

### THE POLEMICAL WRITINGS OF PROFIAT DURAN

by FRANK TALMAGE

The year 1391 opened the final chapter in the history of Spanish Jewry. Within one hundred years of that date, the Jews of Spain would be scattered to the four corners of the earth. Among the many witnesses to the events of that year who expressed their feelings and reactions in the light of the terrors and persecutions they experienced was Profiat Duran or, as he was known in Hebrew, Isaac b. Moses ha-Levi. Duran is known in Jewish history by the *nom de plume* Ephod (based upon the acronym of his Catalan name: En Profiat Duran) which was incorporated into the title of two of his books. Little is known with certainty about the details of his life, most of our information about him being based upon conjecture.<sup>1</sup> He was born in Catalonia or in a Catalan-speaking district in the latter half of the 14th century, but neither the exact date nor the exact place are known.

---

Professor Frank Talmage is a member of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Toronto, specializing in Medieval Jewish Literature and History, and is the editor of the *AJS Review*. This article is a slightly abridged translation of his introduction to a recently published critical edition of two of Duran's works, mentioned here.

*The Polemical Writings of Profiat Duran. The Reproach of the Gentiles and "Be Not Like Unto Thy Fathers."* Edited, with an introduction and notes, by Frank Talmage. Jerusalem, 1981. (Ben-Zion Dinur Center for Research in Jewish History and Zalman Shazar Center for the Furtherance of the Study of Jewish History. "Kuntresim" — Texts and Studies. 55)

כתבי פולמוס לפרופיט דוראן, כלימל הגויים ואגרת "אל תהי כאבותיך". מבוא ועריכה מאת אפרים תלמג. ירושלים, מרכז דינור ומרכז שזר, תשמ"א. (קונטרסים — מקורות ומחקרים, סדרה א' 55).

This article is published with the gracious consent of the Dinur Center. Translation by Jonathan Chipman.

1. See Selig Gronemann, *De Profiatti Durani (Efodoei) Vita ac Studii*, Breslau, 1869, pp. 5 et seq.; *Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Duran, Profiat"; Isadore Twersky, "Religion and Law," in S.D.

Duran was an encyclopedic scholar, a typical Spanish Jewish intellectual of the period. His most famous work, *Ma'aseh 'Efod*,<sup>2</sup> is a grammatical work in which the author reveals his acuteness and originality. In addition to the traditional problems of Hebrew grammar, several of which he analyzed anew, he dealt with several subjects less common to this genre, such as Jewish music, Hebrew phonology and the nature of language. Like the grammarians who preceded him, he placed the study of grammar within the larger framework of the intellectual activities of his time.

In his survey of contemporary Jewish culture, he defines three categories of Jewish scholars: traditional Talmudic sages, advocates of philosophy and Kabbalists and arrives at the conclusion that one ought to return primarily to intense and constant study of the Bible. As he says: "It follows from all that we have said that the true service of God is to be found in the study of the Torah and the books of the prophets, and in their constant study and examination" (*Ma'aseh 'Efod*, p. 14).<sup>3</sup> He prized the study of the Bible to such an extent that he saw its neglect as the cause of the tragedies which befell Spanish Jewry, and he claimed that if the communities of Aragon were spared at all during the persecutions, it was due only to their study of the Book of Psalms (*ibid.*); a period in which the Jewish People understand the Bible in depth will be the time of redemption. Thus, his composition of a book of grammar which would assist them in attaining this goal was not merely an intellectual exercise but a sacred task.

For all of these reasons, I consider my writing of this treatise a sign that the Divine redemption is close at hand, and that his justice is to be revealed, and even if he tarry it will not be for long. This is alluded to in the words of the prophet, "Write the vision; make it plain upon

---

Goitein. *Religion in a Religious Age*, Cambridge, Mass., 1974, pp. 69–82; German introduction to *Ma'aseh Efod* (see note 2, below); H. Graetz, *History of the Jews*, abridged English version of German ed., Philadelphia, 1956, v. 4, pp. 188–191 and in index, p. 735; *idem*, *Geschichte der Juden*, Leipzig, Auf. 4, 1904, v. 8, pt. 2, pp. 87–89, 164; A. Poznanski, afterword to text of *Kelimat ha-Goyim, Ha-Tsofeh me-'eres Hagar (ha-Tsofeh le-Hokhmat Yisrael)* 4 (1915), pp. 125–132; Y.F. Baer. *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, Philadelphia, 1961, v. 2, pp. 150–158 and in index, p. 532.

2. *Ma'aseh Efod*, ed. J. Friedländer and J. Kohn, Wien, 1865. The work was written in 1403.

3. Whatever may be the reasons for his bibliocentrism (on this, see I. Twersky's forthcoming monograph on Duran), it certainly ought to be seen within the context of the renewed emphasis on the Bible within contemporary Christianity, particularly that of John Wycliffe. This "return to the sources" ought to be distinguished from that of the 16th century Reformation. It did not adopt the slogan "Scriptura sola" (the Bible alone), but understood that Scripture must be read within the framework of the Patriarchal tradition and Christian theology, just as the Ephodi did not isolate study of the Bible from other branches of Jewish learning. However, one ought to avoid drawing a complete analogy between these reformers and the Ephodi, remembering that Duran wrote for the educated classes while Wycliffe attempted to influence the masses. See H.B. Workman, *John Wyclif*, 2 v., Oxford, 1926, v. 2, pp. 149–200; Gordon Leff, "John Wyclif: The Path to Dissent," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 52, pp. 143–80; *idem*, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, 2 v., New York, 1967, v. 2, p. 523.

tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its time." (Hab. 2:2-3) That is, once the vision and that which is upon the tablets — i.e., the Torah — becomes clear, this shall be a sign of the approach of the redemption. This is what is meant in the subsequent verse, "For still the vision awaits its time; it hastens to the end — it will not lie. If it seem slow, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay." (v. 3) — *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, p. 178

Duran did not write a Bible commentary, but he did compose several short works on various Biblical subjects.<sup>4</sup> With regard to fields not directly related to Biblical or linguistic matters, Duran stressed in the introduction to *Ma'aseh 'Efod* that philosophy ought not be the focus of study, but that it is, nevertheless, necessary as a tool for strengthening the foundations of faith and protecting it against various kinds of sceptics and heretics. (Ibid., p. 6-9) An example of this is his reliance upon philosophical arguments in his polemical works, to be discussed below. However, he did not limit himself to these fields, but also wrote a commentary on Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed*<sup>5</sup> as well as the *Heshev ha-'Efod*<sup>6</sup> dealing with astronomy and the fixing of the Hebrew calendar, as well as briefer treatises and epistles on various subjects.<sup>7</sup>

One work which has unfortunately not survived is his "*Ma'amar Zikhron ha-Shemadot*" (Memoir of Persecutions)<sup>8</sup>, which was known by Isaac Abrabanel (1437-1508), Solomon ibn Verga (ca. 1450-1520) and Samuel Usque (16th cent.). It is not surprising that the subject of the expulsions and persecutions which beset the Jewish People throughout the history of its dispersion should have troubled Duran as it troubled the entire generation which underwent the persecutions of 1391. His feelings are expressed in a letter of condolence (*Kinah ve-Hesped*) which he wrote in 1393 to Joseph b. Abraham ha-Levi upon the death of his father, R. Abraham b. Isaac ha-Levi, one of the leaders who had been active in saving Geronese Jewry in 1391. In this letter, he reacts to the death of this leader and, by way of background, describes the tribulations of the time.<sup>9</sup>

A question which has continued to concern scholars for over 100 years is the fate of Duran himself during these persecutions. According to Y.F. Baer, Duran escaped forced baptism, and remained openly Jewish.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, R.W.

---

4. See *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, German introduction, p. 11; Poznanski, *Kelimat*, p. 127. His comments on the Tekoite woman, on Ahithophel's advice and on Hushai the Archite were published as an appendix to *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, pp. 198-209.

5. Sabionetta, 1553.

6. *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, p. 7.

7. His letters to Meir Crescas and to Joseph b. Abraham ha-Levi were printed as an appendix to *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, pp. 181-87, 191-97. See there also the German introduction, pp. 6, 10-11 and Poznanski, p. 127.

8. *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, pp. 9-10; Y.F. Baer, *Untersuchungen über die Quellen und Komposition des Schebet Jehuda*, Berlin, 1923, Ch. 1.

9. Baer, *History*, *ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

Emery found documents in Perpignan according to which Duran was baptized during the persecutions of 1391 and afterwards lived publicly as a Christian, under the name Honoratus de Bonafide. According to these documents, Duran served twelve years later as the court astrologer of Juan I of Aragon.<sup>11</sup> One wonders, however, how he succeeded in writing and publishing his anti-Christian writings, *Kelimat ha-Goyim (Reproach of the Gentiles)* and *'Al tehi ka-'Avotekha ('Be Not Like unto thy Fathers')* and how he continued to serve as a teacher in the home of Hasdai Crescas (d. 1412?)<sup>12</sup> under such circumstances. There remains the possibility, which some have found most plausible, that Duran was in fact baptized in 1391, but afterwards returned to Judaism.

In Duran's writings themselves, there are veiled references to forced baptism. Thus, in the introduction to *Heshev ha-'Efod* he writes, "since the day that God poured out his wrath like water<sup>13</sup> upon the exiles of Jerusalem in Spain, I have used Ephod as my name."<sup>14</sup> It was apparently after the persecutions that he began to refer to himself as Ephod, in accordance with the Talmudic dictum quoted in his letter of consolation to R. Joseph b. Abraham ha-Levi: "Why was the Biblical pericope dealing with the priestly garments placed next to that of the sacrifices? To teach that, just as sacrifices atone for sins, so do the priestly garments atone. ...*The Ephod atones for the sin of idolatry.*" (Zevahim 88b, as quoted in *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, p. 194) He then concludes the letter:

---

11. R.W. Emery, "New Light on Profayt Duran the Efodi," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, n.s. 58 (1967-68), pp. 328-37. Similar documentation was presented and discussed earlier by H. Gross, "Zur Geschichte der Juden in Arles," *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, 31 (1882), p. 499.

12. Duran was evidently both a protégé of Crescas and a member of his household. In the introduction to *Ma'aseh 'Efod* mention is made of "my wise students of the house of Hasdai" (p. 17). See Gronemann, *De Vita*, p. 10.

According to the copyists of several of the manuscripts of *Kelimat ha-Goyim*, Duran came from the city of Perpignan. See Gronemann, p. 6; A. Kaminka, "Shirim u-melitsot le-ha-Rav Shelomoh beha-Rav Reuven Bonafed," *Ha-Tsofeh le-Hokhmat Yisrael* 12 (1928), pp. 33-42. However, in the title of a poem which the poet Solomon b. Reuben Bonafed sent him, he refers to him as "Master Profiat *MLGYRY*" (Ibid., p. 38). Different scholars have suggested various conjectures as to the identity of this place. See Kaminka, p. 33f.; Gronemann, *ibid.*; H. Gross, *Gallia Judaica*, Amsterdam, 1969, pp. 358-59; Baer, *Die Juden im christlichen Spanien*, Berlin, 1929, v. 1, p. 799. All known material has already been analyzed, and only new findings can determine this question definitively.

13. In the literature of the period, and particularly in Duran's writings, "water" and "insolent waters" are concealed references to forced baptism. See *Ma'aseh 'Efod*, p. 14: "When they departed from the Torah of God and the words of the prophets, which are compared to water, He poured his wrath upon them like water." Compare the thirteenth century Ashkenazi polemical work, *Sefer Nitsahon Yashan*, (Nizzahon Vetus) ed. M. Breuer, Ramat-Gan, 1978, p. 185: "the waters of apostasy were called the 'insolent waters.'"

14. MS Munich 299, fol. 1v.

...This, my brother, I have seen fit to compose in honor of the venerable sage and poet, your father of blessed memory, secretly and modestly, for the Lord my God hath put me to silence, and given me waters of gall to drink to repletion and satiety. *The insolent waters have overwhelmed me*, the stream has inundated me. I speak as a spirit from the netherworld and from the dust I speak at all times and all hours so that my words are muffled. To whom shall I teach knowledge and to whom shall I impart understanding?... And it is the speaker's will that his soul, which is bound with yours, shall weep in secret, for behold, he is not of his faith, strange is his deed and alien his worship — your brother the Levite whose song has been spoiled, this is his name for ever and his memory is — Ephod. (*Ibid.*, p. 197)<sup>15</sup>

One may still question whether these allusions are definite evidence of Duran's own forced conversion<sup>16</sup> or whether he expresses himself here as the spokesman of his generation.

In either case, Duran's conversion was — according to the copyists of his words — the background to the writing of his two polemical works, *Kelimat ha-Goyim* and *'Al tehi ka-'Avotekha*. The commentator on the epistle, Joseph ibn Shem Tov (1400–1469?) tells a somewhat romantic story about the circumstances of its composition:

This epistle was sent from Avignon to the late Don Meir Alguadex,<sup>17</sup> the rabbi of all the Jews in the Kingdom of Castile. The letter deals with two *conversos* who lived in Aragon one named Master Profiat and the other Bonet Bonjorn. The two of them agreed to go to Palestine, there to return to Judaism. Master Profiat left first for the port, and waited several days for Bonet Bonjorn. Meanwhile, Master Pablo, formerly known as Don Solomon ha-Levi, came to Avignon to serve as bishop. There he found Bonet Bonjorn, the Christian, and disputed with him and convinced him of the truth of his own beliefs. As a result of this, Bonet Bonjorn sent a letter to Master Profiat, which we have not seen... but from his reply we may conjecture some of what was written there.<sup>18</sup>

This story about a secret meeting which never took place is appealing, but is apparently purely the product of historical imagination. On the other hand, the details contained within the body of the letter are not without interest. As accoun-

---

15. Translation based partially upon Baer, *History*, v. 2, p. 152.

16. See Gronemann, *De Vita*, p. 8. He saw in the words of Solomon Bonafed a veiled reference to Duran's forced conversion (Kaminka, "Shirim," p. 38).

Another question related to this is that of Duran's participation in the disputation of Tortosa. According to Baer, Duran was present (*History*, v. 2, p. 173), even though he is not mentioned in the documentation. On the other hand, one may see in Bonafed's poem the hope or wish that Duran appear, an indication that he was in fact not present. One may conjecture that his "conversion" prevented him from appearing publicly as a spokesman for Judaism in those districts in which he was baptized.

17. Died 1410. Court physician and chief rabbi of Castile. He had contact with Hasdai Crescas, Solomon da Piera and Solomon ha-Levi (Pablo de Santa Maria) before his conversion.

18. There are various theories as to Bonjorn's identity. According to Baer, he is David Bonet Bonjorn, a resident of Gerona, who was examined as a physician at the University of Perpignan in June 1390. See Baer, *Juden*, v. 1, p. 259. See also Gross, *Gallia Judaica*, pp. 470–472.

ted there, a friend or acquaintance of Duran, En David Bonet Bonjorn,<sup>19</sup> had decided thereafter to remain loyal to his new faith. Bonjorn was the protégé of Pablo de Santa María — the former Solomon ha-Levi — who had converted out of genuine belief in Christianity in 1390 or 1391.<sup>20</sup> The latter was close to Cardinal Pedro de Luna, who later became the antipope, Benedict XIII. Pablo was sent by Luna to study in Paris; there he received an education in theology, philosophy and natural science — an education to which Duran did not attach overly much importance. Pablo was later to be appointed, in 1415, the bishop of Burgos, and his exegetical writings (the ‘Additions’ to the *Postilla* of Nicholas de Lyra) and his anti-Jewish polemic, *Scrutinium Scripturarum*, were considered important works by medieval Christianity.

Duran’s comments in the letter testify to Bonjorn’s respect for Pablo de Santa María and his loyalty to Christianity. It would seem that, out of zeal for his faith, he sent Duran a letter arguing against his devotion to Judaism and blaming his servants for preventing him from seeing the light. In his epistle, Duran repaid Bonjorn in kind, condemning both his disloyalty to his people and to the teaching of his fathers, as well as Christianity itself, for contradicting the principles of reason and of nature. This letter was apparently composed in 1394 or 1395 and the polemical work *Kelimat ha-Goyim* a year or two later, in 1396.<sup>21</sup>

A foreword to *Kelimat ha-Goyim*, found in several manuscripts, connects this work to the events of the time and to Duran’s supposed conversion:

This tractate was written by an outstanding sage who was forced to convert during the terrible persecutions decreed against us (for our many sins) leading to our destruction, death and annihilation. These persecutions began in Seville which, instead of being a great and beautiful community, marked with glory and Torah and every precious thing... has now been completely destroyed, like the condemned cities which God overthrew and turned to salt and brimstone in the land of the covenant. And the persecutions known among the great communities of Spain have spread, and the evil waters have also overrun us in Catalonia, with all the things mentioned above, in the year 1397. This sage, mentioned above for his wisdom, wished to investigate the vanities of the Gentiles and the errors of Jesus, which they followed, so that we may refute the shaky foundations of their religion with the words of its own founders. And he put these words in the following twelve chapters...<sup>22</sup>

---

19. There are various theories as to Bonjorn’s identity. According to Baer, he is David Bonet Bonjorn, a resident of Gerona, who was examined as a physician at the University of Perpignan in June 1390. See Baer, *Juden*, v. 1, p. 259. See also Gross, *Gallia Judaica*, pp. 470–472.

20. On whom see P.L. Serrano, *Los conversos Don Pablo de Santa María y Don Alfonso de Cartagena*, Madrid, 1942; F. Cantera y Burgos, *Alvar García de Santa María*, Madrid, 1952.

21. There are various theories about the dates of these works. B. Netanyahu’s discussion of this problem seems quite plausible. See his *The Marranos of Spain*, 2nd ed., Millwood, N.Y., 1973, pp. 221–226.

22. Poznanski, *Ha-Tsofeh* 3 (1914), p. 100.

In fact, the book had been commissioned by Hasdai Crescas, and was intended to serve as the basis for a polemic which Crescas himself intended to write — the *Biṭṭul 'Iqqare ha-Notsrim* (Refutation of the Principles of Christianity) which appeared in Catalan in 1397, and which has survived only in the Hebrew translation of Joseph ibn Shem Tov.

At the end of the dedication of this book, Duran writes to his patron, “I shall write briefly as you have wished, for I know that with your broad mind and sublime intellect, you shall add your own astute remarks.” He then modestly adds that, “we did not intend to refute them (the Christians) in this work, for you, the glory of the rabbis, are quite capable of refuting them (Ch. 2, end)... and you will strike with the venom of your tongue and the breath of your holy mouth, smiting the wicked with the spirit of understanding lips.”

Despite this disclaimer, Duran felt that his composition had value in itself. At the end of the book, he writes: “If this work reaches one lacking in your learning and your understanding, his eyes will be enlightened by this little bit of honey.” This assumption is confirmed by the number of manuscripts of this work which testify to its wide distribution among the reading public.

### **The Structure of the Writings**

The epistle, *'Al tehi ka-'Avotekha*, is considered not only one of the most successful medieval disputations, but one of the classic works of Hebrew literature. In the epistle, which is written satirically, the author poses as an orthodox Christian and advises his interlocutor that he, too, should cling to the faith in Jesus and turn his back on the path of his Jewish ancestors who were blinded and did not see the light of truth. Thus, the refrain “Be not like unto thy fathers,” (based upon Zech. 1:4) repeats itself over and over again. However, everything which Duran presents as negative — adherence to a rational faith and to the Torah — is, of course, praiseworthy in his eyes, while whatever is presented as positive — the acceptance of beliefs which are contrary to reason and the rejection of the Jewish tradition — are despicable to him. As told by Isaac Akrish, the first to print the epistle, “Since all of its words are very obscure, hidden, and subtle, the Christians called it *alteca boteca*, that is to say, *'Al tehi ka-'avotekha*, because each chapter begins in this manner. The Christians brought proof from it for their belief, contrary to what the Ephodi intended... until the sage, the theologian Joseph ibn Shem Tov came and explained each of his words according to the truth. Ephodi was certainly ridiculing and mocking Bonet Bonjorn, who had apostasized, for his faith and for his words.”<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup>. According to the above-mentioned edition of A. Poznanski, pp. 12, 14.

In fact, however, the irony in this epistle is quite transparent, and it is difficult to believe that anyone who was capable of dealing with the difficult and ornate Hebrew style of the epistle would be unable to understand that it was not intended as Christian propaganda. The central part of the work is based upon philosophical argumentation, with very little discussion of the New Testament or of textual problems. At the end of the letter, there is some interesting historical material dealing with the Church and the situation of the Jews at that time.

Duran's approach in *Kelimat ha-Goyim* (Reproach to the Gentiles) is different. This work is a systematic discussion of the principles of Christianity in twelve chapters, with criticism of the New Testament, of "errors" in Christian Bible translations, and so forth. Rather than presenting an antithetical discussion, as in the epistle, he uses a form of argument in which he pretends to accept the assumptions of his opponent, namely, the argument "*ke-fi ma'amar ha'omer*" (according to your own words).<sup>24</sup> For this reason, he invests a great deal of effort in the analysis of the New Testament as the basis for his own positions.

An outstanding example of his use of this principle is his relation to the problems of the chronography of Jesus' life. The general tendency of Jewish polemicists, both before and after the composition of this work, was to claim that Jesus lived earlier than he did, in order to refute the Christian claim that the Temple was destroyed because of the sin of his crucifixion. For their purposes, the Christians employed the Talmudic account of the signs which appeared in the Temple forty years before its destruction (Yoma 39b), while the Jewish polemicists stressed the tradition of the sages that Jesus was a student of Joshua ben Perahiah<sup>25</sup> and therefore lived more than one hundred years before the destruction.<sup>26</sup> Against this, Ephodi answers "according to your own words" and accepts the Christian tradition which places the birth of Jesus in the year 3761 A.M. (1 C.E.)<sup>27</sup> (Ch. 11, cf. Ch. 6) He felt that this was sufficient to contradict the Christian testimony, because then Jesus' crucifixion would still precede the destruction by at least fifty years, and there was no need to exaggerate the discrepancy if the Christians could be proven mistaken by even a small amount.

---

24. See Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, New York, 1961, p. 11.

25. According to Sanhedrin 107b; that is, at the end of the second century B.C.E.

26. According to Levi b. Abraham b. Hayyim — 130 years (below, Ch. 11, note 21); Simeon b. Zemah Duran — 157 years (See appendix); Solomon ibn Verga — 150 years (*Shevet Yehudah*, ed. Y.F. Baer and A. Shohet, Jerusalem, 1947, p. 106); Abraham Zacuto (1452?–1515?) — 150 years (*Sefer Yuhasin*, ed. H. Filipowski, London, 1928, p. 15). R. Yehiel of Paris, when he defended the Talmud in the "disputation" in Paris in 1240, claimed that the Jesus mentioned in the Talmud was someone other than the Christian Savior (R. Margalioth, *Vikkuaḥ Rabbenu Yehiel*, Lvov, 1928, pp. 16f.).

27. Compare the discussion in his *Ḥeshev ha-'Esfod*, in *Sefer ha-'ibbur* of Abraham bar Hiyya (d. 1136) and in *Sefer 'Evronot* of Joseph b. Judah the Hazan of Troyes (13th cent.).



Almost every polemical discussion, to a certain extent, reflects the spirit of the time in which it was written. On this point, Duran's works are no exception. We must therefore briefly describe the situation of the Church in the 14th century before discussing the content of his works.

In 1309, Pope Clement V decided, for various political reasons, to move his residence from Rome, the capital of Christendom, to Avignon. Until 1378, except for a brief period, the papacy continued to be located in Southern France, the center of gravity of European politics. This period, during which the papacy was absent from Rome, is known in Church history as the Babylonian Captivity. In 1377 Gregory IX decided to put an end to this "captivity" and to return to Rome, both in order to look after the interests of the Papal States and to promote the development of renewed connections with the Byzantine Church. Immediately after making this decision, Gregory died, so that in 1378 a new pope had to be chosen. The election of Urban VI was not universally accepted, again for political reasons, and the choice of a rival pope, Clement VII, was announced. From then until 1417, the Roman Church was divided and two opposing popes (and for a brief period three) reigned at one and the same time — the pope in Rome and the antipope in Avignon.

This politicization of the institution of the Papacy led to a crisis of faith within the Church, and there were those who began to question the centrality of the Pope and suggested the running of the Church by a council instead. These Conciliarists, such as Marsilius of Padua, William of Ockham, Jean of Paris, Dietrich of Niem, Pierre d'Ailly and others, argued that authority in the Church stems from the community of believers (*Universitas fidelium*) and that priests, bishops and the pope himself are all equals. Moreover, the status of the laity is not a lesser one than that of the clergy, and there were even those who said that the laity take precedence. In addition to the Conciliarists, other critics emerged within the 14th century Church, such as John Wycliffe (1320–1384) in England and Jan Hus (1372–1415) in Bohemia. These religious reformers severely criticized the clergy and the papacy, and suggested theological reforms in several central areas.

Out of their desire to reduce the status of the clergy, they attempted to deemphasize the centrality of the sacraments within the cult. Thus, they argued that "rituals performed by the various ranks of clergy do not in themselves bring salvation, and are no more than symbols, representing the contrition of the sinner from the depths of his heart, because of which he deserves absolution."<sup>28</sup> What is

---

28. Menahem Dorman, *Marsilyus Ish Paduah*, Ramat-Gan, 1972, p. 78. For the background of these developments in Christian theology, see Michael Wilks, *The Problem of Sovereignty in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1963); S.H. Hendrix, "In Quest of the *Vera Ecclesia*: The Crisis of Late Medieval Ecclesiology," *Viator* 7 (1976), pp. 347–378.

said here of Marsilius of Padua is true of other religious reformers as well.<sup>29</sup> Wycliffe declared that God absolves man without the mediation of the priest.<sup>30</sup> Likewise Jan Hus, anticipating the reformation which would come two hundred years later, attacked the doctrine of the spiritual treasury of the Church, out of which are distributed indulgences and pardon to believers.<sup>31</sup> Those who followed in Wycliffe's path, the Lollards, likewise claimed that oral confession alone is superfluous.<sup>32</sup> Generally, these critics attached no importance to "uttering of the proper words" in the performance of the sacraments.<sup>33</sup> Wycliffe claimed that Jesus had not introduced the ordination of priests at all.<sup>34</sup> Hardly any of the sacraments escaped criticism, but the focus of their criticism, particularly that of Hus and Wycliffe, was the Eucharist. They denied any real transformation in the bread and the wine, stating that transubstantiation was a purely spiritual concept, the bread and wine remaining the same substance as they were (remanance), for one who says that they are actually transformed into the blood and body of Christ exposes the body of the Savior to accidents of matter and to desecration. For example, it is not impossible that a mouse might eat the body of the Lord!<sup>35</sup> The members of the Waldensian sect, which did not accept the authority of Rome, argued that one cannot possibly imagine that the body of the Savior descends from heaven and enters every church in the world at the time of the consecration of the host.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, like the Lollards, the Waldensians claimed that a sinful priest, whose sins have not been absolved, cannot sanctify the host or perform the Mass.<sup>37</sup> In brief, the denial of the literal character of transubstantiation limited the power and authority of the priest.<sup>38</sup> We must explain the development of what they saw as a falsification of Christianity: these critics adopted an historicistic position, and saw in contemporary Christianity a departure from authentic, early Christianity. Thus, Wycliffe and Hus distinguished between the period of the disciples and that of the later Church, whose tradition they called "pharisaic"<sup>39</sup> — a term of contempt in the Christian tradition. In their view, the dogma of transubstantiation was an invention of the "moderns."<sup>40</sup> Similarly, Hus challenged the Papacy, declaring that it was not instituted by Jesus but by the em-

---

29. Leff, *Heresy*, v. 2, p. 411.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 525.

31. Matthew Spinka, *John Hus*, Princeton, 1968, p. 29.

32. K.B. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Nonconformity*, London, 1952, p. 131.

33. A. Gewirth, *Marsilius of Padua, The Defender of the Peace*, New York and London, 1951, pp. 260–261.

34. Leff, *Heresy*, v. 2, p. 525.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 553ff.; *idem*, "John Wyclif," pp. 176–179; Spinka, *John Hus*, pp. 30ff.

36. Leff, *Heresy*, v. 2, pp. 553–54.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 553; McFarlane, *John Wycliffe*, pp. 94–95.

38. Leff, "Wyclif," pp. 176–179; McFarlane, *Wycliffe*, pp. 94–95.

39. Leff, *Heresy*, v. 2, p. 460.

40. Spinka, *Hus*, p. 33; McFarlane, *Wycliffe*, pp. 94–95.

peror Constantine.<sup>41</sup> In the words of G. Leff, “this historical consciousness was one of the moving forces behind the anti-sacerdotalism of the 13th and 14th centuries.”<sup>42</sup>

### The Nature of Duran’s Polemical Writings

A study of Duran’s polemical writings reveals that he knew well not only the Latin Scriptures, but also such basic works of Christian theology and exegesis as the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard (1100?–1169), the *Speculum historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais (d. 1264) and the *Postilla* of Nicholas de Lyra (1270–1349), the authors of which he mentions by name. It would seem that he was also aware of the non-normative trends which we have described above, and knew well how to attack the vulnerable points of Christianity. He mocks the split within the Church of his time in a remark about Pablo de Santa Maria in the epistle, “your speaking of him as the pope has made me wonder whether he will go to Rome or stay in Avignon.” Similarly, in his discussion of the Eucharist it is evident that he knew the dispute within the Church, writing that “some of them have also felt its weakness” (*Kelimat ha-Goyim*, Ch. 6).<sup>43</sup>

Duran’s historicist method, which is the cornerstone of his attack against Christianity in *Kelimat ha-Goyim*, ought to be seen within this context. Duran attempts to demonstrate that contemporary Christianity is the outcome of a long development and that, over the course of time, the heads of the Church (in his words, “the theologians,” “the clever ones,” “the deceivers”) elaborated, confused and falsified the intentions of the founders, Jesus and his disciples, to whom he refers as “those who err.” This approach was not new, and it is quite possible that Duran derived it from the work *Livyat Hen* by Levi b. Abraham b. Hayyim (1245?–1315?), a work which he knew and which is mentioned in his book (Ch. 11). However, in the context of the spiritual trends within the church about which we spoke, this approach received additional impetus.<sup>44</sup>

---

41. Spinka, *Hus*, p. 28; Dorman, *Marsilyus*, pp. 85–86.

42. Leff, *Heresy*, v. 2, p. 456.

43. A question deserving of further study is that of the channels through which Duran received his information about developments within the Church. See Baer, *History*, v. 2, pp. 474–75, n. 41.

44. Levi b. Abraham b. Hayyim, “*Perek ba-'Emunah ha-Yedu'ah*” (Chapter on a certain religion) from his *Livyat Hen*, in *Yeshurun* 8 (1872), pp. 2–3: “There are those who claim that he was only the Messiah. He certainly intended nothing more than this, nor did he intend to nullify any of the commandments, as is explained in their gospels, but others among his disciples struck out against the basic principles (i.e., of Jewish faith). Perhaps he did not intend to deceive at all, but misleading concepts entered his heart, causing him to speak and to do... and perhaps even the early ones also intended this, until the later ones came, particularly Emperor Constantine, and declared that he (Jesus) had been God Himself, and they incarnated him, and attributed to him things which are not true.”

One should also compare the words of Jacob Al-Kirkisani (1st half of 10th cent.), Abraham b. Moses Maimonides (1186–1257), Abraham bar Hiyya, Abraham ibn Daud (1100?–1180) and particularly Levi b. Abraham b. Hayyim (1245?–1315?).

It was within this framework that Duran approached the traditionally pivotal issues of the Jewish-Christian debate, such as the orthodox doctrine of the trinity (Ch. 2), the doctrine of Incarnation (Ch. 3), the centrality of baptism (Ch. 7), clerical celibacy (Ch. 9), and so forth. All of these, he argued, were inventions of later authorities, like the dogma of Jesus' divinity itself. "This false Messiah never intended to make himself into a god, nor did the mistaken ones (i.e., his disciples) intend this," and "neither he nor his disciples ever erred in thinking that he was God and the creator of all." (Ch. 1) He relates to the question of the abolition of the commandments upon the coming of Jesus in a similar manner. Duran claims, on the basis of evidence in the New Testament, that Jesus and his disciples followed the commandments; however, "several major statutes and commandments were negated and destroyed by the deceivers" (Ch. 4) who distinguished among the ethical, practical and legal commandments "and claimed that the Torah of Moses is lacking in all three parts." Only in the New Testament can the entire, complete Torah be found and, in order to explain the nullification of the commandments of the Old Testament, they postulated the existence of three distinct historical eras: from Moses until the crucifixion of Jesus; from the Crucifixion until the publication of the Gospels; and the period after the Gospels. In the course of these different epochs, the commandments were gradually nullified (Ch. 5).

He employs a similar method in discussing those institutions which were subject to criticism by the reformers within the Church. Duran agrees with Jan Hus, in regard to the Papacy, that all the disciples of Jesus were equal and that there was no preference given to Peter over the others. In this view, of course, it is implied that the Bishop of Rome, the pope, enjoys no priority over the other bishops.<sup>45</sup> Even if we agree, asks Duran, that Peter did have primacy, how do we know that he passed this privilege on to his successors, or that he had the right to do so? He exploits the internal Christian argument in order to challenge the view that the pope is the "guardian of souls" and that he "holds the keys to reduce the length and character of punishment" and to draw upon indulgences out of the "treasury of the Church" (Ch. 5).

---

See Leon Nemoy, "Al-Qirqisani's Account of the Jewish Sects and Christianity," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 7 (1930), p. 367; idem, "The Attitude of the Early Karaites Towards Christianity," *Salo W. Baron Jubilee Volume*, New York and London, 1975, pp. 706-707; Gerson D. Cohen, "Esau as Symbol in Early Medieval Thought," in A. Altmann, ed., *Jewish Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, Cambridge, Mass., 1967, p. 46, n. 95; idem, ed., *The Book of the Tradition (Sefer ha-Qabbalah), A Critical Edition with Translation and Notes*, London, 1967, p. xxxii; Maimonides, *Iggeret Teman*, ed. A. Halkin, New York, 1942, pp. 14-15, n. 14-15; Abraham b. Moses Maimonides, *Perush 'al ha-Torah*, ed. S.D. Sasson, London, 1958, p. 64; Abraham bar Hiyya, *Sefer ha-Ibbur*, ed. H. Filipowski, London, 1951, p. 109: "When the disciples of the antagonist came, they misled the nations into these errors, and they went astray after him."

45. *Kelimat ha-Goyim*, Ch. 8; Dorman, *Marsilyus*, pp. 85-86.

Among his other doubts regarding the Eucharist, Duran, like the Christian sceptics, mocks the view that this holy act can be accomplished by means of words alone (*'Al tehi ka'avotekha* closes with the words, "the mystery is connected to the utterance") and by "any priest whatsoever," even a sinner lacking any pure thoughts or intention,<sup>46</sup> simply because "Jesus' vicar, the pope, has the power to give any priest this power" (Ch. 6). This comment is accompanied by the other criticism made by the opponents of the ecclesiastical establishment, including the one about the fate of a consecrated host which has been eaten by a mouse or pig. Like the Christian critics, he is not satisfied by the answer given by orthodox theology (Ibid.). In his criticism of all the sacraments, Duran adopts a historicistic stance and concludes "all of these things are vanity" and are all the product of the imagination of the moderns<sup>47</sup> "and there is no value in their being mentioned (Ch. 9).

But Ephodi wields a double-edged sword. Although he maintains that the institutions of Christianity are a deviation from the intentions of the founders, he holds the founders themselves in little esteem. Primitive Christianity was a confused and distorted versions of Judaism, the result of the ignorance and lack of knowledge of its founders. Duran warns:

There is no doubt that Jesus and his disciples and the apostles were all ignorant people, as may be clearly seen from the sort of evidence they invoke from Scripture in this matter, as well as in their quotation from the narratives of the Torah and the Prophets. I believe that their interpretation of the Scripture was not based upon direct knowledge; but, as the custom then among Jews was to have a public sermon delivered every Sabbath, it was in this manner that they studied Torah, for among his disciples were fishermen and tax-collectors... and some of these were pious men who always listened to these sermons, and because of their lack of knowledge they confused what they heard... (Ch. 10)

Jesus did not know how to expound the Torah according to the hermeneutical rules of the Sages, through the use of reason and dialectics, but rather "that man learned it through rhetoric" (Ch. 1), that is, "he was constantly telling parables" (Ibid., Ch. 6). The problem, however, was intensified by his "deceiving" disciples, who understood the parables in their simple meaning. This was the origin of their distortion of the concept of baptism, which in the sources was nothing but a symbol of repentance (Ch. 7), and of transubstantiation, which in Jesus' mouth was a

---

46. Our author greatly valued inward intention (*kavvanah*) in the performance of the *mitsvot*. In the condolence letter to Joseph b. Abraham ha-Levi, he writes: "I say that this is one of the reasons for the absence of Divine Providence and the hiddenness of God at this time, and the reason that the (Jewish) people falls by the sword and by flame and is despoiled time after time in the period of this great exile is that they perform the deeds alone, without any inner intent or concentration whatsoever" (*Ma'aseh Efod*, p. 192; compare pp. 2-3).

47. Their official formulation came only in the 12th century. See Pierre Pourrat, *The Theology of the Sacraments*, St. Louis and London, 1930, pp. 272ff.

mere metaphor. Through many confusions of this sort, “those who went astray after him attempted to build a great city upon this vain foundation, in which there were few men of truth” (Ch. 6).<sup>48</sup> According to our author, both Jesus and John the Baptist belong to the category of pious fools (Ch. 4, 7), both the words and deeds of Jesus indicating “his foolishness and his madness” (Ch. 6). As for Peter, “perhaps he said this out of his foolishness, for the fool talks too much” (Ch. 8).

Along with this, Jesus is presented as a devotee of the occult. Duran ‘updates’ the ancient tradition found in the Talmud (Sanhedrin 107b) and in the book *Toledot Yeshu*<sup>49</sup> according to which Jesus was a magician, by translating ‘magic’ into concepts of the Kabbalah; in his words “Jesus of Nazareth and his followers were Kabbalists,” but just as they confused the words of Torah, so was their Kabbalah confused; “he did those things which departed from the natural order by means of the practical side of that science”: Jesus exploited the magical potential of Kabbalah to serve the forces of evil (*siṭra ’aḥra*) and “used the left side, the side of impurity, which it is forbidden to use.” (Ch. 2)

One of the cornerstones of his condemnation of the founders of Christianity as boors and ignoramuses is his meticulous textual criticism of the New Testament and of the Vulgate, the Latin translation of the Bible of St. Jerome (340–420). In addition to the material on this subject included in the first five chapters of *Kelimat ha-Goyim*, the tenth chapter deals exclusively with “the errors and confusions which guided Jesus and his disciples,” that is, those readings which departed from those in the traditional Hebrew text, because of their reliance either upon the Septuagint, upon other textual traditions, or due to variations which occurred in the oral tradition.

---

48. In the Jewish-Christian debate, the two sides constantly accused each other both of excessive literalism in the understanding of Scripture and of deviation from the simple meaning of the text. Thus, in connection with the Biblical references quoted by the Christians to support the institution of baptism, Duran writes: “the gates of repentance are locked to deceivers such as these, for while it is allowed to create parables and metaphors such as these... they may not be brought as evidence.” On the other hand, he mocks Christians for understanding the story of the Garden of Eden, that is, the account of Original Sin, in its literal meaning. What is interesting here is that Duran also chides the Christians for excessive literalness in their understanding of the New Testament.

One should compare the approach of Christian exegesis in its interpretation of the apostles’ understanding of the words of Jesus. Commenting on Luke 18:34, in which the disciples “do not understand” when Jesus says that he is going to die, Vincent Ferrer, the great preacher who agitated against the Jews at the time of the persecutions of 1391, said that the disciples were used to understanding Jesus’ words as parables, and for that reason did not understand them when they were intended literally. This was a technique in contemporary Christian preaching and our author used it, after his fashion, to his own advantage. J.S. Sivera, ed., *Quaresma de Sant Vicent Ferrer predicada a València l’any 1413*, Barcelona, 1927, p. 2. See M. Molho, “Les Homélies d’Organya,” *Bulletin Hispanique* 83 (1916), p. 204.

49. For additional details, see *Nitsaḥon Yashan*, p. 20 and notes there. On these traditions, see Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician*, London, 1978.

According to our author, these “confusions” came about because Jesus’ ignorance was so extreme that “this poor man did not even know ‘*Shema Yisra’el*’” (Ch. 10). As for the apostles of Jesus, “some were fishermen and tax collectors... these piously foolish people regularly heard the sermons in the synagogue but, out of ignorance, they confused whatever they heard.” (Ibid.) The disciples of Jesus lacked even basic education “and their lack of knowledge is not surprising, for he (Matthew) was a tax-collector, who sat in the gate of the city, and it is well known that all of them were wicked people.” (Ibid.) For this reason, they confused what they had heard superficially in a public sermon. Thus, “their evil mouths did not know and did not understand and erred in that in which even small school children would not stumble, to show that on that day all is confusion and all their precious things are of no avail.” (End, Ch. 10) Duran points out alleged contradictions and corruptions and says in his epistle, with obvious irony, “all this indicates his competence and expertise in Holy Scripture.”

In addition to the original confusions, Jerome — whom he calls “Jerome the Confounder” — introduced new changes in his translation of Holy Scripture into Latin. A short, but very concentrated chapter, the final one in the book, is devoted to this subject. In his opinion, Jerome’s confusions originated, not only in his lack of mastery of the Hebrew language (for he learned from “an ignorant Jew”) but also in christological interpretations which he deliberately interpolated into the text, such as his translation of “with God, my Savior” (Hab. 2:18) as “with my God, Jesus.” Our author also notes that Jerome’s approach lacks consistency, in that he remains loyal to the Hebrew text specifically in those passages which, as quoted in the New Testament, depart from it. A very instructive example of his sharp sense of criticism is his conjecture with regard to II Corinthians 12:2, in which he reveals the extent of his familiarity with paleographic problems (despite the fact that today his conjecture may seem highly contrived). In this passage, Paul states, “I knew a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to... heaven, whether in the body or out of the body I do not know.” Duran comments, “the deceivers said that he said this about himself, alluding to his becoming a heretic in the vision he claims to have seen. If so, there is no doubt that they confused the number. Perhaps it was forty years, for the number ten in their notation and the number forty in Indian characters are similar, and they became accustomed to writing in those numbers.”<sup>50</sup>

---

50. In astronomical and mathematical tables up through the 12th century, a special symbol was used for the number forty,  $\text{XL}$ , which is the ligature XL. Just as Duran suggests, later scribes confused that sign with the very similar X. Properly speaking,  $\text{XL}$ , is not an Indian decimal numeral. It was, however, incorporated into the “modified Spanish system” which contained both Roman and Indian elements. Thus, Duran considers it an Indian numeral. See Richard Lemay, “The Hispanic Origin of our Present Numerical Forms,” *Viator* 8 (1977), pp. 435–67, esp. pp. 461–467. I wish to thank Prof. Lemay for further clarification made on this point in a personal letter.

The Ephodi also did not overlook the contradictions among the various evangelists: "what is amazing in these stories is that each one tells of the deeds of Jesus in a manner different from that of the other, and they stumble about without eyes." (Ch. 10)

Finally, in order to prove that the Church had not gone back on its errors with regard to Holy Scripture, our author quotes the commentary and explanations of one of the great Christian exegetes, the Franciscan Nicholas de Lyra, who attempts, in his view, to cover up the errors of the earlier ones and to correct them. In all of this, Duran went further than his predecessors, both in the range of the texts which he analyzed as well as in his emphasis upon the textual aspect of the subject.<sup>51</sup>

If the early Christians erréd by distorting the Bible and the Kabbalah, the later ones extensively misused philosophical argumentation. "In the little that they studied of the science of logic and of philosophy, they thought to use an enemy to bolster their belief, and they mixed together honey and wormwood" (Ch. 1, Introduction). As a result, Christian beliefs attack "everything which has been proven in mathematics, natural science and metaphysics, and all the postulates and axioms unique to these forms of wisdom." (Ch. 6) For this reason, in Duran's opinion, which is like that of other Jewish polemicists who preceded him,<sup>52</sup> the Christians are unwittingly trapped in fideism, the abrogation of the demands of reason wherever these do not correspond to the principles of religion. "They reject all doubts, saying that the Divine matter is above human reason, and that the mind is inadequate to penetrate these deep and profound secrets and mysteries, because after Jesus said this and established this principle, one may not question it, because it is the absolute truth, and it is because of the mysteries of religion that faith is assured and questioning is dangerous." (Ch. 4)<sup>53</sup>

---

51. Criticism of the New Testament and of Jerome's Latin translation appeared as early as Joseph Kimhi's *Sefer ha-Berit*, in R. David Kimhi's Bible commentaries, in *Sefer Milhamot ha-Shem* of Jacob b. Reuben, in the *Sefer ha-Nitsahon* and elsewhere. See Lasker, following note, pp. 3-6.

52. Joseph Kimhi, *Sefer ha-Berit*, ed. Dorot, Jerusalem, 1975, pp. 11-12, 25. On the role of philosophy in Jewish-Christian polemics, see the comprehensive study: Daniel J. Lasker, *Jewish Philosophical Polemics Against Christianity in the Middle Ages*, New York, 1977.

53. See, for example, Augustine, *De Trinitate*, in J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus... Series Latina*, Paris, 1844-65, v. 42, col. 819; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 32, 1; *Liber de Veritate Catholicae fidei contra errores infidelium*, 1.16, Turin, 1961, v. 1, pp. 4-5. In the 14th century, the split between faith and "ratio" or the mind was sharpened by such theologians as William of Ockham. See Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, New York, 1955, p. 498. J.M. Millás-Vallicrosa criticizes Duran for "ignoring" Christian use of philosophical argumentation. See his "Aspectos filosóficos de la polémica judaica en tiempos de Hasday Crescas," *Harry A. Wolfson Jubilee Volume*, Jerusalem, 1965, v. 2, p. 572. Duran certainly was aware of such use, but his task as a polemicist was to emphasize the negative.



This discussion is concentrated in his epistle, *'Al tehi ka-'avotekha*. The antithetical and satirical form of this work enables its author to articulate the rationalistic Jewish opposition, which he champions, over against Christian fideism, which he defames. Duran chastises his interlocuter: "Faith ascends upwards, while those who deny it will go down to hell with the wicked; of this it is said, 'the righteous shall live by his faith' (Hab. 2:4), if the definition of faith in the Hebrew language is as you and your mentor (Pablo de Santa Maria) think." That is to say, the Latin *fides* is not commensurate with the Hebrew *'emunah* as understood in the Jewish rationalist tradition. In this, he followed R. Saadiah Gaon: "What is faith? It is a notion that arises in the soul in regard to the actual character of anything that is apprehended. When the essence of investigation emerges, it is embraced and enfolded by the mind and through it acquired and digested by the soul."<sup>54</sup> Speaking ironically, the author expresses satisfaction that "human reason never attracted you (Bonjorn), for it is the enemy of faith and has always caused it great harm. Anyone who speaks of reason and religion as two luminaries is a fool."<sup>55</sup> He writes of his scorn for those Jews who "delve deeply into the ways of reason and its order" and advises Bonjorn to believe "out of necessity, for anything for which you exchange it will be in vain." Duran goes on to examine systematically by the criterion of reason the principles and dogmas of Christianity — the Trinity, the Incarnation, Transubstantiation, the Virgin Birth, the belief in the power of relics and the cult of saints.<sup>56</sup> The force of the epistle lies in its brevity and conciseness, although it was to be expanded greatly by the addition of the detailed commentary of Joseph ibn Shem Tov.

The epistle and the book *Kelimat ha-Goyim* had great influence on the literature of anti-Christian polemics, and their effect may be recognized not only in Hasdai Crescas' *Biṭṭul 'Iqqare ha-Noṣrim*, but also in Shem Tov ibn Shaprut's *Even Boḥan*, in the chapter against Christianity in Joseph Albo's *Sefer ha-'Iqqarim* (15th cent.), in David Nasi's *Hoda'at Ba'al Din* and in other works.

*Immanuel* 13 (Fall 1981)

---

54. Saadia Gaon, *'Emunot ve-De'ot*. English edition, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*, trans. S. Rosenblatt, New Haven, 1948, p. 14. Hebrew, tr. Judah ibn Tibbon, Cracow, 1880, p. 7. Compare Maimonides, *Guide to the Perplexed* I:50.

55. See Harry A. Wolfson, "The Double Faith Theory in Clement, Saadia, Averroes and St. Thomas and its Origin in Aristotle and the Stoics," *Jewish Quarterly Review* n.s. 32 (1942), pp. 312–64.

56. Compare *Nitsaḥon Yashan*, p. 16. This criticism ought to be seen in light of the similar criticism made by Christian religious reformers in the 14th century. See Workman, *Wyclif*, v. 2, pp. 16–17.