

The Life and Works

-of-

PROFIAT DURAN EFODI

With Especial Reference to the Com-  
mentary on the Moreh.

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MAIMONIDEAN TEXT WITH EFODIS COMMENT IN HEBREW AND

ENGLISH. DEMONSTRATION OF HIS INFLUENCE ON SHEM TOB,

ABRAVANEL AND CRESCAS AND HIS DEPENDENCIES ON SHEM TOB

FALAQERA, JOSEPH ION CASPI AND MOSES VARDONNE.

The primary purpose of this essay is to show Efodi's position as a commentator of the Moreh on the basis of Chapters 1 to 70. The plan of the essay is as follows:

- A. Biographical introduction and background.
  - 1. Historical Background.
  - 2. Efodi's Life.
  - 3. Efodi's Works.
- B. Methodological background of Efodi's commentatorial Activity.
  - 1. Efodi's Aim.
  - 2. Classification of Exegeses and Samples.
  - 3. His Knowledge and Scope.
- C. Analyses of three Chapters on Attributes

Maimonidean text with Efodi's comment in Hebrew,<sup>1</sup> in English. Demonstration of his influence on Shem Tob, Abravanel and Crescas and his dependence on Shem Tob Falaquera, Joseph ibn Caspi and Moses Narbonne.

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## SECTION A. BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Spain is one of the great centers of Jewish achievement. With respect to contemporary living, to participation in the culture of their time and their secular-cultural achievement -- it may be put above Babylon and Poland. Indeed, the achievements of the Jews in Spain of the middle ages can compare very favorably with their activity in the emancipated enlightened Germany of the nineteenth century. After Palestine and Babylon, Spain can be called the third homeland of the Jews. There was even a Jewish tradition that there were Jews in Spain in Solomon's time. In a half millenium -- between the beginning of the eleventh and the end of the fifteenth -- the drama of Spanish-Jewish history is played. There is first the development of Jewish culture to splendid heights, the growth of Scientific research, the finest flower of philosophical speculation, the glories of neo-Hebraic poetry. Following upon this radiance -- a total dullness -- a spiritual stagnation and decay in all these spheres.

The death of Maimonides marked the beginning of the decline. The power of the papacy began to spread and the halcyon days of Spanish-Jewish history were past. The oppression of the church destroyed the opportunities for independent intellectual activity. A deep despair and a dull supineness settled upon the hitherto creative and original intellects. From the thirteenth century on the sole aim of the Jews in Spain was to conserve that which they already possessed. Therefore translations and commentaries multiplied. Furthermore, mystic speculations, numerology and astrology supplanted

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philosophy and it is characteristic of the time that it occupied itself greatly with Ibn Ezra's puzzles and obscurities but neglected and even condemned Maimonides' Moreh and Sefer Ha-Madda.\* The fragmentariness and romantic obscurity of Ibn Ezra "appealed to the shallowness of this retrograde generation" (Graetz). The few thinkers who did arise occasionally after Maimonides' death did not seek new paths but tread guardedly in the old - or went astray. There are only a few men who kept a free and independent spirit, who by virtue of their clear and sober vision could see beyond the flatness of their time and who endeavored to wield a beneficial influence on the masses. Thinkers like Gersonides, Narbonne and Crescas are a welcome exception to their time.

There is one man of this period whom Jewish history has not yet sufficiently recognized, who by virtue of his progressive mind, his free and enlightened viewpoint, his many sided erudition and talents deserves to be mentioned in the company of the few luminous spirits mentioned above. This man is the grammarian, exegete, historian, astronomer, philosophical commentator and polemist par excellence -- Profiat Duran - usually known simply as Efodi.

The year 1391 characterized by Jewish historians by the ominous ד'קנ"א which had such bloody consequences for most Jewish communities in Spain was also to be disastrous

\* First there was a simultaneous interest in both these men. Thus Levy ben Abraham of Villefranche and Jediah Bedersi gave both their allegiance. Later on Maimonides was neglected. Thus Ibn Caspi and Narbonne complain of the neglect of Maimonides' studies. Efodi combines allegiance to both.

for Efodi. Till now hatred of the Jews had been secret and found violent expression only rarely. Jews still had the opportunity of achieving fame and careers -- and as financiers and physicians to kings and persons of importance of exercising real influence. But slowly oppressive legislation began to be directed against them. In 1354 a meeting took place in Barcelona under the chairmanship of R. Nissim for the purpose of considering means to combat the antisemitism of monks. It proposed several alleviatory measures to the pope. This appearance of unity and strength was shortly after dispelled. <sup>When this</sup> ~~When this~~ was followed by one of the saddest tragedies of the Diaspora. The weak rule of the eleven year old Henry III who came to the throne in 1390 was unable to keep in leash the furies of the Jew-haters. In Seville the poisonous tongue of a fanatical priest, Fernando Martinez, so envenomed the populace that on June 6, <sup>1391 (1402)</sup> 1931, a massacre of the Jews took place. From Seville the bloody persecutions spread to all parts of Spain and soon similar outbreaks occurred in seventy cities. Slaughter and conversion decimated the great communities of Spain - Cordova, Toledo, Barcelona, Palma, Ascelona, Seville, Perpejuan and Gerona. According to Zacuto, in 200,000 Jews were converted, among them physicians, rabbis, poets, etc. Among these was a scion of the famous Abravanel family and Rabbi Solomon HaLevi of Burgos, who later became bishop under the name of Paulus de Santa Maria.

The fate of forcible conversion also overtook Efodi.

He was like so many of his contemporaries, an

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It appears that after his conversion he went into hiding or avoided the society of his fellows.

1,201 1/2 11/11 13 1/16

and further

1,201 1/2 11/11 13 1/16 DIRGE conclusion

That he really did undergo conversion is established almost incontrovertibly by the dirge. The death of the righteous atones - the rabbis taught (just as the ephod atones for idolatry (which explains his name)). "The death of the rabbis of Gerona and all others who died for the sanctification of the name is as a shield for the remnant which is left. Perhaps too they come before God and intercede for their people."

He then cites a Talmudic passage (Menachoth 53) to prove that one who bore the sign of circumcision though estranged from his people was yet a Jew, and refers especially to those who had been coerced into Christianity - ostensibly at least. Jewish converts to Christianity were not regarded with especial affection by their former co-religionists. Maimonides had already striven against this and had written his for this reason. Ephod is deeply obsessed by the conviction that those who had been compelled to adopt Christianity were not entirely cut off from their people. The plight of these converts was pitiable - despised by the Christians and hated by Jews -- conscious always of their dejection -- they were very unhappy. From responsa of Isaac b. Sheshet, Simon b. Zemach and Solomon Duran, the conduct of the Jews to the Marannos appears to have

(I.e. Ephod - Since Ephod "the friendly instrument atoned for idolatry because it was of the same metal as the golden calf" it may be that the Prefect Duran was accused at his conversion



been cruel and rigorous.

אמנם אנחנו צריכים לזכור את המצב  
הזה (עמ' 145)  
היה (עמ' 145)  
היה (עמ' 145)  
היה (עמ' 145)

"And when the promised deliverance will come it will include all of the seed of Abraham both those over whom the fate of conversion overtook and those who remained Jews" (יהוה יברכך). He remarks that in all the previous exiles (of Egypt, Babylon, etc.) many Jews reneged but were not regarded as strangers by those who remained faithful. So now, too, if any Jew because he feared for his life, adopted Christianity he was nevertheless still part of his people.

הגאון הגדול היה אדם חכם ונבון  
הוא היה חכם ונבון  
הוא היה חכם ונבון  
הוא היה חכם ונבון  
הוא היה חכם ונבון

The verse (Deut. 32, 43) יהוה יברכך  
יהוה יברכך יהוה יברכך

he interprets thus: Let those who are called Goyim rejoice and (גוים) those of the people who have mixed with the Gentiles, because the blood of His servants shed in sanctification of the name <sup>He</sup> will avenge. Vengeance will come on the oppressors of his people (אויבים) and when they (the apostates) return to the land (of Israel) their sins will be forgiven.

Later he says: "So we the inheritors of the Torah will certainly not exchange it for something else-except apparently or outwardly. Some time we may be able to do the





Isaac, son of Moses Ha Levi, surnamed Profiat Duran, was born in Catalonia (1) and perhaps lived at Perpignan. In the Duran of Reuben Bonfied he is called *מלג'י* which would make him a native of Melgueir.<sup>6</sup> His parents may have come from South France - maybe Melgueir. His birthplace is not known. In an introductory note to *כ"ח חג'ר* he is called *מפרסני* Steinschneider ad.loc. (Cat. Bodl. 2113) reads *מפרסני* and supposes the latter to be corrupted from *פרסני* and that both should be read Profiat. Gross (p. 472) admits that Perpignan is mentioned only here and nowhere else, and what is worse, in another place Jacob Frohenberg has been written Jacob *פרסני* but remarks that it isn't likely that an error was made in a name so famous. Perhaps he lived at Perpignan awhile, or maybe that is where he was born. The family Duran originated in Provence, but maybe that our author was not connected with that family. Shem Tob in the introduction to his commentary on the epistle states that Profiat was from Catalonia (Const. Ed. 1864). This is more likely than Aragon (Steinson Cat. Bodl. 2114. - ~~Gratz VIII, 34, 400~~; DeRossi, p. 230, and Akrison introduction to Epistle) because most conversions took place in Catalonia not in Aragon where only money

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- (1) Gronemann, p. 3, conjectures on the basis of a Ms. (Eibl. Sussex) that he was born in Cordova, which is more likely than the Provencal Perpignan or Melgueir. After 1391 he left Catalonia and settled in one of these cities - whence the appellation in the Mss. The chief reason is that he knew Arabic but didn't Ibn Caspi, for example, know Arabic?
- (2) Renan, p. 741, remarks that the reading *מלג'י* already given by Dukes is the only correct reading. The Diwan of Solomon Bonfied contains a letter with following epigram:  
*לפני כבוד קדשו מו"ר חג'ר מלג'י בר באבא דוד יצחק יצחק*  
 Mss. Bodl. 1864, 28 Cat. p. 272 -  
 Gross p. 238
- \* maybe it was at Perpignan that he sojourned preparatory to leaving for Palestine.

was extorted. (H. Cresca's letter printed in Seneet Yehuda ed.  
Hanover; Eiodi - Masse Eiod. p. 14)

Both names Proiat and Duran point rather to a French  
origin the names being very common in central France. If he was  
born in Catalonia, which would be consonant with Bonfed's ref-  
erence to him as a relative, it is possible that his parent came  
originally from Melgueir. They may have come to Spain in the  
expulsion of 1308 and they may have stopped at Perpignan and  
gone on to Catalonia. Perhaps both Proiat and his friend were  
born in Perpignan and later came to Catalonia.

Michael in his Ms. of the Duran reads in <sup>place</sup> ~~face~~ of  
מלך גונה (1) from la Guna. Zunz (Z. Gesch u Lit 488)  
renders de la Guna. There is such a place but it isn't known  
if Jews lived there.

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(1) Steinson. accepts. Cat. Bodl. 2.14  
Hecl. Bibl. III 80

Efodi, a Catalanian, was born in the beginning of the second half of the fourteenth century. The year of his birth is nowhere indicated. At the beginning of the second chapter of his Kelimat Hagoyim (כלימת הגויים) which was composed in 1397 he remarks משה נולדתי בן ארבע עשר שנה (I was born 14 years old) from which we gather that his youth was already past.\*

But little is known of his early life as only a few biographical items are certain. It used to be thought that he went to a Yeshabah in Germany in his youth. But that fact has been impugned.\*\*

- \* Attempts have been made but unsuccessfully to determine the exact date of his birth by using two verses which occur at the close of his epistle to Bonet, -

אלה הן ימי חיינו (These are our days) (which would give his age at the time of the writing of the epistle) and

אלה הן ימי חיינו (These are our days) (which would give the year according to the Christian calendar). The first verse is lacking in most manuscripts, and the date given by the second is uncertain. The epistle was written after 1391 and before 1397 since it is mentioned in the

Ch. 6. If

in the second verse written above equals 366 and if you add 30 years to 1366 which is the commonly accepted period of Jesus' life. (Efodi himself gives this period in Ch. 11)

then the date for the epistle would be 1396. The year of Efodi's birth would then be about 1376. See Friedlander, Kohn's introduction to the Maase, Efod p. 3, 45.

S. Bäck in Winter & Wünsche, V. 3, p. 671, remarks that since he had a philosophical correspondence with a pupil before 1391, the date of his birth can't be much after the middle of the century. See below under "smaller work" - "Three Responsa."

- \*\* At the beginning of the second chapter of occurs the verse:

This occurs only in the Vienna Ms. but all others have

See Posnanski - Ha, z of eh. V. 4, p. 125

Efodi was probably not very happy with the then ruling system of Talmud study, which he later attacked sharply (~~Int. 20 to~~ ~~Maase Efod. p. 4 -~~ ~~Cess. to Merch passion~~). The aridity and inanity of those studies did not satisfy him who sought the knowledge of philosophy and the sciences. In his leisure he read the Kusari of Jehuda Halevy and the "Guide" of Maimonides and despite the prohibition of his teachers (Introd. p. 25) he obeyed their impulses. The many activities and literary productions of our author testify to his diligence <sup>pursuit</sup> in<sub>4</sub> and success in attainment of his aim. No other fact is known about him until his conversion.

The year 1391 <sup>(ד'ק"ט)</sup> was a monstrous year for the Jews of Spain. Either death or conversion was forced upon them; whole communities were baptised forcibly. Efodi too was forced to undergo conversion and he became an <sup>עליון</sup> like so many of his contemporaries, ~~and Only Aragon was saved because of their diligence of the Jews in reciting Psalms. (Maase Efod. p. 14)~~ Many doubts have been expressed as to Efodi's conversion but there is sufficient evidence to countervail it.\*

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\* Shem Tob in his commentary to the epistle and Isaac Akrisch in his introduction to the epistle speak of his conversion. Gedaliah Yanya in <sup>עליון</sup> speaks of Efodi's apostasy and return. Sabbata in <sup>עליון</sup> Jehiel in <sup>עליון</sup> Heilprin in <sup>עליון</sup> Geiger in <sup>עליון</sup> p.101, deny this. De Rossi-Dictionary, speaks of conversion, p.260, and states that Efodi himself refers to it in his introduction to the Grammar. See Friedlander-Kohn Introd. p. 4, 41 n.13. In his dirge upon Don Abraham Halevi appears the very clear statement. See above pp 7-8 which leave no doubt.

In order to return to Judaism he arranged with his friend (1) David Bonet Ben Giorno (2) <sup>or Bongoron</sup> <sup>דוד בן גורן</sup> <sup>דוד בן גורן</sup> who had also become forcibly converted, to migrate to Palestine because living a Jewish life would be easier there and because the ground of Palestine could give atonement for idolatry (Dirge on Abraham Ha Levi - printed with Grammar, p. 195). Efodi set out first, expecting David to join him presently - probably at Perpignan whence Maimonides too had embarked for Palestine. But his friend did not arrive. (3) Paul of Burgos had met him and persuaded him to remain in his new faith and David sent a letter to Profiat urging him to do likewise and praising his new faith. (4) The answer to this was the <sup>famous</sup> satirical epistle.

(1) Acc. to Ms. Munich No. 315, 7. Renan Les Ecrivains Juifs <sup>742</sup> p. 396

(2) David Bonet Bongoron after his conversion in 1391 assumed the name of Maestre Bonet Bongoron. In the text of the epistle the name appears <sup>דוד בן גורן</sup> but in Shem Tob's commentary it is given as <sup>דוד בן גורן</sup>. It has been conjectured that his father was Jacob Poel, the astronomer (Steinsch- Cat Bodl. p. 2117; Graetz VIII, 94 and 409) He thus carried according to the then prevalent usage the names of his father (Bonet Bongoron) and his grandfather (DAVID) His father had lived in Perpignan and David may have lived there originally, but later he certainly lived in Catalonia. Gross, p. 471.

(3) Posnanski loc cit - says from Avignon \* I don't know why. Shem Tob says he waited 2 days and Akrisch two <sup>in Avignon</sup> <sup>AKRISCH says so too. So it is likely that Epodi was at Avignon</sup> stages of the journey.

(4) The letter of David is not extant.

*Similar proselytism letters had been sent by the apostle Astone Raimond (Franciscan) who came to his young friend Ben Shalbel Bongoron and elicited a satirical reply from Solomon Ben Efodi's relative. This is printed in Koblet's Wikkeuheim. Another specimen of this genre is the satirical reply of Ben Pulgar to Abner of Burgos in the third decade of the fourteenth century.*

Nothing further is known of the life of our author nor is the date and circumstance of his death known. Graetz says that he managed to make people forget his baptism and settled down quietly in Spain or Perpignan where he commentated Maimonides and Ibn Ezra and wrote other works. We do not know if he went to Palestine or no, but at the time of the composition of the grammar, 1403, he was again Jew. In speaking of the neglect of the holy language, he says that according to the Talmud the Galileans had been guilty of such ignorance and therefore it was that the law didn't prosper among them. That was also the reason why Israel was unhappy, despised and exiled and why it changed its religion so often. It was ignorance which caused blaspheming against God's name - and he adds

אין ק' קבל מ'ה' מ'ה' which is interpreted as a reference to the origin of Christianity. "And perhaps that was meant by the statement 'The Galileans did not heed', because those people were Galileans, i.e., Christians" - 'and what have I with them' (Maase Efod. p. 40) which refers to contemporary events.

Perhaps he was still alive in 1409 because a document of St. Paul Trois Chateaux (Gross - Monatschrift 1882, p. 499) mentions a Christian convert from Judaism ISAQUETOS PROFIAT JUDAEUS. If this is our Isaac Profiat it appears he was thought to be a Christian. After 1397 he called himself Efod.

We have seen that by 1403\* he had already returned to Judaism - perhaps already in 1396 with the composition of the Epistle.

\* It is interesting that even at the time of the composition of the grammar he finds it necessary to remark that one not to judge the value of an utterance by the biography of its author (Grammar p. 25)



Graetz has conjectured that Efodi was the author of the account of the persecutions of Vincent Ferrer of 1412 used by Usque. But this is extremely conjectural.

Solomon Bonifed includes in his Duran accounts of the disputation at Tortosa 1413-1414. We have mentioned above the letter in the Ms. of the Duran in which he speaks of his relative Moestro Profiat. But we have no means of knowing when this letter was written.\*

In 1413 a disciple of Efodi, the Grammarian, Joseph H. Jehudah Zark came to Yehiel b. MATTATHIAH DA PISA at Florence with an elegy. (Cassuto p. 302).

The account seems to indicate that Efodi still lives.

With regard to a place of his dwelling, all the difficulties have been enumerated above. But if he was the teacher of Crescas' family it is clear that he had to be living in Spain and not in Provence. Further in his preface to the grammar he speaks of himself as living in Spain. (In recommending works by Jewish Scholars he chooses those that are concise and makes demands on the reader. They are

פירוש יבני ח' התורה והלכות והמורה נבוכים  
והמורה נבוכים ופירוש אורחות חיים ופירוש  
פירוש אורחות חיים ופירוש אורחות חיים

and later

פירוש אורחות חיים ופירוש אורחות חיים  
פירוש אורחות חיים ופירוש אורחות חיים  
פירוש אורחות חיים ופירוש אורחות חיים

Cassuto gives a most valuable hint for the dating of

Efodi, but unfortunately he does not indicate the source. In

\* It was clearly after 1403 because he mentions the grammar

Gli Ebrei A Firenze, p. 302, he is speaking of the fame of Jehiel da Pisa which had spread beyond the limits of his own city, and he goes on to say "The grammarian Prophiat Duran Ephod<sup>e</sup> had the occasion to speak the praises of Jehiel to his pupil Joseph ben Jehudah Zark the poet, who came to Pisa in 1413 and sought the hospital of Jehiel. While there, he composed verses in his honor." This would indicate that Efodi was still alive in 1413.



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It is not known what occupation Efodi followed. It seems almost certain that he was not a rabbi. From Efodi's response (1391 and perhaps earlier) it appears that he was a teacher and from the introduction (p. 17) to the grammar (1403) that he was tutor in the house of Crescas. One of his pupils was Meir Crescas (Kalonimus). Others aren't known by name but one commented on Efodi's answer to Crescas (MS. Vienna 32, 21 (Schwarz). Another made some remarks which have been preserved (MS. Paris 1023) and one copied the dirge for Abraham b. Isaac Halevy (Cod. de Rossi 835). Later on one of his pupils was Joseph b. Jehuda Zark, the poet.

Efodi was probably well circumstanced.\* The reference to his servants by David Bonet mentioned in the epistle would suggest this. Again his panegyric of riches in the preface to his grammar (Rule Thirteen for Study) and his delight in aesthetically satisfying objects would strengthen this impression. He further remarks adversely on the tendency of contentious rabbis to excommunicate the rich. (Grammar, p. 5.)

Prophiat Duran like his two friends, Don Meir Alguadez and Moses Zarzal, is also reputed to have been a physician. Carmoly - Histoire des Medicins juifs and Steinschneider - Juedische Aerzte, do not mention him. But Landau ~~de~~ Geschichte der Jüdischen Ärzte <sup>he</sup> who dates Duran at ca 1400 and supposes him to have emigrated to Palestine.

\* Kohn ("Efodi" p. 14) thinks that the fact that Efodi was a tutor indicated that he was in poor circumstances and praises him on that account for his courage in denouncing the errors of his time. I don't think so. All of Efodi's responses are to "grown up" students.

J. E. under Medicine Medieval mentions Propiat Duran as  
a physician, too. That is most readily concluded from  
the title Maestro which is nearly always prefixed to his  
name -- a title which usually was applied to physicians  
in Spain. \* Efodi brings many illustrations to the grammer  
from that art and exaorts his pupils to study it. (M.E. 2,  
17, 43, 140, Dirge 191, 193). *Then he commented Avicenna's Canon - (See "Works")*

\* Groemmann, p.7.

<sup>PROFIAT</sup>  
~~Propheet~~ Duran has a very extensive <sup>erudition</sup> learning. He

knows the Bible thoroughly and the Talmud too. He is acquainted with the best commentators on both, i.e. Rashi, Nahmanides and Ibn Ezra to the former and Alfasi the Tosafists and Maimonides to the latter. He knows minor works like Sherifa's "Epistle" and Benjamin of Tudela's "Travels." In his special fields he knows all the relevant authorities. He knows Jewish philosophy well although he doesn't mention the philosophical works of Saadia, Ibn Daud or Abraham b. Hiyya; he knows the Arabic-Aristotelian philosophy thoroughly, i.e. is acquainted with half a dozen of Aristotle's works and with the most important works of the Arabic philosophers. He is thoroughly versed in the science of grammar as we have seen above. He draws many illustrations from medicine and quotes from Galen and Avicenna. He was also master of astronomy and had the reputation of being expert in mathematics. He was also conversant with the New Testament and the patristic literature and late Christian writers like Peter Lombard and Nicholas de Lyra. VINCENT OF BEHAVIS

Duran also knew several languages. Catalan and Latin he certainly knew as evidenced by the <sup>א"ל א"ל</sup> who by several references in the Grammar (p. 39, 34, 38, 60, 68, 140). It also appears from the references in the Grammar that he knew Arabic. Whether he knew Greek is uncertain, although he refers several times to points of Greek syntax (cf. above)

His versatility, his fluent speech,<sup>1</sup> his wit<sup>2</sup>

- 
1. Efrodi's Hebrew style is quick and nervous. He writes clearly, easily and his syntactical structure is very easy.
  2. Thus his comment on Jewish poets. Jewish poets differ from those of other nations in that they come by grammar naturally. Their utterances always conform to philological principles and the fundamental principles of the language without previous studies.

establish him as a clever and talented if not very great man. The Epistle is master piece of irony. Karpeles designates it as the most successful production in all Jewish polemical literature. It is genuinely clever, thoroughly informed and deeply emotional. His love for words, his tendency to classify, mark the analytical type of mind - the philologist par excellence.<sup>1.</sup>

In general Efodi was a rationalist. In his youth he had been repelled by the narrowness of the rabbinical learning and life and had sought wider horizons. His adult works were all popularizations of various sciences - Biblical philology and grammar, calendography, Maimonidean philosophy, etc. - designed to improve his contemporaries. Yet Efodi was not entirely free from the vagaries of his time. He believed in astrology and was a great student of Ibn Ezra. Thus he believed that the Ineffable Name (אֵלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים) could be used to work wonders and produce miracles (Gram. p. 90-91) that six is a perfect number and that is why Hebrew has six conjugations (p. 60) that there are twenty-two letters in the alphabet for the twelve constellations and the ten spheres, or that God taught Hebrew to Adam, Eve and the serpent (p.30). Then he also believes that sacrifices have supernatural potencies and attributes some of the miseries of the Diaspora to the cessation of sacrifices (Dirge<sup>1,2</sup>).

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1. These analytical qualities of mind must have made him a very good teacher as they made him a good popularizer. To complete the picture of the cultured, and clever writer we must also remember his aesthetic preferences for beautiful synagogues and tuneful melodies and handsome books, etc. (p. 19-21 Grammar)

In several places of his grammar Brodi evinces a marked anti-rationalistic or at least anti-philosophical tendency. His interpretation of the Section in the Guide Bk. III Ch. 51, already alluded to, establishes the superiority of students of Jewish lore to those of philosophy.<sup>1</sup> (Gram. p.7-8)

Following Maimonides and going even further he remarks that every true and established proposition in the philosophy of the Greeks was taken from the Jews. How then asks Brodi, can we say that M. thinks Greek philosophy so important if he himself contradicted and opposed it on so many points - especially in celestial matters. (p. 9)

The philosophers with all their investigation can have no share in the science of Cabbalism because Aristotle and his school have no share in the God of Israel. (p. 9)

He permits and enjoins, even, the study of sciences and logic in so far as they advance religious studies and ~~then~~ logic is necessary for success in disputations with Christian theologians-but metaphysics is permissible only in so far as extreme care is taken to avoid those conclusions of the Greek thinkers which contradict the principles of the Torah. Cosmogonic speculations are forbidden because they are insusceptible of proof and likely to mislead. (p. 15)

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1. The interpretation is very plausible though perhaps not in the vein of Maimonides. Shem Tob in his commentary quotes it in the name of Brodi. Anad Haam in his essay <sup>1880 1106</sup> (p. 1107) does not interpret the passage thus but Satanow in his commentary ad loc. accepts Brodi's classification.

He can even say this: "How many Jewish scholars I have seen who have lived a long life in comfort and pleasantness - but how many philosophers - short lived, poor and miserable." (p. 16)

After the student has come of age, he may add as a <sup>philosophy</sup> fourth subject to his curriculum (Bible Mishna and Talmud being the other three) and apportion his time equally to all - if his intention be right. This means close to the age of thirty, when growth has stopped.

"The Torah is the chief end of man's endeavor. Let the enlightened <sup>לומד</sup> beware against following the impulses of his heart to occupy himself with any science outside of it -- especially with the sciences and metaphysics of Greek philosophers. Let him strengthen himself against this disease which is incurable. A previous study of Jehuda Halevi's 'Kuzari' and then of Maimonides' - Guide to the Perplexed insures an immunity. (p.25)

He confesses that in his youth he had disobeyed his teachers and thrown himself rashly into philosophical studies with evil results. He therefore wishes that others may profit by his experience. (ibid)

"Philology is decried by the philosophers devoid of all wisdom <sup>(לומד חסיד)</sup>. The matter of the divine names can't be apprehended by the philosophers with all their research." (p.90)

These comments constitute a marked reference to the

commentary on the Moreh where he is extremely rationalistic. Add to this the two comments which appear in the grammar but not in the commentary already mentioned, and that on p.45 and p. 177 he comments on points which Maimonides treats in the Guide but which he does not linger over there and it is remarkable that such a change should take place. It may be that the commentary was composed in Mofdi's youth when he was still pursuing general intellectual perfection. Later on after he had passed through his ordeal and had seen the evil effect of philosophical studies in that they served to break down the stamina of the Jewish youth and their resistance to the blandishments of the world - and when the times became so parlous he abandoned his youthful ideas. (Gronemann p.7, 17)



The new feeling for his people which had been aroused by his personal misfortune and the disaster which had overtaken his people reinforced by the natural fondness for language serve to explain Efodi's great love for the Hebrew tongue and the Bible which was the Jews' all. Undue occupation with either philosophy or the Talmud is called a disease; the Torah should be the end of man's efforts.

Efodi's veneration for the Torah was immense. Of course it contained all of wisdom. Certainly it is God's, and the study and observance of it constitute the only means of attaining eternal life and prosperity on earth. It gives tranquility to the soul of man. The Aggadic portions of the Torah do not contain falsehoods as the legends of other peoples. The Torah has a dual composition corresponding to man's; practical precepts for the body to act upon -- and wisdom for the soul. The theoretical pursuit is as much above the practical as the soul above the body. Intention is absolutely necessary for the act too.

Efodi ascribed a miraculous efficacy to the mere reading of the Torah and states that an intelligent study which would have the effect of actually changing the course of events and again bringing God's Providence over Israel, "According to the opinion of the rabbis reading alone has the power of keeping the world stable; if investigation and proper intention are also present then man approaches God most nearly." (Grammar, p.14)



Prayer in the Hebrew tongue is very valuable and efficacious. Sfodi believes that neglect of the Holy tongue is responsible for the misery of the Jews - wherever it was cultivated with some fidelity the Jews prospered. Thus the community of Aragon was spared the fate that overtook all other Jewish communities because of their regularity in prayer and their diligence in Psalm reciting. He thinks that what caused people to neglect the Bible is the excessive attention paid to the Babylonian Talmud - "which is deep and wide and which is greater than man's intelligence can comprehend entirely. Much time is consumed by it and they dropped the Bible. Moreover many desire to get to the bottom of things and to ask countless questions, etc., not for the sake of knowing the laws of the Torah better or understanding their development but to contend with one another and to show off. (Grammar p.14) Formerly, however, Biblical studies had received its proper allotment of time.

The very sounds of Hebrew are divine (Ca.1)

The language as a whole conforms more to the nature of existing things, *ibid.* p. 60. Indecorous songs after the fusion of the Greek should not be composed in that language. (p.29)

It was the original language created by God (p.30) and remains pure -- i.e., unadulterated by foreign admixtures (p.31). It is more perfect than any other language (*ibid.*). Arabic is somewhat similar and shares some of its virtues since it is a degenerate Hebrew (33). So also of Arabic.

It is more concise than any other language. Further it does not have declension of nouns, which is a virtue because the substance <sup>the bearer of accidents</sup> which the noun represents does not change.

The language suffered many losses in the exile. It became poorer because of the poverty of its children and their weakness. They learned the languages of the nations and forgot their own. Moreover, those who did prosecute Jewish studies, the Talmudists ~~and~~ the Aramaic jargon, to write the Talmud in. And today the same condition holds.

In the academies the Hebrew language is not used exclusively. The great teachers neglect the Bible and are satisfied just to read it once a week. <sup>אין אדם יודע כלל</sup> If you ask them about a certain verse they are unable to place it and think you a fool for occupying yourself with such problems. This sickness (thinking that the Talmud is everything) is especially widespread in France and Germany. Aforetime the greatest scholars occupied themselves with Biblical science, e.g. Rasni - but nobody today knows the difference between Nephel and Hethfael, etc. (ib.)

As evidence of the ignorance of the Hebrew language Efovi adduces the fact that the sum of all Hebrew roots -- nouns, verbs and prepositions does not exceed 2,000 -- and verbs alone not above 1300. But among other nations this figure is at least double. Technological, medical, biological and geological terms are very scant. Even the

meanings of those words that have come down are uncertain .  
(Ch.7)

Even the proper pronunciation of the Hebrew letters is unknown. Maybe by the mispronunciation of God's name we are not praying to Him at all. (p.177)

Hebrew is called *Qaf qof* not as Maimonides thought because it doesn't contain terms for the lower functions of man which Nahmanides has controverted but because the Toran and the prophets and all Holy Writ is written in that tongue. (p.177)

His numerous works bear witness to his versatility. He was master of almost all departments of the knowledge of his time - philology and Bible science philosophy, astronomy, history and medicine. He associated intimately with the most famous men of his time. Chasdai Cresca's in whose family he was a tutor and at whose instigation he composed several of his works, the physician and chief Rabbi Don Meir Algnadez to whom he sent the epistle and Moses Zarzal together with the former physician to King Henry III of Castile, to whom he dedicated the Chesneb. In general the tone that pervades his works is one of rationalism - yet he is not entirely free from the thought modes of his time and contains considerable mysticism. His clear vision, his keen critical understanding, are combined with a strict traditionalism which does not however express itself so blatantly in Efodi as in Ibn Ezra. In general the scientific polemising of Efodi is quite the opposite of Ibn Ezra - the latter is harsh and rude and frequently argues ad hominem; our author is polite and bland, argues to the point and frequently omits the name of the individual whom he is criticising for his error and not his name is our concern. At the most, he is faintly ironical. (Maase Efodi, p. 82,86). He further gives credit where credit is due (ibid. p. 112)

His blandness and placidity leave him when he treats his own age and its errors. He opposes the shortcomings and faults of his time fearlessly, determined to do his utmost to aid every good cause and to further the welfare of his people. He

denounce the social and spiritual evils and finds in them the source of the nation's misery and turbulation; and lays the blame at the door of the leaders and religious teachers.

(Cf. Elegy - print Grammar p. 193)

Times were so bitter and life so harsh and oppressive that no attention could be paid to the welfare of the people as a whole. Thus when Abraham b. Isaac Halevi died no one mourned him. (Dirge)

Its leaders were selfish, vindictive and incapable. "Everyone was nearest himself." They could not understand that the welfare of individuals depends on the welfare of the group in the end - especially among the Jews where one is responsible for the other. R. Abraham b. Isaac Halevi was a radiant figure in the decadence of his time, because he was noble, kindly and learned. They pronounced excommunications irresponsibly and sought to mix in the secular affairs of their communities. They occupied rabbinates for the glory and emolument of the posts not because they wanted to lead the people. (Dirge, and preface to Grammar, p.5, etc.)

Efodi deplores the excessive emphasis on the Talmud to the exclusion of the Bible - especially since the motive of all the pilpulistic haranguing was a boastful contentiousness. The neglect of Hebrew had gone so far that Efodi had never met a Rabbi who was master of Hebrew grammar (p.17) He further hints that the mastery of the Talmud was not as complete as imagined. (p.18) The most that the average scholar can do is to acquire the methodology. (p.18 M.E)

The rabbis do not lead, and cultivate the wrong studies.

The masses do not study but spend their leisure time in playing chess and dominoes. (p.21)

Again and again he scores the mechanical observances of ritual prescriptions. (Dirge, p.192). That he holds to be one of the causes of Jewish misfortunes in the Diaspora. <sup>Crane p. 73</sup> The other cause is the cessation of the sacrificial ritual to which he seems to attribute supernatural potencies.

172  
Mention of Ephod by Bibliographers

Bartolucci mentions him in three places:

1. Under Enprophie Luran Hispanus - author of the letter to Bonet.
2. Under Enprophie Luran Hispanus - a Christianized Jew author of the letter to Bonet.
3. Under Peripetus Luran - author of the book with an introduction.

Bibl. rabb. I p. 98 -

p. 403

p. 354

Heif treats our author under Propiath Luran and enumerates four of his works:

1. The Epistle and the treatise
2. דגל מן דגל
3. דגל מן דגל
4. Commentary on the Moreh

NOTW: Vol. 1, p. 207 v.l. remarks that Bartolucci has recorded  
a commentator of Maimonides - Heif does not give this.

(Bibl. retr. I p. 982.) (Also, p. 207)

Le Bossi, under Peripet Luran says that our author originated in Aragon that he was called Ephod because of his book Ephod and that he flourished at the end of the 14th and beginning of the 15th century. He then gives what the Hebrew writers say of him. He calls the דגל מן דגל PROPHET. The eulogy that he mentions was copied by one of Ephod's pupils. - Le Bossi Codex 835. (Liz. Stud. V. 2, p. 88.) (p. 250 in Bossi-Franciger)

Fürst - places our author under Luran - says he comes from  
Aragon and adds that his name was Isaac, son of Moses Halevy,  
and in the vernacular Mestre Profiat Luran Halevi - de la Guna.  
By an abbreviation of the three words *מִסְתָּבִיבֵי* *יִי*  
he forms the name *יִיבִי* *יִי* . He makes his  
flourish towards the end of the 14th century. He enumerates  
the four works known by Wolf without mentioning *מִסְתָּבִיבֵי*

(Bibl. jud. I. - p.215)

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ACRKS

## I.

Commentary to various compositions of Ibn Ezra:

1. An explanation of a liturgical poem ( שְׁמִי עֲלֵי )  
(Cod. de Rossi 800) written at the request of two members of the Benveniste family. Printed by Dukes in *Literaturblatt des Orient* 1843 p. 486,  
and later in מגן עוז ed. Leipzig, p. 76.
2. Solution of Ibn Ezra's riddle on the quiescent letters (Cod. de Rossi 835 No. 3) given by Benvenuto in his grammar ( מגן עוז p. 16 ed. Mantua) but without mentioning Efod. Printed in the review *Beth Talmud*, V. 2, p. 197.
3. Interpretation of Ibn Ezra's commentary to Lev. Chap. 23 and Num. Ch. aa (Cod. de Rossi No. 4) "The first is exclusively astrological - mystical; the second is mostly grammatical but also contains mystical portions." (Friedlander & Kohn, *Introd.* p. 47, v. 41, where part of the second is printed from the Ms. Parma No. 800? See also Renan, p. 744)
4. On the symbolism of the number seven (see under Response to Meir Crescas) <sup>2</sup>Commentary on Ibn Ezra's commentary to Exodus 20:40. Ms. Paris No. 831,2 ( תשובה למהרש"א על חזקוני )  
and Oxford no. 232:3 ( תשובה למהרש"א )
5. In the same Paris Ms. appears a commentary of Efodi to a passage in the מגן עוז of Ibn Ezra.

II.

Some astronomical observations written by a pupil in the name of his teacher *יחזקאל בן יהושע* in the Ms. of Paris, 1023,3. The first section in this Ms. contains other marginal glosses perhaps by the same pupil

*דבריו* *למנוח* *דבר* . Renan p. 744. Steinschneider *Judische Mathematiker* (*Bibliotheca mathematica* 1888, p. 42-44) remarks that this Ms. is very doubtful.

Ms. Paris 1028, 1, has notes on Jacob Anatoli's translation of Averroes' *Almagest* probabl. identical with Ms. Oxford 2011<sup>2</sup>. The second section of this Ms. 102812 contains a treatment of the astronomical day and the length of day and night in various seasons and latitudes (The name of the author in both is ( *דוד* ) Renan p. 744.

Ms. Berl. 2011 - *Almagest* in its Tibbon's translation. Averroes' commentary upon it translated by Anatoli and *passim* notes of *דוד*

III.

Notes on the first book of the Canon of Avicenna, 31, "factors ( *דוד* ) which are found in Ms. Paris 1047, 10. Ms. Cambridge 114 - *דוד* *דוד* Hebr. *Meters*. 14, 150.

IV.

Letter of Maestre Profet ( *דוד* ) Levi to Maestre Schealtiel Gracian a physician in response to certain astrological questions. It is signed *דוד* *דוד* Ms. Paris 1048,3 Ms. Vienna 201, c. 100a - 1003.





## VII.

### Works with definite dates:

A Dirge on Abraham b. Isaac Ha Levi was composed in Marcheschwan 134 - 1394<sup>1</sup> and together with a letter of condolence was sent to the son of the deceased. In Joseph Abram ( *po'le Polye* ), a friend of Efodi's, to be pronounced as a requiem. The dirge containing many interesting eye-witnesses and numerous illuminating comments informs us that the deceased had been a poet and one of the chief rabbis of Gerona - ~~the~~ <sup>in</sup> Catalonia, which had been especially stricken in the oppression of 1391. Abraham had been distinguished not merely for his Talmudical knowledge, but also for his noble efforts in behalf of his people, constituting a complete contrast to the selfish unprincipled and narrow leaders of most Spanish communities of his time. (Dirge, p. 133).<sup>2</sup> He fled to Narbonne but grew sick of heart and died in 1393.<sup>3</sup> (Note: Friedlander & Kohn in their Intro. p. 6 give the date of his death at 1396 - so the Dirge would then have been written a year before Abraham's death. See J.E., v. 1, p. 111)

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<sup>1</sup> Renan, p. 740, gives 1393.

<sup>2</sup> Insert: Three of his associates in the massacre at Gerona were slain and all his books were destroyed by fire.

<sup>3</sup> Insert before note: Efodi cites a certain Maestre Bonet Davila - perhaps the father of Jacob Poel. In a marginal gloss to the manuscript from which this letter is taken the nature of Moses Narbonne's lost book "Chapter of Moses Narbonne" can be conjectured. Renan, p. 740.

\* This note in parenthesis before previous one. (Gross and J.E., vi. p. 111, basing on a conjecture of Neuhauer in R.Z.J. IX., p. 117)

## VIII.

The girdle of the Ebnod (Ex. 29,5) on the Jewish calendar and the astronomical theories which are requisite for it, was composed in 5155 - 1395 (chap.5). It contains 29 chapters and purports to be a summary or short recapitulation of the work of his predecessors Maimonides, Abraham bar Hiyya and Ibn Ezra. It is dedicated to a Moses משה בן משה זרזל probably Don Moses Zarzal, of the family of Crescat. The twenty-third chapter contains instructions on the calculation of conjunctions and intercalary years and for mnemotechnical reasons it has been put into verse. De Rossi (loc cit) and Zunz (= Lit. & Gesch. p. 488) attribute poetical ability to Eibei on this score but it is hardly warranted (F.21 v.p.7). Judah Moscato quotes the Chasdei frequently in his commentary to the Qazari. The works exist in Manuscript - Ms. Oxford 2047, Parma 800, Paris 201,3, Munich 298,1 where the date is given as 1391. The preface and the twenty-third chapter are reproduced in editors' introduction to the grammar (p. 43,44).

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- \* The Parma ms. has האבדתי את בני which should be corrected to אבדתי because Chasdai had lost his only son in the massacre of Barcelona 1391. (See Chasdai's letter 1392, printed in Sonetot Yehudah et. Hanover). It appears that this work was written for the family of Chasdai and dedicated to Moses Zarzal. (Friedlander & Kohn p. 44).

## IX.

A satirical epistle with the refrain

Don't be like your fathers directed to his former friend David Bonet Benjorn was probably composed about 1396.<sup>1</sup> Together with him, his friend David Bonet ~~Ben-~~  
~~gon~~ was converted. Both however determined to return to Judaism and to journey to Palestine where the resumption of their ancestral life would be easier and the living of a Jewish life more possible. They appointed to meet at a town in south France whence they would embark. Profiat Duran arrived first and after waiting a couple of days received a letter from his friend. The burden of it was that the notorious Apostate Paul de Santa Maria had come to his town and had won him over to the Christianity for good and aye. David urged his friend to do likewise and praised Christianity enthusiastically.

Duran's answer was the famous polemical satirical epistle termed *ה' דוד בן יוסף* after the opening words of every paragraph. It is very subtly ironical and to a hurried perusal gives the impression of conforming David's deed and arguments and of villifying Judaism. The epistle was sent not

<sup>1</sup> It was obviously composed after 1391 - after the depredations. It was almost certainly written before the *ה'ק"ל* since it is mentioned there (Ch. 3). The latter was probably composed in 1397. In the epistle the date of the ascension is given. *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* If thirty years, the usual period of life attributed to Jesus be added, we get 1390. Graetz takes the *ל'* of *ה'ק"ל* as a numeral which gives 1393. Renan (p. 743) prefers to read *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* *ה'ק"ל* Other versions give other dates which are impossible). (See F & K. p. 7, 8, 40, 43. But on p. 4 n. 4 they give the date as 1396).



### Summary of Epistle.

In the introductory paragraph he comments on the obscurity of David's letter and trusts that the Holy Ghost had inspired him. Apparently reason and religion have no commerce - ~~may~~ are deadly foes and David has obviously ~~abjured~~ the first. For creed is the essential and he who doubts is eternally damned. Of course David's actions are entirely idealistic and he will certainly avoid contact with reason and its lies. A few points of the faith must be emphasized.

Don't be like your fathers who believed in one God and removed every vestige of multiplicity from him. You believe not in one unique individual and simple - but that one is three and vice-versa.

Don't be like your fathers who believed change impossible with reference to God and removed every possible appearance of corporification from Him. Believe rather that he became incarnated in one of his persons and gave his blood for the redemption of man. Be grateful that he died to save you - he couldn't possibly have thought of another way. Believe that he became flesh in the body of a virgin ~~which~~ which certainly means a virgin Cf. Pr. 30<sup>19</sup>. Don't heed the impossibility of the entrance of one body to another.

Don't be like your fathers who sought to understand the creation story philosophically, i.e., allegorically. You take it literally and add thereto the notion of original sin and its implications.

Don't be like your fathers who occupied themselves with the sciences. You must reject even the most fundamental law of logic, i.e., of identity in order to prove that the father is the son. Neither can there be any quantitative judgments for you. Otherwise how could the big body of the Messiah be equal to the small wafer and be contained in it. Nor again can physical laws have any validity for you for Motion <sup>is</sup> ~~as~~ in time and both motion and the body rest can not be predicated simultaneously of any object. How then could Jesus descend from ~~Heaven~~ <sup>Heaven</sup> to enter the wafer while he remains on high. All that is requisite is the pronunciation of the proper formula - no matter whose mouth utters it. God will be with you forever.

Your fathers suffered, hungered and thirsted but you are sated Celestial bodies can have only circular motion but you must believe that Jesus is travelling up and down. You must therefore ignore the law of contradiction if you hold that in Heaven <sup>is</sup> Jesus immobile but that he moves on earth. You must forget also that the transformation of an "accident" into an <sup>essence</sup> "issue" is impossible; when the bread is transformed by the formula of the priest - the original essence disappears or becomes accidental and the original accidents become independent. The whole is not greater than its part - rather is it equal to it. The infinitely divisible host contains the body of the Messiah in each of its facts. Forget that whatever is essentially impossible remains so but swallow all the impossibilities you can.

Don't be like your fathers who held tenaciously to the Law that was given them - and strove to achieve a spiritual life in thought and act. This law was eternally binding for them. You however are freed from having to observe all the laws. Yet the Apostles themselves prohibited the violation of the Mosaic code (Acts 15, Matt. 15<sup>17</sup>) although their acquaintance with Biblical literature was scant.

Don't be like your fathers who held all corpses to be impure even that of the high priest. Go and gather relics, beautify them and serve them.

I know that your intentions are of the purest and you have put away the lusts of the world. You will be able to pass unscathed thru the gauntlet of your abusers - those on one side reviling you as a baptised renegade and those on the other as a circumcised one. The vision of God will be your reward and of

*לשון אלהים*

As to the great merits and abilities of your teacher (Paul of Burgos) the Messiah should be glad to have such a one in the world. His achievements in astronomy and philosophy are of course famous. Not for nothing did the chosen one of Israel, R. Hasdai Crescas have disputations with him and spend much time at his house. Paul's exercises on behalf of the Jews are known too - Cardinal Pampeluna and other dignitaries plus a neat sum of florins helped to silence him.

In your letter you chide me foolishly for having permitted my retainers to confuse my mind. I am surprised at you.

77  
 כי יצדתי אחי ברגי רצויה למדע מבידי  
 תמים זוני זמן " זלתי קכל לבדי וקכל נסלי לרל נלתי  
 וקמלי לבדי הנדע קכל מלמל ותקלי הלא מדלי ותלי  
 ולמלי, אמלי דל מ/ ולדלי. אכל מלי זוני קכל  
 דליל המלי לא נלד מלי נלי. וקכל לא לני  
 וכלר למלמלי ילי הלא מלי המלמלי לל דליל לני.

He concludes by requesting his friend not to sign  
 his father's name any more for had the latter lived he would  
 have disowned such a son. "May Jesus the Messiah who you have  
 chosen irradiate his countenance to you and give you peace -  
 but none other. May he give you peace and bless you. The  
 undersigned will love you forever if you will mend your ways.  
 And it shall come to pass if you hearken to the voice of your  
 God. I will make peace with you and bless you wherever I shall  
 be, and shall consider you as a brother and a favorite child.

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- This last sentence so important for us is not given in Const. Ed.

merely to David but also to the physician of the King of Castile, Don Meir Alvardez<sup>1</sup> and chief rabbi of all the Jewish communities of Castile.<sup>2</sup> Then it spread throughout Spain.

The epistle is a masterpiece of anti-Christian satire, but Christians at first regarded it as a panegyric of Christianity and knew it under the appellation "Alteca Boteca".<sup>3</sup> After it began to spread among the Jews of Spain and especially after it had been commented by Shem Tob, its true character was revealed and it was consigned to the stake.<sup>4</sup> Joseph ben Shem Tob supplied a commentary to the epistle probably about 1460, and Isaac Akrish an introduction.

This epistle is in almost every big library of Hebrew manuscripts. Ms. Paris 262,8 bears the title הפוסטילא דה שם טוב

הפוסטילא דה שם טוב [ ] with the commentary of Ibn Shem Tob. This Ms. differs a bit from the text of the first edition. Among the mss. of Munich we cite 262,8. (פוסטילא דה שם טוב) and 310,7 הפוסטילא דה שם טוב; Leiden Warner, 24 ( הפוסטילא דה שם טוב ) The Breslau Ms. gives a detailed account (Forkanski הפוסטילא דה שם טוב Ms. 4 p. 125)

<sup>1</sup> This appears in Akrish's introduction. Did Duran then go to embark for Palestine? It appears that both Duran and Bongoran were in Avignon and that Paul came there too. Incidentally he says they came from Aragon.

<sup>3</sup> A corruption of the Hebrew title. See Akrish's introduction and the title of Ms. Munich 267,8 (Repub. p. 747).

<sup>2</sup> Kesslering in J.F. vol. 1, p. 367, states that Paul de Burgos addressed a Hebrew satire on the festival of Purim to Don Meir and received in reply the satirical letter הפוסטילא דה שם טוב.

<sup>4</sup> AKRISH - INTRODUCTION

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Shem Tob's commentary and Scal. 10,4      שם טוב' ע"נ  
 At London Jews College no. 31,1 (      16,2 שם טוב'      ). There  
 are numerous editions. First of Constantinople without date  
 (prob. ca. 1277 with an introd. by Isaac Akkrisch). Then Geiger in  
 פ"ק נ"ח p42-52 and translation in Wissenschaft-  
 liche Zeitschrift v.4.      Heilprin      1817/18, and also פ"ק נ"ח פ"ק

# X.

The work of Efod - At the height of his literary  
 activity after he had distinguished himself as commentator, polemist  
 and astronomer, Efodi in the year 1403<sup>1</sup> completes his most im-  
 portant and valuable work - the grammar. Maase Efod. The work  
 consists of a lengthy introduction and thirty-three chapters.<sup>2</sup>  
 The reason for the name is given at the close of the preface. The  
 author states that in Hebrew grammar is ordinarily called מ"ק  
 to which the word מ"ק is synonymous - thus playing with  
 the Biblical phrase Ex. 38-15. The work was composed at the be-  
 hest of the "sons of the family of Crescas" (p. 117) and con-  
 stitutes a succinct manual for the study of Hebrew.

<sup>1</sup> Date given at close of Ch. 32 - 1335 after destruction - 1403

<sup>2</sup> Saccetai Pass 8 will give wrongly thirty-six chapters. (P. Ak.  
 p. 48 n. 43, Renan p. 747)

In the introduction already mentioned by Schem Tob in his commentary to the Moren Pa III Ch. 61 (1481) Efodi speaks of the three classes of scholars among the Jews, (1) Talmudists; (2) philosophers and <sup>(6)</sup>cabalists<sup>1</sup>, all of whom neglect biblical studies because of their ignorance of Hebrew. He strongly recommends the study of the language and the literature; he attributes Aragon's immunity to the calamities of 1391 to its diligence in praying and reciting psalms. Efodi gives fifteen rules for success in study - particularly Biblical studies. A good teacher, good text books, attentive and intelligent reading, mnemonic devices; use of the same text; attractive books; oral study; accompaniment by musical intonation; square alphabet; gold type; teaching others; calm and tranquil study; study for its own sake; fixed times for study; prayer for divine assistance.

Efodi gives evidence of great erudition. He knows the literature of the subject completely.<sup>2</sup> Friedlander and Kohn give a complete text of all the authors. Efodi quotes or mentions in their introduction p. 13-17.

Efodi contributed one significant point. He anticipated the modern school in considering the Nichei as an independent form not merely as the passive of Kel and adduced as proof the fact that Nichei has an imperative form which is not the

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<sup>1</sup> Of cabalistic works he mentions only the Zohar not the Sefer Hanim.

<sup>2</sup> Renan, p. 748, says Efodi has consulted the Arabic sources. He quotes Arabic philosophers but no grammarians.



case with the other passive conjugations - the Pu'al and Hoph'al. The Niphal denotes reflexive like the Hithpa'el. He gives an illustration from the Catalan (Ch. 11, p. 68)

Eliot's grammar was the first to carry out the suggestion of Joseph ben Caspi - of conducting philological researches logically.<sup>1</sup> By the consistent application of this principle his grammar differs from all previous presentations of Hebrew grammar. The book contains an extremely interesting introduction and thirty-three chapters - the last being a kind of appendix to explain why Hebrew is called "Holy Tongue".

The first five chapters are devoted to general introductions and definitions, which show clearly the tendency of the work. They treat of language as such and treat it in reference to its elements (after the scheme of the Aristotelian philosophy) according to matter, form, end and agent - to its parts (the three parts of speech and its elements (sounds and letters)). In the sixth chapter the letters of the Hebrew alphabet are classified according to their origin in the organs of speech. Two chapters (7-8) on the former glosses of Hebrew speech and the history of grammatical science close part one.

The special part of the book begins with chapter 9 on the classes of nouns. Then come three more (10-12) on the verb and its general nature; a chapter on prepositions (13) and a

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<sup>1</sup> In the preface to Scharaschoth Keseph, <sup>the latter</sup> he avers that the earlier philologists, viz., Ibn Ganach, David Kimhi, Ibn Ezra, went astray so often because they didn't know enough logic - the prerequisite of valid thinking and writing.

short one on phonetic change lead to the conjugation of verbs. There is a general consideration of conjugations of moods (15) and then a special investigation of each one (16-23). Then here is a presentation of the forms of nouns according to roots (24), rules for determination of any Hebrew word (25) presentation and object suffices of verbs (26). Then there are three chapters (27-29) on the hermenentic of Holy Writ - derived from Abulwalid's grammar, but differing. There is a consideration of particles (30) and finally two chapters on phonetics.

Efodi intended to enlighten the ignorance of his contemporaries and to disabuse them for the errors foisted upon them by late grammarians, principally David Kimhi, whom he opposes very frequently. As grammatical authorities he mentions Chajjug, Abulwalid and Abraham ibn Ezra (whom he doesn't regard as very original). He also quotes frequently from an unknown "excellent grammarian" Samuel Benveniste. Efodi does not regard his little book as a complete presentation but as an indispensable introduction to grammatical science. For further study he recommends the three aforementioned authorities. He is also acquainted with early grammarians (Ch.8) and knows the polemical writing of Menahem's pupils against Dunash but erroneously attributes it to Menahem himself.

Efodi agrees with Kimhi about the number of vowels but he does not divide into long and short. He rather accepts the five vowels founded on the nature of speech (a e i o u) which are represented by five of the seven Massoretic vowels. The other two Kamez and Segol are only nuances of Patach and Zere. Efodi opines that Ezra invented the punctuation and accent marks after the original matres lectiones (  $\text{׀} \text{׀} \text{׀} \text{׀} \text{׀}$  ) were found to be insufficient.

Although Efodi's grammar did not destroy the effectiveness and value of Kimhi's achievement it did not nevertheless remain without influence on Heb. grammar. Especially worthy of mention is a manual composed by David b Solomon ibn Jachja (1440-1504) under the title  $\text{פ' א' נ' ס' ׀ ׀ ׀}$ . Another grammarian influenced by Efodi was Moses b Shem Tob ibn Habib also a Portuguese who went to Italy before 1488. In the year 1517 Elisha b Abraham published his  $\text{א' ב' ג' ד' ה' ו' ז' ח' ט' י' כ' ל' מ' נ' ס' ע' פ' צ' ק' ר' ש' ת'}$  in which he defends David Kimhi against the 60 attacks that Efodi had made on him. Abraham de Balmis and Immanuel Benvenuto also follow Efodi and frequently actually reproduce his definitions and comments without mentioning his name ~~very frequently~~.

The introduction was very famous and was mentioned by Shem Tob, Sol. Norzi (Introd.  $\text{׀ ׀ ׀ ׀ ׀}$ ) Aaron Berechya of Modena (Ch. 23  $\text{א' ב' ג' ד' ה' ו' ז' ח' ט' י' כ' ל' מ' נ' ס' ע' פ' צ' ק' ר' ש' ת'}$ ) calls Efodi  $\text{א' ב' ג' ד' ה' ו' ז' ח' ט' י' כ' ל' מ' נ' ס' ע' פ' צ' ק' ר' ש' ת'}$  Menachem of Lonsano (  $\text{א' ב' ג' ד' ה' ו' ז' ח' ט' י' כ' ל' מ' נ' ס' ע' פ' צ' ק' ר' ש' ת'}$  ) Elijah Ha Kohen (  $\text{א' ב' ג' ד' ה' ו' ז' ח' ט' י' כ' ל' מ' נ' ס' ע' פ' צ' ק' ר' ש' ת'}$  ) Azariah Di Rossi (Ch. 58  $\text{א' ב' ג' ד' ה' ו' ז' ח' ט' י' כ' ל' מ' נ' ס' ע' פ' צ' ק' ר' ש' ת'}$ ) and by Christian scholars Morinus, Boxtorf and De Rossi. It was translated into Latin by Paganinus.

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This grammar was very widespread to judge by the great number of Ms. of it found. In Paris alone there are four exemplars Ms. 831, 1215, 1245, 1246.<sup>1</sup> The work was printed in Vienna in 1865 by Jonathan Friedlander and Jacob Kohan on the basis of the incomplete Ms. of Vienna, supplemented by Mss. belonging to S. D. Luzzatto and Rabbi Sanger. On the margin are found glosses by <sup>310</sup> ~~310~~ - perhaps <sup>310</sup> ~~310~~ - Mordecai Finzi says. The latter is a well-known <sup>as the one</sup> who made glosses signed by <sup>310</sup> ~~310~~ to Efodi's astronomical work<sup>2</sup> glosses already mentioned by Moscato in his commentary to the Guzari. Another gloss is signed <sup>310</sup> ~~310~~ - Jacob Loans<sup>2</sup>. Together with the grammar are printed the minor writings - the three letters to Meir Crescas (p. 179-187), the dirge on Abraham Ha Levi (189-197), the two exegetical compositions (198-209). There is also a Hebrew preface, a long and very able introduction in German treating of the man and his works (p. 149-pagination from the end back), including the textual variants of the Maase Efod in the Mss. of Oxford, Paris and Sanger's.

There is a Hebrew letter from Luzzatto on the character of Efodi's grammar and another from Halberstamm (p. 224-226 gives some additions to Efodi's bibliography and the table of contents of the Chesheb. Then there are notes and corrections to the grammar.

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<sup>1</sup> See the testimonials of later writers in F & K introd. pp. 14-15.

<sup>2</sup> F & K (p. 49) conjecture that this is the physician Loans who lived in Vienna in the first half of the 15th century and was Renschlen's first teacher in Hebrew (Renan p. 749).

## XI.

The plan of the book is as follows:

1. To prove by means of New Testament quotations that Jesus did not think or contend that he was God - nor did his disciples.
2. To explain the doctrine of the trinity and to indicate its sources.
3. To expound the doctrines of incarnation and the matter of original sin - together with the apposite texts.
4. Jesus never sought to oppose the Torah, but desired its fulfillment and perpetuation. His disciples too thought it eternally binding for the people to whom it had been commanded.
5. To explain why his followers thought it advantageous to abrogate the Law, what sanctions they found and how their belief spread.
6. To explain their sacrifice with the bread of their God and the wine which they think lose their form and assume the body of Jesus in those very dimensions which he possessed at his crucifixion - and the sources for this belief.
7. To explain baptism which they regard as a cardinal tenet of their faith.
8. To explain the matter of the Pope whom they call Papa - (i.e., Pater patrum) who is the overseer of their religion. This too is held to be a cardinal tenet of their faith quite unwarrantedly.
9. To explain the matter of Miriam, mother of Jesus and the sacraments, cardinal sins and virtues.
10. To set forth the errors in translation, quotation and understanding of Holy Writ which Jesus and his followers were guilty of.

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- 11. To show the errors of Christianity in its chronology.
- 12. To point out the errors of Jerome in his translation of the Bible into Latin together with a proof that the extant Hebrew version of the Old Testament is correct and truthful.

Works with Ascertainable Chronology:

פאראג פאראג א work of religious polemics<sup>1</sup>  
 contains a criticism of Christian dogma in twelve chapters. It is dedicated to Chasdai Crescas אהרן הכהן אבן עזרא  
 וזוהי שאלתו וזוהי תשובתו וזוהי פאראג פאראג א work of religious polemics<sup>1</sup>  
 and is stated to have been written at the latter's behest. (See Introduction and conclusion of the work). In 1396 Chasdai had written an anti-Christian tract in Spanish-Tratado<sup>2</sup>. He then probably requested his protege Efodi who was also tutor in his family and whose fame as a keen polemist had already been established, to write a work of similar purport for Hebrew readers in popular Hebrew style.

The persecutions of the Jews which started in Saville extended to Catalonia and reached their high watermark in 1397, The purpose of this tract was to examine the foundations of the

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<sup>1</sup> It has been denied that Efodi wrote this work but now it is usually accepted that he is the author. In Ms. Oxford 2153 we read: "This book was composed by the great scholar who was forced to undergo conversion during the great persecutions which, beginning from Seville, spread throughout Catalonia, in which we ourselves were forcibly converted in the year פ"ח ת"ח  
 No. 2155 of the same library has the following note: "Letter to the great man, the Hasdai composed by Maestro, Profet of Perpignan who also was forced to be converted."

<sup>2</sup> This was translated into Hebrew in 1451 by Joseph Ibn Shem Tob under the title of פאראג פאראג א work of religious polemics<sup>1</sup>  
 This appears from the conclusion where he says "Perhaps this essay of mine will fall into the hands of one who is not accustomed to your level of thought (i.e. Cresca's) These may find some enlightenment from mv



Christian religion by an investigation of the earliest sources, i.e., the N. T., and thus to expose the errors of the epigoni. (This would expose the errors of the C. religion and would have the effect of stemming the tide of conversion and enhancing the Jewish religion at once. The appeal to consider the reasonableness of a given doctrine was to be again invoked. There was to be no satire or irony but a simple earnest consideration of what Christianity meant.)

In the introduction, Efodi states that no one had ever before thought it necessary to treat such themes but that it was a matter of life and death now. It seems that primarily aimed to reach those Jews who were perplexed about the validity of their own faith and who were beginning to doubt the intellectual superiority of their own faith to the others. He evinces great familiarity with New Testament and patristic literature. This work is probably to be dated at 1397. (Note: This work was composed after the "Tratado" after 1396. The precise data is 1397, given by a remark of a copyist to the work.

היה הקדמה שם 201 אבא דא' מ'ס'ג  
למנוח מר האדמו"ר הר"ר אברהם

which equals 1397. The word אברהם is not indicated as having numerical value but Zunz suggested this. Otherwise the date would be 1349; and besides the Biblical phrase (Deut. 30,23) יהי אברהם. The suggestion was made in Ersch & Gruber - Encycl. ser.2, vol.27, p. 410. This work was the basis of Simeon ben Zemach Duran's

אלה האבות  
אברהם אבינו

and almost three-quarters of the appears there.\*

\* Same. Monatschrift - 3 - see next page



This work has also been called *דברי חיים*. Joseph ben Shem Tob in his commentary to the Epistle alludes to this work by the author of the Epistle. Isaac Akrisch mentions the of Efodi in his introduction but Heilprin the editor of *דברי חיים* in which this is printed, in a note ad loc. doubts Efodi's authorship of this. It has been attributed to Crescas - *פוסק* 1785 p. 47. Furst Bibliotheca III., 179 attributes it to R. Rueben ben Meir the Spaniard follows Buxtorf's error. Steinschneider Catl. Michael p. 364 and EM Finger - Catl. Rosenthal, speak of *דברי חיים*.

Shem Tob ben ibn Shaprut attests that the author of *דברי חיים* is one with the author of the Epistle. At the close of his book *דברי חיים* he condenses or summarizes *דברי חיים* (Ms. Rome Casanatense 3099). Poznansky loc.cit. gives the exact correspondences.

Sanger (in Monatsschrift 1855) proved the plagiarism of Simeon ben Zemach Duran. The latter's *דברי חיים* contains about three-quarters of the *דברי חיים* so that by comparison of the two obscure places in either text Poznanski used it to check his edition. Steinschneider "Jewish Literature" (p.127) states that Efodi's name wasn't mentioned because the liberality of his opinions caused him to be disliked.

## XII

Commentary on the Guide. Efodi's commentary is more literal than those of Caspi or Narbonne. In p. 7 and 90 of the Grammar, Efodi gives extended treatments of points in the Guide which are not contained in the commentary JELLINEK ( *pr* 31 '2012 fasc. 27 ) conjectures that copyists have shortened his commentary - as he has proven in the case of other commentaries on the MOREH. Perhaps the commentary was composed after the grammar which would explain why he never cites it. (Renan, p.750). Of all our authors' works, this was the first one printed, the text of the Moreh being printed with the commentary in 1551 at Sabianetta.

Efodi shows himself in his commentary to be well versed in the Aristotelian-arabic philosophy and in the Jewish literature on the subject. Ms. Oxford 2422, 16 contains an Arabic fragment of our commentary which was translated into that tongue.

Mss. Paris 1021,6 - 1026,4 contain a long note on the hyperbolic curves and asymptotes (treated in the Guide BKI ch. 73) longer than Levi h. Gersonson on the subject.

Other Mss. are Vat. 297,4; Paris 705,2, 1021,6; 1026,4. The last two contain a note on hyperbolic curves and

asymptotes (treated in the Guide BK I Ch. 73).

Renan p. 750 - 1.

Steinschneider - Bibl. mathematica p. 42-4 (1899)

- Die Hebraische Commentare zum Fuhrer  
des Marmonides - Sonder -

- Abdruck, Festschrift zu A. Berliner, 1903.

Ms. Bodl. 1230, informs us that Efodi also annotated  
the CUZARI of JEHUDA HALEVI.

## Memorial of the Oppressions

The discovery that Efodi was also a historian was made by Graetz (Geschichte V. 8, p. 404). In Abravanel's work *Sefer Nivhar* (1497) in which he defends the Messianic idea, contains a list of persecutions and gives as his source an unknown work of Efodi's. It appears to have been a catalogue of persecutions that the Jews had to undergo after the destruction of the temple. Abravanel does more than to mention this martyrology - he gives extracts from the work. (1) Of the expulsion from England; (2) of the expulsion from France under Philip Fair; (3) the readmission under his successor Louis; (4) the re-expulsion under the same; (5) the readmission under John; (6) the final expulsion under Charles VI. Graetz (Ch. p.405) has shown that the text given by Abravanel occurs also in Ibn Vergas' *Shebet Yehuda* and in Samuel Usque's *Consolacao as tribulacoes de Israel* - proving that both these authors used this work.

(Renan, p. 405-6)

Solomon Alafmi (fl. ca. 1400) in his epistle *Sefer Nivhar*

*(p. 22 is Gellinek's)*  
 1-PT *לפי שכל המעשים הנעשים לנו*  
*בשם ה' אלהינו וכו' וכן נראה*

This is conjectured to be Efodi's book.

Graetz further conjectured that the details of the persecution of Vincent Ferrier in 1412 given by Usque are taken from Efodi. This would mean that he wrote it after 1412. In any case he wrote after his return to Judaism, i.e., after 1396 (Renan, p. 753).

Neubauer has published (R.E.J. - V.9, p. 136) a chronicle of persecutions copied from Ms. 315 of Baron Horace Gunzburg which he supposes to be an extract from Efodi's work; that is mostly based on the fact that dates are expressed by mnemonic words. The latest date is 1395. The episode of Vincent Ferrier is not mentioned but this does not prove that the complete work didn't contain it.

XIV.

(Renan, p. 753) A response <sup>תשובה</sup> to the  
astronomical book of Joseph ben Nahmias entitled <sup>ספר אור</sup>  
Light of the World. These remarks are found in Ms. Oxford  
Can. misc. 479, fol. 26b - after Joseph's treatise.

EFODI'S AIM:

EFodi desired to supply a running commentary to the text of Tishbi's version of the Moreh. Unlike many other commentators he wrote no preface to his annotations in which he set forth his aims probably because first, his intention was so transparent, and secondly because such remarks would in the light of such an intention, appear irrelevant.

None of the famous scholiasts aimed to write a textual commentary merely - if at all. Shem Tob ibn Eliaquerra announces in the preface<sup>(1)</sup> to the Moreh that his first aim is to treat of certain matters mentioned in the Moreh and of the doctrines of the philosophers contained in it, and to point out what agreements or disagreements there are between the two and what is doubtful in their theories - "That is - he proposes to summarize the text and to include certain dicta of the philosophers (particularly Averroes who resembles the sages in many ways) which will serve as an explication of or supplement to Maimonides. In addition to illuminating the text there are three further tasks carried out in three supplementary chapters (1) The opinions of the philosophers about human perfection and union with the Active Intellect. (2) On a doubt<sup>on Ch. 51Bk III</sup> expressed by Abn Ribbon in his notes. (3) On the errors committed by Ribbon in translation. (4) Summary of most of the chapters

3. Joseph ibn Caspi in the preface to <sup>2/2 1/2 2/2 2/2 2/2</sup> announces that he will explain many matters of the Moreh, the only metaphysical work left the Jews after all their philosophy has been

1 - Moreh Ha-Moreh - Presburg 1837 1-6, p. 141

2 - <sup>2/2 1/2 2/2 2/2 2/2</sup> Ed. Werblumer Frankfurt 1846 pl



spoken by the Gentiles. This however includes only those points concerning which no excessive secrecy is enjoined. The Commentary will in the large, contain simple reasonable matters.

Those however concerning which great secrecy has been enjoined will be treated in פסוק נחמני He apologizes for having transgressed the prohibition of Maimonides against commenting his works and declares himself ready to risk the curse because he feels he can benefit people in their understanding of the master.

Moses Narbonne is very explicit as to his purpose (1): "It is not my intention merely to explain difficult points of language without going into detailed explanation of whatever philosophical problems occur (אין כוונתי לפרש) or without illuminating profoundly and expatiating on his secret points. He deplores the desuetude into which philosophy has fallen and the rarity with which Maimonides is studied and proclaims that he wants to "fill in the interstices and to explain this wonderful metaphysical book. Occasionally I will show what issues have been taken against him due to his following Avicenna. The commentary contains actually certain things which are found potentially only in the text."

Shem Tob repeats the usual formula of veneration for the author and his work and echoes Narbonne's plaint about the ignorance of contemporary scholars with regard to the Moreh. He then avows his goal to be the composition of a "commentary which will be clear without having to resort to the Maimonidean text;

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1. Moreh Narbonne - Commentary to Moreh ed Goldenthal p 1.  
Moreh

2. Introduction of Shem Tob - printed with the Moreh Nebuchim Warsaw edition p 2A.

this, despite the fact that one should not oppose the divine purpose which concealed last truths especially those concerning the knowledge of God from the masses. If necessity compels me to treat difficult linguistic points to some extent and to explain at length many points derived from philosophers - we shall draw on the commentators in so far as they are correct."

Crescas 1) in his prefatory note declares that he has composed his commentary for the benefit of youthful students who come to the Moreh without sufficient preparation and hopes that his composition will prove effective. It is only to cover certain points which call for especial elucidation.

Of all the famous commentators to the Moreh then Sfodi is the only one who aims primarily at nothing higher than literal exegesis - to render the text of the Moreh more legible to a generation which possessed no great knowledge of philosophy in general and Maimonides in particular.

1) Introduction - printed in Moreh Nebvichim, Warsaw 1872 p 2B

The essential trait of Efodi's commentatorial activity has long been recognized. An epistle (1) <sup>written by</sup> attributed to Rabbi Joseph Solomon Delmedigo the physician of Candia gives the following illuminating information. "When I was in Egypt I saw about eighteen commentaries long and short to the Moreh that important and great book. If you would permit me the figure I would say that the commentators of Maimonides correspond to the four sons. # The impious one is Rabbi Moses of Narbonne, the master of those who understand. He is the majordomo of the teacher and has penetrated further than all the other commentators into the profundity of the Guide. But he is a tattle bearer ( <sup>המגיד</sup> ) reveals secrets and respects no man. The wise one is Rabbi Shem Tob who explains well, calls attention to difficulties in the words of Maimonides and calls the master in question. The simple one is Crescas - who explains in a rabbinical manner. The one "who does not ask" is Efodi - an honorable man who, while asking no questions, nevertheless answers well - with brevity and perspicuity like Rashi. He is the prince of the commentators and belongs to the ranks of the mathematicians and astronomers, which is not the case with Shem Tob." Whether Shem Tob is as wise or Narbonne as wicked as their Talmudical prototypes is not so certain; but the simplicity of Efodi is indisputable. Especially pleasing is the comparison with Rashi. The simple, persistent endeavor to render the text more accessible and comprehensible by removing the obscurities that attach to words and phrases and simple ideas.

1-Geiger - Melo Chofnaim p.18 <sup>printed in</sup>

#-In the Talmud there are mentioned four kinds of sons to whom it may be necessary to relate the story why Passover is celebrated - the wise ( <sup>החכם</sup> ), the impious ( <sup>הרשע</sup> ), simple ( <sup>הטולד</sup> ), and the utterly simple or childish who cannot yet ask questions ( <sup>האילן</sup> )

Exposition not discussion, a simple running commentary on the text - not a compendium of it or a theorizing upon it, is what Maimonides supplies and it was undoubtedly this that made him so respected and valued. Many surpassed him in attainments. Shem Tob Crescas surpassed him at least in mastery of the text. Ibn Caspi in rationalistic emphasis and familiarity with Arabic philosophy, Nerbonne in subtlety, Shem Tob in clarity and connectedness and Crescas in precision. But no one of these furnished a commentary which accompanied the text and helped the reader read with his own eyes. This was left for Maimonides to do.

If Ibn Caspi had paid more attention to smaller details and hadn't indulged so many rationalizing impulses or if Crescas had lived earlier and covered every chapter, Maimonides's task might have been done by another. But it was not.

All of Maimonides's comments on the text of Maimonides may be classified into the following way:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Language            | 1. Philological Analysis - words, constructions.                          |
|                     | (2. Simple exegesis, or paraphrase  |
| Thought             | 3. Complex comment, development from text, discovery of contradictions.   |
| Miscellaneous helps | 4. Introductory notes, summaries, transitional remarks, cross references. |

The greatest number of his remarks are simple elucidations of the text. He will give an explanation of a single word or phrase, or sentence either by supplying a fact necessary for the understanding of the text, by giving some suggestions or by rewording and paraphrasing it.

He very rarely prefaces his remark, to a chapter by indicating its tenor or showing its connexion with what has pre-

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ceded or its place in the movement of the thought.(1) With Shem Tob and Abravanel of course, this is the rule. But not infrequently, his last remark to a chapter may give the upshot of the discussion or point the way to what is coming.

In the first book the only instances of prefatory comment are in chapters 26,35,66. In the second and third books he occasionally devotes a sentence or two to pointing out connexions or giving a terse formulation of the subject of the chapter, e.g. Bk II, Introduction, I,II,IV,XLVI, XLVIII, Bk III, II,30.

Shem Tob never has any philological analysis of words or phrases - or even construction of the text. In such cases he always relies on Efodi. Crescas has them occasionally and he generally approximates Efodi. Abravanel does engage in philological analysis but generally it is confined to showing the relation between a usage found in Holy write and that in question. Very often Abravanel accepts Efodi's philological and syntactical comments with <sup>out</sup> punctilious acknowledgement, of course.

There are a considerable number of philological comments. There may be the definition of a word, or the analysis of its grammatical and syntax form. In defining it is noteworthy that not in a single case save one" does Efodi give an equivalent in the vernacular- be it Latin, Arabic, Spanish or Provencal. There may be the syntactical construction of a phrase - e.g. what it modifies <sup>a statement of</sup> or refers to. Finally there may be a statement of variant readings usually confined to the inclusion or omission of a certain word, e.g. Ch. #5, Ch #28, Ch. 33 k, Ch.39 f

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" In ch. 73 he gives a Spanish equivalent for indigo - but this is taken from Ibn Tibbons glossary to the Moreh.



Marbonne occasionally has a few simple comments to make but for the most part he is engaged in developing the text, quoting the opinions of other philosophers, etc. Shem Tob as we have said, never makes philological analysis. But neither does he make simple local exercises. His intention is first to summarize the text, next to show its connexions and finally to introduce his personal reflections comments and impressions. Abravanel's favorite habit is to ask a number of questions on the text none of almost importance which he then proceeds to answer, occasionally. Usually he gives an outline of the text and shows its connexions. These are helpful.

FOOTNOTES: There have been mentioned above personal reflections, comments and impression that are recorded by Marbonne Shem Tob, Abravanel and even Crescas. Sfodi hardly makes a simple comment revelatory of himself. The form of his commentary simple local explanations forbids it. All the commentaries have introductions in which the authors state their aims, set forth their method and give some general statement of their attitude to philosophy and their relation to Maimonides. This is missing in Sfodi.

Marbonne abounds in interesting remarks. For one thing, he mentions dates and places and events in his life. Thus of references to his own works, we have explained this in our introduction to the *Sefer ha-Itim* (The Intentions of the philosophers - Makasid of Gazali) (Chap. 31) or in our commentary to Hai ben Yektan (Chap. 37) in our explanation of the Epistles on the possibility of Union of Averroes, Ch. 72; in my book *Shem Tob* (Ch. 55); or references to dates and places and individuals, the following: "When I was a youth in my Lehrjahre at Perpignan, there was a famous rabbi, etc., Ch. 50; or when I was in Toledo I spoke on this subject to the old sage Don Joseph Abubecr (Ch. 25); or One of the notables of

\* See below for sample of my work. Chap. 50 for complete text.

Barcelona of the family of Crescas showed me a stone quarried from Mt. Sinai, in which was reflected a bush hence the name *y'ofra*. When I broke this into many parts, each ~~par~~ fragment kept the image of the bush *ch. 66*; or when I was there in the year . I saw a remarkably old woman who had witnessed the eclipse (Bk 3 Ch. 17) Then there are remarks which reveal to us his knowledge and intimacy with philosophy. Not merely is his explicit quotations from Avenodes which are found in every chapter almost or Avenodes, Al Chozal, Al Farabi Alexander and Aristotle. A reference such as this is very illuminating. A propos of Maimonides statement that Themistius had said that reality doesn't follow from an idea but that true ideas correspond to reality - Narbonne remarks: "This is one of the curious things in Maimonides. How could he have attributed this to Themistius when Aristotle spoke of it explicitly in the Metaphysics" (Bk I, Ch. 71). Or, I am surprised that Maimonides didn't know this from Safer Bahir (what God's twelve lettered name was) Ch. 62. I need not refer to the picture of the man that we derive from his exegeses themselves, nor need I quote them. They abound on every page - the subtle learned equivocal rationalizer, disdainful of the crowd (cf. his mordant reflection at the close of Ch. 54,) impatient with the dogmatic rabbis.

These tirades against the masses and panegyrics of intellect are very frequent in Shem Tob - who although he gives almost no facts concerning his own life and age nevertheless frequently permits us an insight into his character. Thus in Ch. 51 he says guardedly that the majority of Jews have beliefs unworthy the name and that despite the fact that in some cases these beliefs are verifiable or actually correspond to a reality



nevertheless the beliefs are not true because their possessors have  
 no intellectual awareness of them. <sup>cf. ch. 1, p. 13</sup> His comment on "great theological  
 scholar" (Intro): A theological scholar that will be subservient to  
 the religion but not like a beast that is led by its rein - but a  
 master of the truth. Crescas and Abravanel again supply no facts about  
 their life. In this they resemble Efodi and yet one is so much more  
 certain of the essential spiritual traits of these men than in the  
 case of Efodi. Crescas too runs on with the text but in his longer  
 exegeses we ~~feel~~ the clear headed rabbanite or scholastic who  
 possesses a good measure of dialectic skill whose Jewishness and  
 secular culture are at one within him. *Cf. Such an illuminating remark as Bk III Ch 512*

We feel that we know Abravanel with his fluent speech, his love  
 for Hebrew, his veneration of Maimonides on the one hand and his  
 trembling orthodoxy on the other. Thus in Ch. 50 he says very  
 unmistakeably that belief or faith is not a matter of intellectual  
 apprehension though that may be concomitant, but that in religious  
 matters authoritative tradition prophetic or miraculous source,  
 eternal truth and utter difference from all (lower) forms of  
 belief must be present. He adduces many Hebrew authors, Nahmanides,  
 Crescas though his familiarity with the Arab is scant. His anti-  
 pathy to Ibn Caspi Narbonne and Efodi for their rationalistic  
 exegeses and his frequent caustic strictures upon  
 them is so characteristic of the man.

M. commanded that no Man of evil faith or unbeliefs should  
 read his book. He summoned a nation, righteous in its beliefs <sup>which</sup>  
 guards the truth *א' יא' ונ' י' י' י' i.e. the beliefs of*  
 the Torah of Moses, our teacher. But what the Master feared has  
 come to pass, for lo there came Narbonne. a heathen

not righteous, "11 a heathen not pious to study his book and to impute to him evil notions and to speak against God and Moses. Intr p. 11B.

His passionate outcry against Narbonne's and Efodi's allegorization of the revelation in Ch. 5 and Ch. 14. In Ch. 1 Efodi remarks of God's knowledge "God's knowledge is of the species of existing things and not of individuals - except in the human species". Shem Tob makes a very cryptic remark. We might suspect it refers to absence of Providence. Abravanel exclaims a propos of Efodi's remark "וְהַיְהוּדִים הָיוּ לְמַעַן הָאֱלֹהִים וְלֹא לְמַעַן הָאָדָם" "The Jews were for the sake of God and not for the sake of man".

Not so Efoûl - not a single date place or person is mentioned by him, not a single detail refelatory of the man himself except for what specious generalization can be made from his known achievement as a commentator. He seems to be an orthodox Maimonidean nearly always- who loves and venerates the great teacher. There is hardly a deviation of importance from the apparent meaning of Maimonides anywhere. The influence of Gersonides and Crescas whom he knows are not to be seen in his commentary.

A word about some very minor differences between Efodi and the text. First, Efodi believes in astrological influences Ch. 63, 30 f. His conception of the creation, the theophany are completely allegorical and symbolical and in some cases he goes on to complete or invent an allegory of his own accord. His God is exceedingly abstract and he is very fearful lest any admixture of reality result through unguarded language Ch. 15 f. A number of other single deviations are appended. Following these a number of additions to or developments from the text that Efodi made.

1- Denies that intellectually one is harmed by undue or excessive speculation. Only the physical senses and organs which





Alexander Aphrodisias Bk I Ch. 68 <sup>4</sup>, Bk II, Ch. 16; Galem Ch 72 <sup>8</sup>; Averroes Ch 74 <sup>3</sup>, Intro. Bk II, Ch. I and 29 <sup>4</sup>, Avicenna, Introd. Bk II; Ibn Ezra Bk II Ch 29., Kimhi Bk II Ch 30; al Siag Bk III Ch 51; Aubergibid.

Quotes and mentions: Narbonne, the commentator of <sup>דבר חכמה</sup> (Ghazali Makasid) Bk II Ch I; R. Vidal Bk II Ch 45 (probably Narbonne), Maestro Vidal Bk III Ch 29.

Samuel ibn Tibbon, Bk II Ch I, II, to essay " <sup>דבר חכמה</sup> " Bk II, Ch 7.

Gersonides: ("Maestro Leon - author of "Wars of the Lord") Bk I Ch 72 <sup>8</sup>, Bk II Ch 20, 24; Commentary on Job Bk II Ch 23. Further mention Bk I Ch 66<sup>5</sup>, Bk II 24 <sup>6</sup>, Bk III 20<sup>3</sup>.

Maristri#Abram Ch 59 : This is perhaps Abraham Bonafomy, of Perpignan - author of " <sup>דבר חכמה</sup> " but most likely the same Abraham Caslari's next.<sup>#</sup>

Abraham David Caslari, Ch. 78 : Physician and astronomer at Besalu, Catalonia ( ) in the first half of the fourteenth century - teacher of Narbonne.

( <sup>דבר חכמה</sup> ) : Chap. 69<sup>8</sup>, 72<sup>8</sup>. Probably Missim Gerondi.

Abuhamed (Ghazali): The <sup>דבר חכמה</sup> Makasid is quoted in Ch. 40<sup>6</sup> Int. Bk II and mentioned in Ch. 71<sup>6</sup>

Aristotle - Natural History quoted Ch 72<sup>8</sup>; Categories referred to Ch 52<sup>7</sup>.

Joseph ibn Caspi - Ch 34<sup>7</sup>, 36<sup>7</sup>, 73<sup>7</sup>.

#### *SPECIMENS OF EXEGESIS*

#### PHILOLOGICAL ANALYSIS :

Lit. From the time when you came

<sup>א"פ</sup> <sup>דבר חכמה</sup> From the time when you intended to come. Int.<sup>4</sup>

The word <sup>מעתה</sup> is most likely misspelt for <sup>מעתה</sup>. <sup>5611111</sup>  
The appellation <sup>דבר חכמה</sup> is found in a response of Missim and in a superscription to one of his own words. Se Gallia Judaica. P. 29 619



So that not

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Next it denotes entering a certain place. The first usage doesn't indicate the place to which the man is coming - merely that one man is approaching another. But the second indicates the place to which the man has come viz. and "Joseph came to the house", "When you come to the land." (Ch. 28)

Their temperament is so bad that it cannot be cured (Fried-  
lander).

Munk. "Don't on ne peut rendre compte", qui échappe à l'analys e.

It is impossible for the possessors of these characteristic s  
to leave the evil traits induced by their temperament. An-  
other explanation is that it is impossible to set forth in wor ds  
the evilness of this man's disposition, because of his  
many evil attributes (Ch 34<sup>17</sup>). The second explanation is  
taken from Caspi. Efodi uses both these meanings of <sup>the evilness</sup> <sup>of this man's disposition</sup> again to explain <sup>the evilness</sup> <sup>of this man's disposition</sup> in Ch. 61<sup>17</sup>.

### Construction of phrases.

To help understand the nature of proof and to test truth by char-  
acteristics essential to it.

"Characteristics essential etc." refer to "proof". Ch. 34.

<sup>the evilness of this man's disposition</sup> : That it is impossible to teach  
metaphysics by the true way and that further we should not  
begin by describing the true essences of things - that it  
is necessarily so, and cannot be otherwise, will be shown  
in the next chapter. (Ch. 334). Efodi refers the phrase to  
both the propositions just enunciated, Friedlander and  
Munk only to the last <sup>the evilness of this man's disposition</sup> i.e. why things must be as  
they are and cannot be otherwise. But Chm 106 and Crescas  
refer this phrase as Efodi does to the impossibility of  
starting with metaphysics.

How was this question on that matter etc.

Ch. 63

So in Ch. 62 he gives two meanings of <sup>the evilness of this man's disposition</sup> , 1) corruption  
and 2) death.

<sup>the evilness of this man's disposition</sup> Also Ch 22 Ch 212 2 pages of for 1-26 - 237 (Jan 237) In the first "was" is subject in the second "man" is  
Ch 287, Ch 297, Ch 298, Ch 299



The majority of Efodi's comments are simple explanatory statements either of the words of the text or of the ideas involved. The philological comments have already been spoken of. Simple explanations may be paraphrases of the text and popularization of the thought. There may be a translation into simple terms of an obscure expression- there may be an illustration to the point in question, or a confirmation of it by adducing the reasons for the position. He may supply a fact necessary for the proper understanding of the text. To this class belong all those comments which supply a quotation or give the source for one; also all the cross references where Efodi gives the Book and Chapter in which Maimonides discusses - which he promises to discuss, or cross references, in general. Of this last class also are the mathematical comments for which Delmedigo praised him, e.g. Ch 36; § 73 P. 123A (See below) or logical comments e.g. of the reciprocal relation 52b (see below). A favorite device with Efodi is to clarify a point by classifying or drawing distinctions between its component parts (see below). Finally the translation and simple exposition of Biblical text belongs in this class. (See below for example of Efodi's translation of a Biblical verse.)

SIMPLE EXEGESESMathematical Comment.

If a man does not know the measure of a cone: מן הן לא ידע מן הן  
 If he does not know in what proportion (the pointed portion of the column or cylinder literally) מן הן לא ידע stands to a cylinder which is equal in width till its very top to the diameter of the cone and whose altitude is equal to that of the cone. This man was ignorant of the proportion of the cone to the true cylinder.

If a man assumes the cone is one half of the cylinder:  
 as though the cone was one half of the complete cylinder which is false because the proportion is one to three. Ch 36/6.

Of his very lengthy and famous exegesis of a symptotic catenatic curve, in Ch 73 p. 180a.

SHANE BANGS :

who abjures reason will injure his Toraic studies:  
 He wishes to reveal to us that in this second case - if he will believe the literal meaning of the Torah he will do injury to his intellect and bring detriment to his religious studies. Int. 3<sup>r</sup>

The parable may be interpreted as a reality: The reader may err and interpret that which is a metaphor in a literal sense; worse yet, that which is the subject of the metaphor, the thing which is compared may be interpreted by him as a figure. Thus the figure of the harlot advanced by Solomon with reference to prime matter he may interpret ~~it~~ in a literal sense. And as an instance of the second case - he may take the episode of the woman bathing on the roof which is a perfectly true story as a figure. This will keep him from such error. Introd. 10<sup>3</sup>

Care has been taken to supply satisfactory explanation of the doubts. הנהגה נכונה Nothing has been set down by chance or accident but with great consideration and with care that nothing doubtful should remain unexplained. All doubts have been illuminated הנהגה as far as possible. Introd. 3

The second meaning of these three: הנהגה, הנהגה, הנהגה

The second meaning of these three words. Ch. 18

הנהגה The profundity of this chapter consists in its proving that the imputation by the whole world of the three attributes to God - is wrong and unfounded. Ch. 57

There are clear paraphrases in great numbers. 12, 20

52 46 53 61 71 56 17

Only corporeal object: The eyes only perceive corp. objects and only one side of the object - not all of it, only a part. Also that which the eye does perceive is only a part of the accidents as white and black which are the color - but it doesn't perceive other attributes since the eye can't perceive cold and warm. Ch. 4

Thou shalt walk in his ways: Man is corporeal but the word הלך doesn't fit what isn't body at all i.e. God. Therefore Maimonides explained it by "conduct of the inner life" Friedlander.

When two things belong to two different categories: When two things belong to two different categories there's no doubt that there's no relation between them. And although they belong to one category: And although they belong to one category and not to two, there still can be no relation between them. Ch. 52

The proportions of the several spheres to each other (Friedlander) ~~Think~~ has "les mesures de certaines des parties". Eddi differs from both. He writes  $\rho' \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{2}$  the number of the spheres. Ch. 58<sub>1</sub>

"Ladder" refers to one thing, etc. Namely the inter-connexion of all existence "Descending to the ground" denotes the lower world. "Reaching heaven" denotes the world of the spheres. "Angels of God" refer to the world of angels. "Ascending" refers to the perception of the intelligence when it is directed to something above them. "Descending" refers to the perception of the intelligences when they contemplate themselves or anything below themselves. "God standing over it" refers to the existence of God who hovers the highest sphere. (Intro. p. 8A )

Harlot: Who removes one form and assumes another. Intro. p. 8B.

And is a married woman. Matter will never be fixed - only form is permanent. (Intro. 8b)

Some deficiency of birth: E.g. he was born blind or halt. (Intro. p 8B)

Every evil propensity: of his choice. (Intro. p. 8B)

Names of more than one signification: The noun may be homonymous as when we say the kid 'ק' will be slaughtered and roasted and the kid will not be slaughtered and roasted. In one of these cases 'ק' stands for the constellation Capricorn. Intro. p. 10B.

"Open the Gates" - with homonymous nouns. Intro. p. 11B

That which is preparatory to astronomy: Mathematics.

מקדים / מדעיה אחרות

His use of /נ/ is like that in the verse "Do not give thy strength to women: Giving here denotes a continued action i.e. do not continue to give thy strength to women - In our example it means that the righteous will continue to give all his days to wisdom. Ch. 34 ?

The first matter: The subject matter of the fourth class which precedes this fifth. ch. 10

Also applied: חכמה חכמה I.e., in the third class or signification. Ch. 10

Ruah is also applied to what is left of man after death: What is left, according to Maimonides opinion are the acquired intellectual actions. חכמה חכמה Ch. 40 ?

Shape: As square, round, triangular. Ch. 4 ?

חכמה חכמה Nature of numbers.

חכמה חכמה The science of numbers.

Ch. 34

חכמה חכמה Properties of geometrical figures.

The science is what is meant

חכמה חכמה Ch. 34 }

Many subjects of speculation. That is the discipline of logic. Ch. 34 }

Nor is his wisdom like wisdom of men: Since the wisdom of God is necessary and is the cause of (all) existents but our wisdom is contingent and is acquired from the existents. Ch 35 ?

q.

The definition of space. Chap. 8 10

" " of cause. Chap. 28 10  
חכמה חכמה 10 10

Illustration. Ch. 46 10

58. 10

Or a quotation or its source is supplied Bk. 1, Ch. 5,  
Bk. III, 80, 90

Giving of cross references to Mamonidean text.

For the closer explanation of this point other chapters  
have been reserved: i.e. Ch. 68 & 72 of Bk. I. Ch. 32

As we shall explain in the chapters dealing with con-  
duct: Ch. 18 & 19 of Bk. III. Ch. 40

I have already informed you that there is nothing be-  
sides God. He gave this information in Ch. 34 Ch. 71

Classification

Organs or substance of speech such as mouth, tongue and voice (sound): The sound is the material נ"ח of speech whereas the lips and tongue are the form of speech. Ch. 46

א'תה נ"ח

By custom and bad habits

(Friedlander) So מ'ק. א'תה נ"ח because of the character of the individual man; פ'תה נ"ח because of the country in which he lives and not through his fault. Ch. 34 ה"א

Sun consists of fire and heavens form a hemisphere:

Mamonides now makes six divisions (of errors) - two from the lower world, two from the intermediary and two from the world of the intelligences. Ch. 36

Growth of body: At the time of growth.

Preservation of strength: In years of adulthood.

Preservation of existence: In years of decline. Ch. 30 ה"א

ח"ו. Glory word Presence - Ch. 21

ח"ו.

53 ה"ב



## Holy Writ - Language

Solomon has already explained that it is impossible to reach wisdom without a long preparation by saying וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת-הָאֵלֹהִים

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת-הָאֵלֹהִים Ec. X 10

The meaning of the verse according to the opinion of Mamonides is as follows. If the sharp edge of the knife has become blunt so that it no longer cuts keenly and if the rust has not been removed from its surfaces how is it possible for him (the warrior) to conquer other soldiers? With this poor instrument it is impossible. But it is necessary that the blade be repaired that it be sharpened and honed. All these improvements are needed before he can conquer other soldiers with the aforementioned blade.

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁכַּח אֶת-הָאֵלֹהִים

Literal meaning - an advantage

for giving success is wisdom (Brown ~~Davis~~ Briggs). Yet wisdom requires many more preparations and preliminaries ere man will get to know the truth. This exegesis has been followed by Abenavanel Shem Tob and Munk. The Hebrew is very fluent and idiomatic.

### Complex Exegesis

In the class of complex exegeses are included all those exegeses which are not requisite for a simple comprehension of the text or those comments which are not at all exegeses but disquisitions, developments of the thought, etc. This may take the form of allegorisations, pointing out and resolving contradictions in the text, directions of the reading of the text arbitrary interpretations. There are a very considerable number of such exegeses. It is not always easy to determine whether a given comment is

simple or not. The only criterion possible is the judicious readers own judgment. Does a given comment help arrive at a literal clear comprehension of the meaning of the text! If yes - then it is simple. If the remarks do not serve this purpose they are usually complex.

Another set of comments which are not simple nor yet necessarily complex, though they are to be classified under that general head, are introductions, summaries or transitional statements, such a note may be a faithful statement of the upshot of a chapter (and not complex) but since it is not an exegesis of any one point it has been classified under complex. Only three chapters in the first book have introductions; but very many have concluding transitional remarks - sometimes summaries.

#### Contradictions - Questions on Text

True essence of the Lord: This is contradictory to Chap. 37 where he says "And the truth of his existence as it is in reality cannot be apprehended", whereas here he says "and he comprehended the true essence of the Lord". It may be answered that here is an illustration of the fifth cause (of contradictions mentioned in the introduction) Here he speaks quickly and in passing - but there according to the truth. Ch. 3

Ch. 3 1c, 4 6, 9 6, 24 7, 34 12, 36 2  
(Quoted from Caspi) 56 1, 60 1

#### Directions on Reading of Text

Prophetic figures will be explained in a certain way:

He will reveal part and conceal part

מגלה חלק וסוד חלק

but there never will be a perfectly clear and complete explanation  
(Int. 4)

In this figurative sense: Everywhere that Maimonides says *אולי* he wishes to call our attention to the fact that the verse in question is unlike the preceding ones. So here the *ראי' sight*, which is used in reference to God has no relation with that of human beings, since it is *ה'ל'ל' intellectual perception.* Ch. 4

Wherever Maimonides says "this is not the purpose of the chapter" *he is hinting at something.* Ch. 54

COMPLEX EXEGESIS

Causes of inconsistency and contradiction: There is a difference between contradiction *סותר* and inconsistency (contrary) *הפך*. In *סותר* there is a divergence both in quantity and quality. Take for example the case of these two statements. All men write. No man writes. There is not merely a difference of positive and negative between these two assertions ( *הוא כותב / איש איש* ) but also one of quality. In *הפך* there is only a difference of quality e.i. the man is white, the man is black. Introd. p. 10A.

(Note: Shemtov follows. Crescas ad loc. interprets conversely and more justly)

"Teach me thy faith - which I should too": Whether I should proceed by way of absolute religion *תורה דאמונה* or absolute philosophy ( *פילוסופיה* ) for my desire is unto thee, O Lord. (Introd. 9.)

Cosmogony *קדמון* is natural science: Natural

science is called *לפניו* because it is first. i.e. Knowledge of natural science precedes and is the beginning of theology - metaphysics. Another explanation what was made at the beginning and origin was made by (in) the essence of the thing. The agent is within it and this is called natural for nature makes it with her imaginative faculty. (Narbonnean) (Intro)

Great theological scholar:

*גדול*

He is described by all the attributes that he should possess. *גדול* denotes one great in philosophy, *גדול* in Talmudic science and *גדול* in theology. He is in possession of the truth. When he teaches a certain matter he doesn't teach from the rabbinical standpoint i.e. the Talmud nor according to philosophy but in accordance with the truth which is midway between them. Intro.

Absurdity of their perverse notions: The reference here

is to the tenets of the *Melekallim* who are not truthful and go in the paths of Sophistry. (Intro.)

Cf. Ch. 3 *ל*, 66 *ל*, 53 *ל*, 17 *ל*



Be firm and steadfast in the conviction that God is the source of all things for this will lead you to a knowledge of the Divine Being.

*אשר הוא מקור כל*

If you wish to comprehend that God is the source of all things be firm and steadfast to perceive and comprehend all existents. Then you will know truly that God is the source of all things and you will have comprehended as much of Him as you will be able to, for knowledge of the essence of God is closed to us. Let him, therefore, who desires to apprehend, whatever can be apprehended, perceive and comprehend (*grasp* and understand)

all the details of existence ( מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו' ). And insofar as he will know these he will know God for all existents have been stamped with a spiritual formal stamp. Ch. 16

According to another reading: He suggests here that the wisdom חכמה for the sake of which the human form (species) exists is the Torah. It is composed of intellectual notions and ethical precepts. By the knowledge and observance of it does the human species reach perfection and immortality but not by wisdom חכמה alone nor by the deeds of the Torah alone. Ch. 30

When he says that מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו' water refers to wisdom he hints at the waters of Marah. ( מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו' lit. waters of bitterness) For intellectual principles alone are bitter to the crowd and deeds alone are bitter for the enlightened מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו'

Therefore the thing combined of them both which is the Torah is "sweet water". And this is what our Rabbis said \* מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו'

\* The Sabbath and the laws were revealed at Marah. "Sabbath" is a reference to the knowledge of first principles, notions so profound that the human mind is exhausted till it gets to them, and "laws" refer to morals and practical commandments (deeds). So they called attention to the secret of the waters of Marah in these deep words. Understand this for it is wonderful to the intelligentsia and to the mass. מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו'

He should respect his Master: מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו'

That he should respect his acquired intellect. Ch. 32

Summaries, Transitions, etc.

And know this also: Maimonides brought this chapter after the one on מ'כ'ב'ה'ג'ו' to complete the homonymous meanings of that term and to explain that it is used to express the three elements

(of all existing things). Form, Matter and Privation. He wishes also to explain the significance of  $\text{אין אור אין תכלית}$  (On a rock in Horeb. Ex. 17:6) when Moses brought forth water from the rock. Rock ( $\text{אין}$ ) in this case means prime matter. Moses apprehended and knew the subject of matter and was working on the matter of the world as he desired and was causing it to leave one form and assume another. This is the key to the verse. To excuse himself for having obscured the truth and spoken only hintingly he says that necessity compelled him as you've seen in this chapter. Now since he has spoken of causative elements - and that which is the cause of another meets and touches ( $\text{אין אור אין תכלית}$ ) that other as matter with form - therefore M. added this following chapter. This is derived from Ibn Caspi.  $\text{אין אור אין תכלית}$

#### Introductions:

In this chapter Maimonides absolutely permitted the explanation of God's spirituality (deprivation of corporeality) to the masses. This is the first intention of the book and the reason why it is called ( $\text{אין אור אין תכלית}$ ) Moreh - teacher. For the earlier Sages used to indulge in obscurities. ~~M. Add this clause here,~~ and say that he is a veritable light and that the light dwells with him.  $\text{אין אור אין תכלית}$  because it was improper to tell the masses that God is not corporeal (because for them that would be equivalent to denying his existence) and equally improper to say that he is corporeal for that would be wide of the truth. Ch. 35.

This is Narbonnean. See further Ch. 66.

Efodi is wrong or unfounded in his remarks occasionally. It is usually an excessive commentative zeal which has carried him



astray. Instances are Introd. 7<sup>3</sup> Chap. 28 7, 49 3, 55 4, 60 8, 62 7.

The text is in several cases open to suspicion. Aside from the fact that single words sometimes seem to be wrong there are instances where sections have been misplaced. Ch. 28 7, Ch. 9 46 7. Abravanel at the end of chapter 3 quotes Efodi differently - quotes certain things which do not appear in the commentary here. Further it is very remarkable that two lengthy and important exegeses of points in the Moreh that are quoted in Efodi's grammar 92 11 26 11 do not appear in the commentary. The editors of the Maaseh Efod in their introduction (p. 9) conjecture that our edition of the commentary has been tampered with by the censor. Maaseh Efod ed Friedlander & Kohn - p. 7, p. 90.

#### Efodi as a commentator. Sources, Influence, Conclusions.

Efodi's method as a commentator has already been spoken of. Something must now be said about the sources of Efodi's commentary and its influence, then a few conclusions shall be drawn.

Efodi's debt to Joseph ibn Caspi is great and hardly ever acknowledged, - in simple and complex exegesis alike. The rationalistic emphasis, the zeal for allegorizing, the tendency occasionally to mystify or be intentionally ambiguous these and other traits he shares with Ibn Caspi. These characteristics are found also in Narbonne of course and it is from these two men that he derives most of his extended complex comments. His simple analysis, comments, constructions are generally his own.

As to his influence it may be said that



ShemTob# relies on Efodi's simple exegesis all the time, ( In some cases when Efodi is obscure because of his succinctness we are helped by reading the more extended comment of ShemTob fitted into Efodi's own words, (and that though Abravanel does not always accept Efodi's comments he is always cognizant of them. Though Crescas does not mention Efodi by name he frequently gives the same explanation as the latter.

In fine it may be said that Efodi is of service in rendering the Tibbonide text more accessible. Of all the famous commentaries it is the simplest and least pretentious. Loyal disciple of the great master Raimonides, crown of the masters of theology and philosophy ( *אורייתא דאורייתא* 'הקדמה לפרק א' ) last of the GAONIM in time but first in importance - author of that great book whose value and importance cannot be estimated - the like of which has been composed by no other nation, his modest aim was to make the reading of the text more easy for the Jews of his time. we have already seen that previous commentators had complained of the poverty and infrequency of Marmonidean studies. This condition was certainly worse now and Efodi's commentary the simplest and least burdened with extraneous matter - must have been of undoubted service. Efodi is only rarely actually wrong and that usually by misunderstanding of a construction. Of course there are places where his comment is obvious or naive or superfluous, or far-fetched. But definitely wrong on vital point he is not. He understands the text and in many cases he is illuminating. His Hebrew is fluent and easy and is seen to good advantage in the

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# It is remarkable that though ShemTob mentions Narbonne he never mentions Efodi by name and certainly does not acknowledge his indebtedness. Only in one place, Bk. III, Ch. 51, in reference to the superiority of philosophers to Talmudists does he mention Efodi and quote the explanation given by him in the preface to his grammar.

longer exegesis.

His mathematical comments we have seen were selected by Delmedigo as especially praiseworthy. Otherwise there is no originality in Efodi's commentary except that his aim is consciously more modest than even Abravanel's or Ibn Caspi's who also give many simple comments. To have as a guide to the Moreh a man who is of rationalist temper, well versed in philosophy, who has an affection for the task and who moreover confines himself mostly to giving only the necessary comments without running into pages of text is still an advantage even for the modern reader of the Moreh and very likely this was even more the case in the past.

Example of Efodis Exegesis  
On First Ten Propositions Bk. II

It is impossible that there should be an infinite line or surface or body.

Every motion is a gradual change and every gradual change is a gradual transition from potentiality to actuality - Gradual change is passage from one attribute to another and takes place in four categories for sudden change would take place in all ten. In reality motion does not apply to the category of substance - for it is a sudden change. When the seminal drop changes to the human form it is impossible that the change should take place in time for that would imply two forms dwelling together simultaneously, or matter without form. We may say that according to Maimonides motion may be used in reference to substance because of the motion of the potentiality.

When the form of air changes to that of water it is now one but it is necessary that the air should become chilled or become ready to assume the form of water. Thus there is motion and this is what M. meant. Maimonides did not mention the category of position  $\gamma\beta$  (in Ghazali-Makised) because it may be included under our category of "place".

Things which change in their substance are divisible and therefore every thing which moves is divisible. Hence any thing which changes moves and is divisible is necessarily corporeal. We might ask why M. says that everything which moves is divisible for the sphere moves but is indivisible although men's minds can imagine the possibility of the celestial sub-

stances being divisible (despite the fact that the sphere itself is indivisible) since we think of them as of bodies. This is the difference between conceivable and possible *voir 12*. The former refers to our conception of matter and has no reference to the nature of subject - but the latter implies that the possibility exists in the very nature of the subject. Thus it is conceivable from the point of view of our minds that the sphere be divisible. So then there really is no question on Maimonides.

Everything which moves by accident comes to rest by necessity.

We might ask if it is **true** that a corporeal thing that sets another in motion can only effect this by setting itself in motion at the same time-how is it that we find a magnet moving iron without itself moving. The answer is that the magnet does not cause the stone to move but that the "form" of iron impels the substance to the magnet - which is agreeable to its nature. For just as matter is attracted to form and moves towards something agreeable to its nature - so may form sometimes move to matter.

Accidents exist through objects -i.e. if the object disappeared the accidents would go too. The essence of an object is determined by certain traits whose disappearance would be followed by the disappearance of the object as a natural form.

(The eighth proposition is not clear - and is apparently misprinted).

Is not something uttered by the mouth. אין ענין בפה  
הוא דבר שאין בו שום חומר ואין בו שום צורה  
אשר יוכלו האדם והמלאך להבין  
אחד - זה אינו האמת

For example, if one were to say that God is one and were not to apprehend the essence of that unity and its meaning but would merely say the words - this is not belief. A simple epegesis.

Shem Tob does not give a simple epegesis of the phrase. He first points out the place of the chapter in the work.\* Then he adds: He now wishes to explain that He does not possess attributes and whosoever believes that He does, does not believe in God, since God is one, and whatever has an attribute is not one. So he begins to explain what faith is - not a verbal profession but something apprehended by the mind in the conviction that that something really exists in the way it is conceived.

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\* He does this in the following manner: Maimonides has already explained all the terms implying corporeality which were used about God and angels. But there is a group which believes that God is neither corporeal nor a force in matter - only that He has attributes. This they believed (1) because of the actions which come from Him - since they thought that these come from attributes and traits added to His essence and (2) because of the literal understanding of the Torah. There are three divisions in this group - those believing that He possesses attributes added to His essence, those believing that His attributes are identical with His essence, those believing a combination of these two, i.e., that His attributes are neither His essence nor anything extraneous to His essence. Maimonides is going to prove that God is not corporeal nor a force in matter, but that He is one of simplest unity, that there is no plurality in Him whatever and no composition, but that He is One from whatever side you consider Him, that no plurality will be found in Him not outside of the mind nor within it. אין בו שום חומר ואין בו שום צורה

Abravanel, like Shem Tob, gives a general introduction and explains that this chapter is an introduction to Chap. 31-72, which treat of attributes. "Maimonides wishes to show that belief is found whenever one apprehends an object in his mind and holds that the object is essentially just what he conceives it to be in his mind. Moses Narbonne has interpreted this belief as any sort of belief (see below) whether true or false. It follows that it is not sufficient to repeat those words with the mouth if they are not apprehended by the mind. Take the matter of attributes. He who believes in them after professing to believe in the unity of God and his freedom from matter is simply repeating something with his mouth which he cannot apprehend in his ~~soul~~ intellect.

The bulk of Abravanel's exegesis on this chapter is confined to the answering of ten questions about the chapter which he himself raises in his customary manner. Some are interesting, occasionally even subtle, but never profound.

Itan Caspi writes that this chapter is an introduction to the following eleven which prove the impossibility of applying attribute to God אלהים אינו נאמר עליו שיש לו  
though not from the intellects of the celestial spheres and the Active Intellect. This, however, he understood only by one who has studied metaphysics. There is one exegesis only and a transitional note.

Moses Narbonne, after detailing a personal experience which shows his attitude towards this chapter (see below 2)



writes: The purpose is to explain what is true faith as an introduction to attributes, and what the scholar should have in the way of beliefs. Faith is not a matter of speech because we can say one thing and believe its opposite.

אבל הענין המצוייר בזה הוא שכל צדן האמת והשואו  
 שיהיה בן חוק אפס כמו שצ"ל וא"כ אלא כיאר העין הוא  
 באמת. אם בן גדר האמת יאמר אפילו לאמתו כוזבת

The term "faith" implies that the object of belief should be apprehended by the mind and that the believer should have the conviction that the object of belief exists in the objective world exactly as apprehended, - although he has not established this by proof. Thus the term " אמונה " "faith" can be applied even to a false belief.

A simple paraphrase of the text. The last comment is taken from Moses Narbonne. The latter relates that when as a youth he had studied in Perpignan a famous teacher and his disciples had ridiculed one who had explained that " אמונה " "faith" is at some time used of true beliefs and sometimes in connection with false beliefs. He, despite personal antipathy to the originator of this comment, nevertheless espoused the cause of the truth and adduced this chapter as support. Moses Narbonne takes pains to prove that " אמונה " here signifies any belief. If the object of belief actually does conform to



his idea of it then the belief is true. Congruence with reality does not constitute the essence of belief; but mental apprehension and faith that the existential object corresponds to the idea of it.

Shem Tob repeats this and goes on to make a classification of four sorts of men with regard to beliefs. Those who say they believe without mentally apprehending that object of belief, those who profess, apprehend but do not believe that the object is actually so, those who profess, apprehend and believe in the congruence of the conceived with the ideal object and finally, those who profess, apprehend, believe in the congruency where there really is an identity between the conception and the reality. The first is not worthy the name belief and not much more so the second. Most of the masses have such belief. The third is really belief and the fourth is true belief. And if no reasonable argument can be found for the rejection of that belief or for the possibility of conceiving its opposite then it is absolutely true. Nothing in this essay is called *ḥinukh* except what is intellectually apprehended and believed to be true. Further, let him who wishes to study this book not stop here but seek to determine if his own belief is true or not.

Abraham holds that Moses Marbonne's interpretation of *ḥinukh*, and for that matter Maimonides', is not justified by Holy Writ because there, it is never used in connexion with false beliefs. He does, however, accept the distinction and

uses it later in his own exegesis. He expresses dissatisfaction with Maimonides' definition of faith as intellectual apprehension and knowledge - for when Holy Writ used *Yink* it did not refer to something apprehended by thought - synonymous with intellectual perception and knowledge. According to Biblical usage *Yink* implies four things: (1) That the belief is accepted (on authority or tradition) but not apprehended by study or contemplation. (2) That its source is in prophecy and in miracles but not in argumentation and rational proofs, otherwise it would be called knowledge or wisdom and not belief. (3) That it is eternally true (and not as Moses Narbonne holds implying sometimes true and sometimes false beliefs, otherwise it would be called doubt or false impression). It always refers to truth and substantiated opinion. (4) That it is a homonym designating greatness, faithfulness, establishedness, craftsmanship and finally a strong emotion in the soul ( *Yip* ) which is known as *Yink*. This last homonymous meaning is only used in regard to divine matters, for even if a man should hear and accept (on authority) the existence of prime matter, say, it would be an intellectual matter but not *Yink*. These four conditions determine a divine belief. To be sure, intellectual apprehension is necessary as Maimonides says but there will be no *Yink* if these four conditions are absent.

למה לא נאמר עתה / כי כן  
 למה לא נאמר עתה / כי כן

Especially if you won't seek their truth.

Efodi simply inserts the word "not" - carrying on the idea of *למה* in the previous phrase.

Crescas repeats by saying that the word *למה* applies to other verbs than its own and it is as though it were written *עתה למה*

Shem Tob repeats and amplifies: Maimonides says that if a man will stop at the mere recital of truths or supposed truths without forming any ideas of them that would be very easy, especially if you will not seek to discover if they are true or not. So, many fools will be found who have beliefs which they have not apprehended intellectually; if you call this *דפנות* it will be *דפנות* according to the fool and not according to the definition of *דפנות*. If then your soul desires to rise to a higher state, i.e., contemplation, if you believe that corporeality must necessarily be removed from God, and that God is one with a unique unity so that no composition exists in Him, then it follows necessarily that He has no attributes.

Ion Caspi remarks that truth is proven knowledge *אמת היא דבר ידוע*

ז' איק נאמט לא אאיק נאמין  
 דא שאלו מאמין <sup>האמין</sup> שאלות שאלו ית אהדק ויש לו  
 תארים רבים, כאלו כוללת וחפוט אאיק נוסף אבולו  
 הדברים במבטא לא אאיק נאמין כי אלא בין מציינים  
 בעצמם ענין האחדות וענין התארים הרבים העצמיים,  
 לא בין מאמנים כק. כי הקצרה האחת סותרת לאחרת  
 בלא ספק

Those believers in the attributes who say that God  
 is one and that he has many attributes seem as though it were  
 their problem and concern how we should bring these things to  
 utterance, not what we should believe. For if these people  
 had apprehended intellectually the subject of God's unity and  
 that of his many essential attributes, they could not believe  
 thus, since one judgment undoubtedly contradicts the other.  
 A simple explanation.

Crescas apparently understands the same way but he  
 merely says that this phrase goes back to what was said <sup>one line</sup> above

כן המאמר האמור הוא אחד

Shem Tob accepts and adds that all Israel believes  
 that God is one and the thinkers believe further that God has  
 no essential attribute in any form or respect. Belief comes  
 only after conception ( <sup>אין</sup> ) and the definition of belief,  
 whether actually true or not, is the faith with regard to some-  
 thing apprehended that it is really as we conceive it. (Moses  
 Narbonne)

ואם יהיה דם זאת אמונה  
גם אם יבארכ בחופת מה שהוא אמין, ולא יביא  
אפשר חלופה בשום פנים. ההאמונה (→ מה) והיא אמת.  
כי הפירק היא הלצה לענין מאמין התארים העצמים  
בן ית' ומכאן אוליך ידבר בתארי' יתביין וידעל באון  
חופלק בהחזקת התארים בו ית' ובא' דה' אצל יותר/ עליהם  
וימשק בביאור דה' דפ' מיל' פירק דה'

If what he believes can be proved and its contrary is  
(or any deviation from it) not at all conceivable, then that  
belief will be true.

This chapter is an introduction to the subject of those  
who believe that God has essential attributes. From now on he  
will speak of God's attributes and he will give a very clear  
explanation of the necessity for rejecting attributes in refer-  
ence to God and will explain in what sense they may be applied.  
This will take till the end of Chapter 72.  
A simple exegesis and a transitional note.

Shem Tob repeats the definition of a true belief given  
in the text and adds that this is also a definition of true  
knowledge which is proved knowledge. Although a man believe  
something which is true and the contrary of which cannot be con-  
ceived, yet if his intellect have no image of it, this belief is  
not a true belief. A true belief is one where the object is  
conceived in the intellect just as it is outside the mind and  
where it really is so.

Moses Narbonne recapitulates his previous statements,  
and then adds that our belief that the intellectus, intelligens  
and intelligibile are one in God is unlike the Christian affirma-

tion with regard to their trinity because the former belief is really conceived as one whereas the latter is impossible to conceive unless two contradictions can both be true.

Shen Too says this is wonderful and hidden to the commentators.

Chapter 51.

/c A particular end in view

נח /יח

From the point of view of the established order נח /יח נח /יח נח /יח

Crescas explains thus: Like the Mutakallim<sup>un</sup> who sought to establish the creatio ex nihilo and therefore though going contrary to experience, established the existence of atoms - the disproof of which was well known.

Shem Tor recapitulates the text and explains this point thus: He who sought this not because he was in error but because he sought to mislead because of some thought he had - as e.g., a desire to contradict scholars in order to show himself wise or to establish his religious faith - which sense experience or innate notions contradict.

Abravanel follows: He had another end in view - he was not in error but consciously and purposely established a falseness or falsified a truth according to whatever his purpose was.

Disproof of atoms

נח /יח נח /יח נח /יח

The atom

נח /יח נח /יח נח /יח

Crescas agrees and adds that they (atomists) believed that no existing substance can be divided infinitely - because of their (the atoms') fineness. נח /יח The concrete existence of any existing thing consists in an aggregation of atoms, and their separation are the causes of the finishing of that thing.



Shem. Too defines as Eroul does.

Moses Narkonne's definition. The indivisible part which the Mutakallimim call הדלק הסודי

also Falaquera

To the same class: ומזה הכת הוא וכו'  
 ר"ל כמו שלא היה צריך לאומרו להביא מופת בו מציאות  
 התנועה שיש לה מציאות חוץ לעצם אם לא בדבר אחר  
 שבו מציאותה, כדבר אחרון לא היינו צריכים לבטל  
 התארים הצדתיים ממנו יתברך כי הוא צדן מכלל, אם  
 לא בדבר שהוא אנושי שחייב לו יתברך תארים עצמיים  
 ואין צריכים לבטל עצמם

Just as it would not have been necessary for Aristotle  
 to prove the reality of motion had it not been for those who  
 had denied its existence so we too would not have had to dis-  
 prove essential attributes in God for this is understood, had  
 we not seen men who attributed such attributes to him.  
 Therefore we must disprove them.

Shem. loc repeats

Abravanel repeats and uses this as an introduction  
 to his remarks on this chapter. He classifies Maimonides'  
 rejection of attributes thus. (1) Because God has no cor-  
 porality; (2) because he is eternal; (3) because he is one;  
 and recapitulates the arguments of this chapter with great  
 brevity.

2 There is no third element besides life etc. אין לש אפילו שיש חיה וכו'  
הוא אפילו לש הדבר שיש לו חיה וכו' כי כולם  
השם חיה וכו' והוא האדם נדבר מן השם חיה וכו'  
אין לש הדבר חיה וכו' חיה וכו'  
כ"ו חיה וכו' חיה וכו' חיה וכו' חיה וכו'  
חיה וכו' חיה וכו' חיה וכו' חיה וכו'

There is no third differential necessary to distinguish man from everything else. For by these two points, i.e., living and speaking man is distinguished essentially from everything else and there is no other essential difference.

Another explanation: As between the definition and the defined there is no essential matter possessed only by the defined, for the definition contains all the essential points. This means that the definition is perfectly equivalent to the subject and exhausts it. (For this exegesis you have to take the next phrase in)

Simple exegesis

Crescas writes: There is no third means whereby you can explain the word "man" and have a definition peculiar to it alone. Therefore it is an explanation of the name because this attribute is not like one which is different from the subject (of the attribute) so that the subject may be described by another attribute contradictory or contrary to the one in question. So, for example, if you were to say Keuten is wise. -

there is a third attribute by which you may describe him, -  
 or you may deprive him of wisdom or change the terms somewhat  
 and say - Reuten is knowing or intelligent. But "speaking  
 animal" אדם נאמר is the explanation of the name man  
 and its essence. You can't describe him differently or  
 deprive him of these attributes (life and speech), for if you  
 do, he is no longer man. Thus it is the explanation of the  
 name, its definition and perfect explication. Thus  
 Crescas inclines towards Efoai's second explanation.

Shem Tob inclines towards Efoai's first explanation.  
 "Speaking animal" is man and there is no added attribute in  
 him for he is described by life and speech.

Munk inclines to first "et il n'y a pas là une  
 troisième idée outre celles d'être vivant et de raisonnable  
 que fort l'homme.

ה Which is called

The thing which he called man

Very simplest comment.

אדם נאמר

אדם נאמר

1 We do not reject this

אמיתו לא נאמר זה אדם

הוא אמר נאמר להנחות דבר אדם הנחותים  
 והם ליהיו פירוש אדם, זה לא נאמר אדם אדם אדם אדם  
 אדם אי אדם, כי אדם יהיה אדם אדם אדם אדם  
 אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם  
 אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם אדם

If we say that the essential attributes are used of  
 God in this sense, i.e., as an explanation of a name, such a

usage with reference to God would not be impossible. It is however impossible for another reason. For if God's attributes were the explanation of His name - He would be the subject of a definition and He would have previous causes. But God can not be defined as He has no previous causes as will be explained in the next chapter. Ibn Caspi gives the same reason.

Shem Tot follows. We might admit the attribute in reference to God since the attribute is identical with the subject to be described. We reject it however for the reason that if it were to have any parts (פרטות חסר) it would be composite and not necessarily existent. Or if the attribute is external to the subject then it is something added - hence an accident.

Arravanel follows Efron closely: The explanation of the name, which is the definition, cannot be applied to God for one reason. If He were capable of receiving definition there would be a genus He would share with others and differences to distinguish Him from others and He would not be necessarily existent since He would have causes, which are the parts of the definition, as will be explained in the next chapter.

Moses Narbonne writes such attribute (as explanation) is impossible because He will have dimensions (פרטות חסר) (would this read פרטות חסר have parts?) There follows a very long and involved explanation of the general subject of attribute and essence.

Not by rejecting the appellation "accident"

וליו קשיליות ע"פ המורה

[illegible]

Very clear paraphrase.

Although the attributists believe that God's attributes are not identical with, but added to His, and have also said that God has no accidents, nevertheless their rejection of the appellation accident with reference to God does not remove the fact of accident since their rejection is only in speech. For every matter that is added to an essence - is an accident to that essence and does not form part of the essential properties. This is what constitutes an accident. So they say two contradictory things - first that God's attributes are added to His essence and second, that that added attribute is not an accident - which is a falsehood.

Shen too similarly - and adds. "For example if a man believed that the wisdom of the soul was outside the soul but were to say that the soul has no accidents - his mere statement would have no value in view of his first position."

for the same reason God can have no attributes."

Crescas comments as Eliot does.

Moses Narbonne similarly.

As to this the logical consequence.

מאמר זה מה למה"ק אלא  
 כ"ל מלך זה המלך אי אפשר להיות בו יתרון  
 נוסף אף הנה כי יתרון זה להיות ענין דמיון -  
 והוא ה"ל יתרון יותר מזה.

Besides this reason it is impossible that God should have attributes added to his essence - for then it would follow that there are many beings existing from eternity and God would be more than one.

Simple exegesis.

Chen Ick writes: If he did there would be many beings existing from eternity and there can be no unity except by admitting that he is one simple substance without any composition of quantity.

The last statement

is Cartesian.

Acavanel: This is the best argument against the attributists, i.e., the Mutekallimen which Averroes brings in his "Confutation of the Confutation". They believed in the creation ex nihilo - that there is only one eternal being, i.e. God, and that everything else was created. If they attribute attributes to Him there will be many eternally existing beings, i.e., God and the attributes, and hence a fatal contradiction of their belief that God was the only eternally existing being.

Universals are not existent, etc.

הדעות האלו אינם נכונים.

אלו הדעות האלו אינם נכונים והם חלקים מהמין אינם נכונים אלא הם

נכונים

Universals, i.e., genera and species, do not have  
existence outside the mind but they are not non-existent.  
Simple exegesis interpreting אל אלהים. The  
is very interesting. It shows Wolf's true understanding of  
the matter.

Solomon Maimon explains similarly.

Shem 'oc and Abravanel refer this to Platonic ideas.

It is Cassi has "species and genera".

exist only in words

אם נמצאים אלה

אלו הדעות האלו אינם נכונים והם חלקים מהמין אינם נכונים אלא הם

Simple paraphrase

These matters are merely formulated in words but  
the mind can find no truths in them.

Shem 'oc repeats. Abravanel too, and adds

"אמרו משה ואהרן אל כלל

"A command learned of men - with their notions but with their  
intellects".

If after uttering them and supporting them a man (examined)  
ופליטת אורח ומצאית

כשילקח הזוהר והמחשבות אלו הדעות הם פשוט לא יחזקו

באין וקצור

If he who has uttered and supported these words  
were to examine for himself he will find only confusion and  
stupidity. Simple paraphrase.



So also Abravanel.

Imr Caspi: When he who says and supports them in these evil ways "becomes aware of what he is doing".  
Is there a mean between existence etc.

ה'ל בין הנמצא וכל  
ל"א מה שחומר המאריך והמאריך אינם נמצאים ולא (דברים)  
ה'ל אצלם בין מציאות אחרת? זה (אנ)  
~~Is there a mean between existence etc.~~

In what he has said about species and genera above - that they are not existent but not non-existent - is there a mean between existence and non-existence? This is impossible.

Effodi refers back to his exegesis in simple exegesis - showing connection of these two examples with the subject matter in question, i.e., attributes.  
N Or between two things etc.

ל"א מה שחומר המאריך והמאריך אינם נמצאים ולא (דברים)  
ואם דבר ואין אף מציאות, זה א"א. ל' המאריך הם הם נחלת ית  
ל' מציאות אחרת, ולא נחלת  
~~Or between two things etc.~~

What the attributists said of God's attributes - that they are not Himself (His essence) or something outside of His essence, is impossible. Those attributes are either absolutely outside of Him - or ~~absolutely~~ Himself - not external to Him.

Abravanel just repeats some of Maimonides' words. Is there a mean between positive or negative or between two contradictions?

ואמנם הענין הזה  
 הן הכרחי בעצמו והוא כן תאמר ותבין (אפסוק א' דלמא)  
 הלא אלף להם שומרים הבחינות ומצ"הן תמיד מהגשמי, להם קל  
 הבחינים שומרים עליהם לה זמן. (כ' למ דלמא וזאת חזק א' ה'קדא) אפסוק א' דלמא  
 קלם הבחינים אף (מל) שם גלם שומן לו תאמין דקין. אפסוק א' דלמא  
 וזאת תאמין דקין אפסוק א' דלמא.

The attributists were necessarily brought to believe that God has attributes added to His essence, by the license given to their imaginations (literally, hold fast to imaginary notions) and by their always imagining existing things as corporeal. But this is only one sort of existing object - (substance) since "substance" may also be employed with reference to abstract things. Therefore some phantasts said that no substance could be found without many attributes; and they attributed many essential attributes to God, for this reason. Simple paraphrase.

Crescas understands similarly but adds that what Maimonides refers to by "as we said" is to the earlier mentioned fact that the mass can not conceive of existence save in reference to a body, and that anything which they cannot imagine does not exist. They can only imagine corporeal bodies, that whenever they imagine a body, it is a substance with attributes. They hold fast to what they imagine, and what arises in the imagination is merely the conception of matter or body. That is why he says "Since they always imagine of every body that it is a substance possessing attributes".

Shem Tob follows Efoai but is a trifle clearer since he points out that these men always imagine attributes to be different from the essence of the substance, and the matter or ~~that is described in material terms is different from the~~

~~essence of the substance~~, and the matter or what is described in material terms is different from the essence. Hence if God is a substance and is to be described by attributes - these attributes are apart from him.

Abravanel follows Efoai and writes: This comes about because men have followed their imagination. They saw that all sensible objects have attributes so they believed that God is like that too. With regard to this opinion they were divided into two schools - one believing that he is a substance possessing attributes, as we are accustomed to see in those substances familiar to us - and another, denying that he is not corporeal but still believing that he possesses attributes. (Is this last taken from Shem Tob? Abravanel does not seem to know Shem Tob - he never mentions him by name)

Ibn Caspi: What forced them into this error. He also has a note on a phrase לפי דמיון which doesn't appear in our text and which he himself corrects for another reading,

לפי דמיון "they are somewhat like substance from the point of view of the imagination".

This probably corresponds to the phrase in our text לפי דמיון and Ibn Caspi's comment is incorrect for our text certainly.

o And of attributes superadded

ה' חסידים  
לפי דמיון לפי דמיון לפי דמיון  
לפי דמיון לפי דמיון לפי דמיון

They thought that God plus his attributes added to his essence, was one, (i.e., essence plus attributes = God).  
 Simple exegesis.





When we attribute to man life or speech we are expressing the indispensable predicate concerning the substance to be predicated.

Simple factual exegesis, Shem loo interprets thus: Description by partial definition; i.e., either by genus alone or species alone is impossible with respect to God since genus is impossible without species or vice versa; this is as appropriate as the preceding kind.

Crescas thinks the connection of the attribute with the subject is meant as Efoai holds.

Ahavanel follows Efoai פ"א ח He gives another explanation thus: Describing by complete definition certainly is a positive assertion. We might think that in description by partial definition the parts are used negatively as set forth later (so that his perfection may be imaged - conceived), which is permissible. Therefore he says, partial definition in a positive sense. (Interpreting פ"א ח as positive vis-a-vis - negative)

ח The inappropriateness is the same as the preceding כלקראת זולת אפניא  
כ"ל שאם יהיה לו חלק מהוא, תהיה מהותו מורכבת. ואם תהיה  
מהותו מורכבת יהיה לו גדר. ואם יהיה לו גדר יהיה לו יסוד  
מאילוף סבוא קודמת. כי הגדר הוא מקורף מאלו והגדר אדם כן  
זה שקר בלקראת האלק זולת אפניא.

For if he can have part of an essence, his essence will be composite. If his essence will be composite he will be capable of definition. If he will be capable of definition he may even - perish the thought! - have causes - inasmuch as the defined is combined of genus and species. Thus, this is false as the previous



kind of definition was. Very clear simple exegesis of the text.

Is not complemented by it:

אין אלה שאלה קו  
 הן לזיוף ענין ענין אלה ענין מקרי.

It is not an essential matter (characteristic) but an accidental one.

Simple factual comment.

A sufficient (reason for rejecting the idea) since it diverges from the true conception of His essence.

אין אלה שאלה קו  
 הפסד הנפסד ליהיה מילוק מאמנה יגבש מלכן המקרים יספיק קלה  
 מאמר זה לאי אפסל ליהיה הוא יתחלה מלכן מקרים, כי זהו  
 דבר מקומה הוא קמלה במלכה

Were we to say that God harbors attributes, this false notion would be so far from the truth about Him that we would not need to bring proofs that it is impossible for God to harbor attributes, because this is understood at the very beginning of our thought. Simple exegesis

Shem Tob elaborates: The third way in which an object may be described is by an attribute external to itself - not complementary or essential to its essence - a quality. Quality is a category - all categories are accidents - were God to have such an attribute - He would be the bearer of accidents and this is absolutely impossible (מקרי, קמלה)

Since it's so far away from the true notion of God.





reference to God they only mean that He possesses no quality.  
This is equal (to the above) For every attribute, etc.

Note: Here as in an earlier chapter Ex construes the structure לפי — לפי in two ways. In the first case he translates literally i.e. "Something is not so but otherwise" and in the second exegesis he gives the later meaning "This only means such and such a thing".

Shem Tob uses the second, adds a summary of the kinds of quality and summarizes the argument

ה' A positive attribution  
אין ב' תואר שנתאר לעצמו אחר ויהיה התואר בבואו אלוך עצמי,  
כאן ההעברתו אל המאמר, וכן ההעברתו אל המאמר הפשוט,  
הנה בבואו לא נשאר מאחור מאת דברים. אם יהיה מקום לעצמו  
אלוה הוא ויהיה פירוש השם אבדן ששאל זה, או יהיה בזה  
אילוה אלוה, או לאו החומשיים כבר הובאו מעל ימאם שאין בזה  
חובות. אם כן הם עצמם סגורים זה לזה

If an attribute is attributed to a certain substance positively; i.e., so that it is borne by its subject (לשונו א) like correlation or descriptions of actions - such an attribute can't fail to be one of two things. Either it constitutes the essence of the object and is identical with it and is an explanation of the name - which we have already rejected; or the object possesses qualities. But these attributists have already established that God cannot possess qualities - so obviously they contradict themselves.



I will bring examples of the four kinds (of quality) in the same way, that every category (of quality) should be an adjective. Seeing that he could have adduced the four in another way he therefore says that he will represent the categories by adjectives in order that the inappropriateness of the former with reference to God should become clear.

Simple comment-gives reason for this phrase.

ר Every settled habit.

אל מזה אגדה  
אצ"ק לעין קזה החזק אומר הריק אל מזה אגדה "כ" קטן וענין יכנס דמגד דמאלין אגדיה אכן האזו דמאלין

Notice should be taken of Maimonides' use of "every settled habit". Both קטן and דני (properties and spiritual attributes or capacities and dispositions) are included in the first class of quality - so, it is in the "Categories" Factual comment.

ב Without implying that these conditions have been permanent (Friedlander)

האצ"ק הריק אומר "כלא יתקין המדות" כי כבר מנה דרמאן בסיג דמאלין. אלא ואלו אגדי אגדי בסיג אלו אכן האצ"ק אומר "כלא יתקין המדות"

Maimonides was obliged to add this remark because he had already mentioned "merciful" in the first class. Since he mentions it now again in the third group he has to add "without implying that these conditions have become permanent". Simple factual comment.

Atravanel repeats

Does not possess power

לשליטה  
ל"כ כח הגדול אין לו כח גדול

The physical quality or the absence of the same.

Factual note.

Acquire certain properties as meekness

לשליטה הקטנה כח

This would be passivity of the soul. ל"כ זה הפאזר נעל

Factual note.

Be in a state to which animate beings as such are subject

וא"א מה שלשון דא הפל

ל"כ מפני זה עלה הדין חלוקה אחרת כי היתה הוא הפאזר נעל  
ל"כ, והקטנות והחול הוא הפאזר גופני לשלשון דא נעל, כי  
ח"ו הפל ממשל והקטנות והחול.

Malmonides made another division here because meekness is purely a spiritual state. Health and illness however are physical states to which the body as the seat of the soul is subject, because the soul is not affected by health or illness.

Factual comment

Atravanel repeats. At the close of the chapter he makes another explanation reading *קטנות* *אין כחיות* and giving the following unwarranted sense. - One might think that only with regard to states having physical substrata like meekness and modesty are qualitative attributes forbidden, but that with regard to the higher states; i.e., wisdom, piety, justice, which are the properties of an <sup>intellectual being</sup> *ל"כ* *הוא* insofar as he is a

לפיכך הם הם permitted. The answer is  
no, ~~intellectual being~~ - They are as inadmissible as health and  
sickness, ~~the~~ purely physical states.

Shem Tob follows Efcad. 'Neither are attributes of  
capacity or disposition permitted in Him for they are traits  
found in the soul or the body as the seat of the soul

לפיכך הוא הוא . God is not corporeal and no characterizing char-  
acteristic ( ~~מאפיין~~ ) exists in Him.

Nor can health or illness attach to Him since they beset body  
or soul and God is removed from both. Nor can He be described  
by any acquisition or wisdom - because these are spiritual  
traits - external to the subject and don't establish its essence.

- o Whose impossibility we shall prove  
Ex II. Ch. 2.

ואלו נבאר חסר האפשר  
לפי מהלך ש"ס

- γ Insofar as it includes

כלומר שהוא  
לפי שהוא

That its (motion's) existence have a continuity (when  
we consider motion) This is taken from Moses Narbonne.

Abravanel follows Shem Tob who says that time is the  
measure of motion, insofar as the latter indivisible into before  
and after. Time is applicable to a movement of bodies. Things  
which have no movement or rest don't fall into the category of  
time at all and therefore neither God or the intelligences are  
in time.



2) And is expressed by number. אמריה נפסית

And not like the parts of the road ל"ו ואלו כאלו חלקי הדרך

(which has continuity but can't be expressed by number)

Crescas: Motion is an accident of the moving body - the sphere. Time is an accident depending on motion and it is the measuring of the before and after of the motion. When the sun has moved a small distance in his sphere we measure that movement and say that two or three hours of the day have already passed and that it still has a certain distance to go. That distance we calculate at the later time and say there are still five or six hours of time or day. You see here the measuring of anteriority and posteriority which is in motion.

3) The characteristic of two objects

correlative of each other is their equality when the relation is inverted.

כי אמנות לני המצטרפים ההתהפך מלואו

ל"ו או אפשר ליהיה הצטרפת בין יתרון וכן קולא . כי אמנות  
 המצטרף הוא לא יהיה שום אופן בין המצטרף האחד ואל  
 אחר. אלא כמעט ההצטרפת לכל. החלף פניה האובין אופן אחד  
 והצטרף אחד לאופן הנה יאן הדבר שום צדן בין המצטרף האחד  
 אל האחר ואל כמעט האופנת והצטרפת. ואם נאמר כי נחשב  
 וגילה, הנה לא יהיה אלא אלה אלה אלה אלה אלה אלה אלה  
 לא יהיה קולא. כי יתלה מצומא מחוץ אלה אלה אלה אלה  
 ואם כן יהיה הדבר בין לני המצטרפים קולא. תאמר הנה אלה אלה  
 לכן הוא מקומו לני המצטרף בין יתלה וכן קולא.

It is impossible for a correlation to exist between God and anything else. For it is of the properties of the true



correlation that there should be no difference between the correlated objects except in the relation itself. For example the master is master to the servant and the servant servant to the master. In this case there is no difference between the subjects of correlation except in their positions in the equation - i.e., in the matter of mastership and servanthood. Now if we say of God that the cause is the cause of the effect and the effect is the effect of the cause - this correlation will not have an equality of the members; because God's existence is necessary but that of the effect, the caused, is contingent. So, there will be a difference between the two subjects correlated outside that of cause and effect (which is the point of the equation). Therefore it is clear that there can be no correlation between God and anything else. (Extended and involved comment but still to be classed as simple because it aims at elucidating the precise meaning of the logical term) Mainenices.

This interpretation is taken by Crescas, Shem Tob, Atravanel <sup>MAHAR</sup> and Munk and it rests on an explanatory note of Ibn Tibbon in his glossary under 'הלך פשוט' Only Friedlander understands differently <sup>the</sup> the characteristic of two objects correlative to each other is the equality of their reciprocal relation.

Ibn Caspi doesn't treat this point but paraphrases the one introductory to it: we might think that from the point of view of the aforementioned correlation there will be some relation although very slight.

q Though, as we believe, this same existence is common to both

וְשֵׁנִי תַּכְלָם מְלִיאָה יוֹמָה קִדְּמָתָא  
 דִּין שְׁאִין יוֹמָה קִין הַלֵּל וְהַמְּחִיב וְאִדְּעָה שְׁלֵשִׁים תַּכְלָם  
 מְלִיאָה יוֹמָה אֲפֹי קִדְּמָתָא, שְׁאִין סִדְּרִים שְׁהַמְּחִיב מְקִירָה קִירָה אֲנִימָה  
 ע"ז קִדְּמָתָא דִּין, אֲפֹי בַּת הַמְּחִיב אֲפֹי הַמְּחִיב.

There is no relation between intellect and sight although the same existence is common to both in our opinion, since we believe that existence is an accident that has befallen the existent

Another explanation of "as we believe" - according to the nomonymous meaning but not according to the truth. Factual comment

Abravanel repeats both these comments

7 When they belong to two different classes. כְּשֵׁיחִיָּה שֶׁל דְּבָרִים תַּחַת שְׁנֵי סִגְוִים אֲחֵרִים  
 munk says אֲחֵרִים is unwarranted.  
 דִּין כְּשֵׁיחִיָּה שְׁנֵי דְּבָרִים תַּחַת שְׁנֵי סִגְוִים אֲחֵרִים  
 אִין יוֹן יוֹם קִינִיָּה קִלֵּם פִּנְיָם.

When two things come under two categories then there can absolutely be relation between them. (simple paraphrase) Friedlander, because of the revised reading and a logical consideration - the order of instances ascending to climax - translates "classes in same category."

8 Although the two belong to the same category אוֹיֵן אֲפֹי שִׁיחִיָּה אֲחֵרָה  
 דִּין יִכֵּן אֲדֵעָה שְׁנֵי דְּבָרִים הַיֵּחָה אֲפֹי יוֹן תַּחַת שְׁנֵי  
 סִגְוִים אֲחֵרִים תַּחַת סִגְוִים אֲחֵרִים, דְּבָרִין אֲחֵרִים שְׁלֵשִׁים יוֹם כִּלֵּם פִּנְיָם



If relation were to exist between God and his creatures, it would follow that God would be subject to the accident of relation although it would not be an accident predicated of God - (אין אלו) since the accident of relation is among those things which are a kind of accident. Some accidents are added objectively, others are subjective. This relational accident would come under the head of those subjective accidents; in this way God would necessarily become the subject of relational accidents - if any relationship existed between Him and others. Factual comment  
This is taken from Moses Narbonne

Shem Tob gives a long summary of the argument and develops it. To this point he adds. "Even if God should not have a relation in the true sense of the word - the accident of relationship would overtake Him; i.e., that He would have a similarity to some created thing. This is not an accident added to His essence. But this is impossible, since he has no similarity with any created being.

Abravanel repeats and expresses more clearly than Erodi that relationship is a matter of thought - a subsistent.

2. In a less strict sense

אשר לזיון שיקוף  
לכיוון "אשר הוא" יחידה או פירוש אחר  
פירוש אחר

Relations of this kind may be used with reference to God in passing and in a less strict sense.

Simple paraphrase - explains "אין אלו"

Shem Tob repeats and adds "according to the thought of the mass" - taken from Moses Narbonne.

Abravanel repeats

Crescas doesn't comment on this part of the sentence but is very much worried about the second half of it ל"ו

ל"ו  
This should really read according to Chazal and Munk. He speaks at great length but is unable to decide what the true meaning is, and is quite beside the point.

2. The fifth kind

אמתק החמיל

והפקטת קמה באק החמיל זיין הכליה חק לזמנו קו  
יחזק, כי ה"ו חמיל שופא \* וה"ו חקרה וכלל אתקל כו  
חמיל שופא ה"ו חקרה קמחנה שיהיה כה פואל, וה"ו יתקין  
זיין לו כה פואל חמיל זקם פואל אל הנמצאות. וה"ו חמיל חק.

We might ask here with regard to this fifth kind of attributes why Maimonides permitted their use in reference to God. For that would be equivalent to the statement that God is acting and would imply accident. We may answer that that statement only implies accident if there would be an acting faculty, ~~actually an agent~~. In reality, however, God has no powers but is the producing cause (literally substance) of all existents - and this is what Maimonides says. This is taken from a long discussion of Ibn Caspi's.\* (The word ~~is~~ difficult. It does not occur in the text. Then why should ~~acting as such~~ imply accident in God. Are we perhaps to read \*

\* (The word *חמיל* is difficult. It does not occur in the text. Then why should acting as such imply accident in God? Are we perhaps to read *חמיל* Niphal - he will be subject to influence. This would make better sense. Shem Tob however interprets this "he will act". But Abravanel in his second interpretation inclines to my opinion).

Shem Tob. Described by his action does not imply that he will have an artificial property because this would be of the class of qualitative attributes.

Abravanel repeats Efoal's question and answer. Then he adds (from Ibn Caspi) " *הוא* that may act" means he is acting and God can't be characterized except by what he has already made in the past. This is not connoted by "He is acting"; hence there is no accident. Later he differentiates this fifth class from the third class; i.e., of emotional qualities as well.

Ibn Caspi writes: I shan't say much of this fifth division because it is treated in logic and natural science. I think however that Maimonides makes an additional point here ( *בין המדברים* ) by indicating that this is of the class of correlation, though of the very lowest grade. It means that He makes something, whatever it may be, and it therefore follows necessarily that He is correlated with something he has made; e.g., He has built a house or made or created <sup>something</sup>. The same applies to future actions. This is not a property or disposition for we don't describe Him by a quality or a steady attribute; e.g., a builder, but we say he has built or will build in a moment. The movement is either completed or has not yet been begun. So he is doing wisely and healing somebody or He has healed somebody, not He is wise and a healer for this would be of the class of attribution by dispositions and properties since there would be a difference of strength of weakness.

אין המבין יבא פה ורש"י חזק וזו חכמה ויבא  
לכיה משה יקנין או ענין מצד חזקת בחינת אהבה



In general this fifth class is because God is the cause of everything ( *כל מה שיש* ) and really it makes no difference whether the tense is past or future. Even the participle or adjective would be permissible could we avoid thinking of properties or dispositions and of passivity in connexion with Him (briefly for *אלה נצ"י בן אל קדוש וטהור ונצ"י בן אל קדוש וטהור*

*אלה נצ"י בן אל קדוש וטהור ונצ"י בן אל קדוש וטהור*

Thus it is proved that this fifth class is the lowest grade of correlation ( *י"ב ג' ב' א* ) for He is necessarily related to something He has made or will make in the future. This is the case with all the prophetic references. Either as Moses began *היה ראשית פירות הארץ* etc. and all the creation story (past tense); or what the prophets foretold of the future. Because God is the first active cause of everything so that whatever anybody does we attribute to God, as Maimonides says in Ex II, Ch. 47, we use this fifth class. It has been proven that it does not refer to dispositions or properties or to passivity and so Maimonides says "it is fitting that these attributes should be applied to God. Otherwise we would be denying that God is the first agent *הוא המעשה* for all. Therefore Maimonides said that "this class of attributes is separate from the essence of the thing described" because we do not describe Him by an attribute implying a fixed trait of God ( *אלה נצ"י בן אל קדוש וטהור* ) as participles and adjectives, but by what he does either in the past or future, and there is no movement since the act has either been completed or not yet begun in the acting substance *אלה נצ"י בן אל קדוש וטהור* as will be explained in Ch. 53.



Crescas explains the fifth class: You may describe God by them; viz. that he has created the world and the spheres and the intelligences and the earth. Or that he is doing or making now - and adduces Biblical equations. He concludes that these do not imply qualities.

1/2 Especially since we know  
 כפי מה שכתבנו למעלה, וזהו אפי' היות

That is, according to what we conceive as perfection - not according to the truth.

(Simple comment)

Ibn Caspi: As we have explained in Ch. 46 and 47: This is followed by a resume of the chapter: The purpose was to prove that God is absolutely one with no trace of multiplicity. Finally he comes to two classes of attributes which comprehend all others that may be applied to God. Either it is a description of an action of His, or of a power outside of Him which is one of the four causes, I mean, the active cause; or it is an attribute applied to Him to indicate his perfection, so that we believe God to be absolutely perfect in all that we consider to be perfections. That is why the "Torah spoke in the language of men".

