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AVERROES'S "CONCESSION TO AVICENNA"

INTRODUCTION, FIRST EDITION, ENGLISH TRANSLATION, AND TEXTUAL TRADITION

YOAV MEYRAV
University of Hamburg
Email: yoav.meyrav@uni-hamburg.de
GIOVANNI LICATA
Sapienza University of Rome
Email: giovanni.licata@uniroma1.it

Abstract. The "Concession to Avicenna," also known as the seventh chapter of *De substantia orbis*, is one of Averroes's several philosophical attempts to reconcile between the corporeality of the celestial bodies and their eternity. The "Concession" contains a brief and rare nod of approval to Avicenna, which prompted the title under which it circulated. The work, lost in Arabic, survives in Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Hebrew translation from 1340, from which Abraham de Balmes's subsequent Latin translation was made in the early sixteenth century. The present contribution offers, for the first time, an edition of the text in Hebrew and its original Latin translation (before its editorial revision for the 1525 *editio princeps*), alongside an introduction, a philosophical analysis of the argument, an English translation, and a glossary.

Résumé. La «Concession à Avicenne», également connue sous le nom de septième chapitre du *De substantia orbis*, est l'une des nombreuses tentatives philosophiques d'Averroès visant à concilier la corporéité des corps célestes et leur éternité. La «Concession» contient un bref et rare clin d'œil d'approbation à Avicenne, d'où le titre sous lequel elle a été diffusée. L'ouvrage, perdu en arabe, nous est parvenu grâce à la traduction hébraïque de Ṭodros Ṭodrosi datant de 1340, à partir de laquelle la traduction latine d'Abraham de Balmes a été réalisée au début du XVI^{e} s. La présente contribution propose, pour la première fois, une édition du texte hébreu et de sa traduction latine originale (avant sa révision éditoriale pour l'*editio princeps* de 1525), ainsi qu'une introduction, une analyse philosophique, une traduction anglaise et un glossaire.

1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of the eternity of the celestial bodies troubled Averroes for a very long time. He struggled with this question over several compositions, frequently changing his mind. The gist of the problem is that the celestial bodies, insofar as they are bodies, are finite, and hence they cannot account for their own infinity, whether in power or subsistence. According to Averroes's narrative, which appears in several works, Alexander of Aphrodisias attempted to solve the problem of eternal subsistence by arguing that the celestial body acquires its eternity from the unmoved mover, which is immaterial and hence not limited in power.[1] This causal relation seems to enable the existence of a corruptible thing that does not undergo corruption. However, this solution is problematic, because it assumes that the eternal celestial body is possible rather than necessary, and Aristotle had proved that whatever is eternal is necessary. This apparent contradiction opened the door to Philoponus's argument for creation, which is conflated with a critique of Aristotle on this very point. Alexander's solution also violates the principle of plenitude, because it denies the celestial body's ability to actualize its possibility of undergoing corruption, rendering its possibility vain.[2]

In Averroes's account, Alexander's attempted solution prompted Avicenna to introduce a distinction within necessary things between things that are necessary in themselves and things that are possible in them-

[1] We take this to be Alexander's view insofar as Averroes took it as such, as this is what is relevant for his narrative. The textual evidence for this attribution is unclear. See more below, n. 27.

[2] See, for example, Averroes, Long Commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* (Hebrew translation): MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Hébreu 883, 382v–383v; Latin translation: *Aristotelis opera cum Averrois commentariis* (Venice: Giunta, 1562), vol. 4, 426 H – 427 I; Charles Genequand, *Ibn Rushd's Metaphysics: A Translation with Introduction of Ibn Rushd's Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics, Book Lām* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), pp. 162–168; Arthur Hyman, *Averroes' De substantia orbis* (Cambridge, Mass. and Jerusalem: Medieval Academy of America, 1986), passim; Helen Tunik Goldstein, *Averroes' Questions in Physics* (Kluwer, 1990), passim; Herbert A. Davidson, *Proofs for Eternity, Creation and the Existence of God in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 321–331; Gerhard Endress, "Averroes' *De caelo*: Ibn Rushd's Cosmology in his Commentaries on Aristotle's *On the Heavens*," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 5 (1995), pp. 9–49. To the various sources cited in the literature, an anonymous reviewer suggests also to refer to the recently published Arabic of Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. See Maroun Aouad, *Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Brill, 2024). A discussion with some affinity to what we find in the "Concession" is found in sections 13.23–35 (pp. 516–529); especially 13.29 (522–523).

selves, but necessary on account of another. (For the sake of the discussion, the trustworthiness of Averroes's report is irrelevant.) In several works, Averroes criticized this solution due to the contradiction involved in the transition of the possible into the necessary.[3] However, despite his critical stance, he seems to have been open to some kind of variation of this principle that would avoid this contradiction. It is in this context that we find the composition under discussion here, the so-called seventh chapter of *De substantia orbis*,[4] which will henceforth be referred to as the "Concession."

We do not know when and in what context Averroes composed this work. It seems to be self-standing as it does not refer to any other work in his corpus, though it assumes that the question of the eternity of celestial *motion* – unlike the question of the eternity of celestial *subsistence* – is already resolved. The original Arabic is lost, and there is no mention of it in Arabic bio-bibliographical literature. A Hebrew translation, the work of the Provençal Jewish scholar Ṭodros Ṭodrosi produced in 1340, survives. Ṭodrosi's translation, in turn, was translated into Latin by Abraham de Balmes in the early sixteenth century.

In what follows, we will provide (1) a survey of what is known about the work and its fortune; (2) an analysis of its philosophical argument; (3) an *editio princeps* of the Hebrew translation; (4) an English translation, made from the Hebrew; and (5) a new annotated edition of the Latin translation, accompanied by a discussion of its circumstances. In the appendix, the reader will find a Hebrew-Latin-English glossary of the key terms in the work. We hope that the publication and English translation of this work will contribute to the study of Averroes's intellectual development and his complex relationship with Avicenna's philosophy.

[3] For references and discussion, see Cristina Cerami, "A Map of Averroes' Criticism Against Avicenna: *Physics*, *De caelo*, *De generatione et corruptione*, *Meteorology*," in Amos Bertolacci and Dag Nikolaus Hasse (eds.), *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Natural Philosophy* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), pp. 199–200; 203–207. Davidson, *Proofs*, pp. 318–321; 331–334. H. A. Wolfson, "Averroes' Lost Treatise on the Prime Mover," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, vol. 23, no. 1 (1950), pp. 699–702; Yoav Meyrav, "The Only Known Defense against Ibn Rushd's Critique of Ibn Sina's Necessary Existent: Moses Halevi's *Metaphysical Treatise*," *Oxford Studies in Medieval Philosophy*, 11 (2025), pp. 56–94. See also Ibrahim Y. Najjar, *Faith and Reason in Islam: Averroes' Exposition of Religious Arguments* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2001), p. 29.

[4] For the origin of this title, see section 5 below.

2. THE "CONCESSION" FROM ARABIC TO HEBREW

The Hebrew version of the "Concession" in Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's translation was first identified with *De substantia orbis* 7 by Helen Tunik Goldstein in 1979.[5] Ṭodrosi translated our work under the title "Averroes's treatise: Concession to Avicenna concerning the matter regarding which he criticized him in the treatise preceding this treatise" (*Maʾamar le-ibn Rušd hodaʾah*[6] *le-ibn Sinai ʿal mah še-heśig ʿalaw ba-maʾamar ha-qodem la-zeh ha-maʾamar*). The "preceding" treatise is the one that appears immediately before this one in Ṭodrosi's collection, which was translated no more than a month earlier. It is commonly known as Averroes's "ninth question" on physics,[7] here translated under the title "Averroes's treatise: a critique of Avicenna's division of existents into possible in itself; possible in itself, necessary by another; and necessary in itself" (*Maʾamar le-ibn Rušd haśagah le-ibn Sinai be-ḥalqo ha-nimṣaʾot el efšar be-ʿaṣmuto we-el efšar be-ʿaṣmuto meḥuyyav be-zulato we-el meḥuyyav be-ʿaṣmuto*). The Arabic original of this work is also lost, but its existence is attested in Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa's list of Averroes's compositions: *Maqālah fī al-radd ʿalā Abī ʿAlī b. Sīnā fī taqsīmihi al-mawǧūdāt ilā mumkin ʿalā al-iṭlāq wa-mumkin bi-ḏātihi wāǧib bi-ġayrihi wa-ilā wāǧib bi-ḏātihi*.[8] Ṭodrosi's title is a near-precise translation of this Arabic title.[9] Since the "Concession" is presented as a follow-up to this treatise, it is possible that the title in Ibn Abī Uṣay-

[5] Helen Tunik Goldstein, "New Hebrew Manuscript Sources for Averroean Texts," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 38 (1979), pp. 29–31. Earlier scholars knew of the work but did not realize what it was (see Tunik Goldstein's references there).

[6] Tunik Goldstein (and earlier, Georges Vajda in his unpublished working notes) mistakenly read the key word in the title as *horaʾah* ("proof," "directive") rather than *hodaʾah* ("concession"), resulting in Tunik Goldstein's convoluted translation of the title: "A work of Averroes's (offering) a(n exculpatory) proof for Avicenna regarding that same matter for which he criticized him in the preceding work" (H. T. Goldstein, "New Hebrew Manuscript Sources," p. 30; see also Vajda's handwritten note in https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8530181x, fol. 607r), which manufactures the same meaning that would naturally arise from reading *hodaʾah*. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the letters Dalet (ד) and Resh (ר) in Hebrew manuscripts.

[7] For this work, see Shalom Rosenberg, "The Hebrew Translations of Averroes's Questions on Physics and Rabbi Moses Narboni's Commentaries," Hebrew, *Qiryat Sefer*, 57 (1982), pp. 718–719, and the annotated English translation in H. T. Goldstein, *Averroes' Questions in Physics*, pp. 33–36; 141–151.

[8] In E. Savage-Smith, S. Swain, G. J. van Gelder (eds.), *A Literary History of Medicine: The ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ of Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿah* (Brill, 2020).

[9] The only difference is that for the Arabic *mumkin ʿalā al-iṭlāq* ("absolutely possible"), the Hebrew has *efšar be-ʿaṣmuto* ("possible in itself"). The Arabic is more precise,

biʿa's list encompassed both works. Of course, the fact that these works circulated together does not mean that they were conceived as such. In fact, the content of the "Concession" suggests otherwise: although it indeed contains an agreement with Avicenna, it is not the focus of the treatise. The reference to Avicenna, while doubtlessly significant, does not take up more than three sentences in the entire work. The treatise is taken to be a "concession" only on account of its juxtaposition with the previous treatise, the "critique." A similar remark can be made concerning the latter work: while it begins with a critique of Avicenna, it is in fact yet another attempt to account for the source of the celestial bodies' eternity. In a second, anonymous Hebrew translation, this so-called critique is transmitted without a title, and Moses Narboni, alongside whose 1349 commentary the anonymous translation survives, does not frame it as a treatise about Avicenna.[10]

From this state of affairs, it seems reasonable that when Ṭodrosi encountered the two works, they were already circulating together and had been associated thanks to their somewhat contrasting approaches to Avicenna. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that Ṭodrosi was responsible for this association. This question notwithstanding, Ṭodrosi adds yet another point of reference: at the beginning of his translation of the ninth question, he notes in the margin that the reasons that brought Avicenna to this division of existents are explained in Averroes's Long Commentary on the *Physics*, at the end of the eighth book. Ṭodrosi writes that this is an attempt to escape a very difficult problem raised by Alexander of Aphrodisias that had taken Averroes a great deal of time and effort to resolve, as he himself noted.[11] Ṭodrosi's note is a blend between a paraphrase and a direct quotation from Averroes's Long Commentary on the *Physics*, a work he knew very well. Earlier in the codex, in his "Physical Excerpts," Ṭodrosi "uses, almost exclusively, citations from Averroes's *Long Commentary* to explain the *Middle Commen-*

but one can argue that the Hebrew wording implies the absoluteness given the qualification of possibility in the next part of the title. We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

[10] Rosenberg, "Hebrew Translations," p. 719.

[11] British Library, MS Add. 27559, 304r–v:
תשקיף מה הביא אבן סיני לזאת החלוקה לנמצאות מפרישת השמע לאבן רשד בסוף השמיני שאבן סינא אמר זה לדבור ראהו לארסטו ודבור אחר שמעו לאלסכנדר ושהוא אמר זה להמלט מן הספק העמוק הנופל בזה אשר הוא מגדולי הספקות הנופלות בזאת החכמה ואמר אבן רשד זה הספק לא התבאר לי אלא אחר חקירה חזקה וזמן מחיי בלתי מועט
The original context is MS Paris, BnF, Hébreu 883, 383r (Hebrew); *Aristotelis opera cum Averrois commentariis*, vol. 4, 427 D (Latin).

tary,"[12] including the relevant section in the commentary on book 8.[13]

In sum, Ṭodrosi's framing and contextualization of his Hebrew translation of the "Concession" is part of his own understanding of Averroes's project, which is perhaps different from its original inception in Arabic (about which we have no information) and does not seem to have a bearing on its subsequent entry into the Latin world. This state of play should be taken into account in further studies of the work.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE ARGUMENT OF THE "CONCESSION"

The work reads as a series of notes at different levels of development and consolidation. The structure of the discussion is as follows: Averroes introduces an aporia, resolves it, explains its origin, and then projects it onto other thinkers / schools. His argument is not straightforward and it requires some supplementary analysis, especially concerning the second half of the treatise, which is particularly disjointed. However, the thread that holds the discussion together is the modal approach that Averroes adopts.[14]

The aporia stems from an apparent contradiction between the possibility and the eternity of the celestial bodies. Averroes remarks that the argument for the incorporeality of their movers is based on the finitude of a body's power. In other words, no body – insofar as all bodies are finite – has within it the power to move eternally. But if this applies to the celestial bodies' motion, then why does it not apply to their subsistence? If their power to subsist is finite, they should be corruptible, which means that they contain possibility; but they are also eternal, and Aristotle had proved that eternal things are necessary. Hence, if they did contain possibility, it would exist in vain, for their eternity guarantees that their possibility of not existing will never be realized.

The resolution comes through a distinction between two kinds of finite powers: one that is based on matter, and one that is not. The former kind cannot be transformed into infinity because it is based on the

[12] Steven Harvey and Oded Horezky, "Averroes ex Averroe: Uncovering Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Method of Commenting on the Commentator," *Aleph: Historical Studies in Science and Judaism*, 21 (2021), p. 21.

[13] Averroes's full discussion of this issue in the Long Commentary is reproduced in Ṭodrosi's selections from the *Physics* (British Library, MS Add. 27559, 203v–204v).

[14] We would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for highlighting this point and more valuable observations which significantly improved our philosophical framing of the present analysis. The overview in this section is indebted to the preliminary analysis found in Davidson, *Proofs*, pp. 329–331.

notion of matter, and matter receives contrary forms. It seems that potentiality is inseparable from these powers, and as such, they prescribe corruptibility. The latter kind can be transformed into infinity because the bodies that possess them do not have this kind of matter, hence they have no potentiality for corruption. In other words, their finitude does not prescribe corruptibility.

This resolution does not entail the adoption of a position that a thing can exist that is both finite and infinite (or both possible and necessary), because the finitude that we attach to these powers is not real: it is nothing but a byproduct of intellectual abstraction. In other words, in reality, their subsistence is infinite because the connection to their movers is eternal. When the intellect disconnects them intellectually, a quasi-finitude emerges as a mere formality. The finitude that their bodies display is not expressed in corruptibility, but in a limitation of their active powers: both their speeds and their causal power (such as heating) are quantifiable and of different measure.

Averroes's point is further clarified in an example that amounts to what seems to be the principal view according to which the apparent contradiction is the result of examining the same object from two different perspectives, each of which produces a different conclusion, albeit in a different framework. A contradiction only arises when we think we are dealing with the object in the same way. The example that Averroes uses is an apparent contradiction between physics and geometry concerning the point of tangency between a plane and a curve: according to geometry, the point must be indivisible, but according to physics, this is impossible, because divisibility is a prerequisite for contact between bodies.

Equipped with his solution, Averroes discusses other opinions and approaches and explains their relation to it. It seems as if he is trying to show that his solution, besides being philosophically adequate, harmonizes with earlier authors' tacklings of the same question, is consistent with Scripture, and dodges both John Philoponus's creationist critique of Aristotle and the dangers of materialism.

Averroes starts by quoting approvingly from Alexander of Aphrodisias's *On Providence*, in which he attempted to resolve the problem of the eternity of the finite celestial bodies by attributing their persistence to the first cause.[15] Averroes does not elaborate, but the placement of the discussion suggests that his approach to the problem infuses fresh

[15] As mentioned above, it is unclear whether this part is authentic to Alexander. See below, n. 27.

sense into Alexander's solution, given that the corruptibility aspect of the celestial bodies has now been eliminated.

At this point comes the "concession" to Avicenna: Averroes acknowledges the legitimacy of Avicenna's modal distinction between things that are completely necessary and things that are possible in themselves, but necessitated by another, with the caveat that the transition from possibility to necessity is nothing more than a shift of perspective from reality to intellectual abstraction. In short, this transition is not "real." This brief nod of approval toward Avicenna – who is not the focal point of the treatise, but whose modal distinction sets the tone for the subsequent discussions – was apparently enough for an anonymous scholar to dub the work a "concession" to Avicenna.

Combining Alexander's and Avicenna's opinions with his innovation concerning celestial incorruptibility, Averroes completes the picture by introducing the causal mechanism by which the celestial bodies are sustained. This mechanism is the soul of the celestial body, which is now defined as the power that adheres to its immaterial, spiritual forms. When this necessary connection is severed by what can now be referred to as an intellectual experiment, the possible nature of the celestial body is revealed.

For Averroes, another upshot of this association is that it reinforces the necessity of immaterial existents. If the celestial bodies were completely necessary, then this would open the door to a materialistic view of the cosmos, a danger to which Averroes alluded in several of his writings.[16]

Averroes then proceeds to expand his discussion to any relationship between cause and effect. From the perspective of the intellect, every effect can be taken to be possible in itself. This creates a threefold grada-

[16] This point could be read somewhat ironically because one of Averroes's contentions against Avicenna's argumentation for the Necessary Existent is that its reliance on general premises (rather than Aristotelian physics) opens the door for a completely materialistic understanding of the cosmos, the whole of which could be taken as the Necessary Existent without recourse to an immaterial substance. According to Averroes, this point led some thinkers to believe that Avicenna's esoteric position in his "Oriental Philosophy" was materialism. This problem is the starting point of Averroes's treatise "On the Separation of the First Principle" (*De separatione primi principii*, surviving only in a Latin translation), and it is also discussed in the *Incoherence of the Incoherence*. See Carlos Steel and Guy Guldentops, "An Unknown Treatise of Averroes Against the Avicennians on the First Cause," *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales*, 64 (1997), pp. 96–101; Averroes, *Averroes' Tahafut al-tahafut: The Incoherence of the Incoherence*, transl. from the Arabic with introd. and notes by Simon Van Den Bergh (London: Luzac, 1954), vol. 1, p. 254.

tion of existence with respect to cause: the uncaused is absolutely necessary; the effect of a necessary cause is possible in itself, necessary by another; and the effect of a possible cause is absolutely possible. As Davidson has already noted, this brings Averroes's own position very close to the opinion he ascribed to Avicenna and criticized in the ninth question on physics.[17] It also casts doubts on the organicity of the association between the two treatises. The only difference, which Averroes considers significant, is that this distinction is not ontological, but strictly epistemological, from the point of view of the intellect. But still, this distinction aspires to suffice for creating a certain gap between God and the rest of the existents, and Averroes cites a Qurʾānic verse to this effect: "All things perish, except His face [Qurʾān 28:88]." Avicenna quotes the same verse in a similar context, and it was later echoed by al-Ghazali.[18]

Finally, Averroes utilizes his solution to reject Philoponus's argument for creation. Since it has been shown that the eternity of the celestial bodies can be guaranteed without violating Aristotelian modal principles, Philoponus's critique loses its force and can be safely rejected.

There is a certain lacuna in Averroes's argument that needs some reconstruction. He does not explain why the celestial body needs to be sustained eternally by an external force. If Averroes has already established that the celestial bodies cannot undergo corruption, then why does he still need to stress that their natures are rendered eternal by an immaterial power? Why is it only susceptible to being transformed into something that is eternal when there is nothing in it to prevent its eternity in the first place? The answer to this question can be adopted from a remark in the second treatise of *De substantia orbis*. In this treatise, Averroes explains that the celestial bodies cannot move infinitely due to their corporeality, and then adds that the same logic applies to their duration.[19] This means that although it is not within a celestial body's

[17] Davidson, "Proofs," p. 331.

[18] For discussion and references, see Alexander Treiger, "Monism and Monotheism in al-Ghazālī's Mishkāt al-anwār," *Journal of Qurʾanic Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1 (2007), pp. 9–10; Scott Michael Girdner, "Ghazālī's Hermeneutics and Their Reception in Jewish Tradition: Mishkāt al-anwār (The Niche of Lights) and Maimonides' Shemonah peraqim (Eight Chapters)," in *Islam and Rationality: The Impact of al-Ghazālī, Papers Collected on His 900th Anniversary*, vol. 1, ed. by Georges Tamer (Brill, 2015), pp. 260–261.

[19] See A. Hyman, *Averroes' De substantia orbis*, p. 84 (Hebrew 28): "For, even though the celestial body is simple and has in itself no potentiality for corruption, yet, since its dimensions are finite and since it is bounded by its surrounding surface, it is necessarily finite in its activity. And everything having this nature – even though the intellect can conceive it as existing in virtue of itself without something else

power to sustain itself eternally, insofar as it is a finite body, there is nothing in it to prevent it from being sustained eternally by an eternal, external force. The susceptibility element, then, simply means that the causality that a separate form exerts on its celestial body with respect to subsistence does not work against the latter's nature.

However, Averroes's solution is still not unproblematic from a theological point of view, and his quotation from the Qurʾān could be seen as doing him a disservice as contributing to the incompatibility between him and Avicenna, despite the seeming harmonization. Avicenna's original distinction between [i] necessary in itself and [ii] possible in itself, necessary by another was aimed at the distinction between the Necessary Existent and everything else – *including* the separate intellects / unmoved movers. This ontological advantage fits very well with the Qurʾānic statement that "all things perish, except His face." This statement would even fit (obviously, anachronistically) with Alexander's view, which attributes the eternity of the celestial substance to one entity; namely, the first cause (or Aristotle's God). However, Averroes's distinction allows for a plurality of "necessary existents;" that is, all of the separate intellects, each of which sustains its own celestial body. Unlike Avicenna, his explanation does not leave room for the separate intellects to be effects (at least not from the point of view of their subsistence). In other words, whatever advantage God eventually has over the separate intellects, it cannot be one of imperishability, hence the Qurʾānic verse does not apply. This, of course, does not have any bearing on the philosophical solidity of Averroes's solution. Still, the expressed need to satisfy theological considerations warrants further scrutiny.

4. EDITION OF THE HEBREW TEXT AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Hebrew translation of the "Concession" survives in two manuscripts: London, British Library, Add. 27559 (henceforth L) and Paris, BnF, Hébreu 989 (henceforth P).[20]

imparting to it permanence and continuity – necessarily requires, according to our opinion, that just as its activity is finite so is its duration finite." An anonymous reviewer suggests that "the lack of a proper explanation of the reason why the eternal subsistence of celestial bodies needs to be granted by an external power might be intentional on Averroes' part, if we admit that the eternal subsistence of celestial bodies per se is not the point to be established in the 'Concession.'" Further analysis of this point can also help in situating the "Concession" chronologically in relation to other works of Averroes (e. g., if it already assumes the solution in *De substantia orbis* 2).

[20] Some sources mistakenly also situate our work in MS Paris, BnF, Hébreu 1023.

L London, British Library, Add. 27559, 307r–309v

This extraordinary codex, written in the fifteenth century in Spanish script, consists almost exclusively of intellectual output by the Provençal scholar Ṭodros Ṭodrosi from the 1330s onwards.[21] Ṭodrosi's work ranges from straightforward translations from Arabic to selective compilations and translations, annotations, and philosophical commentary.[22] Several

See Shalom Rosenberg, "Hebrew Translations," p. 721; Gabriella Elgrably-Berzin, *Avicenna in Medieval Hebrew Translation: Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Translation of* Kitāb al-Najāt*, on Psychology and Metaphysics* (Brill, 2015), p. 6. However, Paris Hébreu 1023 contains a sequence of works exactly as they appear in the London codex, with nearly identical formatting, only omitting the "Concession" – perhaps by oversight?

[21] The codex was first described in George Margoliouth, *Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: The British Museum, 1899–1935), vol. 3, pp. 186–190, n. 890. This description is updated in S. Harvey and O. Horezky, "Averroes ex Averroe," pp. 76–77, with further references there. Despite intensive work, further basic research on this codex is required. Hanna Gentili, who examined the physical object, kindly informed me that she was able to identify one watermark that is very similar to Briquet 14330 ("Tête de bœuf avec yeux et nez," Montpellier, 1446), which sits well with the script. There are interesting marginal notes ascribed to a certain hitherto unidentified "Italian" (10r) and another A-Š-L (10r; 24v; 25r; 111r); the same hand sometimes adds corrections based on comparison to another (lost) manuscript (e. g. 27v). Furthermore, although the codex is primarily a single production unit, there are some extra parts by a different hand (or hands), probably the same annotator, with a discussion of motion in the context of Ibn Bāǧǧa's theory of original motion, which also mention Averroes and criticize Aristotle and Gersonides (302v–303v; 320v–321v). So far, I have been unable to trace their source, and it is unclear if and how they are related to Ṭodrosi's project. Finally, there is an interesting list of books by yet another hand on 321v, with some information that conflicts with what we know today and requires some study.

[22] For Ṭodrosi's unique methodology, see S. Harvey and O. Horezky, "Averroes ex Averroe;" Steven Harvey and Oded Horezky, "From Translator to Commentator: Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Presentation of Aristotle's *Organon*," *Studia graeco-arabica*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2021), pp. 141–156. See also Mauro Zonta, "About Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Medieval Hebrew Translation of al-Fārābī's Lost Long Commentary / Gloss-Commentary on Aristotle's Topics, Book VIII," *History and Philosophy of Logic*, 32 (2011), pp. 37–45. Ṭodrosi also translated Averroes's Middle Commentaries on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, which survive but are not included in the London codex. The two translations were conceived in 1337, and Ṭodrosi's general introduction to both is translated and analyzed in Francesca Gorgoni, "Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's *accessus ad auctorem*: A Hebrew 'Aristotelian Prologue' to Averroes's Middle Commentaries on *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*," in Racheli Haliva, Yoav Meyrav, and Daniel Davies (eds.), *Averroes and Averroism in Medieval Jewish Thought* (Brill, 2024), pp. 397–419. Ṭodrosi's translation of the Middle Commentary on the *Rhetoric* was published by J. Goldenthal (Hildesheim, 1842). His translation of the Middle Commentary on the *Poetics* was published and studied in Francesca Gorgoni, "La traduction hébraïque du Commentaire Moyen d'Averroès à la Poétique d'Aristote: Étude, édition du texte hébreu et

philosophical materials from the Arabic (and Greek) traditions survive in this codex alone, and many parts of it have accordingly been published and studied.[23]

In this codex, the "Concession" is sandwiched between two other short works by Averroes that were also translated by Ṭodrosi at roughly the same time: the treatise that came to be known as the ninth question on physics, as discussed above, and the "Appendix" (*al-Ḍamīma*), a companion piece to Averroes's *Decisive Treatise*, here introduced by the Hebrew title *Maʾamar ba-madaʿ ha-qadum* ("Treatise about Eternal Knowledge").[24]

The text of the "Concession" contained in L is mostly complete and (to our mind) accurate, except for one omission by homoeoteleuton, which can be recovered from P.

P Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Hébreu 989, 29r–29v

This codex was originally written in Northern Italy in Spanish script in the second half of the fifteenth century.[25] However, the trio of Averroes's short treatises it contains is a later addition by an Italian hand. It seems that an unknown scholar made use of some empty pages in an incomplete quire to insert this additional material, which explains the crowded text. The same holds for further material in the codex, selections from Averroes's Long Commentary on *Metaphysics* 3 copied by yet another Italian hand. Both Italian hands provided extensive annotations in the margins of the Hebrew translation of Averroes's Middle

traduction française avec glossaire hébreu-arabe-français" (PhD dissertation, Paris, Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales, 2017).

[23] Elgrably-Berzin, *Avicenna in Medieval Hebrew Translation*; Daniel Davies and Alexander Lamprakis, "Al-Fārābī's Commentary on the Eighth Book of Aristotle's Topics in Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Philosophical Anthology (Introduction, Edition of the Text, and Annotated Translation)," *Oxford Studies in Medieval Philosophy*, 10 (2022), pp. 24–88; Shalom Rosenberg and Charles Manekin, "Themistius on Modal Logic: Excerpts from a Commentary on the *Prior Analytics* Attributed to Themistius," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 11 (1988), pp. 83–103; Shalom Rosenberg and Charles Manekin, "Japheth in the Tents of Shem: Themistius' Commentary on the *Analytica priora*," Hebrew, *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought*, 9 (1990), pp. 267–274. Harvey's and Horezky's important studies cited above also published several materials from this codex in the realms of physics and logic.

[24] For this translation, see Silvia Di Donato, "La tradizione ebraica dell'opuscolo di Averroè sulla scienza divina," in Francesca Gorgoni, Irene Kajon, and Luisa Valente (eds.), *Philosophical Translations in Late Antiquity and in the Middle Ages: In Memory of Mauro Zonta* (Rome: Aracne, 2022), pp. 141–169.

[25] According to Georges Vajda's working notes, the paper used for the codex has a watermark that is similar to Briquet 11658, which dates from 1460s Padua (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8530181x/f51.item.r=989).

Commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in Kalonymus ben Kalonymus's translation, which is an original part of the codex.[26]

The Hebrew text of the "Concession" in P seems to have been copied rather hastily, so it contains errors here and there. The most notable of these are three omissions by homoeoteleuton. However, it can be utilized to recover the omission in L.

The text given here is by and large based on L (marking page numbers, with lines divided by a vertical line), recording variants in P. The only exception is a case where an omission was recovered from P (p. 258, lines 14–15) and corroborated by an external source (Alexander of Aphrodisias's *On Providence*).[27] Originally continuous, the text has been divided into sections for the sake of user-friendliness and ease of navigation against the Latin and English translations. We have not recorded self-corrections or spelling variations. L follows a scribal practice of repeating the last word(s) of one page on the beginning of the next to keep track of the foliation, which we have not reproduced here.

[26] This display of intensive study warrants additional research.

[27] See § 14-15 below, the nearly precise quotation of the Arabic adaptation of Alexander of Aphrodisias's *On Providence* (*Fī tadbīrāt al-falakīyah* = *The Governances of the Spheres*, known as the D15 version). Cf. Hans-Jochen Ruland, "Die arabischen Fassungen von zwei Schriften des Alexander von Aphrodisias *Über die Vorsehung* und *Über das liberum arbitrium*," Phd dissertation (Universität des Saarlandes, 1976), p. 91, lines 3–6; 13–15, especially as of the second sentence:

... لكل جرم متناه قوة متناهية، لأنه لا يمكن أن للجرم المتناهى قوة لا نهاية لها. فان كان هذا هكذا وكانت السماء جرما متناهيا، لم يكن قوتها غير متناهية، فاتها ستفق يوما ما، فاذا وقعت، بطلت. فان كان هذا هكذا، رجعنا فقلنا ان دوام الأجرام الأول يكون من قبل العلة الأولى، ودوام الأجرام المستحيلة يكون من قبل الأجرام الأول الثابتة الذات

This quotation corroborates the Hebrew reading in P. The skipped lines appear in the margins of the manuscript from which Ruland published his edition, so it is likely that Averroes is quoting or paraphrasing from what he took to be a continuous text. The more literal translation, Abū Bišr Mattā's *Fī al-ʿināyah* (= D18), does not contain this part, so it is possible that these sentences were not part of Alexander's original treatise. See also C. Cerami, "Map," p. 186 and further references there. For a systematic discussion of the differences between D15 and D18 and their respective origins, see Silvia Fazzo and Hillary Wiesner, "Alexander of Aphrodisias in the Kindī-Circle and in al-Kindī's Cosmology," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 3 (1993), pp. 119–153.

Averroes's Treatise: Concession to Avicenna concerning the matter regarding which he criticized him in the treatise preceding this treatise

The religious judge Averroes, may the Lord make His face shine upon him, said:

[I. Demonstration that the movers of the celestial bodies are neither bodies nor powers in bodies]

[1] Since it has been explained, concerning the celestial bodies that are moved in a circular motion, that their motion does not and will not cease, and it has been explained that every moved [thing] has a mover, it follows that every mover of these bodies is a power, or powers, that does not subsist in a body, since they are not divided with the division of their [respective] bodies [i. e., the body that they move].[28]

[2] It has become manifest that they [i. e., the powers] are not divided with the division of their bodies, because the power of the smallest body among them [i. e., the celestial bodies] and the largest body among them is equal with respect to their incessant motion. If they were divided according to the division of their body in which they are, it would necessarily follow that the power of the smallest body – that is to say, the power that moves the smallest sphere – will cause motion for a shorter time than the power that moves the rotating sphere [i. e., the sphere of the fixed stars];[29] for it has already become manifest that the power of the parts of the bodies, whose powers are divided when they are divided, is smaller than the power of the whole [body].

[3] This demonstration encompasses the active and passive powers that exist in every body, as has been proved in the first [book] of *On the Heavens and the World*.

[II. Aporia: The eternity of the celestial movers contradicts their possibility]

[4] If this is so, then every power in a body – active or passive – is necessarily finite, because in them [i. e., in bodies], the power of the whole is greater than the power of the part and the power of the largest among them is greater than the power of the smallest. If this is so, then if the celestial bodies have a power, [be it] receptive or [lit. and] active upon another, it would necessarily be finite. If so, then they would be possible by nature, and if so, then there would be here an eternal thing for which corruption is possible.

[5] This impossibility has already been explained in the first [book] of *On the Heavens and the World*, for if this were possible, then it would be possible for a possible [thing] to become necessary.[30]

[6] And if we say that corruption is not possible for them, then they would have neither a receptive nor an active power that is finite. But this is impossible,

[28] With P, the translation would be somewhat different: "It follows that these bodies have a power, or powers, that do not subsist in a body, since they are not divided with the division of their body [i. e., the body which they move]."

[29] With P, the translation would be "the power that moves the star's sphere."

[30] The text in P would be: "Then it would be possible for a possible [thing] to be *considered* necessary."

307r 1 מאמר לאבן רשד הודאה לאבן סיני על |
מה שהשיג עליו במאמר הקודם לזה המאמר |
אמר השופט התוריי אבן רשד יאר הש' פניו |

[1] שלמה שהתבאר מענין הגרמים השמיימיים המתנועעים | תנועת
סבוב שתנועתם לא סרה ולא תסור והתבאר | שכל מתנועע לו מניע
חויב שיהיה כל מניע לאלו | הגרמים כח או כחות שאינם עומדות
בגשם להיותם | בלתי מתחלקות בהחלק גשמיהם

[2] ונגלה שהם בלתי מתחלקות בהחלק גשמיהם מפני שכח הגשם
| הקטן מהם והגשם הגדול שוים בהתנועעות הבלתי | פוסק ואלו היו
מתחלקים בהחלק גשמם אשר הם בו | היה מחויב בהכרח שיהיה כח
הגשם הקטן כאלו תאמר | הכח המניע הגלגל היותר קטן יניע זמן יותר
קצר | מן הכח המניע הגלגל המסבב לפי שכבר נגלה שכח | החלק
מן הגשמים אשר כחותיהם מתחלקים בהחלקם | יותר קטן מכח הכל

[3] וזה המופת הוא כולל לכח הפועל | והמתפעל הנמצאים בכל
גשם כפי מה שהושקף בראשון | מן השמים והעולם

[4] ואם היה זה כן הנה כל כח בגשם | פועל או מתפעל הוא בהכרח
בעל תכלית אחר שכח | הכל בם יותר גדול מכח החלק וכח הגדול
מהם יותר רב | מכח הקטן ואם היה זה כן הנה הגרמים השמימים אם
307v || היה בהם כח מקבל ופועל בזולתו הוא בהכרח | בעל תכלית ואם
היה זה כן הנה הם אפשריים בטבעם | ואם היה זה היה בכאן דבר
נצחי אפשר ההפסד |

[5] וכבר התבאר המנע זה בראשון מן השמים והעולם | כי אלו
היה אפשר זה היה אפשר שישוב האפשר | הכרחי

[6] ואם אמרנו שאין בהם אפשריות ההפסד הנה | לא יהיה בהם
כחות מקבלות ולא פועלות בעלות | תכלית והוא נמנע להיותם גשמים
בעלי תכלית וכבר | התבאר שכחותיהם המקבלות בעלות תכלית
והפועלות | ממה שישיגם מחוזק התנועה ואיחורה וכח הפעל | בזולתם

1 לאבן סיני] לא"ס P 6 שיהיה] שתהיה P 6 כל מניע] ליח P 6–7 שאינם עומדות
בגשם] ל"א שאין עמידתם P in marg. 7 גשמיהם] גשמם P 12 המסבב] מהכוכב P
18 הנה] הרי P 20 הנה] הרי P 20 זה] +כן P 23 שישוב] שיחשב P 24 אפשריות]
אפשרות P 25–27 והוא ... והפועלות] ליח P

because they are finite bodies. It has already been explained that their receptive powers are finite. Their active [powers are also finite, first with respect to] their speed [lit. strength] or slowness of motion, and [second with respect to] the power (or weakness) to act upon others; I mean a certain active power that can be greater, e. g., the sun and its heating, or one that can be smaller, like the heating [power] of the other stars.

[III. Resolution: A distinction between two kinds of corporeal powers]

[7] We say that the receptive and active bodily powers are, according to their nature, necessarily finite, as this demonstration brought about. But among them are:

[i] Those that are finite and for which it is impossible to be infinite (namely, to be of the nature of the necessary neither by their own nature nor by another). This is the power that is in prime matter, either unmediated or through the mediation of other powers that exist in matter. If these powers are active, then they have contraries; if they are passive, then they are connected to forms, which have contraries. [This holds] whether [the bodies] are simple, like the four elements, or [whether they] are composed of the elements.

[8] [ii] Those that are finite by their nature but have become infinite and transposed from the nature of the possible to the nature of the necessary by that which by nature has infinite activity and is necessary. These [i. e., the latter] are the powers that are not in bodies and that do not have contraries. Nor do they exist in matter through the mediation of forms which have contraries.

[9] For these [i. e., group ii], the previous problem is not necessitated. Namely, if someone asks: "How can it be eternal with the power to be possible? For that would mean that there will be here a possibility that will never be realized throughout the entirety of time."

[10] But this is false, because the intellect apprehended this power of possibility in their nature only after it abstracted them from the powers that are not possible [i. e., that are necessary].[31] This abstraction is false, and assuming them to be possible by their nature is also false.[32]

[IV. Intellectual abstraction as the source of the aporia]

[11] For the intellect tends to abstract from each other natures which have yet to be abstracted, enquires into concomitants of these substantial natures, and determines a certain judgement upon them insofar as they are abstracted. When it examines them insofar as they are composite and inseparable, it determines that that judgement about them is false.

[V. Clarification by an analogous example of an apparent contradiction between geometry and physics]

[12] An example of this is the activity of the geometrician. For when he abstracts the equal surface and the circular from matter, he determines a demonstration that they touch each other in an indivisible point [lit. thing]. But when the natural philosopher enquires into this, he explains its falsity because every

[31] P adds "by their nature."

[32] The expression "by their nature" is omitted in P.

וחולשתו ארצה כח פעל מה שהיה ממנו | יותר גדול כשמש על דרך משל בחמומה ופעל מה | שהוא יותר קטן כחמום שאר הככבים

[7] ונאמר שהכחות | הנשמיות המקבלות והפועלות הם בהכרח כפי טבעיהם | בעלי תכלית כפי מה שהביא אליו זה המופת אלא שמהם | מה שהם בעלי תכלית ואי אפשר בם שיהיו בלתי בעלי | תכלית ארצה שיהיו מטבע ההכרחי לא מטבעם ולא | מזולתם והוא הכח אשר בהיולי הראשון אם בזולת | אמצעי ואם באמצעיות כחות אחרות נמצאות בהיולי | וזה שאלו הכחות אם הפועלות מהם הנה להם הפכים | ואם המתפעלות הנה הם מחוברות בצורות להן הפכים | בין שהיו אלו פשוטים כיסודות הארבעה או היו מורכבים | מן היסודות

308r [8] ומהם מה שהם בעלי תכלית בטבעם || אבל שבו בלתי בעלי תכלית ונעתקו מטבע | האפשר אל טבע ההכרחי מפני מה שהוא בטבעו | בלתי בעל תכלית הפועל והכרחי והם הכחות אשר | אינם בנשמים ואלו הם אשר אין להם הפכים ואינם | בהיולי באמצעות צורות להם הפכים

[9] ואלו לא יתחיב | בהם הספק הקודם והוא מאמר האומר איך יהיה נצחי | בו כח אפשר ויהיה בכאן אפשר לא יצא בזמן כלו

[10] וזה | שקר כי כח האפשרות בכאן אשר השיגו השכל בטבעם | אמנם השיגו אחרי שהפשיטם מן הכחות הבלתי אפשריות | והפשטתם מהם שקר והנחתם גם כן אפשריות | בטבעם שקר.

[11] וזה שהשכל מדרכו שיפשיט | הטבעים אשר לא הופשטו קצתם מקצת ויעיין | במתחייבי אותם הטבעים העצמותיים ויגזור עליהם | מצד שהם מופשטים במשפט מה וכאשר עיין בהם | מצד שהם מורכבים ודרכם שלא יתפרדו גזר על שקרות | המשפט ההוא בם

[12] ומשל זה מה שיעשה המהנדס | כי הוא כאשר הפשיט השטח השוה והעגול מן ההיולי | יגזור המופת שיתמששו על דבר בלתי מתחלק וכאשר | עיין בו בעל החכמה הטבעית באר שקרות זה מצד | שכל שני גשמים שיפגשו מן הגשמים הטבעיים יחויב | שיפגוש כל אחד מהם חברו בחלק מתחלק

9 הם] הן P 9 להן] להם P 12 ההכרחי] הכרחי P 19 אחרי] אחר P 19 אפשריות] +בטבעם P 19–20 והפשטתם מהם] והפשתם(!) מאותם P 20 אפשריות] אפשרית P 20 בטבעם] לית P 23 מצד] +מה P 23 מצד] +מה P

two natural bodies that are in contact must contact one another in a part that is divisible.

[13] Similarly, when the intellect enquires into the finite powers that do not have contraries, it determines from its own perspective that their natures are such that their actions and affections are [also] finite. And when it enquires into them insofar as they cannot be separated from the infinite [power] that acts upon their substance, it will find it false for them to have a power for possibility, insofar as they subsist in things that are not possible, but substantially necessary.

[VI. Alexander's discussion of the celestial body]

[14] Thus understood, the previous problem is resolved, and what Alexander [of Aphrodisias] said in *The Governances of the Spheres* is true, namely: "If it is impossible for an infinite body to exist, then every body is finite. And if every body is finite, then it has a finite power. And since the heavens are a finite body, their power must be finite. And if it is finite, then one day it will stand. And when it stands, it will cease.

[15] This being the case, we say again that the persistence of the first bodies is due to the first cause, and the persistence of the changing bodies is due to the first bodies, whose subsistence is due to the first cause."[33]

[VII. The concession to Avicenna]

[16] Avicenna's statement is also true; namely, that the necessary things are divided into two kinds: necessary in themselves, necessitated of themselves – and that is what he calls "the necessary of existence in itself" – and necessitated of another, possible in themselves, i. e., with regard to themselves – not that they contain possibility altogether. And these are the things about which it is said that their nature changes from the possible to the necessary, but in the intellect, not in reality. The impossibility is its transposition in reality.

[VIII. The souls of the celestial bodies are powers]

[17] The souls of the celestial bodies are nothing more than the powers that adhere to the spiritual forms, which are abstracted from matter. When the intellect enquires into these powers having already abstracted them from the spiritual forms, it finds them to be of the nature of possibility. When it enquires into them insofar as they cannot be abstracted from the spiritual forms [in reality], it finds them to be of the nature of the necessary by another.

[IX. Refutation of the materialists' view]

[18] For if they were of the nature of the necessary in themselves, as the materialists believe, then they would not be of the nature of the possible in themselves. And the demonstration for their being of the nature of the possible in themselves was already established when the intellect abstracted them from the nature of the necessary in itself, which is the spiritual forms. For they are finite bodies, but they are not composed of matter and form in such a way that their form inheres in matter, for these are possible in themselves and are not necessary through another.

[33] See n. 27.

[13] וכמו כן | כאשר עיין השכל בכחות הבעלות תכלית אין אשר
להם | הפכים יגזור טבעם אצלו שיהיו פעולותיהם והפעלויותיהם
308v || בעלי תכלית וכאשר עיין בהם מצד שאי אפשר בם | שיתפרדו
מהבלתי בעלי תכלית הפועל בעצמותם | היה אצלו שקר שיהיה בהם
כח על האפשרות | מצד מה שהם עומדות בענינים בלתי אפשריים | 5
אבל הכרחיים בעצמותם

[14] וכאשר הובן זה כפי זה | הותר הספק הקודם והיה מה
שיאמרהו אלסכנדר | בהנהגות הגלגליות אמת והוא זה אם היה אי
אפשר | שיהיה גרם בלתי בעל תכלית הנה כל גרם בעל תכלית |
ואם היה כל גרם בעל תכלית הנה לו כח בעל תכלית | ולמה שהיו 10
השמים גרם בעל תכלית חויב שיהיה | כחם בעל תכלית ואם הוא
בעל תכלית הנה | הוא יעמוד יום אחד וכאשר יעמוד יבטל

[15] ואם היה | זה כן שבנו ואמרנו שהתמדת הגרמים הראשונים |
תהיה מפני העלה הראשונה והתמדת הגרמים המשתנים מפני הגרמים
הראשונים הקיימים מפני העלה הראשונה 15

[16] והיה גם כן מאמר אבן סיני אמת והוא שהענינים ההכרחיים
שני חלקים | הכרחיים מעצמותם ומחוייבים מעצמותם והוא | אשר
יקראהו מחויב המציאות בעצמותו והכרחיים | מזולתם אפשריים
מנפשם ר"ל בבחינת עצמותם לא | שבהם אפשרות כלל ואלה הם
אשר יאמר בהם | שטבעם ההפך מן האפשר אל ההכרחי אבל אצל 20
השכל | לא במציאות והבטל אמנם הוא העתקו במציאות |

[17] ונפשות הגרמים השמיימים אינם דבר יותר מן הכחות |
309r המשיגות לצורות הרוחניות המופשטות מן ההיולי || ואלו הכחות
כאשר עיין בהם השכל וכבר הפשיטם | מן הצורות הרוחניות מצאם
מטבע האפשר וכאשר עיין | בם מצד שאי אפשר שיופשטו מן הצורות 25
הרוחניות מצאם | מטבע ההכרחי בזולתם

[18] לפי שהם אלו היו מטבע ההכרחי | בעצמותם כמו שיאמינוהו
אל דהריה לא היו מטבע האפשר | בעצמותו וכבר עמד המופת על

6 אבל] ליתP 8 בהנהגות] בהנהגתP 11 הוא] היהP 14–15 והתמדת ... הראשונה] ליתP 16 אבן סיני] א"סP 19 מנפשם] מעצמם P (מנפשם in marg.) 20 בהם] בם P 21 והבטל ... במציאות] ליתP 23 המשיגות ... הכחות] ליתP 25–26 האפשר וכאשר ... מטבע] ליתP 28 אל דהריה] אלדהריאP

[X. The example of cause and effect with respect to necessity and possibility]

[19] The same holds for the issue of cause and effect. For when the intellect enquires into any effect, it determines that it is possible in itself. If it is an effect of an eternal cause, then it is always necessary by another. If it is an effect of a possible cause, then it cannot be necessary by another, and is therefore absolutely possible, which is the opposite of the absolutely necessary. The intermediate nature between them is the possible in itself, necessary by another. The same holds for the determination of things in the intellect, when it apprehends these powers.

[XI. The explanation harmonizes with the Koran]

In the same manner, the sages interpreted His saying "All things perish, except His face [Koran 28:88]."[34]

[XII. Employing the solution in response to Philoponus]

[20] And from what has become manifest for us in this treatise, Yūḥanā [John Philoponus]'s problem concerning the Peripatetics about the eternity of the world is resolved. For he said that Aristotle had already explained that every body is finite, and every finite thing has finite power, so therefore it cannot be true that the world is eternal, for a thing that does not have infinite power cannot <avoid>[35] having finite power, unless the possible could be changed into the necessary.

[21] He did not notice that finite powers are of two kinds: [i] A power for which it is possible from the very beginning to receive necessity from another. It will not cease to be necessary, because the possible in the eternal is necessary, as Aristotle says in the eighth [book] of the *Physics*. [ii] A power for which it is impossible to receive eternity from another – neither individually nor in part – but only in its universals or genera.

[XIII. Conclusion]

This treatise is concluded, in the translation of Ṭodros Ṭodrosi, in Adar Bet of good fortune, the year one hundred of the count (= March 1340).

[34] Ṭodrosi adds in the margins: "This is a verse from their Koran, which is the Torah of Ismael."

[35] This conjectured addition is meant to restore the sense, since the Hebrew as it stands is self-contradictory. My guess is that this is a mistranslation of the Arabic expression *lā budda an*, which is a double negation that was often mistranslated by Hebrew translators as a single negation.

שהם מטבע האפשר | בעצמותו כאשר הפשיטם השכל מטבע ההכרחי בעצמותו | והוא הצורות הרוחניות לפי שהם גשמים בעלי תכלית | אבל אינם מורכבים מצורה והיולי על שצורתם עומדת | בהיולי לפי שאלה אפשריים מעצמותם בלתי הכרחיים | מזולתם

[19] וכפי זה הוא עניין העלה עם העלול וזה שכל | עלול כאשר עיין בו השכל שפט עליו שהוא אפשר | בעצמותו ואם היה עלול לעלה נצחית היה הכרחי על כל | פנים בזולתו ואם היה עלול לעלה אפשרית אי אפשר בו | שיהיה הכרחי בזולתו והיה אפשר במוחלט מקביל להכרחי | במוחלט והיה הטבע מאמצעי ביניהם הוא האפשר | מעצמותו ההכרחי מזולתו כן משפט הדברים אצל השכל | בהשגתו אלו הכחות וכפי זה פרשו החכמים אמרו כל דבר נפסד זולת פניו

[20] וממה שגלינו אותו בזה המאמר יותר | ספק יחני על המשאים בקדמות העולם וזה שהוא אמר | כבר באר ארסטו שכל גשם בעל תכלית ושכל בעל תכלית | הנה כחו בעל תכלית אם כן לא יתאמת בעולם שיהיה | נצחי לפי שמה שאין לו כח בלתי בעל תכלית אי אפשר || שיהיה לו כח בעל תכלית אלא אלו היה אפשר שיתהפך | 309v האפשר הכרחי

[21] ונעלם ממנו שהכחות הבעלות תכלית | ימצאו על שני מינים כח אפשר בו מראשית ענינו | שיקבל ההכרחיות מזולתו ולא יסור הכרחי לפי שהאפשר | בנצחי הוא הכרחי כמו שיאמר ארסטו בשמיני מן | השמע וכח אי אפשר בו שיקבל הנצחיות מזולתו לא | באיש ולא בחלק אבל בכולליו או בסוגיו |

נשלם המאמר העתקת טודרוס טודרוסי | באדר ב' דבריא מזליה שנת המאה לפרט

[5] וכפי] ולפי P [8] אפשרית] אפשריית P [9] מאמצעי] האמצעי P [11] כל ... פניו] אמר המעתיק פסוק הוא אצלם מפסוקי אלקראן שהיא (P שהוא) תורת ישמעאל] in marg. LP [12] יחני] יוחני P [18] הבעלות] הבעלי P [20] הכרחי] ההכרחי P [21] מזולתו] מזולת P [22] בכולליו או בסוגיו] בכלי או בסוגו P [23] טודרוס טודרוסי] ר' טודרוס טודרוסי יצ"ו P [23–24] באדר ... לפרט] לית P

5. THE LATIN TRADITION: INTRODUCTION

The MS Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV), Ottob. lat. 2060, ff. 1r–39r, contains eleven questions by Averroes translated from Hebrew into Latin by Abraham De Balmes (1460c.–1523), a Jewish translator of scientific and philosophical works, mainly by Averroes, who was active in Renaissance Italy and worked for Christian humanists such as Domenico Grimani, Alberto Pio di Carpi and Daniel Bomberg.[36] The MS Ottob. lat. 2060 is followed, at ff. 40r–109v, by De Balmes's Hebrew-into-Latin translation of Averroes's *Kitāb al-kašf ʿan manāhiǧ al-adilla*, translated with the title *Liber modorum rationum de opinionibus legis*.[37]

The first nine questions contained in the MS Ottob. lat. 2060 are the nine physical questions from the Hebrew collection known as *Sefer haderushim ha-tibiʿiyim*, "The Book of Questions in Physics," translated into English by Helen Tunik Goldstein in 1991. De Balmes's translation presents the physical questions in a slightly different order to their arrangement in the only two complete extant manuscripts (München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. hebr. 31, ff. 256r–287v; BAV, Urb. ebr. 41, ff. 88r–115v):[38]

I. *Quesitum primum exponens primam demonstrationem septimi Phisicorum* (ff. 1r–2r)

II. *Quesitum secundum: quod motus circularis sit perfectus* (ff. 2r–3v)

[36] On the life, works and translations by De Balmes, see Giuliano Tamani, "Le traduzioni ebraico-latine di Abraham de Balmes," in Angelo Vivian (ed.), *Biblische und judaistische Studien: Festschrift für Paolo Sacchi* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990), pp. 613–635; Saverio Campanini, "*Peculium abrae*: La grammatica ebraico-latina di Avraham de Balmes," *Annali di Ca' Foscari: Serie orientale*, 36 (1997), pp. 5–49; Giovanni Licata, "Abraham de Balmes: Grammatico ebreo, filosofo, traduttore di Averroè," in A. Musco and G. Musotto (eds.), *Coexistence and Cooperation in the Middle Ages* (Palermo: Officina di Studi Medievali, 2014), pp. 785–801.

[37] See Giuliano Tamani, "Una traduzione ebraico-latina delle Questioni sulla fisica di Averroè," *Italia: Studi e ricerche sulla storia, la cultura e la letteratura degli Ebrei d'Italia*, 13–15 (2001), pp. 91–101; Silvia Di Donato, "Il *Kitāb al-Kašf ʿan manāhiǧ* di Averroè nella traduzione ebraico-latina di Abraham de Balmes," *Annali di Ca' Foscari: Serie orientale*, 41 (2002), pp. 5–36.

[38] See H. T. Goldstein, *Averroes' Questions in Physics*, p. xii. In her translation Goldstein followed the order of the questions founded in these two important manuscripts, which also contain, immediately after the nine physical questions, the questions belonging to the Hebrew redaction of the *De substantia orbis*. See also A. Hyman, *Averroes' De substantia orbis*, pp. 13–17.

III. *Quesitum tertium: sub compendio opiniones Perypatheticorum et Loquentium de inventione mundi* (ff. 3v–6r)

IV. *Quesitum quartum demostrans quod motui non fuerit principium* (ff. 6r–7v)

V. *Quesitum quintum in tempore et eternitate* (ff. 7v–8v)

VI. [= 7th Question] *Quesitum sextum epilogans septimum et octavum librum Phisicarum auscultationum* (ff. 8v–21v)

VII. [= 8th Question] *Quesitum septimum demonstrans quod primus motor non sit virtus in corpore* (ff. 21v–25v)

VIII. [= 9th Question] *Quesitum octavum declarans quod non detur possibile ex se, necessarium ex alio* (ff. 25v–28r)

IX. [= 6th Question] *Quaesitum nonum de seminibus* (ff. 28r–31r)

It is plausible that De Balmes had at his disposal an entire MS containing the Hebrew version of Averroes's physical questions and the Hebrew version of the *De substantia orbis* (both with commentary by Moses Narboni, dated 1349), as they are arranged in the Munich and Vatican manuscripts. De Balmes translated all Averroes's questions but omitted Narboni's commentary. Perhaps the modification of the order of the questions, with respect to the arrangement in the Munich and Vatican manuscripts, was due to De Balmes, since he believed to be a clearer arrangement of content moving the biological question on semen at the end of the physical questions. De Balmes probably translated Averroes's physical questions following a request from one of his main patrons, i. e., Domenico Grimani or Alberto Pio di Carpi. In the preface of a book containing the Latin translation of several logical commentaries by Averroes, published in Venice in 1522–1523, De Balmes expressed the wish that his Latin translation of the *quaesita naturalia et metaphisica Averroys* be published under the sponsorship of Grimani.[39] According to the catalogue of his Jewish library, Grimani owned a Hebrew MS containing *Quesita naturalia Averois cum expositione rabi Moisi Narbonensis*, unfortunately lost, which was perhaps the manuscript used by De Balmes for his Latin translation.[40]

[39] See G. Tamani, "Le traduzioni ebraico-latine di Abraham de Balmes," pp. 619–620; G. Licata, "Abraham de Balmes," pp. 794–795.

[40] Ilona Steimann has recently demonstrated that the text of Averroes's physical questions and the *De substantia orbis* preserved in MS München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. hebr. 31, ff. 256r–318v, is a copy produced in Venice around 1550 for Johann Jakob Fugger's library (though it is marred by many errors) and made directly from the lost manuscript owned by Grimani. See Ilona Steimann, "Jewish Scribes and Christian Patrons: The Hebraica Collection of Johann Jakob Fugger," *Renaissance Quarterly*, 70 (2017), pp. 1235–1281, esp. 1268. According to Steimann,

De Balmes added two other questions by Averroes to the nine physical questions: it is impossible to establish with certainty whether he found them in the same Hebrew MS he consulted or he took them from other MSS. The tenth question (according to De Balmes's numbering) is a Hebrew-into-Latin translation of the chapter missed in the old Arabic-into-Latin translation of the *De substantia orbis* (= DSO) by Michael Scot, as De Balmes himself noticed: *Quaesitum decimum est capitulum quod deficit antique translationi libelli de substantia orbis* (f. 31r). That the Latin version of the *De substantia orbis* was missing a chapter present in the Hebrew version was already known in the circle of Christian scholars and patrons who sponsored the translations of unknown works by Islamic philosophers preserved in mediaeval Hebrew versions.[41] This missing chapter of the DSO (known as chapter 6) had already been translated by Elijah del Medigo for Giovanni Pico della Mirandola around 1485, as Elijah himself states in his commentary on *De substantia orbis*.[42]

The eleventh question (according to De Balmes's numbering) is the

Grimani's Hebrew manuscript of Averroes's physical questions originally belonged to the library of Pico della Mirandola (see also Giovanna Murano, *La biblioteca araboebraica di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola* [Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2022], pp. 42–43). In any case, we know for sure that Pico had at his disposal a Hebrew MS containing Averroes's physical question, because Elijah del Medigo in a letter to Pico quoted some Arabic names of Islamic philosophers (e. g., Abu al-Qasim ben Idris and Aven Gaᶜfar), whose questions usually appear together with Averroes's physical questions; see Moritz Steinschneider, *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher* (Berlin: Kommissionsverlag des Bibliographischen Bureaus, 1893), p. 188; Giovanni Licata, *Secundum Avenroem: Pico della Mirandola, Elia del Medigo e la "seconda rivelazione" di Averroè* (Palermo: Officina di Studi Medievali, 2022), pp. 199, 216–217.

[41] De Balmes followed the path opened by the Hebrew-into-Latin translator Elijah del Medigo in translating a vast amount of philosophical and scientific works preserved in medieval Hebrew translations, under request of Christian patrons. For more on the Hebrew-into-Latin translation movement, see Dag Nikolaus Hasse, *Success and Suppression: Arabic Sciences and Philosophy in the Renaissance* (Harvard University Press, 2016); G. Licata, *Secundum Avenroem*.

[42] *Et hic completum est illud quod invenitur ex hoc libello in translatione latina. Sed sermo adiunctus huic in hebraica lingua, quem transduxi vobis latine, est ad declarandum spetialiter quod motores corporum celestium sunt separati a materia, et est sermo propinquus per se noto, et maxime ex iam dictis. Et ideo non declaravi illum. Et puto quod composuit ipsum ante hunc libellum* (MS BAV, Vat. lat. 4553, f. 50r). This version, however, does not seem to have survived, although it cannot be excluded that De Balmes knew it, as is the case with others of Del Medigo's translations (see G. Licata, *Secundum Avenroem*, pp. 59–125). A complete edition of Del Medigo's commentary on *De substantia orbis*, ed. by Michael Engel and Giovanni Licata, is forthcoming.

present question, which, contrary to what has been often argued, has nothing to do with the original Hebrew and Latin versions of DSO. Since the story has been told,[43] a few words on the history of DSO will suffice. As with other works by Averroes, the questions that make up the DSO have not survived in the original Arabic text but are preserved both in Latin and Hebrew translations. It is reasonable to assume that Averroes's questions were in origin independent from each other, with only the first question – as testified by its *explicit* – being properly named *sermo de substantia orbis*. Other questions were put together with the first question for the content's affinity – we do not know whether this happened in one or more Arabic MSS during Ibn Rušd's life or due to choices by those who translated them into Latin and Hebrew. In the Latin tradition, the DSO soon found a stable shape, being translated from the Arabic by Michael Scot in the first half of the 13th century. In the Hebrew tradition, the final shape of the treatise, known properly as *Maʾamar be-ʿeṣem ha-galgal* (= MEG), was the work of Moses Narboni, who (re)assembled and commented it in 1349. It is important to note that the Latin and Hebrew versions differ in the number and order of the questions. The Hebrew version is, in fact, made up of six questions, assembled into three treatises, while the Latin version has five questions. Around the second decade of the 16th century, De Balmes translated two other questions from Hebrew into Latin, which came to constitute the sixth and seventh chapters of the Latin DSO, published for the first time in 1525 by Giovanni Battista Confalonieri. As can be seen, the sixth Latin chapter was already part of the Hebrew version, and thus filled the lacuna in Scot's Latin medieval version; while the seventh chapter is eccentric even with respect to the Hebrew tradition of the MEG.

In table 1 below we can observe the different arrangement of the text in the Latin and Hebrew versions.

De Balmes did not believe (rightly) that the eleventh question, translated in the MS Ottob. lat. 2060, was part of the DSO. He writes in the headline only that this question must be understood in relation to the previous polemical physical question concerning Avicenna, i. e., the *quaesitum octavum* (or ninth question according to modern numbering).

[43] See Arthur Hyman, "The Composition and Transmission of Averroes' *Maʾamar be-ʿeṣem ha-galgal*," in Meir Ben-Horin, Bernard D. Weinryb, Solomon Zeitlin (eds.), *Studies and Essays in Honor of Abraham A. Neuman* (Brill, 1962), pp. 299–307; idem, *Averroes' De substantia orbis*, pp. 13–19; Giovanni Licata, "Problemi della tradizione a stampa del *De substantia orbis* di Averroè," *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa: Classe di lettere e filosofia*, 11 (2019), pp. 559–580.

Tab. 1

De substantia orbis		*Maʾamar be-ʿeṣem ha-galgal*
ch. 1	⟺	I treatise
ch. 2	⟺	III treatise, ch. 1
ch. 3	⟺	III treatise, ch. 2 (first part)
ch. 4	⟺	III treatise, ch. 3
ch. 5	⟺	II treatise
ch. 6 [1525 onwards]	⟺	III treatise, ch. 2 (second part)
ch. 7 [1525 onwards]	⟺	∅

The so-called chapter 7 of DSO is therefore a creation of the Renaissance book market. In his commentary to DSO, Confalonieri – a rather obscure Paduan professor of philosophy[44] who was born in Verona and died in Montagnana (not far from Padua) in 1537, known for writing one of the first treatises on enology (*De vini natura*, 1535) – gives valuable information regarding the publication of the two newly-translated Averroes's questions by De Balmes, reporting that he had received them from the Venetian patrician Alvise Bragadin and wanted to add them to the standard DSO for the benefit of the University of Padua's students.[45] Confalonieri does not doubt the questions' authenticity, even though it is not clear whether they are to be considered two independent physical questions or two missing chapters of the DSO (as some believed). Although Confalonieri was inclined to believe the former hypothesis, the title page (*Libellus de substantia orbis… duobus capitulis auctus*) and the layout of this 1525 edition, presenting these questions as chapter 6 and 7, determined the final, longer shape according to which the DSO was read and understood from the (late) Renaissance to the present day.[46] The

[44] See Jacopo Facciolati, *Fasti gymnasii patavini* (Padua, 1757), pp. 283, 287, 301.

[45] It is probable that this Alvise Bragadin is the same publisher and typographer who would become famous during the middle of the sixteenth century in Venice for the publication of several Hebrew books. See the entry by A. Cioni in the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 13 (Rome, 1971), pp. 659–661.

[46] *Dum libellum Averrois de orbis substantia exponerem, Alovysius Bragadenus inter venetos egregiae nobilitatis et virtutis iuvenis, sicuti ingenio doctrina et moribus, ita benivolentia officio et liberalitate in amicos nulli secundus, hos sequentes duos Averrois ad me tractatus misit quos diligenti industria ab Abramo hebreo in latinum vertendos curaverat, et quia non dubitabam quin ex Averrois minerva prodiissent, id enim dicendi modus et qualitas doctrinae opinionumque conformitas ostendit, propterea ad studentium utilitatem antecedentibus subiungere eosdemque exponere non recusavi, ut quae opusculo de orbis substantia capitula deesse fama est, qualia sint recognoscerentur. Licet autem praesens caput et sequens ab aliquibus pars libelli de*

authoritative Giunta edition of 1550 and 1562, which substantially reproduces Confalonieri's edition *verbatim*, closed the issue.[47]

De Balmes's translation of the present Averroes's question is a very literal rendition of the Hebrew text, in line with all the other Hebrew-into-Latin translations of his where the manuscripts have survived.[48] On the whole, it testifies to an almost perfect understanding of its meaning; there are only a few misunderstandings, probably caused by the difficulty of the text or by some errors in the Hebrew manuscript source (e. g., in § 6, *in celo* was probably caused by a faulty בשמים). Although from the point of view of clarity the text is sometimes quite odd, from the point of view of textual criticism it can be valuably used as an indirect testimony for correcting or better understanding the Hebrew text. On only two occasions does De Balmes deliberately modify the Hebrew source with the aim of clarifying it. In the headline he uses the stronger verb *se reconciliare* 'to make peace' with respect to the Hebrew הודאה 'concession;' moreover, he clarifies that the appeasement should refer to the question of the existence of something that is possible by virtue of itself and necessary by virtue of another.[49] The second marked intervention by De Balmes is in the sentence quoting from the Qurʾān (§ 19).

orbis substantia existimentur, mihi tamen non videntur contexendi in serie aliorum quae exposuimus, tum propter continuationem. Nam si ponamus esse penultimum praesens quod exponimus [i. e., ch. 6]*, tunc epilogus non conveniet, nam in fine huius capitis* [i. e., ch. 6] *epilogat Averroes tanquam ad totius operis conclusionem. Et epilogat etiam in fine ultimi capitis* [i. e., ch. 5]*, quod non convenit deinde initium praesentis capitis* [i. e., ch. 6]*. Non videtur initium capitis quod sit pars alicuius libelli, sed alicuius tractatus per se. Et ideo ego credo quod ista duo capita sint seorsum ab Averroe edita* (*Averrois Libellus de substantia orbis nuper castigatus et duobus capitulis auctus, diligentiaque studio expositus per Joannem Baptistam Confalonerium Veronensem* [Venice, 1525], f. 46r, slightly modified).

[47] *Haec duo sequentia capita, ab Abramo de Balmes latinitate donata, quanquam ab hoc tractatu separata esse videantur, cum iam ei finis sit impositus, quia tamen in eadem versantur re, in qua et priora, ideo ipsa Sextum et Septimum tractatus huius capita constituimus* (*Averrois Cordubensis Sermo de substantia orbis* […] [Venice, Giunta, 1562], f. 11r). There is also a modern transcription of the 1562 Giunta edition of DSO along with an inaccurate translation into Portuguese, which is not useful for the present research. See Averróis, *Exposição sobre a Substância do Orbe*, ed. by Anna Lia A. de Almeida Prado and Rosalie Helena de Souza Pereira (Porto Alegre: Edipucrs, 2006).

[48] See Di Donato, "Il *Kitāb al-Kašf*;" G. Licata, *Secundum Avenroem*, pp. 72–125.

[49] This is the ninth physical question in the translation of Goldstein and the eight question in the MS Ottob. lat. 2060. The concordistic attitude between the philosophies of Avicenna and Averroes, which stems from Pico's *900 Theses* (see G. Licata, *Secundum Avenroem*, pp. 234–235), is one of the main features of Confalonieri's commentary (cf. *Libellus de substantia orbis*, ff. 25v, 29r–v, 50v–51r). See esp. f. 25v: *in capite quodam qui in arabico* [sic] *adiunctus est libello* De substantia orbis*, ubi*

The following edition is based on the MS BAV, Ottob. lat. 2060, ff. 36r–39r. I offer a faithful transcription with slight editorial changes (I have adapted punctuation and capitalization to modern usage; I have distinguished *u* from *v*, but not *i* from *j*; I have divided the text into paragraphs; I have placed quotations and titles in italics).

The *editio princeps*, edited and commented by Confalonieri in 1525, slightly improves the style, sometimes misinterpreting the sense of the original translation. The MS that Confalonieri used as a basis for his edition was not the MS Ottob. lat. 2060, but was, most likely, a closely similar testimony with a few author's variants. However, most variants between the MS and Confalonieri's edition must be explained as stylistic ameliorations of the Latin, the most evident are the frequent inversions in word order or the use of *autem* in the second position of a sentence in place of *et* in the first position, which slavishly followed Hebrew syntax. Other stylistic changes by Confalonieri are recorded in the critical apparatus (I have recorded many, but not all of them). Stylistic improvement of the Latin is in line with most of 16th-century printed editions of Hebrew-into-Latin translations. Latin translations by De Balmes and Jacob Mantino were more or less polished by expert Latinists – a fact that can be demonstrated when both a manuscript and the printed edition of the same translation have survived (the corollary of this is that the examination of a translator's method from Hebrew into Latin must be done on manuscripts, when preserved, avoiding printed editions).[50] Concerning the text published by Confalonieri, it is plausible to argue that the printed text preserves a better or an alternative reading belonging to De Balmes in five or six cases, after a comparison with the Hebrew source.[51]

There are some arguments for considering the MS Ottob. lat. 2060 as an autograph by De Balmes, which is a fair copy in a neat hand, with few abbreviations, by a non-professional scribe. As Giovanni Mercati has suggested, it is probably the same hand that copied other manuscripts containing De Balmes's translations (BAV, Vat. lat. 3897, 4548, 4566; BAV, Ottob. lat. 1401, 1861).[52] The Ottob. lat. 2060 – most likely belong-

Averroes in hac difficultate sese Alexandro et Avicennae reconciliat.

[50] See G. Licata, *Secundum Avenroem*, pp. 72–125. Yet, we cannot rule out the possibility, in the case that the autograph is not extant, that the manuscript was also stylistically revised.

[51] E. g., *defecturus* / *defectus* (§ 1); *impartibiles* / *inseparabiles* (§ 1); *aliis inventis* / *aliis* (§ 7); *invenit eas* / *invenit* (§ 17); *dispositio* / *res* (§ 19); *ea est* / *ea* (§ 19). For all these variants see the critical apparatus below.

[52] See Giovanni Mercati, *Codici latini Pico Grimani Pio* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apos-

Tab. 2: Sigla

MS	=	Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ottob. lat. 2060
C	=	Confalonieri edition (1525)
J	=	Giunta edition (1562)

ing to the library of Alberto Pio di Carpi or Domenico Grimani – has the late possession note of the Roman bibliophile Giovanni Angelo Altemps (died 1620): *Ex codicibus… Joannis Angeli ducis ab Altaemps*.[53]

6. THE LATIN TRADITION: TEXT AND NOTES

36r | Quesitum undecimum in quo Averroys reconciliat se cum Avicenna circa quesitum an detur aliquid possibile ex se, necessarium ex alio.

[1] Ex quo declaratum est de re corporum celestium motorum motu circulari, quod motus eorum non defecisset neque defectus sit,[54] et declaratum est quod omne motum habeat movens, oportet quod movens[55] ista corpora sit potentia vel potentie quarum consistentia non sit in corpore, ex quo sunt inseparabiles[56] ad partitionem corporis earum.

36v [2] Et fuit manifestum quod ille sint impartibiles | ad partitionem corporum earum, quia virtus corporis minoris ex eis et corporis maioris

1–2 Quesitum undecimum … ex alio] Quesitum in quo Averrois ostendit quomodo verificatur quod corpora celestia, cum sint finita et possibilia ex se, acquirant ab alio eternitatem C; Quaesitum, quo ostendit, quomodo corpora coelestia, cum sint finita et possibilia ex se, acquirant ab alio aeternitatem J 4 defecisset neque defectus sit] defecerit neque defecturus sit C 7 inseparabiles] impartibiles C

tolica Vaticana, 1938), pp. 48, 250 note 56, 270; G. Licata, "Abraham de Balmes." The rough copy of a fragment of the Hebrew-into-Latin translation of Averroes's *Long Commentary on Posterior Analytics* is likely an autograph by De Balmes. It is preserved in Modena, Archivio di Stato, Cancelleria ducale, Archivi per materie, Letterati, pezzo n. 6, "Balmes, Abramo" (see G. Licata, *Secundum Avenroem*, pp. 119–122).

[53] On Altemps see the entry by Alberto Merola in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 2 (Rome, 1960). Other MSS related to the library of Domenico Grimani (e. g., BAV, Ottob. lat. 322, 760, 1763) and Alberto Pio di Carpi (e. g., BAV, Ottob. lat. 1401) have the possession note of Altemps. More details in Mercati, *Codici latini Pico Grimani Pio*, passim.

[54] *neque defectus sit*. The alternative reading in Confalonieri's edition (*neque defecturus sit*) is the correct one according to the Hebrew text and the context.

[55] *oportet quod movens*. De Balmes does not translate כל, perhaps lacking in his Hebrew MS.

[56] *inseparabiles*. The same expression בלתי מתחלקות is translated more literally in § 2 as *impartibiles*.

sunt equales in mobilitate non deficiente. Et si essent partibiles ad partitionem corporis earum in quo sunt, sequeretur necessario quod virtus corporis minoris – ac si dixisses virtus movens orbem minorem – moveret breviori tempore quam virtus movens orbem stellatum,[57] quia iam est manifestum quod virtus partis corporum quorum virtutes partiuntur ad partitionem eorum sit minor virtute totius.

[3] Et ista demonstratio continet virtutem agentem et pacientem que sunt in omni corpore, sicut speculatum est in primo *Celi et mundi*.

[4] Et si res ita se habet, iam omnis virtus in corpore agens vel paciens est necessario finita, ex quo virtus totius in eis est maior virtute partis, et virtus maioris de eis est maior virtute minoris. Et res ita est, si in corporibus celestibus fuisset virtus recipiens et agens in aliud, esset necessario finita. Et si hoc ita est, iam sunt possibilia secundum naturam suam. Et si hoc ita esset, tunc esset hic aliquid eternum possibilis corruptionis.

[5] Et iam est declarata istius impossibilitas in primo *Celi et mundi*, quia si hoc esset possibile, possibile esset quod possibile converteretur in necessarium.

[6] Et si dixerimus quod non haberent possibilitatem corruptionis, iam non haberent virtutes receptrices nec agentes finitas, quod est impossibile, cum sint corpora finita. Et iam est hoc declaratum quod earum virtutes | receptrices et agentes sint finite, ex eo quod contingit eis de ve- 37r
hementia motus et eius tarditate et virtute agentis in aliud ab eis et eius debilitate. Et intendo per virtutem agentis id quod fuit maius in celo,[58] gratia exempli, in sua calefactione, et per agens minus, sicut calefactio aliarum stellarum.

[7] Et dicamus quod virtutes corporee recipientes et agentes sunt necessario secundum naturas suas finite[59] et non est possibile eis quod

3 dixisses] dixissem C 8 speculatum] exquisitum C 8 in] *om.* C 13 et si hoc ita est iam sunt possibilia] hoc autem sic existente iam possibilia essent C 14 hic] *om.* C 16 Et iam est declarata istius] Iam autem ostensa est huius C 17 possibile converteretur] convertatur possibile C 21 Et iam est hoc declaratum] Cum autem est commostratum C 27 agentes] quedam *add.* C 28 finite] que sunt in potentia materie prime *add.* C

[57] *stellatum.* This reading agrees with the Paris MS.

[58] *in celo.* Instead of כשמש De Balmes's MS probably had בשמים.

[59] After the word *finite*, a whole sentence of the Hebrew text is missing:

כפי מה שהביא אליו זה המופת אלא שמהם מה שהם בעלי תכלית

I cannot establish if the omission is due to the Hebrew MS that De Balmes used or to translator's oversight. Confalonieri's edition, perhaps willing to make sense of the period, wrongly adds the sentence *que sunt in potentia materie prime*. On the whole, § 7 is not intelligible.

sint infinite, hoc est quod sint de natura necessarii, non ex natura sua neque ex alio ab eis, que est potentia materie prime vel sine medio vel mediantibus potentiis aliis in materia. Et istud quia istarum potentiarum agentes habent contraria et pacientes sunt coniuncte formis quibus sunt contraria, sive fuerint iste simplices, sicut elementa quatuor, sive fuerint composita ex elementis.

[8] Et earum sunt quedam que sunt finite secundum naturam suam, sed converse sunt infinite et translate fuerunt a natura possibilis in naturam necessarii, quia est secundum suam naturam infinitum agens et necessarium. Et sunt potentie que non sunt in corporibus. Et iste sunt quibus non sunt contraria, neque sunt in materia mediantibus formis quibus sunt contraria.

[9] Et nisi[60] cogeret eos dubium precedens, et est sermo dicentis quo modo erit eternum id in quo est potentia possibilis, et esset hic possibile non exiens ad actum[61] in toto tempore.

37v [10] Et istud est falsum, quia potentia possibilitatis in hoc | loco quam comprehendit hic intellectus in natura earum, comprehendit quidem eam postquam eam denudaverit a potentiis non possibilibus secundum naturam suam.[62] Et denudatio earum ab illis est falsa. Et positio illius etiam possibilis secundum naturam suam est falsa.

[11] Et istud quia semita[63] intellectus est quod denudet naturas que non fuerint denudate a se invicem, et speculetur in consequentibus illas naturas substantialibus. Et iudicet de eis secundum quod fuerint denudate iuditio quodam. Et quando speculatus esset de eis secundum quod sint composite et sui moris sit quod non separentur, iudicasset de falsitate iudicii illius de eis.

2 que est potentia materie prime] *om.* C 3 aliis] inventis *add.* C 6 composita] compositae C 8 converse] reddite C 13 Et nisi cogeret eos] Et nisi hoc esset cogeret nos C 14 possibilis] possibilitatis C 14 et esset hic] et esset aliquod C 15 ad] in C 15 in] *om.* C 16 Et istud] Hoc autem C 17–18 quidem] *om.* C 19 suam] *om.* C 21 semita] J; semite MS 22 speculetur] scrutetur C 22 in consequentibus] consequentia C 23 substantialibus] essentialiter C 24 Et quando speculatus esset de eis] Quando autem consideraret eas C 25 sui moris] sue conditionis C

[60] *Et nisi.* De Balmes misunderstood the expression ואלו לא.

[61] *ad actum.* The correspondent Hebrew word is lacking in the Hebrew MSS.

[62] *a potentiis non possibilibus secundum naturam suam.* The addition of *secundum naturam suam* agrees with the Paris MS.

[63] *semita.* The reading *semite*, in the MS, is probably an involuntary mistake. One ought to understand *semĭta intellectus* "the path of the intellect." Particularly striking here is the use of the uncommon *semita* instead of *via*, translating the Hebrew דרך.

[12] Et exemplum huius est quod facit geometra. Quia ipse, quando denudavit superficiem equalem et circularem a materia, iudicaret quod utantur[64] eis secundum rem indivisibilem. Et quando speculatus fuerit de hoc phisicus declaraverit falsitatem istius, ex quo omnia duo corpora que tangerentur a corporibus naturalibus oporteret quod unum tangeret aliud secundum partem divisibilem.

[13] Et sic quando speculatus fuerit intellectus de virtutibus finitis, quibus non sunt contraria, determinabit natura earum apud ipsum quod actiones sue et paxiones sue sint finite. Et quando speculatus esset de eis secundum quod non esset possibile de eis quod separarentur ab infinito agente secundum substantiam earum, fuisset apud ipsum falsum quod esset in eis potentia super possibilitatem secundum quod sint consistentes in rebus non possibilibus sed necessariis secundum substantiam earum.

[14] | Et quando fuerit intellectum hoc secundum istud dissolveretur dubium precedens. Et fuisset quod diceret Alexander *De regiminibus orbium* verum, et est istud: si fuisset impossibile quod esset corpus infinitum, iam omne corpus esset finitum, et si omne corpus fuisset finitum, iam haberet virtutem finitam. Et ex quo celi fuerunt corpus finitum sequitur quod esset virtus eorum finita. Et si fuisset finita, iam staret aliqua die. Et quando staret destrueretur. 38r

[15] Et si istud esset ita regressi essemus et dixissemus quod continuatio corporum primorum esset propter causam primam. Et continuatio corporum transmutabilium propter corpora prima consistentia propter causam primam.[65]

[16] Et fuisset etiam sermo Avicenne verus, et ille est quod res necessarie sint duarum partium: necessarie ex substantia sua et necesse esse ex substantia sua, et est illud quod dicunt necessarie entitatis secundum substantiam suam; et necessarie ex alio ab eis, possibiles ex substantia sua, hoc est dictum secundum considerationem substantie sue, non quod

3 utantur] utamur C 4 falsitatem] falsitatis MS 8 determinabit] decernet C 10 de] *om.* C 10 separarentur] separentur C 12 super] ad C 20 staret] quiesceret C 22 regressi essemus et dixissemus] rediremus et diceremus C 27 et necesse esse] est autem necessarium C 29 substantiam suam] suam formam C 30 dictum] dictu MS

[64] *iudicaret quod utantur.* A faulty translation, probably due to a corruption in De Balmes's Hebrew MS.

[65] *Et continuatio corporum transmutabilium propter corpora prima consistentia propter causam primam.* The correspondent Hebrew – readable below De Balmes's translation – is lacking in the London MS and confirms the integration by Meyrav (see above) on the basis of the Paris MS. On the other hand, De Balmes's Hebrew MS did not contain the serious lacunae that characterize the Paris MS.

in eis sit possibilitas omnino. Et iste sunt de quibus dicitur quod natura earum convertatur ex possibili in necessarium: sed apud intellectum, non in esse. Et ipsum impossibile est sui translatio in esse.

[17] Et anime corporum celestium non sunt aliquid ultra virtutes comprehendentes formas spirituales denudatas a materia, et istas virtutes quando speculatus fuit de ipsis intellectus[66] et quando denudavit eas a formis spiritualibus invenit de natura possibilis. Et quando speculatus est in eis secundum quod | est impossibile quod denudentur a 38v formis spiritualibus, invenit eas de natura necessarii secundum aliud ab eis.

[18] Quia si ipse essent de natura necessarii secundum substantiam suam, sicut credunt de eis Aldaharii, non essent de natura possibilis secundum substantiam suam. Et iam petit demonstratio quod ipse sint de natura possibilis secundum substantiam suam, quando denudavit eas intellectus a natura necessarii secundum substantiam suam que sunt forme spirituales. Quia ipsa sunt corpora finita sed non sunt composita ex forma et materia secundum quod forma sua consisteret in materia, quia talia sunt possibilia ex substantia sua non necessaria ex alio ab eis.

[19] Et secundum istud est res cause cum causato.[67] Et istud quia omne causatum, quando speculatus fuerit intellectus de eo, iudicaverit ipsum esse possibile ex substantia sua. Et si esset causatum a causa eterna esset omnimode necessarium per aliud ab eo. Et si esset causatum a causa possibili, impossibile esset ipsum esse necessarium per aliud ab eo, et fuit possibile simpliciter oppositum necessario simpliciter. Et fuit natura medii inter ea possibile ex substantia sua et necessarium

3 Et ipsum … in esse] Et impossibilis est ipsius translatio ad esse C 5–6 et istas virtutes … intellectus] et quando intellectus scrutatus fuerit has virtutes C 7 invenit] eas *add.* C 12 suam] sum MS 13 petit] consistit C 19 res] dispositio C 25 ea] est *add.* C

[66] *et istas virtutes quando speculatus fuit de ipsis intellectus.* Note that the Latin is slavishy shaped on Hebrew (and Arabic) syntax. This is a common feature with Del Medigo's Hebrew-into-Latin translations (see G. Licata, *Secundum Avenroem*, pp. 311, 318–319, 321). Confalonieri's edition changes the word order according to the Latin rules.

[67] *res cause cum causato.* The reading *dispositio* instead of *res* in Confalonieri's edition could belong to a different version by De Balmes that the Latin editor had at his disposal. The ambiguous Hebrew term ענין was often translated with *dispositio* in Del Medigo's Hebrew-into-Latin philosophical translations. Cf. Averroè, *Parafrasi della Repubblica, nella traduzione latina di Elia del Medigo*, ed. by A. Coviello and P. E. Fornaciari (Firenze: Olschki, 1992), pp. 61–62; *Averroes' Commentary on Plato's Republic*, ed. by E. I. J. Rosenthal (Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 181–182.

ab alio ab eo. Sic est iuditium rerum[68] apud intellectum in eius comprehensione istarum potentiarum. Et secundum istud exposuerunt sermonem prophete in Alcorano[69] quando dixit: *omnis res est corruptibilis preter faciem eius*.

[20] Et ex eo quod manifestavimus in isto sermone dissolveretur questio Johannis contra perypateticos de eternitate mundi. Et istud quia ipse dixit: iam declaravit Aristoteles | quod omne corpus sit finitum, et 39r
quod cuiusque finiti iam virtus esset finita. Ergo non verificaretur de mundo quod sit eternus, quia impossibile est quod illud cui non est virtus infinita quod sit virtus infinita, nisi esset possibile quod possibile convertatur in necessarium.

[21] Et latuit eum quod virtutes finite sint duarum spetierum: virtus cui ab initio[70] sui est possibile quod recipiat necessitatem ab alio ab eo, et non auferatur necessarium, quia possibile in eterno est necessarium, sicut dicit Aristoteles in octavo *Auscultationum*; et virtus de qua est impossibile quod recipiat eternitatem ab alio ab ea, nec est in singulari neque in particulari sed in universalibus suis vel generibus suis.

1 rerum] verum C 2 secundum] secundum secundum MS 2–3 exposuerunt sermonem] exposuerunt sermone MS; exponetur sermo C 5 manifestavimus] manifestatum est C 6 perypateticos] perypatreticos MS 11 in] deest in MS (cf. § 5) 14 possibile in eterno est] possibile est eternum esse C 15 Aristoteles] Aristotheles MS 16 eternitatem] necessitatem C 16–17 nec est in singulari neque in particulari] et similiter neque in particulari C 17 sed] vel C

[68] *rerum*. The reading *verum* instead of *rerum*, in Confalonieri's edition, is a common paleographical misunderstanding.

[69] *secundum istud exposuerunt sermonem prophete in Alcorano*. The word *prophete* should be understood as genitive. Here De Balmes slightly modifies the Hebrew, following the marginal note of the Jewish translator. This led Confalonieri to point out a similar passage of the Bible in his commentary (Psalms 101:26–28, *Initio tu, Domine, terram fundasti, et opera manuum tuarum sunt coeli. Ipsi peribunt, tu autem permanens* etc.).

[70] *ab initio*. De Balmes's choice of not translating מראשית with *a principio* obscures the indirect reference to the first word of the Bible in the Hebrew translation by Ṭodrosi. Perhaps the Jewish translator wanted to hint at the eternistic interpretation of Genesis 1:1, following Maimonides's *Moreh nevukhim*, II, 30 or Isaac Albalag's Averroist exegesis in the note 30 of his *Sefer tiqqun ha-deʿot*; see Georges Vajda, *Isaac Albalag: Averroïste juif, traducteur et annotateur d'al-Ghazâlî* (Paris: Vrin, 1960), pp. 135–138.

7. APPENDIX: HEBREW-LATIN-ENGLISH GLOSSARY

tarditas, slowness	איחור
quo modo, how	איך
singularis, individual	איש
Aldaharii, materialists	אל דהריה
medium, mediated (§ 7), intermediate (§ 19)	אמצעי
dicere, to say	אמר
verus, true	אמת
possibilis, possible	אפשרי
possibilitas, possibility	אפשריות
impossibilis, impossible	אי אפשר
declarare, to explain	באר
necessario, necessarily	בהכרח
consideratio, regard	בחינה
impossibilis, impossibility	בטל
destrui, to cease	בטל
hic (§ 4, 9), *in hoc loco* (§ 10), here	בכאן
infinitus, infinite	בלתי בעל תכלית
inseparabilis (§ 1), *impartibiles* (§ 2), not divided	בלתי מתחלק
indivisibilis, indivisible	בלתי מתחלק
simpliciter, absolutely	במוחלט
Physicus, natural philosopher	בעל החכמה הטבעית
finitus, finite	בעל תכלית
maior, large	גדול
iudicare (§ 11, 12), *determinare* (§ 13), to determine	גזר
orbis, De regiminibus orbium, sphere, *The Governance of the Spheres*	גלגל, הנהגות הגלגליות
corpus, body	גרם
corpora celestia, celestial bodies	גרמים שמיימיים
corpus, body	גשם
corporeus, bodily	גשמי
credere, believe	האמין
fuisse intellectum, to be understood	הובן
speculari, to be proven	הושקף
dissolvi, to be resolved	הותר
materia, matter	היולי
materia prima, prime matter	היולי ראשון
necessarius, necessary	הכרחי
necessitas, necessity	הכרחיות
impossibilitas, impossibility	המנע
positio, assuming	הנחה
movere, to cause motion	הניע
translatio, transposition	הֶעְתֵּק
contrarius, contrary	הֶפֶךְ

converti, to change	הָפַךְ
corruptio, corruption	הפסד
paxio (*passio*), affection	הפעלות
denudare, to abstract	הפשיט
comprehensio, apprehension	השגה
contingere (§ 6), *comprehendere* (§ 10, 17), to amount to (§ 6), apprehend (§ 10), to adhere (§ 17)	השיג
De celo et mundo, *On the Heavens and the World*	השמים והעולם
verificare, to be true of	התאמת
partiri, to be divided	התחלק
continuatio, persistence	התמדה
N/A, to touch	התמשש
mobilitas, being moved	התנועעות
separari, to be separated	התפרד
tempus, time	זמן
vehementia, speed (lit. power [of motion])	חוזק
debilitas, weakness	חולשה
partitio, to divide	חִלֵּק
pars (§ 2, 4, 12, 16), *particularis* (§ 21), part	חֵלֶק
calefactio, heating	חמום
natura, nature	טבע
naturalis, natural	טבעי
dies, day	יום
elementum, element	יסוד
exire ad actum, to be realized	יצא
iam, already	כבר
universalis, universal	כולל
potentia (§ 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 19), *virtus* (§ 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 13, 14, 17, 20, 21), power	כח
stella, star	ככב
continere, to include	כלל
Geometra, geometrician	מהנדס
demonstratio, demonstration	מופת
compositus, composite	מורכב
cuniunctus, connected	מחובר
speties (*species*), kind	מין
movens, mover	מניע
invenire, to find	מצא
entitas (§ 16), *esse* (§ 16), existence, reality	מציאות
oppositum, opposite	מקביל
recipiens (§ 4, 7), *receptrix* (§ 6), receptive	מקבל
Perypatetici, Peripatetics	משאים
exemplum, example	משל
iudicium, judgement (§ 11), determination (§ 19)	משפט
transmutabilis, changing	משתנה

consequens, concomitant	מתחייב
partibilis (§ 2), *divisibilis* (§ 12), divided (§ 2), divisible (§ 12)	מתחלק
motum, moved	מתנועע
paciens, passive	מתפעל
manifestum esse, to become manifest	נגלה
impossibilis, impossible	נמנע
esse, to exist	נמצא
latere, to not notice	נעלם
transferri, to be transposed	נעתק
corruptibilis esse, to perish	נפסד
substantia (§ 16), *anima* (17), self (§ 16), soul (§ 17)	נפש
eternus, eternal	נצחי
eternitas, eternity	נצחיות
circularis, circular	סבוב
genus, genus	סוג
dubium (§ 9, 14), *questio* (§ 20), problem	ספק
deficere (§ 1), *auferre* (§ 21), to cease	סר
circularis, circular	ענול
mundus, world	עולם
consistens, subsisting	עומד
speculari, to enquire	עיין
omnimode, always	על כל פנים
causa, cause	עלה
causatum, effect	עלול
stare (§ 14), *consistere* (§ 18), to stand (§ 14), to be established (§ 18), to inhere (§ 18)	עמד
res, thing, issue	ענין
substantia, substance	עצם
substantialis, substantial	עצמותי
facere, to do	עשה
tangere, to be in contact	פגש
agens, active	פועל
exponere, to interpret	פירש
facies, face	פנים
actio, action	פעולה
simplex, simple	פשוט
denudatio, abstraction	פשיטה
forma, form	צורה
recipere, to receive	קבל
eternitas, eternity	קדמות
precedens, previous	קודם
minor, small	קטן
consistens, to subsist	קיים
dicere, to call	קרא
primus, first	ראשון

initium, beginning	ראשית
spiritualis, spiritual	רוחני
converti, to become	שב
regredi, to repeat	שב
equales, equal	שוה
superficies, surface	שטח
intellectus, intellect	שכל
celus, heavens	שמים
iudicare, to determine	שפט
falsus, false	שקר
falsitas, falsity	שקרות
motus, motion	תנועה

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