## Grappling with Aristotelianism in Medieval Jewish Philosophy[*]

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Every generation generates its own rational resources to plumb the depths of the Bible—"turning it and turning it again" to extract its infinite meanings. Following the polemics and rapprochement in attempting to reconcile the truth of religion and the truth of philosophy, this paper will examine the probing process of Jewish thinkers that contributed to the growth and development of medieval Jewish philosophy.

From the time that Arabic translations of Greek culture were made available to Jewish inhabitants of Moslem countries, philosophy became a challenge and a goad to show that Judaism was compatible with the teachings of philosophy. To justify their pursuits, some scholars were quick to point out that the provenance of philosophical teachings rightfully belongs to the ancient Hebrews but that it was subsequently lost or stolen.[1] It was sufficient for them to examine Scripture to see that it contained many statements on Creation, on the nature of God, on His attributes, and on the freedom of will to indicate a direct stimulus to speculative investigation.[2] In the hands of these rationalists, the teachings of the Bible were kneaded, pummeled, and shaped into whole systems of thought, but, like the Scriptural law of *hallah*, the result presupposed a prior disposition of holiness.[3] Although God was referred to as the First Cause, the First Essence, the Final Cause, the First Mover, the Unmoved Mover, the *Agens Intelligens*, the First Concept, the Form of Forms, etc., these philosophical designations took for granted an underlying existential relationship. God as a religious reality was presumed in the analytic process and was invariably followed by such pious formulas as; "May He be blessed," or "May He be exalted."[4]

For every synthesizer, however, there were many detractors. Those devout believers who found no need to harmonize religion with philosophy kept a watchful eye on the growing speculations of their co-religionists lest they remove their neighbor's boundary line of naive faith.[5] Jewish rationalists for their part claimed that they wrote for the edification of their kinsmen, considering their philosophical works as a guide for the perplexed of their generation.[6]

Beginning with the tenth century, Saadia dealt with the problem of reconciling the secularity of philosophy with traditional religious beliefs in his comprehensive work *Sefer ha-'Emunot we-ha-Deʿot* (*The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*). But it was not until the twelfth century, when Abraham ibn Daud wrote his *Sefer ha-'Emunah ha-Ramah* (*The Book of the Exalted Faith*), that any systematic harmonization took place between Aristotelianism and Judaism.[7] Although Isaac Israeli, whom Maimonides pejoratively refers to as a mere physician,[8] had

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earlier compiled works on Aristotle, Israeli did not ventilate them in relation to Judaism. At that time, to be sure, the Aristotelian corpus which reached Jewish philosophers had already contained the accretions of such Greek interpreters as Alexander of Aphrodisias and Themistius, as well as the Neoplatonic colorations of such Moslem commentators as Alfarabi and Avicenna.[9] Among Jewish philosophers, Solomon ibn Gabirol's work, *Meqor Hayyim* (*The Fountain of Life*), remains unique in its Neoplatonic essence.[10] Generally, however these systems of philosophy were not neatly distinguishable in the reticulation of ideas which resulted from the mediation of Greek thought through Christian and Moslem thinkers. In fact, the relationship of Aristotelianism to Neoplatonism was such that Averroes, the twelfth century major Arabic exponent of Aristotle, assuming an indissoluble tie between the two systems, wrote a commentary on Plato's *Republic* to express Aristotle's position on politics.[11] It is therefore not unusual to find Isaac Israeli described as both the first Jewish Neoplatonist and an Aristotelian.[12]

With Abraham ibn Daud, however, Neoplatonism receded in importance and,  except for the subsequent critique of Crescas, Aristotelianism thereafter dominated the Jewish philosophic scene. The innovation of ibn Daud's synthesis was to establish the existence of God not from the Kalamic position of creation which demands a creator, as his predecessors Saadia and Bahya had done, but from the Aristotelian principles of motion which demand a prime mover.[13] In so doing, ibn Daud circumvented the problem of the eternity of motion and time and consequently of the eternity of the world, and it was left to his preeminent successor Maimonides to clarify the inadequacy of his position.[14]

In this as in many of his other ideas, ibn Daud anticipated Maimonides.[15] Although Maimonides developed ibn Daud's ideas with greater Aristotelian precision, it was ibn Daud who first signaled a change in equilibrium between philosophy and religion, placing greater emphasis on science and theory.[16] Nevertheless, it was Maimonides who succeeded in bringing about the greatest synthesis between Aristotelianism and the tradition of rabbinic Judaism. His *Guide of the Perplexed* is an intricate, interlaced exposition of Biblical exegesis and speculative application, one which leads Maimonides to identify the esoteric science of the account of Creation with Aristotle's *Physics*, and Ezekiel's vision of the chariot with Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.[17] Thus his method was not merely to superimpose a scientific structure on a religious intuitional order, but Maimonides essentially believed in the correspondence of the truth of philosophy and the truth of faith. In his attempt to safeguard both, however, he maintained a precarious balance straining the proofs sometimes at the expense of reason and at times at the expense of religious certitude. In view of Maimonides' undisputed influence on medieval Jewish philosophy, it would be expedient to consider some of these issues.

Influenced by the Aristotelian summum bonum of man, Maimonides asserts that the highest worship of God lies in man's intellectual apprehension of the divine. Man's love of God is proportionate with his knowledge of Him.[18] Thus in his hierarchy of values, although the intellect does not supersede traditional practices, these practices

nevertheless remain in an adjuvant position in order to attain to the intellectual good. In the Guide, the laws of the Torah serve as means to promote the common welfare of the people. Morality is judged in terms of its social effects and is a subordinate and preparatory discipline for the development of the intellect.[19]

The superiority of reason to moral directives is further undeniably adduced from Maimonides' explanation of the fall of man.[20] Adam in his pristine state was endowed with perfect and complete intellect, distinguishing between the true and the false. After his disobedience, he lost part of his rational faculty and was charged with the knowledge of good and evil. The moral laws are not laws of reason but belong to the domain of universal consent. Maimonides thus indicates that the truth of the rational virtues is prior and anterior to the truth of tradition.

On the other hand, the dictates of religion buttressed by reason compel Maimonides to oppose the Aristotelian position of the eternity of the universe in favor of creation. The Mutakallimun method of proving creation *ex nihilo*, and its corollary, the existence of God, were most objectionable to Maimonides on grounds of specious speculation. "The utmost power of one who has acquired knowledge of true reality consists, in my opinion, in his refuting the proofs of the philosophers bearing on the eternity of the world."[21] Although the methods of logic are insufficient to establish the truth of Scripture, they can be applied with rational rigor to invalidate the proofs for the eternity of the universe. Maimonides then proceeds to disprove Aristotle's theory of necessity in the superlunary world--a theory in which Aristotle himself found weaknesses. Maimonides maintains that since the cause of the variety in the motion of the heavenly bodies could not be explained, it gave evidence of a voluntary determination and consequently of a being who designed it, thus leading to the possibility of creation and miracles.[22] After demolishing Aristotle's theory of the eternity of the universe on grounds of logical insufficiency, Maimonides asserts that since either position is untenable, he will opt for creation on the testimony of religious authority.[23] Here reason defaults in favor of the truth of revelation.

Maimonides' theory of negative attributes similarly militates against both reason and religion. Stating that every positive attribute destroys the divine unity, he avoids exegetical discussion concerning unity in favor of speculative proofs that God's essence is absolutely simple, unknowable, and that any attributes said of God are descriptions of his actions.[24] Elsewhere,[25] Maimonides argues, as does Aristotle in Book *Lambda* of the *Metaphysics*, for the similarity of man's intellect to God's intellect in the threefold identity of subject, object, and the act of intellection. With this comparison, Maimonides seems to be in conflict with his own theory of negative attributes, namely, that God's knowledge is of a completely different genre from man's knowledge.[26] The theory, moreover, is wanting not only on rational grounds but from religious considerations as well since it renders man's worship of God superfluous. To accord with his theory of negative attributes, Maimonides prefers silence to supplication, declaring that assertions about God should not go beyond those which the men of the Great Assembly have inserted in the prayers and benedictions.[27] The attempt

here to show that Aristotelianism and Judaism are reducible components seems to fall short in both camps, both as to reason and as to religion.

In the matter of the immortality of the soul, philosophic evidence impinges on traditional beliefs,[28] and Maimonides maintains a discreet silence on the subject in the *Guide* reminiscent of Aristotle's own indeterminateness. (Of course, Aristotle's opinion on life after death would in no way be muted by religious considerations.) Yet the inescapable inference to be drawn from Maimonides' nontreatment of the problem in the *Guide*[29] is that immortality is consequent upon the perfection of the intellect. Maimonides describes[30] the intensification of the acquired intellect at the separation of the soul from the body regarding the deaths of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and to a lesser degree other prophets and pious men. This intellect which is immaterial reaches an "enduring permanence" and returns to the world of intelligible things. The part which survives therefore is the actualization of the intellect which dovetails with his belief in the Aristotelian *summum bonum* of man.[31] In addition, it is clear from his proofs[32] that what is immaterial cannot have individuation, thus ruling out personal immortality. Maimonides shares this doctrine of the unity of the intellect with ibn Bajja and Averroes, although he makes no mention of the latter in his work. Since Maimonides does not explicitly attempt to discourse on the issue of immortality in the *Guide* it is problematic whether he desists by reason of religious considerations or rational ambiguities or both.

Having accepted the hypothesis of a created world by a free act of divine will, Maimonides is able to bend the nature of providence and prophecy to the needs of faith. Both doctrines retain Aristotelian characteristics in their rational imperatives, but they are now extricated from a purely philosophical process and given a religious foundation.
Where Aristotle limits divine providence in the sublunar world to the species of plants, animals, and man for their preservation, Maimonides, guided by Scriptural intention, extends God's providence to individual human beings based on the degree of development of their intellect coming into union with the Active Intellect.[33] By these means Maimonides delivers man from Aristotle's web of chance and necessity and establishes him as a volitional being able to work out his salvation.

Prophecy is similarly marked out by theological considerations. The criterion for this endowment rests in the perfection of the moral, imaginative, and rational faculties. Prophecy, as described by Maimonides,[34] consists in the overflow of the Active Intellect first toward the rational faculty of man and then toward his imagination. As an orthodox Aristotelian, Maimonides assigns a superior place to the intellect; as an orthodox religionist, he preserves the notion of divine selection, albeit by privation. Thus, whereas in the Aristotelian process the flow of illumination follows necessarily from these perfections, in the religious scheme God may elect to withhold the gift of prophecy.

With the dissemination of the *Guide of the Perplexed*, the rational spirit was firmly entrenched in Judaism. "Reading the Bible through Aristotelian spectacles became the fashion of the day after Maimonides." [Subsequent philosophers] " tried their hand at

Biblical exegesis, and the Maimonidean stamp is upon their work."[35] Maimonides' synthesizing work served as a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it protected and preserved the religious integrity of Jewish rationalists such as his disciple Joseph ben Judah ibn Shimᶜon to whom he addressed the *Guide*. On the other hand, it cut into the sacred beliefs of the devout masses who cherished their naive faith and resisted the deanthropomorphization and rationalization of the Bible. If Maimonides' work succeeded in opening the minds of his kindred philosophers, it was also instrumental in closing the hearts and inciting the ranks of the faithful masses.

The corpus of Aristotelian literature is fraught with problems of reconciliation. In some respects, each attempt at a solution provided the antithesis for the next thinker's synthesis. Less than a century later, Levi ben Gerson (Gersonides) addressed himself to those issues in the *Guide* which Maimonides failed to deal with satisfactorily.[36] Gersonides believed that Maimonides, the leader of the Jewish community, was constrained by the teachings of the Torah from following through to their logical conclusions the philosophic implications in his synthesis.[37] In his work *Milhamot ha-Shem* (*The Wars of the Lord*), written in the scholastic format, Gersonides, using Averroes as his main source, rigorously redresses these issues. By including the precautionary statement that he would desist from his investigations if they were found to be in conflict with traditional beliefs, he attempted to avoid the faith-philosophy confrontation.[38] On the other hand, he could not permit the doctrines of religion to preempt the dictates of reason. "The Law", he states, "cannot prevent us from considering to be true that which our reason urges us to believe."[39] His Aristotelian priorities aroused the wrath of his co-religionists prompting the fifteenth century Kabbalist Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov to defer disparagingly to his work as *Milhamot ᶜim ha-Shem* (*The Wars <u>with</u> the Lord*).[40]

Briefly, Gersonides' stringent reasoning brings him to the following conclusions at variance with Maimonides. Since the issue as to whether the world was eternal or created in time could not be logically established in an indisputable manner, Maimonides, as we have seen, chose the creation hypothesis based on religious convictions—convictions which demand a God transcendent to nature who makes miracles possible. Gersonides agrees that the world had its origin in time but, relying on the principle that from nothing, nothing comes, he also accepts the Aristotelian notion of the eternity of matter. If his eminent predecessor opted for creation *ex nihilo* to allow for miracles, Gersonides proves that the miracles in the Bible were produced from preexisting material. Thus, as against Maimonides' traditional doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*, Gersonides claims an eternal formless matter from which God created the world, an untraditional position which he is nonetheless able to reconcile with the Biblical account of creation.[41] Moreover, in harmony with their respective positions, whereas in Maimonides' system God Himself performs miracles, in Gersonides' scheme the actual performance of miracles is accomplished by the Active Intellect through the general order of forms which it comprehends.[42]

In another modification, pointing to the lack of design in the heavenly spheres, Maimonides rejects the Aristotelian idea of nature and necessity and argues that the world came into being by the will of God. Gersonides adopts Maimonides' argument as against Aristotle but, unlike Maimonides, he extends the evidence for the break in the natural order from the heavenly spheres to the sublunar world to argue for purpose and design in creation [43] For Gersonides, it is teleology and not dire necessity operating on earth which attests to a Creator and Architect.

In the matter of God's knowledge of particulars, Gersonides remains Aristotelian in his outlook. He considers Maimonides' explanation of the problem a logical absurdity, to wit: that knowledge is said of God and man homonymously and that God's knowledge is wholly different from man's knowledge. If there is only a nominal resemblance between God's knowledge and man's knowledge, how do we know that it is found in God? Gersonides argues that the difference in knowledge is not one of genus but of degree. It exists in God priorily and in man posteriorily.[44] In these solutions, Maimonides and Gersonides are motivated by different pieties. Maimonides, in attempting to preserve the rabbinic dilemma of God's omniscience and man's free will, introduces a *deus ex machina* solution, namely, that there is no analogy between God's knowledge and man's knowledge.[45] Gersonides, wishing to preserve both his rational integrity and man's freedom, retrenches religious dogma and places limits on God's knowledge. God has foreknowledge of particulars only insofar as they are united to the universal order, but He does not know particulars insofar as they are contingent.[46] Human actions as they are governed by the heavenly bodies are known to God, but man can liberate himself from these determinations through the development of his intellect which perceives and averts them.[47] Thus human beings are protected by the same providence which watches over other species, but, being endowed with the faculty of reason, man has the capacity to actualize his intellect and thereby to exercise his free will. "The individualization is due to [man] the recipient and not to [God] the dispenser."[48]

Gersonides explains prophecy along similar premises. Through his heightened reasoning faculty which is under the influence of the Active Intellect, the prophet apprehends the general nature of a thing. By means of his perception and imagination, he applies his knowledge of the universal to instantiate a particular situation.[49] The illumination which the prophet cognizes is the general order of events which he then informs and individualizes with specific and concrete phenomena--a far cry from the Biblical God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in close contact with His chosen.

If religious constraints compel Maimonides to make God accessible to man through miracle, providence, and prophecy, the force of reason coerces Gersonides into distancing the Creator God from any direct relation with man.[50] *The Wars of the Lord* had thus gone beyond the Aristotelian-Rabbinic synthesis. Through his identity of the truth of tradition with the truth of philosophy, Maimonides sought a true fusion and maintained a careful equilibrium between the two. Gersonides, however, pursued the rational arguments to their

logical conclusion and gave the lion's share of credence to the speculative sciences. He enlarged the tents of philosophy at the expense of those of Shem and Eber.[51]

These incursions into faith had their repercussions. On the philosophic level, Hasdai Crescas, in his *Or ha-Shem* (*The Light of the Lord*), attempted to stem the intellectualism of Judaism by restoring religious dogma and the existential relation between man and God to its Biblical sanctity.[52] In a refutation of the twenty-five propositions set forth by Maimonides in the *Guide*,[53] Crescas discloses the weakness of Aristotle's *Physics* on problems of vacuum, place, motion, and time. His aporetic approach was designed to topple Aristotle from his high pedestal and introduce doubt into the efficacy of reason.[54] After undermining the Aristotelian notion of a prime mover, Crescas established the existence of God from the proof of a necessary being. He reinstates a Creator God who creates the world *ex nihilo* and has knowledge of particulars.[55] His solution to the dilemma of divine foreknowledge and man's free will was not in curtailing God's omniscience as in Gersonides' system, but in reformulating the problem of individual freedom. Man's free act is contingent when considered by itself, but it is necessary in relation to its causes and God's foreknowledge.[56] It is in the reluctance or willingness with which he performs the act that man perceives himself as acting freely.

The nature of the divine in Crescas' system is no longer God thinking Himself but God whose principal content is absolute goodness. Accordingly the nexus between man and God is through love and reverence for God. Love rather than intellectual apprehension is the essence of the soul which leads to unity with God, and this unity leads to happiness and immortality.[57] Because his predecessor Gersonides had exceeded the allotted measure by which speculation may distance itself from faith, Crescas reacted with the avowed purpose to narrow this gap in his critique of Aristotle.

Thereafter, happiness based on intellect in a religious sense receded in importance in the lives of Jewish thinkers. Crescas' work made more of an impact among Christian scholars than among Jewish Aristotelians.[58] His ideas were circulated among his co-religionists through the writings of his student Joseph Albo, whose popular and homiletic style attracted many readers. Albo's work *Sefer ha-ʿIqqarim* (*The Book of Principles*), merely recapitulated the thinking of Maimonides, Crescas, and Simon ben Semah Duran in a rearrangement of their ideas formulated through dogma, but it contained no new insights into the perennial problems.[59] By that time, Aristotelianism as a dominating influence had passed its zenith, and philosophy independent of the problems of religion subsided into "a subject in the school curriculum" where it flourished as an academic discipline.[60]

**Notes**

[1] *The Exalted Faith: Abraham ibn Daud*, translation of *ha-'Emunah ha-Ramah* with Commentary by Norbert M. Samuelson (New Jersey: Associated Presses, Inc., 1986), 3b19-23, p. 40, see note 35 p. 43. *'Emunah Ramah*, translated by Samson Weil, p. 4, as quoted in Julius Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism* (New York: Anchor Books, 1964), p. 162. *The Guide of the Perplexed*, translated by Shlomo Pines (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), I:71:175; II:11:276; II:13:282 (hereinafter referred to as *Guide*). Isaac Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy* (New York: Atheneum, 1974), p. xvi. Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), Vol. 1, p. 198. See Norman roth, "The 'Theft of Philosophy' by the Greeks from the Jews," *Classical Folia: Studies in the Christian Perpetuation of the Classics* (worcester, Massachusetts, Institute for Early Christian Iberian Studies), vol. Xxxii, 1978, No. 1, pp. 43-67.

[2] Ibn Daud, *'Emunah Ramah*, p. 83, as quoted in Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 197, p. 446, n. 222.

[3] Numbers 15:20-21. See Joseph ibn Shem Tov, *Kevod Elohim* (Ferrara, Italy: Abraham Usque: 1555 -- 4 Tishre 5316), 17a:

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דרשו תורה לרבים מהמוצאים מהשכל, קצתם בטענות ראויות וקצתם בטענות חלושות,
אחד המרבה ואחד הממעיט כוונו לבם לשמים.

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[4] See, for example, *Guide*, I:69:166-167.

[5] For a discussion of these polemics, see Zinberg "The Renewal of the Struggle Against Rationalism," *A History of Jewish Literature*, translated and edited by Bernard Martin, Vol. 3, *The Struggle of Mysticism and Tradition Against Philosophical Rationalism* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), pp. 55-57; Baron, "Faith and Reason," *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. 8, pp. 55-137; Guttmann, "Aristotelianism and Its Opponents," *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 207-274; Marc Saperstein, *Jewish Preaching 1200-1800: An Anthology* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 56-57, 112-113, 118-120, 255, 381-386. Frank Ephraim Talmage, "David Kimhi and the Rationalist Tradition", *Apples of Gold in Settings of Silver: Studies in Medieval Jewish Exegesis and Polemics* (Toronto, Canada: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1999) pp. 3-44.

[6] See Saadia Gaon, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions*, translated by Samuel Rosenblatt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 3; Bahya ben Joseph ibn Paquda, *The Book of Directions to the Duties of the Heart*, translated by Menahem Mansoor (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 100; *The Exalted Faith: Abraham ibn Daud*, 3b11-19, pp. 39-40; *Guide*, I, Introduction, p. 6; *Levi ben Gershom* (*Gersonides*): *The Wars of the Lord, Book One: Immortality of the Soul*, translated by Seymour Feldman (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1984), Vol. I, p. 94.

[7] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 199, 235; Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, p. 162.

[8] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 2, 60. For a more detailed discussion of Isaac Israeli, see ibid., pp. 1-16; Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 95-101.

[9] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. xxix; Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 152-155.

[10] Like Isaac Israeli before him, Solomon ibn Gabirol "did not single out the nation [of

Israel].” See *The Exalted Faith* 4b19-21, p. 40. Lacking a complete Hebrew translation of his work for a non-Arabic speaking Jewish population, Gabirol's *Meqor Hayyim* was translated into Latin as *“Fons Vitae”* by Christians, under the authorship of his latinized name Avicebron (or variations thereof), and Scholastics “had no idea he was a Jew.” Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 61-62, 64, 198.

[11] Stuart MacClintock, “Averroes”, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), Vol. 1, p. 221; Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 317; Georges Vajda, *Introduction à la pensée juive du moyen âge* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1947), p. 141. Vajda makes the observation that Plato's *Republic* with the notion of a philosopher-king, an ideal law, and an ideal city was especially adaptable to the Islamic structure of Mohammad the legislator, the *Imam* of the Shi'ites, the Koran, and the Moslem community.

[12] See Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 2, where Isaac Israeli is juxtaposed to other Aristotelians; see Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, p. 96. A similar designation is ascribed to the ninth century Moslem, Alkindi. Ibid., p. 68.

[13] See Aristotle, *Physics*, Book VIII; *The Exalted Faith*, Chap. 5, 47b10-54b7, pp. 79-82.

[14] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 86, 207, 217-218, 253.

[15] Ibid., pp. 235, 237, 246, 253, 350. Husik points to Maimonides' indebtedness to Abraham ibn Daud of the following ideas: Use of homonym as the basis of a method of interpretation, p. 240; proof of existence of God from motion, p. 257; negative attributes and existence of angels and their relation to separate intellects, p. 266; existence of separate intellects from motion of heavenly spheres, p. 267; phenomenon of prophecy, p. 276; Aristotelian metaphysics in Scripture, p. 302.

[16] There is disagreement regarding the indebtedness of Maimonides to Abraham ibn Daud. Whereas Husik points to a direct line of development from ibn Daud to Maimonides, Guttmann minimizes the extent of influence. Says Husik, “In conclusion we remind the reader that ibn Daud was the precursor of Maimonides, touching upon, and for the most part answering every question treated by his more famous successor. Ibn Daud was the first to adopt Aristotelianism for the purpose of welding it with Judasim. He showed the way to follow. Maimonides took his cue from ibn Daud and suceeded in putting the latter in the shade. Historic justice demands that ibn Daud be brought forward into the light and given the credit which is deservedly his due.” Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 198-199, end of p. 235. Cf. Guttmann: “It is not surprising that once Maimonides had placed the issues neglected by ibn Daud at the center of philosophic discussion, the latter's work lost in importance. Maimonides may have drawn on it for some minor points, but it exerted no influence upon the further development of philosophy.” Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, p. 163.

[17] *Guide*, I, Introduction, p. 6.

[18] Ibid., I: 39:89; III:28:512-513; III: 51: 621.

[19] Guttmann meliorates the balance between the contemplative and ethical perfections by reinstating the previously subordinate moral activities as a purposeful corollary to the intellectual knowledge of God. Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 200-201, 501, n. 120.

[20] *Guide*, I:2:24-26.

[21] Ibid., I: 71:180.

[22] Ibid., II: 15:289-293; II:19:302-312. The medieval Christian philosopher Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was influenced by Maimonides regarding the relation of faith and reason. See Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles*, II, pp. 32-38. Cf. Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1954), pp. 229-230; 650 n. 41. Cf. Judah Halevi, *The Kuzari* (*Kitab al Khazari*), translated by Hartwig Hirschfeld (New York: Schocken Books, Inc., 1964), I:67:54; V:14:270.

[23] *Guide*, II: 16:293-294; II:22:317-320; II:23:321-322; II:39:378-381. In spite of Maimonides' stated position on Creation in the *Guide*, Maimonidean scholars believe that Maimonides essentially believed in the eternity of the world. See *Levi ben Gershom* (*Gersonides*): *The Wars of the Lord*, translated by Seymour Feldman, p. 35, n. 10. See discussion in Colette Sirat, *A History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, pp. 188-192. Menachem Kellner, in considering Maimonides' Thirteen Principles in relation to the *Guide*, touches upon some discrepancies in Maimonides' writings regarding creation. See Menachem Kellner, *Dogma in Medieval Jewish Thought From Maimonides to Abravanel* (New York: Oxford University press, 1986), pp. 49-61 with corroborative notes pp. 237 (n. 192) to p. 243 (n. 247). Kellner notes those scholars who held that Maimonides ultimately denied creation *ex nihilo*, n. 223, p. 242.

[24] *Guide*, I: 57-60:130-147.

[25] Ibid., I: 68:165-166. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1072b19-23; 1074b34.

[26] For a discussion of this contradiction, see *Levi ben Gerson, Milhamot ha-Shem* (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von Carl B. Lorck, 1866), 3:3:132-137; Gersonides, *The Wars of the Lord Treatise Three: On God's Knowledge*, translated and edited by Norbert Max Samuelson (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1977), pp. 182-224.

[27] *Guide*, I:59:140-141.

[28] These beliefs are to be found in Maimonides' *Helek, Sanhedrin, Chapter Ten*, translated by Arnold J. Wolf as "Maimonides on Immortality and the Principles of Judaism," *Judaism* xv (1966), pp. 95-101, 211-216, 337-342*; The Code of Maimonides, Mishneh Torah* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949-1961); *Shemonah Perakim: The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics*, translated by Joseph I. Gorfinkle (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1966); *Treatise on Resurrection*, edited by Joshua Finkel (New York: Proceedings of American Academy for Jewish Research, vol. ix, 1939). For a discussion of Maimonides' position on immortality, see Harry Blumberg, "The Problem of Immortality in Avicenna, Maimonides and St. Thomas Aquinas," *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume* (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1965), pp. 165-185.

[29] For references to the immortality of the soul, see *Guide*, I:41:91; I:70:173-174; II:27:332-333.

[30] Ibid., III: 51:627-628.

[31] See Aristotle, *De Anima* 430a23; *Guide* I:70:173-174; III:54:635; Vajda, *Introduction à la pensée juive du moyen âge*, pp. 143-144.

[32] *Guide*, I:74:221 end of proof 7.

[33] Ibid., III: 17-18:471-477.

[34] Ibid., II: 36:369-373. See Ruth Birnbaum, "Imagination and Its Gender in Maimonides' *Guide*," *Shofar*, Jewish Studies Program of Purdue University (Lincoln: Nebraska Press), vol. 16, No. 1, Fall 1997, "Imagination and Prophecy," pp. 25-27.

[35] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 302. Cf. *Levi ben Gershom* (*Gersonides*): *The Wars of the Lord*, translated by Seymour Feldman, pp. 34-35.

[36] These issues include the immortality of the soul, prophecy, God's omniscience, Divine providence, the nature of the celestial spheres, and the eternity of matter. See *Gersonides on God's Knowledge*, translated by Samuelson, p. 79. Guttmann, however, sees Gersonides' focus as being on his differences with Averroes. See Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, p. 238.

[37] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 3:3:132, 135. See also *Gersonides on God's Knowledge*, translated by Samuelson, pp. 97-98n, 184, 184n, 204. For a discussion regarding constraints in writing, see Leo Strauss, "The Literary Character of the *Guide for the Perplexed*," *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Glencoe, I11.: the Free Press, 1952), pp. 38-94.

[38] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 1:14:91.

[39] Ibid., Introduction, pp. 6-7. This position of Gersonides is formulated from Averroes' *Kitāb Fasl al-Maqāl*. See *Gersonides on God's Knowledge*, translated by Samuelson, pp. 301-302, 620n.

[40] *Gersonides on God's Knowledge*, translated by Samuelson, p. 4.

[41] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 6:2:1:418-419.

[42] Ibid., 6:2:10:445; see Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 244-245; 247.

[43] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 6:1:13:349-353; Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 354.

[44] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 3:3:132 ff. See *Gersonides on God's Knowledge*, translated by Samuelson, p. 186.

[45] *Guide*, III:20:480-484.

[46] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 3:4:138; *Gersonides on God's knowledge*, translated by Samuelson, pp. 231-233. For further discussion of the problem of God's knowledge, see Harry Austryn Wolfson, "Maimonides and Gersonides on Divine Attributes as Ambiguous Terms," *Mordecai M. Kaplan Jubilee Volume* (New York, 1953), pp. 515-530.

[47] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 4:7:187; 4:5:165-166.

[48] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 349.

[49] Levi ben Gerson, *Milhamot ha-Shem*, 4:5:165-166; ; *Gersonides on God's Knowledge*, translated by Samuelson, p. 236n.

[50] See Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 244, 253-254.

[51] Shem and Eber are the eponymous ancestors of the Jews.

[52] For a discussion of Crescas' philosophy see Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 256-276; Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 388-403.

[53] *Guide*, Introduction to part II, II:1:236-252.

[54] Harry Austryn Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), pp. 114, 127.

[55] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, pp. 390-391; Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, p. 261.

[56] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 397; Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, p. 270.

[57] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 401; Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, p. 268.

[58] As, for example, Giovanni Francesco Pico della Mirandola (nephew of the famous Giovanni Pico della Mirandola) and Giordano Bruno. See Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle*, pp. 34-36.

[59] Husik, *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*, p. 406; Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism*, pp. 281 ff.; Zinberg, *A History of Jewish Literature*, Vol. 3, pp. 234-235. Menachem Kellner, *Dogma in Medieval Jewish Thought From Maimonides to Abravanel*, pp.142-146.

[60] Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle*, p. 31; ix.