tang dynasty courts of Indian astronomy. The possibility that the interest in translations from Sanskrit derives from an imitation of Sassanid patronage of science is acknowledged, but the bulk of the text goes to describing and explaining the more exciting interpretation allowed by Abbasid-Tang strife and

communication, and the widespread use of Indian astronomy in Central Asia within a similar time-frame.

In 'Greek Language and Education under Early Islam' Maria Mavroudi explains why Christian literature in Arabic in the ninth Century does not mean that Greek was wholly abandoned by Christians under Islamic rule by that time. Indeed she claims that Greek education was possible at that time and that the language survived for a long time along with Coptic in Egypt and Syriac in the Levant, in spite of Arabic playing an ever increasing role in society. Greek in Muslim lands died a slow death, and literary Greek survived even longer within limited circles.

'Kalām and the Greeks', is Fritz W. Zimmermann's logical and analytic attempt to show that the origin of Muslim dialectic- Kalām- has links in its origins to Greek dialectics, in particular Greek dilemmatic argumentation. By examining Kalām from multiple faiths we can find that where there is Kalām there are dilemmas.

Michael Cooperson describes what *Arab* and *Iranian* meant in Abbasid times in ''Arabs' and 'Iranians': The Uses of Ethnicity in the Early Abbasid Period'. In so doing he presents various personal narratives in which the ethonims become confused. It becomes clear in the article that ethonims change meaning with time, and more specifically, that every characteristic that distinguished an Arab from other ethnic groups was transferrable to members of those groups given the right conditions. Eighth and ninth century peoples could adopt language and religion in a way that destabilised ethnic denominations. The Umma, as it expanded, necessarily changed in character. The main idea to be derived from the article is that any statement about distinctiveness in fact takes part in the construction of the reality it is attempting to describe. By calling something by a particular name, it becomes the thing described by that name.

'The Poetics of Cultural Identity: Al-Mutanabbī among the Būyids', by Margaret Larkin, shares the idea of mutating conceptions of ethnicity, with the previous article, but presents the idea that some of these changes within one individual's experience have been exposed by his poetry. Al-Mutanabbī's poetry, linked to a certain perception of Arab ethnicity changed after working for the Persian Būyids. The piece where this change is most notable is described.

Khaled El-Rouayheb describes a problem extant in Islamic divine command ethics in 'Must God Tell Us the Truth? A Problem in Ashʿarī Theology'. The problem is the following; Must God keep his promises of Paradise, or is he free to break them? The author describes the opinions on this matter of various scholars from within this religious school of thought. Al-Juwaynī, Al-Ghazālī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī all follow a similar argument which the first starts, and the others refine. It begins by stating that it would be impossible for God to falsely assent to someone's claim to prophethood by granting them a miracle when they aren't really a prophet, because the very miracle is an action

granting prophethood. This kind of action is compared to Austin's *performative speech act theory*. In spite of this, the truthfulness of the prophet is not guaranteed. What guarantees it is that the World of God, i.e. the spiritual world of ideas cannot, by definition be false. As God belongs to this realm he cannot plant falsehoods, or at the very least, that he should do so is unthinkable. The oral word depends on the prophet, who depends on miracles so as to claim he speaks in God's behalf, and on the spiritual world for access to the truth. The argument is often accused of circularity, or of claiming lies are bad independently of God's opinion on the matter, which is precisely the sort of idea the proponents of these arguments are against.

'Administrators' Time: The Social Memory of the Early Medieval State, East and West' is Chris Wickham's account of how stories reflect the remembrance of previous administrators by those telling the stories. Stories are told from Tenth Century Islamic lands, sixth-century Roman Byzantium, and tenth-century China. It is found that different kinds of stories reflect different levels of acceptance of political corruption. Where it is mentioned as a plot point, corruption is an accepted and essential part of governance, whereas where it is barely mentioned, it is a hidden and taboo practice.

Devin J. Stewart's 'An Eleventh-Century Justification of the Authority of Twelver Shiite Jurists' is an elucidating perspective on one particular problem within a related panoply in the world of Islam. Where does authority reside within Islam, if it is legitimately held by anyone? This specific case studies the justification of authority for Eleventh Century Twelver Jurists. The text searches for answers in Alī al-Karājikī's work, and includes a translation of his text based on pp. 301-3 of the 1904 edition of Kanz al-Fawā'id and vol.2, pp. 2016-19 of the 1985 edition.

In 'A Family Story: Ambiguities of Jewish identity in Medieval Islam' David J. Wasserstein recounts the family history of four generations of a Jewish-Iberian Banū Naghrīla lineage living in what is now the south of Spain and was then called Al-Andalus, and the changes in identity as Jews that varying circumstances led to. The earliest the author can trace the family back with accuracy is Merida, where Joseph ha-Levi ibn al-Naghrīla resided before moving to Cordoba mid-Tenth Century. His eldest son Isaac is not well known, but his youngest, Samuel moved to Malaga after the collapse of Cordoba as capital. He there becomes the main servant of a brutish Berber vizier, soon taking his place as vizier to the Ziria Berber ruler, and moving with him to Granada. There he served as vizier, amongst great honours, becoming a great philanthropist, scholar, poet, and leader. He earns the title Nagid, or prince of Jews in Iberia, having become a religious leader also. He has four children; A daughter, Qasmmara, a poet in Arabic, and three sons, Judah, Eliasaf and Yehoseph. Yehoseph succeeds him as vizier and Nagid, but is considered an unworthy successor and precipitates one of

a very small number of Jewish pogroms in Islamic lands in this time period, the riot and massacre of Granada in 1066. Yehoseph's son Azarya escapes to Lucena, a Jewish enclave within the same realm, where he inherits the title Nagid, but dies before it is of any significance. Wasserstein concludes that Jews could thrive in Islam, but not become arabised in the same way Christians did.

David Albulafia's article is in many ways a perfect choice to follow Wasserstein's text. 'What Happened in al-Andalus: Minorities in al-Andalus and in Christian Spain' helps explain the events described in Wasserstein's article. The texts seems to focus on explaining up to what point, and in what way the *convivencia* -the peaceful cohabitation of Jews, Moors and Christians in Islamic Iberia- happened. The fact that in early Muslim Spain Arab Muslims are a minority, if a powerful one, is highlighted. Most people, especially in the countryside were most probably Christian. The Moorish conquest was one of Moorish Muslims, Jews and Christians over Visigoth Catholics, Arians, Pagans and persecuted Jews. It was a time period in which mass conversion was easier as religious boundaries weren't as strict. Curiously, Christians assimilated more easily than Jews, in spite, or perhaps because, of greater similarities between Islam and Judaism. Christians had to change to adapt, whereas Muslim rule allowed Jewish differences and culture to flourish, until stricter Almoravid and Almohad Muslims took over.

Mudéjares – Muslims in twelfth and thirteenth-century Christian Spain – lived more similarly to how Christians had lived under Almoravid and Almohad rule, than to Christian in previous Muslim administrations. The specific rights of different populations varied a lot, but all paid tribute to the King, and were, in a sense, his property, as were Jews. They had a hard time acculturating in both Islamic and Christian lands without abandoning their faith, or pretending to. Marranos did the latter, losing much of their Jewish culture. *Convivencia* was a dynamic process with a different meaning for different groups at different times.

Adam Silverstein's 'The Samaritan Version of the *Esther* Story' explores a rarely discussed Samaritan version of *Esther* by Abū l-Ḥasan. This version turns the Jews from protagonists to antagonists. It seems ancient Samaritans thought *Esther* was historical and desired to set the record straight.

In 'New Evidence for the Survival of Sexually Libertine Rites among some Nuṣayrī-'Alawīs of the Nineteenth Century' Bella Tendler Krieger examines a possibly fake text concerning rites among the secretive *Nuṣayrī-'Alawīs.* It is believed that even if the text is a slanderous fake, it is quite possible some rites and customs are well recorded, though perhaps misconstrued. Translations and transcripts of excepts of the text are presented and used.

The final text, 'Crone and the End of Orientalism' – by Chase F. Robinson– is a fitting end to the tome dealing as it does with Patricia Crone's effect on the study of early Islamic history between 1975 and 1990. In the books written at this time

she assaulted a range of scholarly orthodoxies with new methods, slowly making conservative complacency on the subject impossible, disallowing the uncritical use of Ninth and Tenth Century material to describe the Seventh Century. Crone's ability to make evidence fit new models is said to have been field-changing, but perhaps less important than her making it easier and normal for those in the field to acknowledge that there are aspects of the field still unproven or unknown.

In general I consider the book excellent. Though many will use it as reference, consulting only those articles that fit their immediate need, it is perfectly possible to read most of the book merely for pleasure, as most of the articles are written in a comfortable and easy to read way. The index found at the end is long and useful for those who only wish to consult, and most of the articles have long and useful bibliography, allowing further study of any of the topics touched upon. We are before a wonderful book for anyone interested in any way in the history of the Islamic world.

Ana María Mora-Márquez, *The Thirteenth-Century Notion of Signification: The Discussions and Their Origin and Development*, (Investigating Medieval Philosophy, 10), Leiden: Brill, 2015. 183 pp. ISBN 9789004298675 (HBK)

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This is the 10th volume in the series *Investigating Medieval Philosophy*, published by Brill, and consists of four, somewhat uneven, chapters. In the first chapter, Mora-Márquez begins by focusing on, and explaining in great detail, the two primary sources for thirteenth-century debates about signification, viz., Aristotle's *Perihermeneias* and Boethius' second commentary on the same. The most important passage in the former, which is examined at length, is the second sentence, where Aristotle says (and I paraphrase) that "written and vocal words are signs of concepts and things." Thanks to Boethius, however, we are informed of a discrepancy between Aristotle's account of language in his *Perihermeneias* and what he presents in his *Categories*, namely that in the *Categories*, things are immediately signified by words, whereas in the *Perihermeneias*, concepts are immediately signified by words. In time, this conflict developed into what Duns Scotus called a *magna altercatio.*

In the second, and by far the longest, chapter Mora-Márquez turns to this *magna altercatio* about whether concepts or things are primarily signified by language. In the first half of the thirteenth-century, most authors, such as Nicholas of Paris and Robert Kilwardby, hold that concepts are primarily signified by utterances. However, by the end of the thirteenth-century, this view gives way to the opposite view, which claims that external things are primarily signified by utterances. In order to make sense of these various debates, the author divides up the objections into three main kinds: a categorical angle advocated by Radulphus Brito and Walter Burley; a semiotic angle, advocated by Peter of Auvergne,

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Radulphus Brito, Roger Bacon, and Peter John Olivi (the latter two being strongly influenced by Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*); and a verificational angle, advocated by Martin of Dacia and Radulphus Brito. In the second part of this chapter, Mora-Márquez turns to the interesting question of whether words lose their signification with the destruction of their significate. For example, would it be true that "every man of necessity is an animal" (*omnis homo de necessitate est animal*) if no men existed? Accordingly, Mora-Márquez sketches four different answers to this question: Roger Bacon argues that words lose their signification and so the statement is neither true nor false; Boethius of Dacia argues that terms do not lose their signification, nevertheless the statement is false since no man exists; Peter John Olivi also argues that terms do not lose their signification, but the statement is true in one sense and false in another; and finally an Anonymus author argues that the terms do not lose their signification and thus the statement is always true, regardless of whether there are any men in actual existence or not.

In the third, and shortest, chapter, the author introduces the influence Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae* has in the thirteenth-century debates over language. Writing about the same time as Boethius, Priscian became the main source for the theoretical study of grammar in the late Middle Ages, however, his account of grammar differed in substantial ways from Aristotle's and Boethius's description. Whereas Aristotle seemed to be primarily, if not exclusively concerned with truth and falsehood, and thus his account of language focused only on subjects and predicates, Priscian seemed to be primarily concerned with poetry, and thus he introduced other basic parts of speech, including participles, pronouns, prepositions, adverbs and conjunctions.

In the final chapter, Mora-Márquez focuses on the role of the significate in grammar and in logic, first focusing on pre-modists, such as Ps-Kilwardby and Peter Helias, and then finishing the chapter with an analysis of the modist tradition, including Martin and Boethius of Dacia and Radulphus Brito. On the whole, as Mora-Márquez points out, the thirteenth-century evinces a tendency towards a narrower and more coherent use of the notion of signification, which compliments the intent to solidify the scientific status of logic and grammar.

On the whole, this is a very thorough work. The author limits her study to a few key issues and traces those issues as they were debated by the key figures of the thirteenth century. Its only drawback, which is also its strength, is that it is very technical. The thirteenth century debates concerning signification are complicated by any standard, but Mora-Márquez navigates them very well. It is

definitely written for the medieval scholar and is a welcome contribution to a much neglected aspect of medieval thought.

IAN C. LEVY, RITA GEORGE-TVRTKOVIĆ, DONALD F. DUCLOW (EDS.), *NICHOLAS OF CUSA AND ISLAM. POLEMIC AND DIALOGUE IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES*, (STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL AND REFORMATION TRADITIONS, 183), LEIDEN – BOSTON: BRILL, 2014. 251 PP. ISBN 9789004274761 (HBK)

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Après les attentats de Paris du 13 novembre 2015, le premier ministre français Manuel Valls a déclaré la France en «guerre» contre «le totalitarisme islamiste», déclaration suivie de bombardements du fief de l'Etat islamique au nord de la Syrie. La «guerre» est-elle cependant la bonne réponse ? Cette question, aussi complexe soit-elle, il est légitime que les citoyens se la posent et qu'ils la posent aux hommes politiques. A ceux qui argueraient de sa complexité pour la soustraire au débat public, on rétorquera qu'elle appelle plutôt un effort d'éducation publique. Cette éducation pourrait commencer par souligner que ce questionnement n'est pas nouveau, qu'il a des antécédents que cet ouvrage, issu d'une conférence de la American Cusanus Society et du Séminaire International sur la Théologie de la Pré-Réforme du Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary en 2012, a l'immense mérite de venir nous rappeler. En effet, c'est à la réponse à d'autres événements terribles, la conquête de Constantinople en 1453 par Mehmet II et les forces ottomanes, que s'intéresse ce volume des *Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions*, celle donnée par le philosophe, théologien, homme d'église Nicolas de Cues. A ces événements, Nicolas de Cues répondit d'abord par l'écriture de *De pace fidei* («La paix des religion»), un traité dans lequel il recherche la paix entre les diverses religions à travers l'élucidation de la formule «*religio una in rituum varietate* (une religion dans la variété des rites)», avant de se joindre, quelques années plus tard, à l'appel du pape Pie II en faveur d'une nouvelle croisade. Revenir sur *De pace fidei* (qui fut l'objet d'une première conférence en 1986), mais en l'abordant cette fois-ci sous l'angle du dialogue entre ces deux communautés

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au Moyen-âge tardif, voilà ce que nous propose ce volume, dans la double optique, en comprenant mieux ce traité et son auteur, de maximiser aujourd'hui les chances d'un véritable dialogue entre ces deux communautés.

En réalité, le dialogue entre ces deux communautés n'est pas un présupposé à la lecture de *De pace fidei*. Sa réalité et sa possibilité elles-mêmes sont au contraire l'objet d'une réflexion critique de la part de chacun des 14 auteurs réunis ici. Dans leur introduction (p.3), les éditeurs prennent soin de rappeler les objections émises à ce sujet par Rémi Brague et relayées en partie par le livre de John Tolan, *Saracens*: au Moyen-âge, le vrai (*true*) dialogue entre musulmans et chrétiens serait rare, et s'il existe, il se présente sous la forme de polémiques plutôt que d'un échange raisonnable d'arguments. Le dialogue entre les divers représentants des religions mis en scène dans *De pace fidei* obéit à un genre littéraire, mais est sans correspondance dans le réel. On peut lire l'ensemble de l'ouvrage comme une réponse à ces objections, appuyée sur la conviction initiale, non le dialogue entre occident et orient soit réel ou même possible, mais qu'il demeure pour nous, comme il le fut pour Nicolas de Cues, un rêve désirable, si ce n'est, comme le suggère Thomas E. Burman dans sa préface «Nicholas of Cusa and Peter the Venerable's request», une exigence, celle que formula une première fois au 13ème siècle Pierre le Vénérable. Il s'agit de questionner l'idée – celle de Rémi Brague comme la nôtre – de ce qu'est un «vrai dialogue» pour rechercher à quoi ressemble un dialogue au Moyen âge. Cette enquête fera ressortir plusieurs niveaux de dialogue. Le niveau de la vie quotidienne d'abord, où on ne peut pas douter qu'habitant les mêmes territoires ou commerçant entre eux, chrétiens et musulmans communiquaient entre eux. Il est notable ici, comme le soulignera Rita George Tvrtković, que Nicolas de Cues n'ait pas voyagé en terre d'islam et que sa connaissance de ce dernier soit purement livresque. Le voyage, même lorsqu'il s'inscrit dans l'idée de la mission, comme dans le cas du frère dominicain Riccoldo da Montecroce, termine toujours par modifier le regard porté sur l'autre dans le sens d'une plus grande compréhension. La lecture des textes sacrés, leurs traductions et leurs commentaires représentent un autre niveau de dialogue. Tout l'enjeu ici sera de déterminer dans quelle mesure les différences et les différends affichés de part et d'autre préservent tout de même un noyau commun, aussi restreint soit-il. Enfin, à un dernier niveau, le dialogue devient «une affaire d'herméneutique», dans la mesure où les polémistes, traducteurs et interprètes ne pratiquent pas une conversation «face à-face», mais communiquent entre eux à travers leurs propres lectures du Coran et de la Bible, qui s'inscrivent elles-mêmes dans une longue tradition exégétique de part et d'autre. On se retrouve ici face à un «labyrinthe d'hypertextes postmodernes» (p.5) dans lequel il nous incombe, comme déjà aux auteurs médiévaux, de tracer notre route. Cela explique également la variété des textes et des auteurs pris en

considération dans cet ouvrage, du Coran à Nicolas de Cues à Ignace de Loyola aux auteurs contemporains de *A common Word between us and you* (mentionnées par Joshua Hollman) par exemple, puisque c'est une même conversation qui se poursuit et s'enrichit de l'un à l'autre.

En parallèle avec cette élucidation de ce qu'il en est du dialogue entre chrétiens et musulmans, c'est le sens à donner à la tolérance religieuse manifestée par Nicolas de Cues qu'il s'agit de préciser, comme vient nous le rappeler l'article de Morimichi Watanabe (1926-2012), à qui le volume est dédié, et qui ouvre la première section «Cusanus and Islam». Universalisme (synonyme ici de pluralisme : toutes les religions se valent également), parallélisme (qui rejette la possibilité de comparer les religions), exclusivisme ou inclusivisme christologique : comment le Cusain qualifie-t-il les relations entre les religions, se demande Knut Alfsvåg à la fin de sa contribution intitulée «Divine difference and Religious unity. On the relations between *De Docta Ignorantia*, *De Pace Fidei* and *Cribatio Alkorani*?» S'il est certain qu'à travers sa formule «une religion dans la variétés des rites», Nicolas de Cues voulait fomenter l'harmonie et la compréhension mutuelle entre les religions, il règne un consensus entre les auteurs des trois sections dont est composé ce volume sur le fait que Nicolas de Cues ne prône pas pour autant une approche relativiste ou pluraliste des religions.

Dans la première section «Cusanus and islam», les auteurs s'attachent dans cette perspective à mettre au jour les présupposés théologiques de l'approche cusaine de l'islam. En effet, pour Félix Resch, dans «The Trinity as a challenge to Christian-Muslim dialogue in Nicholas of Cusa : Nicholas of Cusa's philosophical translation of trinitarian faith as a response to islamic rejection», on ne peut pas rejeter la dimension «aléthique» des religions, c'est-à-dire leur prétention à la vérité universelle, dans leur dialogue. Il importe de savoir entre le dogme chrétien de la trinité et celui musulman qui soutient l'unité de Dieu, entre l'affirmation de la divinité de Jésus et celle de la transcendance de Dieu qui lui interdit l'incarnation, laquelle de ces affirmations est vraie. Pour cela, le Verbe, qui est le porte-parole du Cusain dans *De pace fidei*, ne recourt pas aux sources supranaturelles de la révélation ou de l'histoire du salut, mais à la raison naturelle qui est aussi une «raison publique – mais profondément métaphysique» (p.99). C'est cette raison qui traduit les Noms propres qui composent le symbole de la Trinité en concepts philosophiques, procédant ce faisant à une certaine démythologisation de ce symbole. Pour Walter Andreas Euler dans «A Critical Survey of Cusanus's Writings on Islam», c'est par une argumentation rationnelle qui relève à la fois de la maïeutique et de la *manuductio* que les musulmans sont amenés à reconnaître la vérité du christianisme. Knut Alfsvåg souligne pour sa

part, en remontant du *De pace fidei* au *De docta ignorantia*, «the necesity of a Christ-centered exploration of the world, even within a philosophical context» (p.54). En effet, même si la philosophie de la religion du Cusain consiste au départ dans l'exploration des concepts d'infini et de fini et de leur relation à travers le concept de participation, elle mobilise nécessairement la double doctrine de la trinité et de l'incarnation comme la seule manière de penser cette dernière. Ou encore, pour Joshua Hollman dans «Reading *De pace fidei* christologically: Nicholas's Verbum dialectic religious of concordance», les conceptions cusaines de l'unité de la religion à travers la diversité de ses rites et de la paix entre les religions sont fondées sur la notion de Verbe de Dieu «rooted in Hellenic thought and the plentitude of ancient conciliar Christology» (p.84). Plus précisément: «in *De pace fidei*, Cusanus dialectically and hierarchically holds together Athens and Jerusalem, reason and revelation, universalist and exclusivist out-looks, conciliar-catholic tradition and the pragmatic concerns of the present, all of which are centered in the cosmic and incarnate Christ» (p.79). Il est difficile ici de ne pas évoquer le modèle de la raison défendu par un autre philosophe, théologien et homme d'église, Joseph Ratzinger – le parallèle entre ce dernier et Nicolas de Cues est d'ailleurs établi par Walter Andreas Euler, comme le signale Félix Resch dans une note (p.88, note 7) –, notamment dans son discours à Ratisbonne en 2006: il existe une «complémentarité essentielle entre raison et foi», liée au fait historique que la pensée grecque a «fusionné» avec la foi chrétienne et c'est «dans ce grand Logos, dans cette amplitude de la raison» que doit avoir lieu le dialogue des cultures. C'est le mérite des auteurs cités, toutefois, de souligner aussi les limites que rencontre ce dialogue sur cette base théologique. Pour un interprète chrétien, il est difficile de faire face à «l'ambivalence de l'islam», favorable et défavorable à la fois aux doctrines fondatrices du christianisme, et le risque est de développer en retour une attitude «ambigüe» (p.62) à son égard, comme en témoigne le parcours du Cusain du *De pace fidei* au *Cribatio alkorani*. Signalons ici, dans la première section toujours, la contribution de Pim Valkenberg, «*Una Religio in rituum varietate*: religious pluralism, the Qur'an, and Nicholas of Cusa» qui s'interroge sur l'origine historique des cinq mots de cette formule-clé. Cette origine renvoie, selon lui, à une certaine théologie coranique, pour laquelle il existe une ambiguïté dans la notion de religion (entre dīn au singulier et shir'ah au pluriel) que la théologie de Nicolas de Cues reproduit (entre lex/fides/cultus/religio au singulier et ritus/religiones au pluriel): il est ironique qu'un penseur chrétien emprunte à l'islam ce qui rend en un sens problématique le dialogue avec lui.

La deuxième section «Historical perspectives», en replaçant l'œuvre de Nicolas de Cues dans le champ historique, ouvre de nouvelles pistes d'approche. La comparaison menée par Rita George-Tvrtković dans «Deficient sacraments or

unifying rites? Alan of Lille, Nicholas of Cusa, and Riccoldo da Montecroce on muslim and jewish praxis» entre les différentes appréciations des rites musulmans et juifs par les trois auteurs cités ci-dessus, si elle conduit à valoriser l'approche positive fondée sur le terrain de Montecroce, permet aussi de souligner le souci de paix de Nicolas de Cues, prêt – fait rare – à accepter qu'on modifie les rites chrétiens et qu'on circoncise tous les enfants si l'harmonie des religions est par là renforcée. Marica Costigliolo met en lumière le changement de perception de l'islam qui s'opère entre le 13ème et 15ème siècle: d'ennemi à abattre, le musulman devient le barbare au sens de l'ignorant qu'il faut éduquer et convaincre, changement qui participe de la construction de l'identité de l'Occident comme étant centrée sur la culture romaine et grecque. Même s'il est vrai, comme le soutenait Rémi Brague, que le genre littéraire du dialogue au Moyen âge recouvre les disputes, les traités apologétiques et les libelles polémiques, il demeure, soutient-elle, qu'à travers ces polémiques (l'auteur souligne ici l'importance du *Contra legem Sarracenorum* de Riccoldo de Montecroce) et les traductions même approximatives du Coran, un dialogue interculturel et interreligieux se noue entre Orient et Occident. Jesse D. Mann qui nous offre une traduction du *Liber de magna auctoritate episcoporum in concilo generali* 10.6 de Juan de Segovia, l'autre grand défenseur de la paix et du dialogue avec l'islam, avec qui Nicolas de Cues a entretenu une correspondance, rappelle pour sa part que le dialogue avec l'islam, du point de vue de Juan de Ségovie était indissociable d'une ecclésiologie synonyme de sotériologie. Enfin, dans une contribution au titre sans détour «How to deal with muslims? Raymond Lull and Ignatius of Loyola», Paul Richard Blum analyse les récits autobiographiques de ces deux auteurs qui concernent un conflit personnel avec un musulman et montre que la leçon négative que Lull en tire – qu'il vaut mieux ne pas essayer de convertir les musulmans – devient chez Ignace de Loyola une leçon positive – qu'il s'agit plutôt de réformer l'église catholique. En d'autres termes, c'est par l'autocritique et la réflexion sur ses propres limites que la religion chrétienne (mais cela vaut aussi pour l'islam) peut s'ouvrir à l'autre et, ajoutons, trouver sa place en démocratie.

Enfin, la troisième section «Muslim responses to christianity», dont les éditeurs soulignent l'importance dans leur introduction, examine la manière dont les musulmans ont affronté eux-mêmes le dialogue avec le christianisme. Comment la notion de Jésus comme *Word of God*, au centre de l'attention des auteurs de la première section, est-elle abordée par les musulmans? On peut consulter à ce sujet l'exposé didactique et exhaustif offert par Asma Afsaruddin dans «The messaih 'Isa, son of Mary': Jesus in the islamic tradition Afsaruddin». Quelles que soient les différences d'approche entre les traditions sunnite, soufie et chiite, toutes convergent pour reconnaître en Jésus un prophète d'un poids singulier, au

rôle essentiel dans l'islam, mais restent hermétiques à la notion d'un Logos qui serait Sauveur. Il demeure, comme l'indique l'auteur à la fin de son introduction (p.179), que Jésus se présente ainsi «not as a divise figure but as one who creates opportunities for greater appreciation of the other's tradition». Pour sa part, au début de sa contribution «Revisiting the charge of *Tahrīf*: The question of supersessionism in Early islam and the Qu'ran», Sandra Toenis Keating adresse aux études islamiques l'avertissement que Félix Resch adressait à la théologie chrétienne, qu'il est tentant, mais erroné, de mettre de côté la dimension théologique des convictions religieuses partagées par les communautés dans l'optique de favoriser la paix entre elles. On s'interdit ce faisant de comprendre ces convictions et on risque de voir le dialogue entre les communautés fracasser tôt ou tard. En l'occurrence, on s'interdit de comprendre bien la notion de *Tahrīf* - l'enseignement selon lequel le Coran viendrait confirmer en même temps que corriger les écritures des autres monothéismes et/ou leurs interprétations qui auraient été corrompus et auraient obscurci ce faisant le message initial envoyé par Dieu – si l'on ne met pas en lumière le problème théologique fondamental auquel il répond, qui concerne à la fois la justice divine, l'égalité des hommes dans l'accès à la révélation et au salut. Ce faisant, l'auteur revient sur le sens de la formule «une religion dans la variété des rites» dans la théologie coranique: si le Coran défend la variété des messages envoyés par Dieu, il ne faut pas voir là «the sort of progressive, pluralistic vision of society» que les penseurs contemporains désirent voir, mais l'importance donnée au jugement final; à ce moment-là, Dieu désignera ses vrais serviteurs ; auparavant, il est inutile de vouloir discuter avec ceux qui ne reconnaitraient pas l'authentique révélation. Il n'y a pas en ce sens, comme le défendait Afsaruddin, d'«equality of God's messengers» (p.180). Ce sont aux réquisits herméneutiques de l'approche du christianisme chez Ibn Hazm et Al-Ghazzālī que s'intéresse Tamara Albertini: tandis que l'approche «littéraliste» du premier le conduit à une condamnation féroce du christianisme, la «'subject-centered' epistemology» (p.220) du second le conduit à s'approcher au plus près de l'idée d'une divinité du Christ à travers l'idée d'un Jésus soufi. Enfin, ce sont deux figures mystiques, Ibn 'Arabi et Meister Eckhart, qui retiennent l'attention de Robert J. Dobie, dans la mesure où leurs efforts pour repousser les limites de leur religion ouvrent la voie au dialogue interreligieux. On apprend ainsi que du point de vue d'Ibn 'Arabi, la variété des rites renvoie aux différentes coupes qui permettent, mais en la colorant, de boire l'eau de la connaissance divine, celle-ci dans sa pureté étant inaccessible à la connaissance humaine, même si la coupe de l'Islam est sans doute la plus transparente et vaste.

Voici donc un riche ouvrage, synthétique, pour nourrir le vif débat actuel au sein de nos sociétés sur la place à faire aux différences religieuses, mais aussi pour

enrichir notre conception du libéralisme. Car c'est le geste libéral – ramener les convictions religieuses au statut de particularismes culturels – qui est aujourd'hui questionné. Comme l'a fait remarquer récemment le philosophe français Etienne Balibar, les religions se distinguent des cultures en ce qu'elles opposent à la sphère coutumière du quotidien des exigences de rupture, de réformes radicales ou même de révolutions au nom d'une prétention à l'universel.[1] Dès lors, il est possible que la réussite du projet libéral de concilier religion et démocratie passe, non pas par la «neutralisation de la théologie», mais par son approfondissement.[2] A cet égard aussi, Nicolas de Cues peut encore nous éclairer.

[1] Cf. Etienne Balibar, *Saeculum. Culture, religion, idéologie*, Galilée, Paris, 2012.

[2] Cf. Michaël Foessel, 'Les croyances de l'homme démocratique. Habermas et la question religieuse ', *Esprit*, janvier 2013, p. 53-67. Pour approfondir ce point, nous nous permettons de renvoyer à notre ouvrage Hedwig Marzolf, *Libéralisme et religion. Réflexions autour de Habermas et Kant*, Paris, Cerf, 2013.

GARTH FOWDEN, *BEFORE AND AFTER MUḤAMMAD, THE FIRST MILLENNIUM REFOCUSED*, PRINCETON – LONDON: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2014, 230 PP. ISBN 9780691158532 (HBK).

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The first Millennium was a period of great changes and relevant historical events that shaped our present world. The events that took place during this period would configure not only the course of the Eastern history, where most of these events happened, but Western history as well.

The innovative approach to the historical analysis of the first Millennium, followed by Fowden in this work, is a revolutionary and most needed new perspective on the study of this historical period. As the subtitle in the book suggests, Fowden refocuses the way we understand the history of the East and West, reexamining the influence that specific events had in the history of ideas and the development of civilizations.

The main point of this work is the reconsideration of the role played by Islam, which traditionally had been treated as a new religion that was not relevant in Western history. Fowden shows the importance of Islam in the configuration of European history giving relevance to the cultural and religious context in which Islam emerged. The author also refers to Christianity and Judaism and some traditions related with the history of ideas such as the Greek philosophy, Manichaeism, among others, without this historical analysis cannot be understood.

The book is divided in seven chapters. The first chapter ('Including Islam', pp. 1-17) presents the content of the book. The author develops his own questions about the role played by Islam in History, which he will answer throughout the work. This introductory chapter allows Fowden to highlight the influence of

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Islam in the development of history in the Mediterranean Basin as well as Western Europe. The author alludes to the work of Gibbon on the fall of the Roman Empire (1776-1788), which is considered by Fowden and other historians, as a pioneer of this type of analysis.

In the second chapter ('Time: beyond Late Antiquity', pp. 18-48), Fowden reconsiders the role that the scholars traditionally gave to Islam. The author also refers to different works in which the History of Europe has been considered from a new perspective. Most of these works, presented by art historians, offered new elements for the reinterpretation of history, which influences Fowden's research.

In the third chapter ('A new periodization: the first Millennium', pp. 49-91) Fowden describes his own idea that the first Millennium should be consider as a complete historical period instead of the fragmented periods in which this time had been traditionally divided by scholars. For the author, there are prophetic, scriptural and exegetical periods that could be identified in some ancient sources, which corroborate this idea of continuity. He explains this idea of continuity as a 'maturity' which is the result of a transformation process of history, in opposition to the idea of decline of civilizations. Fowden takes some examples from different authors (Greek, Syriac and Arabic) and historical events to show this idea of continuity through the first Millennium.

The fourth chapter ('Space: an Eastward Shift', pp. 92-126) deals with geographical issues on the space where the three monotheisms took place, referred by Fowden as the 'Mountain Arena'. The author describes his idea of a geographical context for the first Millennium, which he calls the 'Eurasian Hinge', composed by the Iranian Plateau, the Eastern Mediterranean as well as the 'Mountain Arena'. For the author, this context was where the Achaemenid Empire and the Caliphate of the Umayyads and Abbasids coexisted and evolved with Christian Rome, therefore influencing each other.

Inasmuch as the history of religions and ideas plays an important role in this book, the fifth ('Exegetical cultures 1: Aristotelianism', pp.127-163) as well as the sixth chapter ('Exegetical cultures 2: Law and religion', pp.164-197) centers on these issues. Fowden shows the influence that the Aristotelian ideas had in other traditions such as Christian and Islamic works. The author highlights the importance that the translation of the works of well-known authors into different languages (e.g., Syriac and Latin) had in the evolution of these ideas and to connect the history of East and West. In the sixth chapter Fowden continues

his discussion on the influence Aristotle's thought had in other traditions, however, he insists that these multiple traditions be considered as one.

In the seventh chapter ('Viewpoints around 1000: Ṭūs, Baṣra, Baghdad, Pisa', pp. 198-218) Fowden centers his analysis on four cities, which are significant examples of the transmission of knowledge and the development of new ideas during this period. He starts this chapter with a description of the Avestan religion, which allows him to introduce Firdawsi's work *Shāhnāma*. From Baṣra, Fowden highlights the encyclopedic writings of the Brethren of Purity that influenced Muslim though of the 10th CE. In this context, Baghdad was relevant for the Caliphate, due to its role as center of knowledge, where different scholars met to propitiate new ideas, especially knowledge associated with a diversity of faiths. Pisa is for the author the city where Latin Europe comes back from a dormant period, fighting with Islam's heritage.

Finally, the author suggests a range of topics that could be analyzed further in depth each chapter ('Prospects for further research', pp. 219-224). Fowden assumes –laudably- here that there are some ideas in his work requiring a more in depth analysis and further development. In fact, in many of his commentaries, in this section of his book, the author is already developing some of these topics further.

This is an excellent work that reconsiders the traditional concept of history. The author, following an innovative approach, provides a new view of the history of ideas and religions during the transitional period between Late Antiquity and Medieval Age.

Furthermore, Fowden presents a work about historical view that could be adapted to present time in which a dialogue is necessary to establish better relations between different religions and cultures.

Stephanie L. Hathaway and David W. Kim (eds.), *Intercultural Transmission in the Medieval Mediterranean*, Bloomsbury: London - New York 2012. xxiii + 219 pp. ISBN 9781441139085 (hbk)

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There is a famous medieval Sufi quote that goes: 'Sufism was once a reality without a name, but now is a name without a reality'. Something similar might be said about medieval 'multiculturalism'. On the one hand, the Middle Ages were for decades understood as a homogeneous and monolithic period of time, with a Christian Western focus point to which every other reality was reduced as merely peripheral. Therefore, its multicultural dimension was broadly ignored: it was a reality without a name. On the other hand, as a consequence both of a new historiographical and philosophical insight and of the undeniable contemporary reality, nowadays 'Multiculturalism' has become the guest invited to every party: it may be starting to sound like a name without a reality.

As a matter of fact, what is needed, as in Plato's *Cratylus*, is a reflexion both about the 'name' –i.e., its historiographical and philosophical conceptualization– and the 'reality' –i.e., its historical dimension– of 'medieval multiculturalism'. And this is exactly what this volume, *Intercultural Transmission in the Medieval Mediterranean*, offers. It might certainly be said that in this book there are three parallel levels of analysis. Firstly, this book is mainly a text-based research which focuses on the transmission of worldviews in the Mediterranean Rim between Late Antiquity and the Renaissance. Secondly, it is also a reflexion about how to deal with this 'multicultural' landscape; this self-reflexion might be an important contribution to the further development of a 'method' for the study of medieval 'multiculturalism'. Thirdly, this volume also aims to deal with the contemporary interpretation of the multicultural dimension of medieval texts.

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The volume falls into four main parts, each one containing a number of chapters devoted to their specific issue: 'Faith and Spirituality' (pp. 1-59), 'Chivalry' (pp. 61-116), 'Love and Literature' (pp. 117-162) and 'Material Culture' (pp. 163-213). In the first chapter –'Thomasine Metamorphosis: Community, Text and Transmission from Greek to Coptic'– David W. Kim focuses on the Thomasine community, emphasizing the mutual influence between its developing religio-political identity and its writing project. Analyzing the Thomas Gospel, the author studies the unfolded meaning of the process through which the Thomas people made its teachings into writing, probably between CA 45 to 68. Although the set of approaches that sustain Pella, Antioch or Edessa as possible geographical locations for the Thomasine community are considered, the hypothesis that the group was a Jerusalem based mega-church is seen as the most plausible explanation. As other nascent groups, the Thomasine community needed its own version of the Jesus tradition, sieved by their own memories and experiences. Looking to reach a huge number of people, they decided, among the possibilities that their multilingual context offered to them, to put their Gospel into Coptic. As a matter of fact, this written result was profoundly linked to its circumstances: both its form and content express the way in which the community saw itself and its mission in the contextual environment of the Graeco-Roman world. In this sense, their texts are vehicles not only for the ideas that the Thomas people wanted to express through them but also for the history and framework of these ideas.

The second chapter has as its title 'St Michael of Chonai and the Tenacity of Paganism'. His author, Alan Cadwallader, focuses on a very popular tale in the Byzantine world: the story of the miracle of St Michael, the archistrategos of Chonai. The story is a remarkable example of how –despite Imperial laws and the Christian tenacity– in country communities the alienation between the different religious groups was far from complete in the fourth and fifth centuries. In that context, the Christian faith, in its first steps, achieved adherence through retaining significant elements from the previous hegemonic sacrality. In a very interesting analysis of the complexity of the interaction between different cultural worlds in the Middle Ages, this study shows how paganism was used in the mentioned story both as a negative backdrop and a positive contribution, especially with regard to the portrayal of the main figure, St Michael. Even when the story celebrates the victory of Christianity over pagan religious practice and theology, Michael is characterized in terms of the old pagan deities. The evolution of the story –through its different versions– shows the conflictive symbolic 'negotiations' between the 'old' and the 'new' comprehensions of the reality.

In 'The Cultural Repository of Persian Sufism: Medieval Chivalry and Mysticism in Iran', Milad Milani focuses on the history of chivalry in Iran, tracing its origins prior to the emergence of Islam and highlighting the relevance of the Iranian backdrop for the further developments of chivalry among the Middle East and Western Europe. This chapter develops the path through which chivalry evolved from a primal martial notion –mainly reduced to a set of battle rules– to an ethical conception –a more sophisticated social code of gentility and gallantry– and finally to a more spiritual comprehension. Sufism, which stresses the importance of the inner greater struggle over any external lesser effort, transcends the first two perspectives towards the deeper one. This may be especially said of the Iranian Sufi understanding of chivalry, in contrast with the Arabic perspective on the same issue. The author explores different texts in order to develop this contrast, and, furthermore, to show how the spiritualization of chivalry made by Sufism finally goes beyond chivalry itself, towards what is called 'meta-chivalry'.

In the fourth chapter –titled 'From Knight to Chevalier. Chivalry in the *chanson de geste* Material from Aquitaine to Germany'– Stephanie L. Hathaway concentrates on the transformation of the material of the *chanson de geste Aliscans* to its Middle High German version *Willehalm*. In these two texts –both of which represent the battles at Aliscans between Christians and Muslims in which Guillaume d'Orange fought– the author studies the transformation of the character of Rainouart/Rennewart from buffoon to knight to chevalier. Chivalry is described not only as a result of the multicultural encounters between different Mediterranean worlds but also as the bridge between them: as it is said, the means and manner of interaction between Christians and Muslims –the paradigmatic 'Other' of the Christian Europe– was precisely chivalry. This chapter analyses the historical evolution of the chivalric ideal in Europe –following the same path of refinement described in the immediately preceding chapter– both studying the understanding of chivalry in the mentioned texts and contextualizing these changing comprehensions in the landscape of the cultural exchanges in which they emerged.

The fifth chapter –'Humour and Sexuality. Twelfth-century Troubadours and Medieval Arabic Poetry', by Jerónimo Méndez– states the hypothesis that several Arabic poets –such as Abu Nuwās and other exponents of the *khamriyyat* poetry and the *mujūn* literature– and troubadours –like Guilhem de Peitieu, Bernart Marti, Raimbaut d'Aurenga, Arnaut Daniel– configure some thematic antecedents of the *fabliaux*, the Italian *novellini* and the Catalan satirical narrations of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Firstly, the author analyses a group of Arabic texts highlighting its most important motives and how these hedonistic verses,

full of references to wine, sexual profligacy and homoerotic love, fascinated important religious and political figures of the Abbasid ninth and tenth centuries Baghdad. Secondly, some poems written by the mentioned troubadours are studied, showing how they represent love in physical terms, exalting sexuality through motives far away from any romantic and idealized perspective about love. With regard to the relationship between the Arabic poets and the troubadours, even though there were important differences between them, they shared what is defined as a 'poetic *modus operandi*': a specific way of conceptualizing the desired object and the inversion of social and literary conventions.

In 'Ladies, Lovers and *Lais*. A Comparison of some Byzantine Romances with the Anglo-Norman *Guigemar*', Andrew Stephenson presents a preliminary study about the relation between a group of medieval Byzantine romances and the courtly French literature of the twelfth century. Of the eleven extant Byzantine verse romances, all of which are concerned with romantic love, the author focuses on the three which are usually referred to as Greek in origin but with Western elements incorporated. Although the relation between Eastern and Western literature is said to have been generally seen only on the background of the major episode of contact between East and West –that is, the Crusades and the consequently settlement of Latins and Franks in Byzantium– this chapter summarizes different theories that defend a process of influence and transmission from East to West or from West to East and also those theories that sustain the existence of common sources from Antiquity. The author points out that the path to follow in order to continue with the ongoing research should be to analyze the themes, motifs and structure of the three mentioned Byzantine romances in comparison with the French *lais*.

The seventh chapter –'Performance and Reception of Greek Tragedy in the Early Medieval Mediterranean' by Amelia R. Brown analyzes the manuscript tradition of the plays of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. By doing so, she studies the history of tragedy itself showing that it was not a frozen institution but, on the contrary, a living result always dependent on its different historical contexts. The chapter goes through a vast temporal landscape studying the many different ways in which the performance of tragedy muted, from fifth-century BCA Athens to Early Medieval audiences across the third- to sixth-century Mediterranean. These changes affected many different aspects of the way in which tragedies were performed, from the characteristics of the stage to the importance of the chorus or the actors. Interestingly, the author refers to the relationship between many of these changes with the political and religious context and to the way in which theatrical performances were seen –and used– by the different authorities over

the time. Nevertheless, although all these changes tragedy continued to be a recognized form of drama for centuries. With the exception of Constantinople, where they might have continued for some more time, tragic performances seem to have ended in the rest of the Later Roman Empire in the sixth century.

The eight chapter –'The Urban Language of Early Constantinople. The Changing Roles of the Arts and Architecture in the Formation of the New Capital and the New Consciousness', by Gordana Fontana-Giusti– focuses on the status of architecture and its related arts in early Constantinople (c. CA 324-c. CA 337). Through its long history, Constantinople always remained a bridge between the self and the other and between the past and the present. The city drew from the myths, arts, knowledge and technology of the ancient Greeks and Romans, incorporating all of them into the new urban project. The author highlights the relevance of architecture –in the many times in which the city redefine itself– as one of the bridges through which the ancient knowledge recovered by Constantinople was at the same time preserved and transformed. In doing so, the architecture of the city is understood as the 'objective' manifestation of the 'subjective' living experience of their inhabitants.

The last chapter, written by Timothy Dawson, is titled 'There and Back Again: Cross-cultural Transmission of Clothing and Clothing Terminology'. In his work, the author focuses on how the contact between Western states and the Eastern Roman Empire over the Middle Ages influenced material culture and language. As this chapter says, material culture carries a symbolic dimension. When Westerners adopted Levantine fashions they were not only thinking in their practical benefits but mainly in their 'meaning'. However, the meaning of their material goods –in this study, clothing– was mediated both by the multiple cultural influences that affected the societies and by the way in which they conceptualized those meanings; that is, by the language they used to refer to it. Consequently, the author of this chapter studies several examples of mutual influence between the East and the West, highlighting the importance that the mercantile activity had in culturally sharpening the societies involved in that activity. Finally, at the very end of the book, an 'Index' lists the most important terms and author's names mentioned all over the book.

As G. Fontana-Giusti says, the way in which the past is understood is always in relation with our understanding of the present and our view of the future (p. 191). Therefore, it is good news to realized that 'by now a critical mass of scholars and ideas is available for constructing a new interpretive 'model' that is rich in historical, geographical, cultural and social data, sophisticated in its methodological foundations and representational choices, and reflexive in its

values and analytical techniques and methods'.[1] This volume is undoubtedly a capital step in this path.

[1] Sonja Bretnjes, Alexander Fidora and Matthias M. Tischler (2014), 'Towards a New Approach to Medieval Cross-Cultural Exchanges', *Journal of Transcultural Medieval Studies* 1 (1), p. 30.

Zygmunt G. Barański and Lino Pertile (eds.): *Dante in Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 571 pp. ISBN 9781107033146 (hbk)

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The volume edited by Zygmunt G. Barański and Lino Pertile represents a very detailed attempt to provide an interdisciplinary approach to the framework that surrounded Dante's life and works. A book which gathers the views of international scholars offering an overall perspective of the cultural, historical and intellectual life in Central and Northern Italy during the Late Middle Ages. Zygmunt G. Barański is Serena Professor of Italian Emeritus at the University of Cambridge and Notre Dame Chair of Dante and Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame, and Lino Pertile is Carl A. Pescosolido Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, and Director of the Harvard University Center for Italian Ranaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti, Florence.

Bracketed by an introduction, the work is structured in five sections consisting of a number of essays that provide the reader with an integrated and comprehensive overview of life in Italy around the year 1300. The edition is supplemented by a list of illustrations and maps, including a chronology, abbreviations and several notes on translations. In the opening pages, Zygmunt G. Barański and Lino Pertile give a general view of each thematic session and a detailed presentation of the twenty-five scholars and their contributions.

The first section of the volume, *Politics and society* (pp. 9-134) presents the economical, social and political realities of Italian context around the thirteenth century first decades. In the first chapter, 'Empire, Italy and Florence' (pp. 9-29), William Caferro provides an insightful analysis of the Italian politics during the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century. His analysis focuses on the relationship between the Empire and the Papacy as a key question along Dante's lifetime. As he notes, 'at its core lay the question of primacy of authority:

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whether the State or Church possessed plenitude of power, an issue that involved all of Christendom' (p. 10).

Casting light on the economic background of the period, William R. Day's chapter, 'Economy' (pp. 30-46), analyses the financial situation of Florence over a decade earlier than Dante's birth in 1265. The author emphasises the undisputed economic supremacy of Florence at that time, describing it as the largest city in Tuscany to play a leading commercial role in the region. Day's points out Florence as becoming one of the main commercial centres in Europe and the crib of the Italian Renaissance, as a result of demographic and economic growth. By way of a clarifying explanation focused on the relations between Florence and Pisa, the author emphasises that this economic upswing began more than a century before Dante's birth. The author connects the economic growth of Florence to the expanding of the city's walls to accommodate the increasing population. Furthermore, in this chapter, the private and ecclesial building growth taken place in Florence along the thirteenth century is stressed, yet it seems that these circumstances can be traced back to the second half of the twelfth century, when urban landscape was characterised by towers owned by Florence's most wealthy families.

The volume continues with a chapter devoted to the origins of cannon law and the transformation of cannon legality during the thirteenth century. Sara Menzinger's 'Law' (pp. 47-58) invites the reader to take a look at the politics and public law between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries pointing out the circulation of medieval political ideas. In that regard, the author highlights the translation of Aristotle's *Politics* from Greek into Latin by William of Moerbeke during the second half of the thirteenth century.

As a way of introducing different connotations in the use of the term 'justice' in Dante, Giuliano Milani's analysis (pp. 59-70) attempts to explain Dante's context use of 'justice' as a social experience and political conflict. The author clarifies that trials became a form of governing. In his explanation, he emphasises the notion of 'justice' as an instrument to legitimize private interests and political goals.

Holly Hurlburt starts a new section to the volume (pp. 71-82), where the focus moves to the gender relations during the Italian Late Middle Ages. As the author notes, 'men and women of the late medieval Italy were subject to a number of hierarchies and idealized notions. These structures stressed rich over poor, male over female, masculine over effeminate' (p. 82).

The chapter by George Dameron (pp. 83-105) takes us into a different setting, as he looks into the changes in the Florentine Church from the middle of the thirteenth to the beginning of the fourteenth century. The author notes how politics and religious ideas were 'inextricably intertwined in Dante's Florence' (p. 85).

In his 'Heresy and dissidence' (pp. 106-118), David Burr describes the thirteenth century as a 'period of spiritual and theological creativity' (p. 106). The author goes deep into the variety of heresies and heterodoxies during the Late Middle Ages as well as describes the thirteenth century as a period characterized by a 'genuine revolution in both the form and the content of university instruction' (p. 116). Burr emphasizes how one of the most important changes in content was 'precipitated' by the translation of Aristotle into Latin as some of the Aristotelian ideas 'contradicted' Christian principles.

The first section of this volume concludes with Edward D. English's approach to the 'great changes' in most aspects of daily life during Dante's years in Florence and Northern Italy.

The second section, *Intellectual traditions* (pp. 137-240), fleshes out the framework of thought at the time of Dante Alighieri, since the middle of the thirteenth to the fourteenth century. In seeking to elucidate the role of *philosophy* and *theology* in this context, Andrea A. Robliglio's 'Philosophy and theology' (pp. 137-158) considers the symbiosis between knowledge and religious faith as universal acceptance. The author explains in great detail this synthesis looking into the meanings of *philosophy* and *theology* throughout Dante's context. Regarding the first concept, Robiglio refers to philosophy as 'wisdom' (*sapientia*), which is considered not just as the highest and most fundamental outline of knowledge but also as an appropriate way of living based on Christ's teachings and Christian values. Robiglio highlights the variety of meanings that *theology* manifests in Antiquity and the High Middle Ages. Theology is not only used as the study of the Bible related to 'sacred doctrine' (*sacra doctrina*), it also relates to a 'particular science: the part of true philosophy that deals with God, with the incorporeal substances, and with the human soul, itself also incorporeal and immortal' (p. 138).

In order to explain the status of *philosophy* and *theology* in the late Middle Ages, Robiglio considers the following historical factors as being essential: the establishment of the mendicant orders, the birth of the universities and the Church reform. In keeping with the first factor, Robiglio underlines the foundation of new religious orders over the first decade of the thirteenth century – the Franciscans and the Dominicans in particular. By the end of the century, religious education in Florence and Northern Italian cities was under the control of the previously mentioned orders; and regarding the second factor (the development of higher education and the birth of the universities), the author points out the 'veritable pedagogical renaissance' of the episcopal schools during the twelve century due to the wide circulation of newly translated Arabic and Greek philosophical texts. The author connects the third issue, the Catholic Church's Reformation, to: 'the imperative to exercise greater control over the

behaviour of the clergy and the desire to bring about a religious cultural renewal' (p. 142).

With the aim of defining Dante's intellectual context, Robiglio conceives his philosophical and theological background as a central element in understanding Dante's poetry. Even though the author refers to Dante's brief and irregular contacts with the Florentine schools of the mendicant friars, he clarifies it in relation to theological issues, Dante was mainly self-taught. On this basis and in order to understand Dante's intellectual framework, the author considers it is essential to recognize the impact of mediating factors and extra-academic intellectual traditions. Robiglio's attempt to provide an overview of this context, preaching is considered as a key means of mass communication in Late Medieval urban environment. In this chapter, it is indicated the quick spread of the *studia* of the religious orders throughout Italian cities in the second half of the thirteenth century. Particularly, Robiglio concentrates on the teaching offered by those orders – theology and a two-years introductory philosophical learning heavily rooted in Aristotle's writings.

Luca Bianchi's 'Moral philosophy' (pp. 159-172) provides an explanation to Dante's conception of 'moral philosophy' and 'moral science' as 'the part of wisdom that establishes what is good, how human beings should act, and which kind of life is best for them' (p. 159). For the purpose of elucidating Dante's own view on ethical issues, the author considers it essential to describe the paradigms of moral philosophy and theology by which Dante was influenced. Bianchi recognizes that Latin moral thought, specially Cicero and Seneca, and the Roman juridical tradition impacted on Dante's approach to ethical matters; the Bible, the Church Fathers and Christian moral compilations are also perceived as sources for discussing moral problems that influenced Dante's thought.

Bianchi references the *Nicomachean Ethics* as the Aristotelian work to which Dante refers to when he speaks of ethics, as well as the 'handbook' to teach moral philosophy from the thirteenth century onward. Moreover, the role of ethics as a discipline to be studied based on philosophical sources is described by the author as a turning point in the history of medieval thought. Bianchi's approach enlightens us on taking into consideration philosophical ethics as 'an autonomous field of research that could be explored rationally without recourse to theological principles' (p. 161). Unlike in logic, physics, and cosmology, the author establishes that Aristotle's supremacy in ethics was questioned by classical and Christian authors such as Cicero, Seneca, Augustine, and Boethius.

It is worth bearing in mind the elucidations on the evolution of physics during the period from 1250 to 1350 given by Edward Grant in chapter eleven, 'Natural Philosophy' (pp. 173-188). The author begins by attaching great importance to this period of time referring to the radical changes that transformed the intellectual life of western Europe in 1250. Grant mentions the translation of

Aristotle's natural philosophy into Latin from Arabic and Greek, noting the importance of the translations of Aristotle's natural philosophy from Greek by William of Moerbeke in the 1260s. As the author explains, Aristotle's treatises on natural philosophy formed the basis of the curriculum in the Faculties of Arts in the two new universities of Paris and Oxford. This chapter offers insight into the relationship between natural philosophy and theology, emphasizing that during the late Middle Ages, theologians could use natural philosophy to explain theology. On the contrary, the author clarifies that theology was not used by natural philosophers who were not theologians in the explanation of natural philosophy.

Except for the ideas contrary to the tenets of faith, Grant elucidates that almost all of Aristotle's basic ideas about the cosmos were adopted by medieval natural philosophers. In this chapter is stressed Aristotle's belief in an eternal, uncreated world that would never end as one of the Aristotle's unacceptable ideas. Above and beyond the explanation of the Aristotelian theory about the cosmos, some of the major topics considered by scholastic natural philosophers in their treatises on Aristotle's natural philosophy are provided in a clear and accurate manner. The last section of this chapter deals with the inheritance of medieval natural philosophy, describing the late Middle Ages, mainly the period 1250-1350, as a time that left a profound legacy to western Europe.

In 'Medicine' (pp. 189-199), Michael R. McVaugh examines the 'number of themes' that characterize medicine in the western Mediterranean world during the Late Middle Ages. In an attempt to demonstrate the 'growing appreciation' of academic learning, the author describes it as a 'process that led not only to increasing numbers of medical practitioners with some claim to academic learning in subject, but to a social willingness to concede that the expertise of such physicians entitled them to exert authority over matters that had previously been left to individual decision or municipal degree' (p. 190). McVaugh clarifies that this movement was characterised by the recovery of the writings of Galen, pointing out that many of these were translated from Arabic or Greek in the twelfth century.

Luis M. Girón's 'Islamic and Jewish influences' (pp. 200-220) represents an attempt to establish 'direct cross-cultural exchanges' between Muslims, Christians, and Jews during the later Middle Ages in Italy.

In 'Cosmology, geography and cartography' (pp. 221-240), Theodore J. Cachey, Jr. takes us into a different setting as he examines the cosmological knowledge during the Late Medieval period. The author clarifies that the image of the universe is 'exquisitely represented in *The Creation of the World* (c. 1445), a tempera on panel painting by the Siense Giovanni di Paolo (1398-1482), long believed to have been inspired by the cosmology of Dante's Commedia' (p. 221).

Particular account shall be taken of Theodore Cachey's analysis, together with Mc Vaugh's outlook on the Medicine in the western Mediterranean world and Grant's explanation on the evolution of physics. These chapters represent a great attempt to offer the reader insights into different late medieval scientific issues.

The third section of this book, *Linguistic and literary cultures* (pp. 243-398), not only examines the linguistic and literary cultures, but also deeps into the levels of education, popular culture and journeys to the other world. Starting with a question, Mirko Tavoni starts his essay presenting the main goal of his approach: 'What language or languages were spoken and written in different social situations in Italy during Dante's time?' (p. 243). Tavoni's 'Linguistic Italy' (pp. 243-259), highlights the 'environment of vernacularizing from Latin, beginning in the last decade of the Duecento' (p. 253).

A description of the education system and syllabus in the city of Florence during the later Middle Ages takes place in Robert Black's 'Education' (pp. 260-276). The author begins by describing the later medieval Florentine society using the words 'highly literate' as a result of a fairly developed education system and syllabus. Robert Black provides a complete picture about the three types of schools during the late Middle Age, starting with elementary schools in which basic reading was taught using Latin as a language of instruction. The next stage was devoted to learn how to write in Latin in grammar schools. The author emphasises how the grammar curriculum in later medieval Italy was not only composed by elementary reading, Latin grammar and Latin literature, but also stylistics and rhetoric were included in it. The author mentions the importance of Latinity in Dante, for whom Latin was 'the first art'. Offering an explanation of Dante's academic discipline, Robert Black points out that he was 'self-taught', noting that after 1290, Philosophy became Dante's obsession. Blank's analysis is follow by a chapter on rhetoric, literary theory, and practical criticism (pp. 277-296), in which Ronald L. Martinez focuses on the Rhetoric in the Duecento city-state.

Robert Black's 'Classical antiquity' (pp. 297-318) delves into the study of the heritage of classical antiquity noting that 'the apogee of classical studies in medieval Italy was reached in the twelfth century' (p. 297). The author provides the reader with a more in-depth understanding of ancient Latin authors focusing on their influences on Dante's writings. Meanwhile, Peter S. Hawkins's 'Religious culture' (pp. 319-340) offers insight into the characteristic features of the religious character of Dante's culture. His approach to this issue begins with an overview of the Christian life in Dante's time. Hawkins emphasizes the 'spiritual matrix' within the Medieval city's life.

In 'Visions and journeys' (pp. 341-353), Eileen Gardiner analyses the genre of voyage and vision separately so that the reader could 'appreciate fully their vitality and complexity at the beginning of the fourteenth century' (p. 341).

Ending the section on *Linguistic and literary culture* John C. Barnes examines historical and political literature as 'overlapping categories' in 'Historical and political writing' (pp. 354-370). The last two chapters of the third section by Paolo Cherchi (pp. 371-388) and Jan M. Ziolkowski (pp. 389-398) examine the vernacular literatures and popular culture during Dante's context respectively.

Visual and performative culture (pp. 401-457) is the fourth part of the book which provides a detailed synopsis of the significant changes occurred in the field of the art, architecture and music. In the chapter twenty-four, 'Illumination, painting and sculpture' (pp. 401-426), Louise Bourdua focuses on the visual culture of Dante's context. At the beginning of this section, the author exposes that Dante is often described as 'a very visually observed', which is partly explained due to his contact to the 'rich visual culture' that surrounded him in Florence and Tuscany, where he spent the early years of his life, and in Northern Italy (Verona) and Ravenna, in which he ended his life. Bourdua highlights that Dante was largely relied on by visual stories, by referring to Dante's knowledge about *pitture infamnati*. In this chapter, it is also underlined that the artist's stay in Florence to the beginning of what the author describes as the artistic revolution in monumental painting and sculpture.

Areli Marina's 'Architecture and urban space' (pp. 427-447) examines the factors that conditioned Italian architectural and urbanistic 'reanissance' during Dante's context. The author emphasises the heritage of ancient Rome and political fragmentation as key elements that should be considered in the changes that occurred in the field of architecture.

Throughout his 'Music' (pp. 448-457), Michael Scott Cuthbert delves into the study of the framework that characterises the musical context during the end of the thirteen century and the mid-fourteenth century. The author considers the Plainsong as the most important and persuasive musical tradition, which is defined as follows: 'a set of codified relationship between music and words sung at the daily Mass and, especially in monasteries and the large churches' (p. 448). Cuthbert points out that interval theory was gradually more separated from compositional practices. In this approach, the madrigal, *caccia* and *ballata* are considered to be the main Italic poetic forms that were set musically during the Trecento. Whereas the first two pieces began their existence as polyphonic genres, the author considers the *ballata* as monophonic pieces.

The last section of the book, *Dante: life, works, and reception* (pp. 461-537) proposes an update description of Dante's biography and the textual transmission. Lino Pertile's 'Life' (pp. 461-474) provides a description of those events which shaped

Dante's life-story, focusing on his early life, Florentine politics, exile, Henry VII's Italian campaign, the amnesty and the last years. As mentioned above, Dante discovered Philosophy in 1290, when Beatrice, the love of his life, died. The author considers Beatrice's death as a crucial event in Dante's life that led him closer to his favourite studies. Pertile describes that after the death of Beatrice, he began reading Boethius and Cicero, a life-changing experience whereupon he discovered Philosophy. In respect of Florentine politics, the author refers to the cause of Dante's exile, after he was charged with corruption and financial extortion, opposition to the Pope, and complicity in the banishment of the Blacks from Pistoia.

The chapter twenty-eight, 'Works' (pp. 475-508), represents an endeavour to describe Dante's work, in which Lino Pertile presents his writings interwoven with historical events, poetic autobiography and refection on poetry. The author deeps on the analysis of the *Commedia*, describing it as 'a *summa* of medieval cultural, a synthesis of all facets of reality as an integral whole – earthly and heavenly, physical and spiritual, natural and historical, cultural and ethical' (p. 490). According to the title, the context use of the word '*Commedia*' Pertile sees its meaning and motivation as a controversial issue. The author not only refers to the rhetorical nature of the poem, but also he explains its meaning stating that 'the poem is called a 'comedy' because it narrates Dante's salvation – an experience that is 'comic' in the medieval sense that it leads to a happy conclusion' (p. 492).

In the final two chapters of *Dante in Context*, 'Textual transmission' (pp. 509-517) and 'Early reception' (pp. 518-537), Zygmunt G. Barański provides the reader with a great overview on the 'modalities' by means of which Dante's works were transmitted, received and read, in particular during the two centuries after his death, 'which highlights how Dante's engagement with the world continues, indeed grows, beyond his own life' (p. 3). This is particularly relevant from the perspective of the cultural transfer in the Middle Ages as the transmission and reception of the text represents an essential element in the transferences of knowledge in the Medieval World.

Finally, it is worth noting that the intellectual context in which Dante lived and worked reflects the characteristic features of the cultural transfer in the late Middle Ages. With a view to illustrating the intellectual life of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the second part of this volume brings to light the transmission of knopwledge through the translation of philosophical texts. Chapter nine highlights the wide circulation of newly translated philosophical texts from Arabic and Greek, whereas chapter eleven refers to the translation of Aristotle's natural philosophy into Latin from Arabic and Greek. This analysis emphasises the translations of Aristotle's natural philosophy from Greek by

William of Moerbeke in the 1260s. The translation of philosophical texts involves the transmission of knowledge in which forms of interpretation are included. Texts have been subjected to transformations reflecting the dynamic nature of the cultural transmission during the Middle Ages.

The volume is certainly an outstanding work that sheds a new light on Dante's biography and writings by describing the context that surrounds him, with the exception of the first two chapters of the last section focused specifically on Dante's life and works. *Dante in Context* represents the final outcome of the commendable efforts to provide the reader with a complete and detailed picture of the cultural, historical and intellectual conditions determining Dante's life and works.