The Modena Manuscript and the Teaching of Philosophy in Fourteenth and Fifteenth Century Spain

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The Modena manuscript (Biblioteca Estense α J. 6. 23)\(^1\) first attracted the attention of scholars because of its marginal notes, written in Arabic in Hebrew characters. These are excerpts from Averroes' Long Commentary on *De Anima*, previously known to us only in a Latin translation.\(^2\) The version of the Long Commentary quoted there is earlier than that which underlay the Latin translation and differs from it in important points. The Jewish scholars of Saragossa, however, had been familiar with it; we find it cited in Hebrew in the works of Shem-Tov ben Joseph Falaquera in the thirteenth century and those of Abraham Bibago in the fifteenth century.\(^3\)

\(^1\) Cf. C. Bernheimer, *Catalogo dei manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Estense*, Rome 1960, No. 41, pp. 56-57. In the Hebrew Palaeography Project the description by Lea Shalem is numbered E530. I have recently checked and completed it. The 79 folios (ff. 1-24 and 26-80), essentially six-sheet quires (sexternions), are paper; there is a lacuna between f. 21 and f. 22 and another one between f. 22 and f. 23. The MS measures 280-282 × 212-215 (190-193 × 126-130) mm, with long lines. There are 27 lines, written on the same number of rules. One folio, evidently blank, is missing at the start, and one or more after f. 24. Folio 25 is not part of the manuscript and is another kind of paper. Another two folios, evidently blank, are missing after f. 62, as are two more at the very end. The manuscript was bound carelessly: the correct order of the folios would be 1-35, 37, 36, 38-47, 49, 48, 51, 50, 52-80.

\(^2\) A. Benchehida was the first to call attention to the fragments of the Arabic original in the margins of this manuscript. He published his discovery in 'Iktishâf al-nass al-‘arabî li-ahammi ajzâ‘…‘, in *Al-Hayât al-Taqâfiyya* 35 (1985), where he also published specimens of his deciphering of some of these notes. The full edition promised by Benchehida has never been published. The present authors plan to edit all of the texts dealing with book III of *De Anima*. Ahmed Chahlane has undertaken to publish the glosses dealing with book I of *De Anima*.

\(^3\) The first results of our study of this aspect of the subject appeared in a small
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The manuscript also expands our knowledge about the teaching of philosophy in the period when it was copied. It is in Arabic, but written in the Hebrew alphabet. The scribe, like his readers and glossators, provides evidence of command of Arabic and of a tradition of studying Arabic philosophy in Jewish circles in Saragossa in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and, more generally, of the study of philosophy in fifteenth-century Spain.

The Modena manuscript contains three of Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle, all written by the same hand: 1) The Middle Commentary on *De Generatione et Corruptione* (ff. 1r–23v), concluding with an author's colophon dated February 24, 1172, and a scribal colophon; 2) The Middle Commentary on *De Anima* (ff. 26–62v), concluding with an encomium; 3) The Epitome of the *Parva Naturalia* (ff. 63r–79v), concluding with an author's colophon dated Seville, 13 Rabi I (early January), 1170, and a scribal colophon.

4 Arabic manuscripts written in Hebrew characters are often referred to as 'Judeo-Arabic', but this term is not appropriate for the Modena MS. The fact that a language is transliterated into Hebrew characters adds nothing Jewish to it. The same text transliterated into the Latin alphabet would not be called Latino-Arabic or Christo-Arabic. Many alphabets have been used to transliterate or transcribe languages other than those they were originally designed for. The Latin alphabet is used to transcribe many non-Romance languages; the Arabic alphabet is used for Farsi and various African tongues; the Hebrew alphabet has been used to write Greek, Latin, Farsi, Arabic, and Spanish. One can speak of Judeo-Arabic languages when particular usages or Hebrew words color the Arabic used by Jews. But one cannot speak of Judeo-Arabic manuscripts when the Arabic that was transliterated is that of a Muslim Arab. In the glosses we are studying here, we find that all the scribes used the Aramaic *wekhulé* for 'etc.', always shortened to *wekhu* plus the abbreviation sign. On the other hand, the suppression of some alifs and other ungrammatical spellings may reflect the Arabic usages of Jews in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. A comparison with the practice of contemporary non-Jewish scribes, however, remains to be carried out.

5 There are many Arabic manuscripts in Hebrew characters. On this subject see M. Steinschneider, 'Schriften der Araber in Hebräischen Handschriften. Eine Beitrage zur arabische Bibliographie', *Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 47 (1893), pp. 335-384, and *Jewish Quarterly Review* 12 (1890), pp. 499-501. We would like to thank Ms. J. Lay, who called our attention to this article and provided us with a photocopy. Steinschneider's list has been revised and updated by Y. T. Langermann, 'Arabic Writings in Hebrew Manuscripts: A Preliminary Relisting', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 6 (1996), pp. 137-160.
The first scribal colophon, on f. 23v, at the end of the first text, reads as follows:

Ezra b. R. Solomon, of blessed memory, b. Gategno wrote this book for his own use and afterwards for whom God wants among his servitors. Completed on Sunday, the ninth of Iyyar, 5116 of the Creation of the World [April 10 1356] in Saragossa, may God protect it!

The second colophon is on f. 80r:

Here this book is completed, Thursday, the eve of the Giving of the Torah [Shavuot] in the year 5116 of the Creation of the World [May 5 1356]. Ezra b. R. Solomon, of blessed memory, b. Gategno wrote it for his own use and afterwards for whom God wants among his servitors, in Saragossa, may God protect it!

We know Ezra b. R. Solomon Gategno as the scribe of another manuscript: Paris, BnF 1008. That manuscript was completed on Monday, 3 Tishri 5117 [August 29, 1356], also in Saragossa, and thus postdates the Modena manuscript by several months:

The work [of copying] the Epitome of the Logic is complete, praise to He who dwells in the hidden heights, on Monday, the third of Tishri 5107 as reckoned from the Creation. It was written for himself, and for any who might want it after him, by Ezra b. R. Solomon, of blessed memory, b. Gategno in Saragossa, may God protect it.
MS Paris BnF 1008 contains: 1) Averroes' Epitome of the *Logic*, with the original Arabic in Hebrew characters, on the verso of each folio (the right leaf of each spread), and the Hebrew translation by Jacob b. Makhir on the facing leaf (ff. 1r–96r); 2) Al-Farabi's *Conditions of Certainty*, in Arabic (ff. 97v–99v); 3) Al-Farabi's *Introductory Sections on Logic*, also in Arabic (ff. 100r–103r). The scribe was a philosopher whose main work, a double super-commentary on Abraham Ibn Ezra's biblical commentary, remains almost entirely in manuscript.6

MS Paris BnF 1008 does not contain any glosses. What makes MS Modena noteworthy is precisely the glosses, which are quite thick on some pages, especially those of *De Anima* book III, which deals with the intellectual soul; they were written by at least five different persons. The glosses respond to other glosses, continue from one margin to another, and invade the space left by what was written earlier. They are all in a very cursive handwriting with many abbreviations. Because the manuscript has been trimmed, the outside margin containing the start or end of lines is always missing. The glosses at the bottom of the lower margin, too, have been cut off.

Glosses like these, abundant and in different hands, are typical of manuscripts used in schools. Comparable glossed manuscripts can be found in Muslim law schools (in Arabic), in legal manuscripts from the universities (in Latin), and in medical manuscripts (in Arabic,
Latin, and sometimes Hebrew). Hebrew-language philosophical manuscripts with such glosses are rare; we cannot recall ever having seen another like this one. In other glossed Hebrew philosophical manuscripts, the glosses are usually by various hands, representing different times and places. They provide alternative readings and are often signed ani ha-kotev ('I, the writer'). Sometimes the glossators supply the name of the book or author they are citing because they offer a different opinion or support the ideas obtaining in the text. A glossator may correct or support the views of an earlier glossator. In all these manuscripts, though, it is clear that the volume passed down from one close reader to another, who probably did not know each other and lived in different times and/or places.

The situation with MS Modena is quite different: five individuals hold what amounts to a conversation among themselves on almost every page of the manuscript, supplemented by others whose contributions are more or less anecdotal. All the hands date from the same period (broadly, the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries) and very probably from the same region (Saragossa and its environs). These hands clearly follow one another and complete what others wrote. This is seen, for example, at the bottom of folio 54v, shown in Fig. 1. In fragment 1, on line 10, a hand other than that which wrote the first lines has crossed out the Aramaic we-khu[lei] ('etc.') and added the end of line 10 through the start of line 13. Finally, a third hand completed line 13. In fragment 5, a clumsy writer attempted to correct the incomplete text copied by another scribe. We see something similar in fragments 6 and 8, where four different hands are involved.

The difficulty of distinguishing among the various hands, which sometimes added only two or three words to a passage inserted by a different writer is great. But a more serious problem involves reconstructing the educational process that produced the Modena manuscript. It is clear that there was a succession of teachers, who made notes for their courses in the margins, and that all of them had access to a manuscript of the first edition of the Long Commentary, which they used to annotate the Middle Commentary.
This course was part of a program that was not limited to De Anima but probably included additional works by Averroes, such as the Epitome on the Logic, copied by Ezra Gategno in MS Paris BnF 1008, and others copied for the use of Don Benveniste b. Lavi, a Jewish aristocrat.
of Saragossa. MS Paris BnF 1009, written in 1402, contains several of Averroes' middle commentaries in Arabic written in Hebrew letters: 1) *De Generatione et Corruptione* (ff. 1r-42v); 2) *Meteorologica* (ff. 46v-101v); 3) *De Anima* (ff. 102v-155r); 4) *De Sensu et Sensato* (ff. 155v-179v). This manuscript has two colophons. The first, on f. 101r, reads as follows:

The copy of this book was completed on Thursday, 4 Iyyar, in the year 5162 [1402] of the Creation of the World and was written at the commission of the most eminent vizier, the pursuer of knowledge and searcher after truth, Don Benveniste b. Lavi, may God grant him joy, elevate his dignity, and raise his rank by His grace and power.

The second colophon, on f. 179v, parallels the first:

The copy of this book was completed on Monday, the eve of the New Year, in the year 5162 of the Creation of the World. It was written at the commission of the most eminent vizier, the pursuer of knowledge and searcher after truth, Don Benveniste b. Lavi, may God grant him joy, elevate his dignity, and raise his rank by His grace and power.

The glosses in this manuscript, on ff. 39r and 44r, 52rv, 53r, and 55v, are not nearly so abundant as those in MS Modena. On the other hand, the handwriting is more or less identical throughout. We may surmise that MS Paris BnF 1009 was used by a student rather than by a teacher.

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8 *Manuscrits datés*, Vol.1, No. 76.
In addition to the three manuscripts already mentioned, a fourth contains Arabic commentaries by Averroes, written in Hebrew letters. Copied in 1410, it is in two different Spanish hands; but greater precision as to its provenance is elusive; and it may have been written in southern Spain. We, however, are dealing with northern Spain, from which we have many and diverse testimonies about an Arabic-language scientific culture. The copying of Hebrew-alphabet Arabic manuscripts in the second half of the fourteenth century and in the fifteenth century, in and around Saragossa, is confirmed by a manuscript with an unusual colophon: Paris BnF 1100, which contains the *Almagest* of Ptolemy in Arabic, written in Hebrew characters (ff. 1v–163v). The colophon, on f. 163v, reads as follows:

The scribe says: one part of this book, from the start through the second figure in chapter thirteen of book V, is by the hand of the sage, the faithful one, the scholar, the holy Rabbi Todros b. R. Moses, of blessed memory, b. al-Qostantini, who wrote it in the year 5140 of the Creation of the World, here in Calatayud, as he himself told me. As for the rest of the book, until its end, and all of the tables and figures, I myself wrote it, the son of the scholar, the virtuous R. Moses, the son of the scholar, the faithful one, the holy Todros, of blessed memory, b. al-Qostantini, mentioned above. I finished copying this book on Monday, 4

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9 Oxford Bodl. Hatton 34 (cat. 1374). This manuscript is listed as C. 199 in the documentation of Hebrew paleography.

10 *Manuscrits datés*, Vol. 1, Nos. 51 and 137.
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Sivan, in the year 5235 of the Creation of the World [1475], here in Calatayud, may it be protected.

Calatayud is about a hundred kilometers from Saragossa.

Almost a century separates the grandfather, writing in 1379/80, from the grandson, who completed the copy in 1475, but there is a striking similarity in their handwritings. Thus, in certain families, the continuity of Arabic studies in Hebrew letters was a tradition handed down from the mid-fourteenth century to the late fifteenth century.

There are many other Hebrew-letter Arabic-language manuscripts, most of them on medical topics. 11 One would have to study their date and provenance in order to distinguish those copied in the Orient from those copied in the West. 12 These Arabic manuscripts are easy to identify as having been written for Jews. Arabic manuscripts written in Arabic characters, whether by Jews or Arabs, and read and used by Jews, are much harder to identify. The only way we can know that a book in the Arabic alphabet was owned by a Jew is if he inscribed his name in it (but even that may not provide unambiguous ethnic identity). This subject has been addressed in two illuminating studies, 13 but these deal with Andalusia, which was still under Muslim rule, while we are focusing here on Christian Spain. 14


12 This can be quite difficult, because scribes, wherever they lived, retained the style learned in childhood.


14 The persistent use of Arabic by Jews living in Christian Sicily has been clearly described by Henri Bresc, Arabes de langue, juifs de religion: l'évolution du
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In addition to book-copying, there are many indicators of the Arabic culture of Jews in that age, as E. Gutwirth has noted. These include the presence of Arabic-language interpreters until the fifteenth century, the numerous quotations from Arab authors, and commentaries on Arabic texts. Arabic was looked down on in Castille, whereas in Aragon and Navarre fluency in the language was considered a mark of culture. The education of high-ranking personages included poetry, science and philosophy, and medicine. It was in Arabic that Joshua Lorki (later Gerónimo de Santa Fé) wrote his work on the medicinal uses of plants and herbs. Judah Bonsenyor, Vidal Benveniste of Barcelona, and Benveniste b. Benveniste of Saragossa received a commission to translate various Arabic medical texts into Catalan.

There is nothing remarkable about the fact that Averroes' commentaries were studied in Arabic. What is noteworthy, though, is the existence of organized courses. Actually, we have various medieval evidence that Jews studied secular subjects with a private tutor. The only education provided by the community focused on the Bible, Talmud, and religious precepts. The regular course attested to by the Modena manuscript is conceivable only in an organized and relatively long-lived set-up, operating perhaps within a circle of families, related by blood, marriage, ideology, lifestyle, and mindset. There are several

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16 Ibid., pp. 242-243.
17 A group of poets has recently been described by Matti Huss, Melisat 5'Efer ve-Dinah shel Don Vidal Benveniste, Jerusalem 2003. They provide evidence of the intimate relationship between poetry and philosophical allegory and include many of the individuals encountered in our manuscripts. We would like to thank Gad Freudenthal for calling this work to our attention.
18 Commissioned by the same Don Benveniste b. Lavi we have met previously. See, in general, M. Steinschneider, An Introduction to the Arabic Literature of the Jews, London 1901.
indications that this sort of course did exist in the fifteenth century, just as it did in the Muslim community: 'Late medieval Spanish sources allude to the formation of conventicula or conciliabula for the teaching of philosophy and science, "escuelas en que leen muchos saberes", based on the systematic study of major Arabo-Aristotelian works with the commentaries, assisted by a learned scholar in a semi-communal setting. In fifteenth-century Aragon, there is even evidence of an Islamic "school" of Arabic medicine and physics that is quite active'.

Similar schools existed in Jewish circles, too. They have not received the attention they warrant because the word used to designate them, yeshiva, has been interpreted in its modern sense of 'talmudic academy' - a usage that, thought to be unanimous and universal, concealed the existence of yeshivas for secular studies. In fact, the expression yeshivot ḥokhmot biṣoniyot is used in an anti-philosophical sermon by a rabbi expelled from Spain to refer to the philosophical studia he knew in Spain. One of them was that of Abraham b. Shem-Tov Bibago, in Saragossa.

It was in this academy that a manuscript of Moses Narboni's commentary on al-Ghazali's Maqāsid al-Falāsifah (The Intentions of the Philosophers) was copied. The manuscript (Paris BnF Heb. 908) shows all the marks of a school copy. The handwriting of the scribe, Isaac ben Habib, is far from uniform and is full of variant ways of forming the same letter, sometimes more than one on the same page, an indication that he had not yet mastered Hebrew writing. Moreover, the young scribe's copy-text must have been incomplete and full of mistakes, because he corrects and completes it. The colophon, on f. 163r, reads as follows:

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21 See L. M. Giron-Negrón, Alfonso de la Torre's Vision deleytable: Philosophical Rationalism and the Religious Imagination in Fifteenth-Century Spain, Leiden and Boston 2001, pp. 50-69, esp. pp. 61-62 and nn. 176-177. We would like to thank our colleague Nabil Elsakhawi for providing us with a copy of this book.

22 See Encyclopaedia Judaica, s.v. 'Yeshivot', vol. 16, cols. 762-773.

23 See J. R. Hacker, 'On the Intellectual Character and Self-Perception of Spanish Jewry in the Late Fifteenth Century' (Hebrew), Sefunot 17 (1983), pp. 21-95, esp. pp. 52-56. We would like to thank our colleague Dov Schwartz for reminding us of this article, already cited by M. Beit-Arié; until now its importance had eluded us.

The completion of this book by the hand of the young Isaac ben Habib was on 7 Tevet in the year 232 of the Creation of the World [1471] in the city of Saragossa. In the yeshiva of the Scholar, the faithful one, the divine philosopher, our lord and our teacher, Rabbi Abraham ben Bibag. May the Lord who gave me the merit to copy it give me the merit to study it and other [books]. Amen. Amen. Amen. Selah. Selah. Selah.

The text copied is in Hebrew. It seems likely that only advanced pupils studied Arabic-language texts in the Saragossa school. Most of the many trials of the pen on folios 163 and 164 are in Hebrew, written in Hebrew letters; a few are in Arabic in Arabic letters (several lines on which we can make out the name of Solomon Ibn Shoshan); others are in Spanish, in both Hebrew letters and Latin characters.

A number of manuscripts were copied in these Spanish yeshivas during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Sometimes they were for the student-scribe's personal use, as in the colophon just cited; sometimes students made money by copying texts for other persons.25 Teachers, too, wrote down their courses and had copies made of the books they needed. These books provide us with information about the character of the yeshiva, because the texts are not the same. In traditional yeshivas, plain-meaning biblical exegesis, halakhic texts, and kabbalistic works were copied.26 No student of a talmudic yeshiva would have copied al-Ghazali's work, and even less so the clearly Averroistic commentary by Moses Narboni. Certainly no student would have had access to a

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26 For example, in the yeshiva of Isaac Campanton in Zamora. See Riegler, 'Yeshivot in Spain', pp. 387-388; Hacker, 'Intellectual Character and Self-Perception', pp. 52ff.
philosophical text before the age of 25. The young scribe of Paris BnF 908 was only 13 or 14, the same age as Christian boys matriculating in the faculties of arts of the Christian universities.

It is possible that religious subjects were studied in addition to philosophical topics in the *studium* run by Abraham Bibago. What we know about the written products of the philosophical academies remains, however, exclusively in the domain of philosophy. All the texts copied there were philosophical and their deans were always philosophers.

The school of philosophy in Saragossa was not the only one of its kind in Christian Spain. The other yeshivas of secular studies we know about from manuscript colophons include that in Segovia, headed in 1438 by Joseph b. Shem-Tov, where a certain Samuel copied, for his personal use, the biblical commentary by Nissim of Marseilles, a commentary with pronounced Averroistic leanings.

I, Samuel son of the dear and honorable Don Abraham Qaminata, may his memory be in the World to Come, have written this book entitled [The Work of] Miracles for my own personal use. I completed it on Thursday, 27 Tishri, in the year 5197 [1437] in Segovia, in the yeshiva of the faithful rabbi Joseph Ibn Shem-

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27 The minimum age on which both the opponents and advocates of philosophy agreed, after the violent controversies of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.


29 Most of them have been conveniently brought together by Riegler, 'Yeshivot in Spain'. We would like to thank Malachi Beit-Arié for making our job much easier through the facilities of Sfar-Data. The patience of T. Leiter has also been limitless.

30 Riegler, 'Yeshivot in Spain', pp. 383-384. The manuscript is lost, but a description and the colophon were published in 1923 by Dov Revel, 'Iggeret Rav Saadia Gaon', *Dvir* 1 (5683), p. 180.

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Tov. May God in His mercy and goodness grant me the merit of studying it and many other books and to understand its subjects appropriately and lawfully! Amen. And as proof [that I copied or own the book] I sign my name here, Samuel son of Abraham.

In 1482, the same school was directed by Joseph's son, Shem-Tov b. Joseph Ibn Shem-Tov. A student who neglected to record his own name copied over Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*.

This book was completed when I was at Segovia in the yeshiva of the faithful and divine sage, my master Rabbi Shem-Tov Ibn Shem-Tov. May it be a good omen. Thursday, 12 Tevet 242 of the sixth millennium [1481].

In 1491, under the same master, the young Jacob ben Meir (the reading of the name is not certain) copied two of Averroes' middle commentaries: on *De Anima* and then on *De Generatione et Corruptione*, with a colophon after each of them.33

This book *De Anima* was completed by the hand of the youngest of the students here in Segovia, in the yeshiva of the perfect, divine, and faithful sage, Rabbi Shem-Tov Ibn Shem-Tov, may the Merciful One protect and bless him, on the eighth day of the month of Shevat in the year 5251 of the Creation of the World [January 19, 1491]. Jacob son of Rabbi Meir ha-Kohen, may he rest in Paradise!

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The copy was completed by the undersigned on the ninth day of the month of Shevat, while I was in the yeshiva of the faithful and divine sage, our master and rabbi, the sage Shem-Tov Ibn Shem-Tov, may the Merciful One protect and bless him! May the Lord grant me the merit of studying it, because its instruction is more valuable than pearls. I have subscribed my name here because of the dictum of our holy rabbis, for their words are weighty and always of value: 'A man must always inscribe his name in his book'. So I have signed my name here, Jacob son of Meir ha-Kohen, may he rest in Paradise!

A third such school was located in Aguilar de Campo. Relying on multiple versions of the commentaries of Isaac b. Shem-Tov, H. A. Wolfson has shown that this constant rewriting could be explained only if the texts glossed were being taught. He noted that Isaac completed one of his commentaries in Aguilar de Campo in 145934 and that one of his students copied a manuscript in the same city in 1471.35

This book was completed on 28 Adar, here in Aguilar de Campo, in the year 5219 of the Creation of the World.

34 These are commentaries and remarks on the metaphysics and physics of al-Ghazali's Maqāsid al-Falāsifah, according to the unpublished catalogue by G. Vajda.

I, Isaac, wrote this book, the commentary on half of the Pentateuch by the sage, Rabbi Levi son of Gershom, known as Master Leon, for the sage, the faithful philosopher Rabbi Isaac Ibn Shem-Tov. May God, may He be blessed, in His mercy grant him the merit to study it, he and his descendants and his descendants' descendants to the last generation. Amen. The copy was completed on Tuesday, 6 Adar II, in the year 217 of the short form - 'Arise, shine [אורי = 217], for your light has dawned [Isa. 60:1] - in the sixth millennium [1457], in Aguillar de Campo. Completed. Praise to the Eternal God.

There was a fourth philosophical yeshiva in the Sephardi zone, probably in Spain or Portugal, but we do not know its precise location. We know only the name of its principal, Hayyim Manyian. We do know, however, that philosophical texts were copied there: in 1485, one of his students copied Moses Narboni's commentary on the Guide of the Perplexed and a commentary by Joseph Caspi, with a colophon at the end.

I, Judah son of Benveniste, wrote this book, whose title is Narboni's Commentary, and did so for the perfect sage, the physician Rabbi Isaac Ibn Eleazar. I completed it on the first day of the month of Iyyar, in the year 'the Israelites were departing with upraised hand' [Exod. 14:8] [1485]. May God grant him the merit to study it, he and his descendants and his descendants' descendants, while I am in the yeshiva of the perfect sage, Rabbi Hayyim Manyian. And let us say, Amen.

In that year the same scribe copied another philosophical text: The

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Divine Visions by Hanokh b. Solomon ha-Qostantini,37 the second colophon buttresses the credibility of the first one.

The scribe suffered no harm and will not suffer any until a donkey climbs the ladder that our father Jacob saw in his dream. I, Judah son of Ben Benveniste, wrote this book, The Divine Visions, as well as others for the sage, the physician Rabbi Isaac Ibn Eleazar. I completed it on the eve of the feast of Shavuot, which ends the seven weeks [following Passover] in the year 'the Israelites were departing with upraised [רָמה = 245] hand' [Exod. 14:8] [1485]. May God grant him the merit to study it, he and his descendants and his descendants' descendants. Amen. May it be His will! Blessed be He who gives strength to the weary, and increases the strength of the spent (Isa. 40:29). Blessed be the Lord forever! Amen and Amen (Ps. 89:52). And in witness I sign my name here, with full validity, Judah son of Ben Benveniste.

Evidently the texts used in the schools were Averroes' commentaries, which explains why the philosophers were considered to be Averroists, but this certainly does not prove that philosophy led them to apostasy more readily than non-philosophers. 38 A few celebrated cases have left a stigma that does not correspond to the actual situation: none of the philosophers who had their own yeshivas was baptized; on the contrary, they defended Judaism and philosophy to their utmost.39


38 A charge taken up and published by a number of modern historians, notably Baer, Jews in Christian Spain, 2, pp. 137-150, 163-164, 253-259.

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There remains the problem of the manuscript(s) of the first redaction of Averroes' Long Commentary on *De Anima*, the *vade mecum* of the masters of the Saragossa philosophy schools teaching the Middle Commentary on *De Anima*. Above we mentioned that a text of the same type was available to Shem-Tov b. Joseph Falaquera. Born between 1223 and 1228, he died sometime after 1291. He was a member of one of the eight great families which, in 1305, wielded Jewish communal authority in Tudela, near Saragossa. Was it his copy that was later used in the school from which the Modena manuscript comes? The conjecture is plausible. In any case, it is clear that one or several copies of this text were known in Saragossa in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, and that they were used in a school during the fifteenth century as shown by both the Modena manuscript and the quotations by Abraham Bibago. Was this version known only in Saragossa? We will have to closely examine other texts written at roughly the same time and place in order to gather other quotations from it, although these will not necessarily coincide with the marginal notes in the Modena MS. We have, and probably always will have, only bits and pieces of this version, with, nevertheless, a guiding thread: passages of Averroes not found in the Arabic and Hebrew texts known to us are quite likely to derive form this hitherto unknown redaction.

40 There are several passages in his *Moreh ha-Moreh*, as well as in his encyclopedia, *De Šot ha-Philosophim*. Alfred Ivry suggested the existence of quotations; see 'The Soul of Hebrew Encyclopaedists', in: S. Harvey ed., *The Medieval Hebrew Encyclopedias of Sciences and Philosophy*, Dordrecht 2000, pp. 398-400.
42 The reconstruction of the lost redaction will take many years. The present notice reflects its state in January 2005.