

The Epistle on the
Possibility of Conjunction
with the Active Intellect
by Ibn Rushd
with the Commentary
of Moses Narboni

A Critical Edition and Annotated Translation
by
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*Epistle on the Possibility of
Conjunction by Ibn Rushd with the Explanation of the
Philosopher, Maestro Vidal, of Blessed Memory
(or)
The Treatise on the Hylic Intellect*

INTRODUCTION

Moses, the son of Joshua, the son of Master David Narboni, may the blessed God be with them, said:

Inasmuch as the eternal felicity is the true felicity and the ultimate purpose of the human species, by which the latter is rendered unique among all that exists beneath the lunar sphere, that illumination which comes to us from the spiritual world deserves to be all the more ardently desired by us and all the more preferred, notwithstanding its smallness compared with the many things [we obtain] from the corporeal [world], even though it [sc. the corporeal] is the way to it [sc. the spiritual world], because the eternal felicity is the ardently desired, true good.¹

Eternality, however, is an attribute of the eternal and that which is generated does not receive eternity. It necessarily follows from this that if there exists in us a part which endures, that part will have come to us from the true world; for that which comes to be through generation and corruption "is crooked unable to be made straight" (Eccles. 1:15), and that for which it is impossible to escape non-being. Conversely, if there exists in us a part which is essentially eternal, it would be impossible for it to perish; as the philosopher said, "And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, but the spirit returneth unto God who gave it" (Eccles. 12:7).²

Now it is impossible for this kind of eternity to be individual unless we apprehend our true reality while still existing in this life and become identical with the true reality of both the separate [intellect] and the generic [concepts]. We will, however, attain this to the extent that part of its essence, i.e., part of the reality of the separate [intellect], is connected with us in a union of inexistence.³ This in turn depends on the extent to which we exercise it by viewing the sciences, for it is the agent as well as the recipient, since it is one of the conditions of the recipient that it endures with what is received. In such a way, the respective rank of philosophers is distinguished, and the rank of prophets [is distinguished] from the rank of philosophers.

As Plato said, "Soul resembles the sunlight which passes through a variety of windows. When the intermediate ones are removed, the beam of light will become undifferentiated."⁴ Similarly, the separate intellect will connect with us due to both its action upon our separate disposition for the reception of the speculative intelligibles and its becoming a form in that separate disposition, which resembles the surface of a tablet prepared for inscription.⁵ "And the writing is the writing of God" (Exod. 32:16).⁶ When our soul departs, it returns to its root and becomes united with it. This being so, the illumination of the eternal is the cause for our eternity and it in itself deserves to be held precious in our eyes.

Since the possibility of attaining the true eternity really rests with the possibility of the separate [intellect's] conjunction of perception⁷ with us—it being within us—this very question is of great value. Therefore, I have seen fit to comment upon one treatise, entitled *The Treatise on the Hylic Intellect* composed by the philosopher, Ibn Rushd, which deals with this question, for it [sc. the hylic intellect] is prior by nature.⁸ Now Aristotle promised it to us, but we have not found it.⁹ And if God lengthens our days, we shall comment upon a wonderful treatise composed by the venerable philosopher Abū Bakr ibn al-Sā'igh [ibn Bājja], which elucidates the nature of the apprehension which obtains at the moment of conjunction.¹⁰

We shall commence with that we have promised after seeking

help from the merciful and supernal God, Praise is His, to Him it is befitting, and He shall make for us a sign.

SECTION ONE

Abu-l-Walid Ibn Rushd, the distinguished Judge said:

The purpose of this treatise is to investigate whether or not it is possible for the intellect within us, the so-called hylic [intellect], ultimately to apprehend the separate forms. This is the question which Aristotle had promised us to investigate in the *De Anima*.¹ We say that it has already been shown in the *De Anima* that the hylic intellect is an absolute disposition, unperfected by any form. Since, were it to be perfected by a form, that form would either impede its reception of the forms of things or it would alter the forms upon receiving them.² This being so, it is necessary that we first investigate whether or not this disposition, which is not mixed, but rather a disposition totally free of forms, is created.³

For it is clear that the disposition which is mixed with the forms is created; I mean, the dispositions which arise in substrates so that forms will settle on them.⁴ Our speculation, however, concerns the disposition which is not mixed with forms. But such a disposition is either one whose existence is always dependent upon the existence of some substrate, and given that that substrate is created, it would necessarily follow that it [sc. the disposition] would be created;⁵ or it is one which is not mixed with a substrate, I mean, that its matter and the matter which receives the form of the substrate are not one and the same thing—for such is the nature of mixture. Hence, let us speculate on whether or not we are dealing here with a substrate with this attribute.

The Commentary:

By stating, we say that it has already been shown in the *De Anima* that the hylic intellect is an absolute disposition, unperfected by any form, he means that it has already been shown in the *De Anima* that the hylic intellect, which may also be called the potential intellect, is an absolute disposition. For it is solely a disposi-

tion; neither innate nor mixed, and neither immersed nor extended in matter; and neither entangled in any material form nor distributed through them; and unperfected by any of the material forms; that is to say, [a disposition] which is not created in a substrate so that a form will settle on it, inasmuch as they are not one in the same substrate, since it is not mixed. It is, rather, a disposition free of matter and forms.⁶ And no form constitutes a condition for its receiving the intelligibles. It is, however, a condition for its existence, but not for its reception [of the intelligibles]. This is due to the absence of mixture.

I have already explained in my book, *The Perfection of the Soul*,⁷ the opinions of the various commentators concerning the true nature of the hylic intellect. It was shown there that Ibn Rushd:

held the opinion that the hylic intellect, in one respect, is a disposition devoid of material forms, as is asserted by Alexander who stated that it is not borne by any form, either separate or material, but that [it] is an abstract disposition, inasmuch as the intelligible forms are not hylic, and even though it is associated with imaginative forms which in turn have a certain relation to matter in that they are related to the images of individuals. In another respect, it [sc. hylic intellect] is a separate substance connected with this disposition, I mean that the disposition found in man is something which will perceive the separate substance with respect to its conjunction with man. For the disposition is not something which exists in the nature of this separate [substance], as the other commentators asserted, nor is it an absolute disposition, as Alexander asserted, since it would apprehend non-being.

[By stating], "that the hylic intellect, in one respect, is a disposition devoid of material forms," in accordance with the opinion of Alexander, I mean that it is not [devoid] of all forms, in accordance with the opinion of the other commentators. However, the intellect by whose nature is separate from it [sc. the disposition], will not be connected in such a way that it will be essentially borne by a separate form instead of a material form. For in this respect, it is in accordance with the opinion of Alexander, who asserted that "it is not borne by any form, either separate or material."

However, "in another respect, it [sc. the hylic intellect] is a sepa-

rate substance" attached "to this disposition"—in that it is a form in it—"I mean, that the disposition found in man"—in a connection of inexistence, not a connection of admixture—"is something which will perceive the separate substance"—namely, the Active Intellect—"with respect to its conjunction with man,"—I mean, inasmuch as it acts on the imaginative forms in man. "For the disposition is not something which exists in the nature of this separate [substance]. For, as Alexander asserted, a false conclusion would necessarily follow, namely, that there would be a separate substance whose existence is in disposition and potentiality.

Thus, it has been explained that we make something which is separate in its substance to be a certain disposition by granting that the disposition does not exist for it by virtue of its nature, but only insofar as it acts upon its substance, in which substance this disposition exists, namely, in man. That is to say, insofar as it acts upon the imaginative forms in man, causing them to move to a more praiseworthy state. For it is necessary that this occurs with respect to its being a form, not that it is an external agent, I mean [that the Active Intellect is the form] belonging to the disposition which is connected with them [sc. the imaginative forms].

And this disposition is the occupant of a place, which is not in matter so that it would be innately joined to it, but which is like the abode of something separate. And is specifically called the hylic intellect, even though this disposition and its form is also called the hylic intellect, it being that which Aristotle had in mind when he stated that the hylic intellect is eternal. For by this [statement], he only meant the form of the hylic intellect which is the Active Intellect, but not the abstract disposition, inasmuch as something generated will not become eternal.⁸

Let this measure of transcribing what was said there suffice at this point.

And his statement, *whether* [this disposition] *is created*, is a second question.

Then he proceeded to comment upon the mixed dispositions, and stated that they are *dispositions which arise in substrates so that forms will settle on them*, by which he means that this is due to their being one in the same substrate. And he means by stating, *depen-*

dent upon the existence of some substrate, [dependent] on the settling of the form of the substrate on it. Then he stated, *that its matter and the matter which receives the form of the substrate are not one and the same thing*. He means that, therefore, they will not impede [each other]; and as for their being in one and the same substrate, it is due to the fact that some of them constitute a condition for the existence of others. And it is in this respect that it will be called the substrate of the form which is a condition for the existence of another, [such a relation being that of a] conjunction of inexistence.⁹

By stating, *for such is the nature of mixture*, he means [that] the matter is one and the same [for both]. Therefore, that which is mixed with a substrate is called mixed with some form.

Following this, he completed his discussion by stating, *hence let us speculate on whether or not we are dealing here with a substrate with this attribute*. It is as if he meant to speculate, after this, on the second question, namely, whether it is created, for it is connected with the first question.

SECTION TWO

Ibn Rushd said:

We say that it has already been explained concerning the various faculties of the soul that they are one in a substrate, but many in their functions.¹ The nutritive faculty, for example, is the substrate of the sensible soul, and the sensible soul of the imaginative. However, since they are one in a substrate, it necessarily follows that some of the forms will impede upon each other in proportion to the mixture of the disposition possessed by the form which arrives with the recipient. But were it the case that all of the dispositions of the faculties of the soul existing in the substrate were completely mixed, it would be impossible for something to exist that would be one with respect to the substrate, but two with respect to the form, just as it is impossible for one thing substantially to be hot and cold at the same time. And were the situation regarding the dispositions of the faculties of the soul analogous to

the situation regarding the dispositions of the faculty of the intellect with its substrate, I mean, unmixed with each other, it would then be possible for all of the faculties of the soul to inhere in a single substrate in the state of their final perfection, without one altering the other.² However, inasmuch as the incidence of the sensible form in the nutritive soul is a certain affection in the nutritive soul as one of the many modes of alteration,³ it necessarily follows that the disposition for the reception of sensible forms is not free from mixture with the nutritive soul. Neither is it mixed with it in the manner of the mixture of the disposition of natural forms with each other. Because of this mixture which necessitates change, the psychic forms hinder one another in some degree of hindrance. Therefore, it is impossible for one to imagine and sense the same thing at the same time, since when the sense is active, it is difficult for it to be perfect with regard to imagination—it being closer to potentiality than to actuality. And, therefore, the imaginative faculty performs better when the senses are inactive. This is the cause of the clairvoyant and the prophetic wonders which generally occur in dreams.⁴ Hence, the ancients used to call it the “divine malady.”⁵

It is for this very cause that sense requires a discrete substrate, namely, the brain and the nerve; while the imagination requires its own substrate, and the faculties of cognition and memory [require another], despite the fact that they are all in the principle of [their] nature, one and the same substrate, namely, the heart—I mean, that their activity is fully manifested in the bodily substrate exclusively theirs without there befalling them a hindrance stemming from the form which bears them.⁶

From this, it has certainly been made clear to you that the psychic forms bring one another to perfection. Furthermore, it has been made clear that those which apprehend are those which are perfected [by] apprehending that by which they are perfected. This means that insofar as the imaginative faculty is perfected by the sensibles present in the *sensus communis*,⁷ they must necessarily apprehend them just as the senses apprehend the sensibles of that by which they are perfected. Similarly, it is evident that the acquired intellect is perfected by the imaginative forms, despite the

fact that the latter serve as its substrate and even though by apprehending them it endows them with a more perfect existence, namely, their becoming intelligible forms—as has been made clear in the *De Anima*.⁸ Since it is not impossible that the deficient forms are perfected by those which are more complete, in perfection and existence, in the same way as matter is perfected by form, then the perfect form is rendered all the more perfect by the deficient form insofar as it causes it to advance from deficiency to perfection, I mean, the one that apprehends it. An example of this is the perfection of sense by the imagination in the way that the substrate is perfected by its form, while the imagination is perfected by the sensible form when it causes it to advance from the level of sense to a more noble level, namely, imagination. The connection of the intelligibles with the imaginative forms will now be evident: the imaginative forms serve as the substrates for the intelligibles with respect to perfection, just as the sense is perfected by the imaginative forms. And the faculty of intellect, in turn, is perfected by them insofar as it causes them to advance from the realm of imagination to the realm of intellect.

Since it is clear to you that the imaginative forms are the substrates for the intelligibles, that potentiality for the reception of the intelligibles, namely, the so-called hylic intellect, must necessarily be joined to them in a connection of inexistence, not in a connection of admixture. Inasmuch as this faculty is joined to the forms in these two modes, I mean, that they are like its substrates and like that which speculates and gazes upon it—as is the case of the sense and the sensibles⁹—then it is clear that if the imaginative forms are generated and corruptible, then the speculative intelligibles are generated and corruptible. But due to the fact that the faculty of intellect is not mixed with the imaginative forms, no impedance at all obtains between the intelligible forms and the imaginative forms. Nonetheless, the existence of the imaginative forms is one of the necessary conditions for the existence of the intelligible forms, as is the case in the relationship of the sense with the sensible forms external to the soul; I mean, that no impedance arises between them at all. This is due to the multiplicity of their

substrates, I mean, that the two forms are not one in the same substrate.

Since the disposition is not mixed, that which pertains to being in one and the same substrate relates to the fact that some of them are dependent for existence on all existence of others without their causing an impedance; as in the case with those forms which perfect one another, as do the sensible forms with those forms in the objects of sensation and as does the form of the vegetative sense with the form of the nutritive. And it is for this cause that it ultimately arises in two different substrates after having been in one substrate, as has been made clear from the nature of the soul.

Since neither Galen correctly understood this subject nor Plato and Hippocrates before him, men thought that the faculties of the soul were separate.¹⁰

The Commentary:

By stating, *it has already been explained concerning the various faculties of the soul that they are one in a substrate, but many in functions*, he means that *the various faculties of the soul are one in a substrate*, namely, the natural heat which is in the heart, *but many in functions*, i.e., [a substrate which is many] in parts and in forms.¹¹

And by stating, *however, since they are one in a substrate*, he means: *however, since they are*, according to this method, *one in a substrate* which is the natural heat which bears the nutritive soul . . .¹²

And by stating . . . *in proportion to the mixture of the disposition possessed by the form which arrives with the recipient*, he means [that the mixture] is in the measure in which it is borne in that matter.

Then he stated, *and were the situation regarding the dispositions of the faculties of the soul analogous to the situation regarding the dispositions of the faculty of intellect with its substrate*, I mean, *unmixed with each other*, by which he means: *and were the situation regarding the dispositions of the faculties of the soul analogous to the situation regarding the disposition of the faculty of the intellect with*

its substrate, I mean, [which disposition] is not mixed with the substrate in which it exists, namely, the imaginative forms, that is to say, that is connected with it in a conjunction of inexistence, not a connection of mixture, I mean, that they are unmixed with each other, *it would then be possible*, etc.¹³

Then he stated, *hence the ancients used to call it the "divine malady."* They so termed it because it is the cessation of sense activity and the improvement of that faculty which is more devoid of hylicity. Similarly, the author of the *Imaginary Circle* called the event of the Vision the "ladder of lameness,"¹⁴ and the sages of Israel, peace be upon them, stated, "Balaam was lame in one foot" (*Sanhedrin* 105a). In this way they taught that his prophecy was through the intermediacy of an angel, I mean, the faculty of imagination,¹⁵ which is a bodily faculty which impedes the senses, as the Perfect Torah testifies concerning him, "Fallen down, yet with opened eyes" (Num. 24:4). But our Master, Moses, peace be upon him, who did not employ the faculty of imagination, [and to whom God spoke] "from above the ark-cover, from between the two cherubin" (Exod. 25:22), did not have his senses rendered inactive.¹⁶ For the faculty of intellect is not in a body, even though it arises with a body, I mean, the disposition for receiving the intelligible [is not in a body]. Therefore, it does not impede the senses in the manner of not standing upright, although it was necessary for Him [sc. God] to divert his attention from sensible objects at the time of union, inasmuch as they are contraries. And this is [the significance of] falling on one's face. Therefore, He said, may He be praised, "And I will cover thee with My hand until I have passed by" (Exod. 33:22).¹⁷

Then he states, *from this, it has already been made clear to you that the psychic forms bring one another to perfection. Furthermore, it has been made clear that those which apprehend are those which are perfected* [by] *apprehending that by which they are perfected*. He means that the psychic forms perfect one another's existence, I mean, that the perfected [form] which is [now] the perfect one, comes into existence after the perfecting [form] which is the deficient one, that is to say, that it is impossible for it [sc. the perfected] to come into existence without it [sc. the perfecting form],

as in the case of form in matter. And it is for this reason that the deficient one is more perfect in absolute existence. *Furthermore it has been explained that those which apprehend are those which are perfected* [by] *apprehending that by which they are perfected*, [which entails that] the deficient ones will be perfected in a more praiseworthy [level] of perfect existence, [as well as] in perception.¹⁸

Then he stated, *similarly it is evident that the acquired intellect is perfected by the imaginative forms, despite the fact that the latter serve as its substrate and even though by apprehending them, it endows them, etc.* He means: *similarly, it is evident that the acquired intellect is perfected, i.e., [perfected] in existence by the imaginative forms* in that they *serve as its substrate*,¹⁹ that is to say, [the substrate] of the intellect *in actu*. And it is perfected by them *despite the fact that it apprehends them and endows them with a more perfect existence*, by all of which he means that it perfects them.²⁰

Then he stated, *since it is not impossible that the deficient forms are perfected by those which are more complete, in perfection and existence*, he means that not only are they perfected in existence alone, but that they also are elevated in rank on account of them, in a fashion analogous to the status of matter in form which is different from the opposite case.²¹ And know that when the perfecting [forms] apprehend, it does not suffice for them to perfect the deficient [forms] merely in the level of existence, rather [they perfect with respect to] apprehension, as well. By stating, *an example of this is the perfection of sense by the imagination in the way that the substrate is perfected by its form*, he means that *the sense is perfected by the imagination, i.e., a perceptual perfection in the way that the substrate is perfected with its form, i.e., an ontological perfection*; and in a category of more praiseworthy existence, and in a category of perceptual conjunction inasmuch as it was caused to advance. And by stating, *while the imagination is perfected by the sensible form*, he means to say [that it is perfected] in existence in the same way as form is perfected in matter, and [perfected] in a category of conjunction of existence, which is the perfection of existence.²²

Then he stated, *the imaginative forms serve as the substrates for the intelligibles with respect to perfection*, by which he means with

respect to perfection being borne by the substrate in the same fashion as the deficient form's bearing the perfect [form], which [substrate] is now perfected in level by the existence of the perfecting form, whose existence is at the height of the grade of existence and at a high level and in [a state] of perceptual transformation. And by stating, *and the faculty of intellect, in turn, is perfected by them insofar as it causes them to advance from the realm of imagination to the realm of intellect*, he means [a perfection] in the category of the perfection of a perfect form by a deficient one, namely, perfection of existence alone, not in level, but solely a conjunction of existence.²³

Then he stated, *since it is clear to you that the imaginative forms are the substrates for the intelligibles, that potentiality for the reception of the intelligibles, namely, the so-called hylic intellect, must necessarily be joined to them in connection of inexistence, not in a connection of admixture*. He means: When these two premises become clear to you; one of which is *that the imaginative forms are the substrates for the intelligibles* with respect to perfection, this occurring when they are altered into becoming abstract universals; the second [sc. premise] of which is that even though the imaginative forms are substrates for the intelligibles, they do not impede the intelligibles; and since it is natural that the specific cause of impedance owes its power to things which are unified by being joined to the substrates in a connection of admixture, in addition to the connection of inexistence, then this also necessarily applies to that which is borne by it; now by affirming the opposite of the consequent, namely, the [already] mentioned premise—even though the imaginative forms are substrates for the intelligibles, then the opposite of the antecedent will be made clear, namely, *that the potentiality for the reception of the intelligibles, namely, the so-called hylic intellect, must be necessarily joined to the imaginative forms in a connection of inexistence, not in a connection of admixture*. And it is a potentiality with a body, not a potentiality in a body.²⁴

Then he explained the second question, namely, that this potentiality is not eternal, I mean, the disposition which is devoid of forms. He states, *inasmuch as this potentiality is joined to the*

forms in these two modes, I mean, that they are like its substrates and like that which speculates and gazes upon it—as in the case of the sense and the sensible—it is clear, etc. He means: *inasmuch as this potentiality is joined to the imaginative forms in these two modes, i.e. [modes] of connection, I mean, that they are like its substrates, i.e., in the sense that they are essentially changed into abstractions, and like that which speculates and gazes upon it—as in the case of the sense and the sensible, which case entails a connection of inexistence, not a connection of admixture, it is clear, etc.*²⁵

Then he clarified the true nature of the second premise of the hypothetical demonstration with which he explained the first question, namely, *[whether or not we are dealing] here with a substrate with this attribute*, that is to say, [whether or not] it is unmixed. He stated, *but due to the fact that the faculty of intellect is not mixed, etc.*, by which he means [unmixed] with the imaginative soul, as well, inasmuch as it is not mixed with it.

Then he stated, *as in the case in the relationship of the sense with the sensible forms external to the soul*. In his *Epitome of the De Anima*,²⁶ Ibn Rushd wrote, as follows:

But when I critically investigated the words of Aristotle, it became apparent to me that it is altogether impossible for the hylic intellect to be a substance which receives a potentiality in which there exists some actual being, I mean, some form. For were this to be the case, it would not receive all forms. And these imaginative objects are related to the hylic intellect as the sensible is related to sense, I mean, [the relation of] the visible object to the faculty of eyesight, but not the relation of the eye to the faculty of eyesight, that is to say, the substrate. And it is not a kind of intermediary between the substrate and that which arrives, as I thought before in accordance with what I learned from Abū Bakr [Ibn Bājja].²⁷

Thus, his statement, *as in the case in the relationship of sense with sensible forms external to the soul, I mean, that no impedance arises between them at all*, means that since the sense is unmixed with the sensible forms external to the soul, and [unmixed] with the sensible body, there will be no impedance at all between the sensory forms and the sensible forms which are their substrates with respect to

perfection. Similarly, there is no impedance between intelligible forms and the imaginative forms. *And this is due to the multiplicity of their substrates*, due to the absence of mixture, *I mean, that the two forms are not one in the same substrate*, and that this disposition is not truly borne by the imaginative forms. For, since *the disposition* [for receiving] the intelligibles *is not mixed*, as we have stated, *that which pertains to being in one and the same substrate*, i.e., the meaning of our statement that the imaginative forms are only the substrates for the intelligibles in a comparative sense, that is to say, *that some of them are dependent on the existence of others*. And this is [the meaning of] his statement, *that the disposition [is not mixed, that which pertains], etc.*

And by stating, *as do the sensible forms with those forms in the objects of sensation*, he means that it is to be asserted that the latter are their substrates owing to their being advanced in perfection and to their constituting a condition for their [sc. the forms in objects of sensation] existence and to their returning to their own essence. While the sensible forms are borne in their essence in the sensible body, the sensory forms are borne in the sense which is borne in the front ventricle of the brain as in the meeting of the two nerves. Thus, this disposition is not a faculty in a body, although it is a faculty with a body, in that it is connected with the imaginative soul, which in turn is connected with the imaginative forms.

Then he stated, *since neither Galen correctly understood this subject nor Plato and Hippocrates before him, men thought that the faculties of the soul were separate*. He means that these men did not correctly understand this important and exalted matter, for they thought that the faculties of the soul were separate in character and location. They stated that there are three souls. They neither knew nor discerned that the brain, nerves, and liver were merely posited as being substrates in the analogy of an instrument in order that their functions be made fully manifest in their specific, bodily substrate without impedance befalling them from the form which bears them. [Nor did they know] that the matter is one and the same. Indeed, their principle is truly one. It is only that they crowd in on each other, and observing that the substrate is insufficient,

they extend themselves outwards in order to perfect themselves and to bring peace among them.²⁸

For this reason, my opinion is that these forms, whose principle is truly a single substrate from the very outset of their nature, are, as Ibn Rushd said, merely the parts of the soul for which it is impossible to be divided by the division of the body. They constitute many faculties which are unified in the same substrate, in which they subsist and endure and from which they extend themselves. They are separate in character, but not in place. It is as if they were to constitute a single faculty whose totality is the soul. They are not instruments of the soul, as Abū Hāmid [al-Ghāzālī] said. For he fell into the error of Avicenna, who himself erred while trying to flee from the error of Galen. Nevertheless, I say they are instruments inasmuch as we posit their having organs which are like specific instruments with which their functioning is improved. However, insofar as they do exist in a single substrate without being in their final perfection, but as impedances, and in the category of an intermediate species of perfection, they are merely parts of the soul, the totality of which is the soul. With this [explanation], the profound secret has been clarified, and it is our opinion and the true meaning of our investigation.²⁹

In his commentary to the choice virtues, our Master, Moses [Maimonides], wrote the following:

It is known among philosophers and physicians that the appetitive soul is in the heart, the heart is its organ and that to which it is related. And even though all the faculties are scattered from the heart, it is their principle according to the true opinion. However, the appetitive faculty does not extend from it to a different organ in the way that the nutritive faculty, I mean, the growing part, extends from the heart to the liver.³⁰

Know that the human soul is one, but that it has many diverse activities. Some of these activities have, indeed, been called souls, as was the belief of the physicians, with the result that the most distinguished of them states in the introduction of his book that there are three souls, the physical, the vital, and the psychical. These activities are called faculties and parts, so that the phrase "parts of the soul"

frequently employed by philosophers, is commonly used. By the word "parts," however, they do not mean to imply that the soul is divided into bodies as are bodies, but they merely enumerate the different activities of the soul as being parts of the whole, the union of which makes up the soul.³¹

Now when these two questions, namely, that this faculty is unmixed and that it is not eternal, became clear to Ibn Rushd, he applied himself to the question of primary interest here, namely, concerning the intellection of the separate [intellect] itself while it is still conjoined, and he stated:

SECTION THREE

Ibn Rushd said:

Now that you are satisfied with regard to the necessity of the connection of the intelligible forms with the imaginative forms, it was the intellect of that connection concerning which it was his¹ intention at the very outset [to show] that it apprehends the separate forms. Therefore, the imagination considerably impedes the act of verification characteristic of the intellect, for example, its verification² that neither a vacuum nor a plenum exists outside of the world.³ In this matter, the intellect strives to remove and erase its [the imagination's] form from the soul. Now if the intellect is capable⁴ of bringing about the creation of its existence in proportion to this activity, namely, the removal of the imagination and its erasure, then simultaneously with this creation it will, without doubt, apprehend the separate forms. Indeed we find that those men who are constitutionally stronger in this activity possess a more perfect intellect. And this activity arises in man through constant usage of the sciences and by his progress from science to science, so that we find many beginners in speculation for whom verification of the existence of matter is impossible, to say nothing of [verifying] the existence of the separate beings.

The Commentary:

He means by stating, *and this activity arises in man through con-*

stant usage of the sciences and by his progress from science to science, the speculative sciences. As for mathematical sciences,⁵ they are indeed part of that which aids in this, but not of that which is specific [for apprehending the separate forms]. For they lack sufficiency in contrast to the physical and divine [sciences], inasmuch as the latter accomplish this in perfection, as was indicated by the example which he brought and by everything else already stated in this treatise which is self-evident.

Then he moves on [to deal with] the *appropriate method*.⁶

SECTION FOUR

Ibn Rushd said:

Having established that the apprehending forms perfect one another in two modes of perfection—perceptual perfection and ontological perfection—let us proceed to speculate upon the relationship of the final form of the intellect with the form of the Active Intellect. There is no method more appropriate than this method for reaching a correct understanding of that which we intended to explain from the outset. First let us recall what was explained concerning the faculties of the soul, as well as what was explained concerning the forms of the separate intelligibles. And that which has already been explained concerning them is that they conjoin with one another in a conjunction of inexistence and a conjunction of perception; and that the very essence¹ of perception is [identical with] the very essence of existence, and the very essence of existence is [identical with] the very essence of perception. Regarding the psychic forms, it has also been explained to you that the types of conjunction are two; namely, that the imaginative soul conjoins with the sensible [soul] in a conjunction of inexistence insofar as the latter is its substrate, and the sensible [soul] conjoins with the imaginative [soul] insofar as the imaginative [soul] perceives it.

But in this, the psychic forms differ from the separate forms, I mean, that the ontologically deficient forms are brought to perfection by those more ontologically perfect, whereas those which are more ontologically perfect are not brought to perfection by the

more ontologically deficient;² since some men thought that in such a case the perfect would become deficient. Of course, this would necessarily follow if it were assumed that the perfect forms a conception of the deficient in the mode of the latter's existence. However, were it to be assumed that it acquires it by its conception³ of a more perfect ontological status, namely, the ontological status which is characteristic of the agent of conception itself, then it would be truthful to assert of them that the more perfect forms a conception of the deficient—albeit in the mode in which it is more ontologically perfect—this itself being the form of perfection.

And when I came to understand this, I understood that the First Intellect forms a conception of all the existents out of His own essence. And this is because the most noble existence enjoyed by the existents is their very existence in Its essence.⁴

The Commentary:

He means by stating, *perceptual perfection*, [perfection] of the deficient [forms]; and by stating, *ontological perfection*, he means [perfection] of those which are perfect in elevation, I mean, the noble [forms].

Then he stated, *and that which has already been explained concerning them* [sc. the forms of the separate intelligibles] is that *they conjoin with one another in a conjunction of inexistence and in a conjunction of perception: and that the very essence of perception is [identical to] the very essence of existence, and the very essence of existence is [identical to] the very essence of perception*. He means that the perception of the lesser form by the elevated [form] is the very cause for the existence and essence of the lesser one.⁵ Indeed it is in its perception, inasmuch as for intellect, the very essence of existence is perception. And for this reason the conjunction of inexistence is the conjunction of perception itself.

And by stating, *a conjunction of inexistence insofar as the latter* [sc. the sensible soul] *is its* [sc. the imaginative soul's] *substrate*, he means—insofar as it is a condition for its existence and for its reception. Then he stated, *the sensible [soul] conjoins with the imaginative [soul] insofar as the imaginative [soul] perceives it*.

Commentary: [This belongs] in the category of the elevated form perceiving the lesser form, thereby being advanced into being something which perceives more in truth. It is not that the sensible [soul] perceives the imaginative [soul].

Then he stated, *that the ontologically deficient separate forms are brought to perfection by those more ontologically perfect*, by which he means that the existence of the deficient [forms] and their perception are perfected in the existence of the perfect forms with respect to that certain kind of perception of the deficient [forms] by those which are perfected. And it is with respect to this way, that they intend by their statement that the very essence of existence is the very essence of perception, contrary to the statement of Ibn Rushd. For according to his opinion, it is due to both aspects,⁶ except that they attain an existence which is more praiseworthy than the one which they had when they were perceived. And understand all this.

Afterwards, he stated, *whereas those which are more ontologically perfect are not brought to perfection by the more ontologically deficient*, etc., by which he means that they assert that the perfect [forms] do not perceive the deficient ones. Therefore, the higher ones do not perfect the deficient ones, even though the deficient ones perfect themselves through the higher ones. Now Ibn Rushd refutes this erroneous opinion and explains that the First Cause forms a conception of all existents in the most praiseworthy mode, and in the utmost simplicity and unity belonging to any of the forms of the sensible existents. And it is the ultimate, human knowledge concerning the Creator, may He be blessed. Now we have already composed a short epistle concerning this, constructed along the lines of a commentary on *Shi'ur Qomah*.⁷ So there is no need to repeat here what has already been said.

Then he stated, *the more perfect forms a conception of the deficient—albeit in the mode in which it is more ontologically perfect—this itself being the form of perfection*. Commentary: According to this, the character of the separate forms differs from that of the psychic [forms] only in that the deficient ones do not perfect the existence of the noble ones, yet they do perceive the supernal [forms]. It is not that the noble ones do not perfect the deficient

ones with respect to perception, as well, inasmuch as for them, it [sc. perception] is the very essence of existence. For they cause them to attain an existence which perceives that which is more praiseworthy.

After this preliminary [discussion], let us move on to that which is intended.

SECTION FIVE

Ibn Rushd said:

Having established all these matters concerning the forms which apprehend and conjoin with one another and bring one another to perfection, both hylic and separate, and having explained in what ways they are similar and different; let us proceed first to investigate whether or not the form of the developing intellect ultimately conjoins with the form of the Active Intellect. And if it does conjoin, in which of the two modes of conjunction? Would that I knew;¹ I mean, whether in the mode in which the deficient form is perfected by the ontologically perfect form, or in the mode in which the deficient form advances to the more ontologically perfect form? We observe that the forms have descended from the first form to the last form in matter.² And I am puzzled—inasmuch as they have descended. Is it that they possess a desire for the perfection of the deficiency which clings to them, so that they ascend from the last form which is in matter to the first form? Were this to be possible, it would be better. For it is already evident from their behavior that they ascend from the hylic form to the human intellect which is the last of the hylic forms. The question now is whether or not it is possible for the hylic, human intellect to ascend to the most proximate, separate form.³ Were it to be possible, this would be felicity; since by this conjunction it would in some way⁴ become one of the eternal, incorporeal beings.

This explanation is, as we have stated, constructed upon two propositions: one of them being that the acquired intellect conjoins with the Active Intellect in a conjunction of form with the substrate of the form; the second being that this conjunction is a per-

ceptual conjunction, since the conjunction of intellect with intellect entails one of the two apprehending the other or each of the two mutually apprehending the other. This is because the conjunction with that which is here, which [conjunction] is the perfection of that which is perfected arising out of its perception, is [identical with] perception. Were this not so, there would be neither conjunction nor perfection, since it is not true that intellect conjoins with intellect in a conjunction of inexistence rather than in a conjunction of perception, because these two modalities are not discrete in intellect; I mean, that the very essence of existence in intellect be identical with the very essence of perception. But this [kind of] conjunction is evidently the case when the conjoining partners are separate [i.e., immaterial]. However, when one of the two is eternal and the other is generated and corruptible, the existence of that which is generated and corruptible is not identical with perception.⁵

Would that I knew whether, if conjunction occurs, it conjoins insofar as it exists or insofar as it is intellect; for if it conjoins with it solely because it exists, then it is impossible for it to conjoin in a conjunction of conception. But if it conjoins with it in both types of conjunction together, then it is certainly possible that the intellect within us conjoins with the first intellect insofar as it is intellect, so that it ascends from hylic existence to eternal existence.

The Commentary:

Here he postulates two questions: The first question is whether it conjoins; the second question is, in which of the two species of conjunction. He stated, *let us proceed first to investigate whether or not the form of the developing intellect ultimately conjoins with the form of the Active Intellect. And if it does conjoin, in which of the two modes of conjunction?* He means, *in which mode* of the two species of conjunction of a deficient form with a perfect [form], and [in which mode] of the category of conjunction of the form with its form.

Then he stated, *whether in the mode in which the deficient form is perfected by the ontologically perfect form*, by which he means: Whether in the mode in which is perfected the deficient form, i.e.,

ontologically deficient in degree, *by the ontologically perfect form*, which [mode] is the conjunction of matter with form and which is a conjunction of inexistence in degree without an advance to a perceptual conjunction. Then he stated, *or in the mode in which the deficient form advances to the more ontologically perfect form?*, by which he means a perceptual conjunction.

You must know that when the higher perceives the deficient, the former advances to becoming greater in perception in truth, as in the case of the psychic forms. And when the deficient perceives the higher, it is as if it too, in this respect, advances to becoming greater in perception in truth, as in the case of the separate forms. Therefore, lower forms always conjoin perceptually with the higher ones insofar as they are perfected in perception by the higher ones. And there is no difference except that for the psychic [forms], the lower ones do not recognize the higher ones, and it is the perception of the higher ones which actualizes the perception of the lower ones, and it is they which perfect them. Whereas for the separate [forms], the lower ones do indeed recognize their Creator. And even though it is the perception of the higher ones that actualizes the perception of the lower ones insofar as they perfect them, they themselves are, nevertheless, perfected as well, by them, and caused to advance on the levels of perception in the sense that they are regarded as perceiving that which is above them, thereby attaining an existence which perceives that which is more praiseworthy. And know this.

He explained the question further by stating, *we observe that the forms have descended from the first form to the last form in matter*. By *first form*, he means the first, simple, and most praiseworthy *stoicheion*,⁶ namely, God, may He be praised. And by *the last form in matter*, he means the form which was first settled in the prime matter⁷ and which is the corporeal form⁸ which constitutes the determinate dimensions, that is to say, which are not essentially limited. And it is the last form whose status is non-generated and non-corruptible, as opposed to the determinate dimensions, inasmuch as they are generated and corruptible, that is to say, limit in itself, inasmuch as it is dependent on the natural form, I mean, the essential form, in accordance with what we have

explained in our commentary to *A Treatise Concerning the Substance of the Celestial Sphere*,⁹ by Ibn Rushd.

For the natural forms possess characteristic dimensions known in nature as small and large. As Aristotle said, "Even if God were to want to elongate the wing of an insect, He would be unable to do so,"¹⁰ by which he means [to elongate the wing of an insect] beyond the possible limit, but with its remaining an insect, "for the impossible has a stable nature."¹¹ The same holds true for every existent.

Now it seems that the measure known in nature for man's stature is four multiples of the average man, in accordance with what appears to be the testimony of the prophet who said, "Now the name of Hebron beforetime was *Kiryath 'Arb'a*, which *'Arb'a* was the largest man among the giants" (Josh. 14:15). It is possible that he is indicating that the largest measure someone can have is four times the stature of the average man, like the King of Hebron beforetime in antiquity. Therefore, that King was called *'Arb'a*, and that city was called The City of *'Arb'a*.¹² And it is possible that they established such a name in order to allude to this secret. For the sciences in antiquity were built upon the specific secrets of reality which are hidden today in accordance with what is apparent from the actions of the ancients, whereas contemporary science is [built] upon the universal secrets of reality, as is apparent from the books of Aristotle.¹³ And the character of scientific problems is like that of all the other existing things which are generated and corruptible. And contemplate upon this.

Then he stated, *the question now is whether . . . the human intellect ascends to the most proximate separate form*, by which he means [whether or not the human intellect] perceptually conjoins with the Active Intellect.

And now he proceeds to explain the second question with a demonstration. By stating, *that the acquired intellect conjoins with the Active Intellect in a conjunction of form with the substrate of the form*, he means that it is a conjunction of inexistence, and it is it which is a condition for the existence of the substrate and for its perfection. And he will state *infra*¹⁴ that the reception *must necessarily terminate with a disposition for receiving a form*, which [dis-

position] *is not a condition for its* [sc. the form's] *existence: rather, it, i.e., the form is a condition for its* [sc. the disposition's] *existence, as is the case of the celestial bodies.* And understand this, for that reception will be a perceptual reception. But the conjunction of form in matter also entails its being a condition for the existence of the disposition. Thus, his statement, *the second* [proposition] *being that this conjunction is a perceptual conjunction,* means [that this conjunction] entails some of them being a condition for the perception belonging to others. I mean, here, [that] the separate [intellect] is [a condition] for the acquired intellect.

And by stating, *this is because the conjunction with that which is here, which* [conjunction] *is the perfection of that which is perfected arising out of its perception, is* [identical with] *perception,* he means that the very essence of conjunction occurring amongst the intellects amounts to being *the perfection of that which is perfected arising out of its perception,* and that which is the agent of perfection and that which endows it with its perception—is *perception.* It should not be asserted that this conjunction is merely one of inexistence. And by stating, *because these two modalities are not discrete in intellect,* he means [the modalities of] inexistence and perception.

Then he stated, *I mean, that the very essence of existence in intellect be identical with perception,* by which he means that all is one and the same, inasmuch as the essence of intellect is perception. And because the form of a thing is that in which the thing becomes substantiated and perfected,¹⁵ and since the soul is the most important of the hylic forms, it was customary for philosophic authors to call a thing's essence, soul.

You must understand that Ibn Rushd asserted his opinion here on the issue of a thing's existence and its essence. You certainly know that Avicenna conjectures that existence is an accident which befalls existing things, with the exception of the First Cause.¹⁵ Now Ibn Rushd holds the opinion that the very "soul" of existence is the very "soul" of essence, inclusive of all existents. And he said of Avicenna, "One should be amazed at this man, for he sought to deny the First Cause, that [which is enjoyed] by all the existents far from Him." Now Ibn Rushd gave an indication of

this opinion when he said that the very essence of the separate [forms] is identical with perception. For by this he meant that the very "soul" of essence is the very "soul" of perception, inasmuch as their essence is intellect. Hence, he called essence, existence, inasmuch as they are one and the same.¹⁶

Then he stated, *but this* [kind of] *conjunction is evidently the case when the conjoining partners are separate,* by which he means; when that which conjoins, namely, the higher, and that in which it conjoins, I mean, it is the lower, *are separate.*

Then he stated, *then it is certainly possible that the intellect within us conjoins with the first intellect,* by which he means, the [intellect] which is close to us, hereby alluding to the Active Intellect.

Now he proceeds to complete the demonstration for the conjunction of the hylic intellect with the Active Intellect in a perceptual conjunction, even though the one is eternal, and the other is generated and corruptible, and non-separate. And he said:

SECTION SIX

Ibn Rushd said:

We say: That the Active Intellect conjoins with us from the outset in a conjunction of inexistence, I mean, the conjunction of form with the bearer of the form, is something already explained in the *De Anima* and agreed upon by all the commentators, for it has already been explained there that two parts exist within us.¹ One part produces the intelligibles through cogitation and opinion, in the same way as it makes something through its form into another thing.² This pertains to speculative notions, whereas axioms are acquired by experience, since truth exists in them.³ Now the [Active] Intellect, in this respect, is our form; but insofar as we cause the potential intellect within us—it being the form by which man is a generated and corruptible being, I mean, the first entelechy⁴—to pass from potentiality to actuality, it is as if it were apart from the hylic intellect. The function and its conjunction with it seems to resemble more the conjunction of form in matter

than it does the conjunction of agent with effect. The well-known difference between agent and effect is that the agent is external, but here there is no external agent.⁵

However, the relation of the Active Intellect with the hylic intellect can be compared to a potter already immersed in the clay, as formulated by Themistius in his book; and [compared to] the relation of the form of fire to a burning object, as in the simile depicted by Alexander. This being so, it [the Active Intellect] is a form conjoining with the hylic intellect, as long as it remains in the state of being hylic intellect, in a conjunction of inexistence, not a conjunction of perception.⁶ Therefore, we do not apprehend the form of the Active Intellect as long as the intellect termed the acquired persists in existence. And it is the [acquired] intellect the cause for whose existence in us is nature and volition.⁷ Nevertheless, when this intellect arising from us attains its final entelechy, there remaining in it no potentiality at all, then there certainly must arise between it and the Active Intellect a different conjunction—for the conjunction of deficient with perfect is unlike the conjunction of perfect with perfect. And if there is only conjunction of inexistence and conjunction of perception, and its conjunction of inexistence is the same as its conjunction with an intellect persisting in deficiency, then its second conjunction must be a conjunction of perception and conception.

The objection may not be raised that both conjunctions are merely conjunctions of inexistence, except that the last conjunction is more complete than the first. The rejoinder to this objection would be this statement: We know for a certainty that the first conjunction possesses the function of generating the intelligibles. As for the second, more perfect conjunction, it must necessarily possess a function rendering it unique, one that is better than the first. That function is nothing other than the conception of the Active Intellect by the acquired intellect.⁸

The Commentary:

By stating, *for it has already been explained there that there exists within us two parts*, he means the disposition which is speci-

fied by the name hylic intellect and the Active Intellect which is a form in it after we attain that disposition; attaining it, moreover, by our own volition. And that which is composed of these two is called the hylic intellect.

By stating, *it being the form by which man is a generated and corruptible being*, he means the disposition.

Then he stated, *therefore, we do not apprehend the form of the Active Intellect as long as the intellect termed the acquired persists in existence. And it is the intellect the cause for whose existence in us is nature and volition*. He means: *therefore, we will not apprehend the true reality of the Active Intellect [by means of] the acquired intellect which persists in being a generated thing and unperfected. And it, i.e., the acquired intellect is that which persists in being a generated thing and unperfected, is that intellect the cause for whose existence in us is nature and volition, i.e., our hylic nature and its existence with a body to which are attached deficiencies and the attraction for bodily pleasures, and its choosing [to pursue] them*.

Then he stated, *and if there is only conjunction of inexistence and conjunction of perception*. He means: *and if there is, i.e., in the [category] of conjunction, only conjunction of inexistence and conjunction of perception*, that is to say, that conjunction is divided into these two primary genera. But you must know that conjunction of inexistence is divided into two species: Either it is a conjunction wherein existence is perfected, namely, the conjunction of form in matter, and which is conjunction of inexistence in the absolute sense, or it is a conjunction wherein the level of existence is perfected, namely, the conjunction of matter in form and the category of the conjunction of a deficient form with a higher form. And it is this latter one which ought to be called conjunction-of-inexistence-in-connection, I mean, conjunction of existence in degree without advancement to a conjunction of perception. For then, it may be said that it conjoins with it in a perceptual conjunction.

You must also know that conjunction of perception is predicated in an absolute sense of that with which the deficient conjoins, as it is said, "And to cleave unto Him" (Deut. 11:22). And it is also

predicated of that which conjoins, and which is the perfect partner in conjunction which allows the lesser one to advance to the more praiseworthy perception.⁹

Then, after this, he sets forth another demonstration that the acquired intellect conjoins with the Active Intellect in a perceptual conjunction. He stated:

SECTION SEVEN

Ibn Rushd said:

It has also been explained concerning the nature of the conjunction of the psychic forms which apprehend one another, that it consists of two conjunctions: conjunction of inexistence and conjunction of perception. Now it is all the more appropriate that this should obtain for the intelligible forms. The conjunction of perception obtains either as a result of the apprehension of the lower by the higher, as is the case with the psychic forms; or as a result of the apprehension of the higher by the lower, as in the case with the conjunction of the intelligible forms with one another.

Inasmuch as it is impossible that the Active Intellect conjoins with the acquired intellect in a conjunction of perception after that perception had not existed before—in such a case a new apprehension would arise in an eternal object, and this is logically absurd—there remains no alternative except that the conjunction attributed to apprehension in this case be but the apprehension of the separate, Active Intellect by the acquired intellect.

The Commentary:

By stating, *the conjunction of perception obtains either as a result of the apprehension of the lower by the higher, as is the case with the psychic forms; or as a result of the apprehension of the higher by the lower, as is the case, etc.*, he means that both of these are called the conjunction of perception, even though one is prior to the other, as we have explained. You must know that in all cases, the lower ones are perfected by the higher ones in a perfection of perception, for they perceive with respect to the higher

ones, whether in complete transformation after the manner of the psychic [forms], or whether it is with respect to the higher ones being the objects of their desire after the fashion of the separate [forms], in which case they advance and truly become more apprehending. And understand this.

And know that even though the lower ones perceive the higher ones in the case of the separate [forms], with respect to which they conjoin in a perceptual conjunction, it is the opinion of Ibn Rushd that the higher ones perceive the lower ones and endow them with their existence which is identical with their essence and which is the very essence of a more praiseworthy perception. In this sense, as well, they perfect the lower ones, while the lower ones conjoin with the higher ones in a conjunction of inexistence and perception. And understand this as before.

And by stating, *inasmuch as it is impossible that the Active Intellect conjoins with the acquired intellect in a conjunction of perception*, he means that *it is impossible for the Active Intellect to perceive the acquired intellect* as it exists *per se* after that perception had not existed before, that is to say, [it is impossible] inasmuch as it is created. For if it does perceive it, a created perception would arise, as he said, in an eternal thing. And this is impossible. Therefore, God only knows His Essence, just as only God knows God.¹ And when He thinks Himself, He knows all of the existents, albeit in an unchanging, praiseworthy existence. And in this way, the question is solved whether or not God's knowledge of the future precludes the possible.² And the intelligent will understand.

Then he stated, *there remains no alternative except that the conjunction attributed to apprehension in this case be but the apprehension of the separate, Active Intellect by the acquired intellect*, by which he means that it will conjoin with it and that it will be perfected by it. And the manner of its perfection in perception is when it apprehends it, for then it is advanced from being a deficient form to being a more perfect form, thereby becoming more real in perception.

After explaining this, he proceeds to meet some objections which befall this question. And he states what you shall see.

SECTION EIGHT

Ibn Rushd said:

And if the assertion were made: Just as it is false that the eternal intellect apprehends a created intellect, so too is it absurd that something generated and corruptible apprehends an eternal intellect; we would reply: Only if the acquired intellect were to survive its purification by the Active Intellect at the moment of conjunction, would it necessarily follow that a non-eternal object becomes eternal. However, when the Active Intellect elevates the acquired intellect, the latter is then totally corrupted and obliterated,¹ while the former conjoins with the hylic intellect which is a disposition and absolute possibility for receiving all the forms. Now the effect which necessarily arises from the Active Intellect during its conjunction with the acquired intellect at the time of its perfection is the latter's elevation. But it has already been explained that at that time the effect which necessarily arises from it is other than the preceding effect. And because of this, the elevation corrupts and obliterates the form of the acquired intellect, and there remains only the hylic intellect. It apprehends [sc. the Active Intellect] at that moment without being subject to corruption or to transformation from substance to substance, I mean, from a corruptible substance to an eternal one. For the hylic intellect has none of the forms, in that the first cause exists with this attribute, it is the most disposed for receiving this form [sc. the Active Intellect].

And if the objection were raised: Why is it that we do not form a conception of it [sc. the Active Intellect] from the outset, since there is no necessity for a superfluous formation of concepts [by the acquired intellect]; we would reply: We have already stated that the Active Intellect exhibits two distinct functions during its conjunction with the hylic intellect. One of them operates as long as the hylic intellect persists, when the latter's existence is not perfected, namely, the presence of the intelligibles within it; the other operates when being active, namely, elevating the intellect toward it. And were this activity possible for it, neither would the acquired intellect come to be, nor would it be a condition for it. But the existence of this intellect at the level of its first entelechy is a condi-

tion for this [ultimate] existence, after which it no longer co-exists. For it is one of the conditions of the stronger form that it does away with the weaker form, just as we have stated that the existence of the sensible faculty is one of the conditions for the imaginative faculty, after which the sensible no longer remains.²

The Commentary:

By stating, *and it conjoins with the hylic intellect which is a disposition and absolute possibility for receiving all of the forms*, he means [a disposition for receiving any form] whether it is an eternal [form] or a corruptible [form]. For as Ibn Rushd will say,³ the eternal force does receive something which is not eternal, from which he explains by demonstration the possibility of the non-eternal force receiving an eternal substance, as will be fully set forth in this treatise.

Then he stated, *now the effect which necessarily arises from the Active Intellect during its conjunction with the acquired intellect at the time of its perfection is its elevation*, by which he means that it is the elevation of the acquired intellect so that the separate intellect purifies it to the point when the agent acts upon itself, I mean, the Active Intellect [acts upon itself], inasmuch as there is no existent there save itself. For it is then that the acquired intellect is obliterated, and it is a condition of the recipient that it remains with that which is received. Therefore, it is the Active Intellect which perceives itself.⁴ And it is joined to us when this disposition passes into actuality for which it was prepared accidentally with respect to its [sc. the Active Intellect's] investing itself in it [sc. the disposition] by its action, whereupon it [sc. the disposition] receives this separate form.

Then he stated, *for the hylic intellect has none of the forms*, by which he means [in contrast to] the acquired intellect.

And by stating, *the presence of the intelligibles within it*, he means that the first function is the arrival of the intelligibles in it. Then he stated, *and were this activity possible for it, neither would the acquired intellect come to be, nor would it be a condition for it*, by which he means: *and were this second activity possible for it* without being preceded by the first activity, as it would be if we

were to form a conception of it from the outset, then the first [activity] would be *superfluous*, inasmuch as it would be possible without it. This is [the force] of his statement, *neither would the acquired intellect*, etc.

SECTION NINE

Ibn Rushd said:

It is a necessary result at this moment that the elevation perfects the nature of both intellects, I mean, the hylic intellect and the Active Intellect, for this obtains whenever some existent is perfected. Now it is the way of hylic intellect to look toward its perfection, I mean, its form; whereas it is the way of the Active Intellect to cause the form to arise in it, thereby causing it to advance from the nature of hylic forms to the nature of intelligible forms. And because this actualization arises by necessity from the nature of the two intellects—just as it is the nature of fire when approaching a combustible body to burn that body and change it into its own nature, so too the perfection of the acquired intellect by the Active Intellect is a result stemming from the nature of the Active Intellect and from the nature of the hylic intellect.

As for the hylic intellect, it, without doubt, looks toward that very perfection; whereas the Active Intellect causes that perfection to arise insofar as it is an intelligible and insofar as there is nothing else except its essence to cause it to arise in it, so that it is that by which it is necessarily elevated, I mean, [when] the Active Intellect [causes] perfection to arise in the hylic [intellect]. Or shall we say that it brings about at that time a nature intermediate between Active Intellect and acquired intellect, namely, that which men call the emanated intellect?¹ If, however, some intermediate nature were to exist, it would necessarily follow that it possess a special function. Perhaps its activity is the elevation of the acquired intellect to an existence resembling that of the separate forms, so that the mover moves its own substance. But this is the function of the Active Intellect. Indeed it moves the hylic intellect to no form other than itself. This is so, moreover, because we understand that

the end of the hylic intellect's motion is the conception of the Active Intellect. Therefore, it is more plausible that the emanated intellect and the Active Intellect are one and the same in the substrate, analogous to the celestial bodies [in relation] with the separate intellects. Inasmuch as the hylic intellect does not possess any of the forms, the closest resemblance is to the souls of the celestial bodies.² This is because the nature of soul in them only means desire for motion during their apprehension of that separate form with respect to reception. Now the difference between those two³ and man amounts to this: For the celestial bodies, reception is eternal, whereas he is a generated and corruptible being.

The Commentary:

This is another demonstration that the hylic intellect conjoins with the separate [intellect] in a perceptual conjunction, I mean, that this possibility is necessary.

By stating, *the elevation*, he means the purification. And by stating, *for whenever some existent attains perfection*, he means when it is invested with some form, for forms are the perfection of existents.⁴

And by stating, *now it is the way of the hylic intellect to look toward its perfection*, he means that it exerts itself in abstracting its form and in attaining it. And by stating, *Whereas it is the way of the Active Intellect to cause the form to arise in it*, he means: And it is the way of the Active Intellect to bring that form upon the hylic [intellect], causing it to arrive in it with the result that it acquires it and attains it. And by stating, *causing it to advance*, he means when it causes the form to arise in it in order to apprehend it. For "whatever man calls it, that is its name" (Gen. 2:19).⁵ Know this.

Then he stated, *the perfection of the acquired intellect . . . and from the nature of the hylic intellect*, etc., by which he means the conjunction [of the two intellects] which is the cause for the reception of the hylic [intellect] from the Active [Intellect] of something [which resembles] that which subsists in the place of a body burned by fire.

Then he stated, *there is nothing else except its essence to cause it*

to arise, by which he means that [this is so] inasmuch as it has already been perfected and elevated. And in that elevation the acquired intellect is corrupted. Therefore, that perfection which arrives in the hylic [intellect] must necessarily be the Active Intellect itself, in accordance with what has been explained concerning the nature of the two intellects.

And by stating, *perhaps its activity*, he means the activity of this intermediate nature. And by stating, *to an existence resembling that of the separate [forms], so that the mover moves its own substance. But this, etc.*, he means: *to an existence*, i.e. [the existence] of this intermediate, *resembling that of the separate [forms]*, inasmuch as it is an intermediate thing. Now that which is intermediate is that which takes an equal share from each of the two extremes.⁶ And this elevation which raises the acquired intellect at its perfection when it purifies it [entails], as has been explained, that it necessarily be specified by a character which it did not enjoy as an attribute prior to its perfection, and that it brings to corruption. This is so in order that *the mover move its own substance*. Hence the relation of this intermediate with this [hylic] intellect is like that of the Active Intellect. And so we have returned to the fact that the object ultimately apprehended is the Active Intellect. [And this is the meaning of his statement,] *but this is the function*, etc.

Then he stated, *therefore it is more plausible that the emanated intellect and the Active Intellect are one in the same substrate, analogous to the [relation of the] celestial bodies with the separate intellects*, by which he means that the Active Intellect is called "Active" insofar as it moves the hylic intellect, and is called "emanated" insofar as it conjoins with the hylic [intellect] when it forms a conception of it in the manner of the celestial bodies with the separate intellects. For there is no doubt that their mover is the object of desire, which is the separate [intellect]. It is called "Separate Intellect" with respect to itself, and with respect to the object of desire being the intelligible itself. And it is called "soul" with respect to its causing motion, and with respect to desire. For the object of desire is that which desires, inasmuch as the intelligible is that which thinks. And causing motion and possessing desire constitute the specific activity of soul.⁷

In his *Treatise Concerning the Substance of the Celestial Sphere*,⁸ Ibn Rushd explained this by stating as follows:

Since it became clear to Aristotle concerning the celestial bodies that their forms settle upon their subjects in such a manner that they are not divisible by the division of their subjects, and the reason for that is that they do not settle upon the subjects insofar as they are divisible, it followed that these forms do not subsist in the subject, but they are separated from the subject in respect to existence. For, since these forms settle upon the whole subject yet are not divisible in virtue of its division, they have no subsistence in the subject, for they do not settle upon the subject, not in the whole, nor in part of it and generally not in something divisible nor in something indivisible.

This being so, it also follows that the form by which the celestial body is moved is the same as that toward which it is moved, for in the case of the forms which subsist in their subject, the form by which the body is moved is not the same as that toward which it is moved. And similarly the form subsisting in a subject which moves that subject to another form by virtue of its existing in the subject, is itself moved in order to attain perfection through another form. The motion of that subsisting form is therefore finite inasmuch as it produces motion in the subject only while it itself is moved. And this is also one of the arguments which moved Aristotle to believe that the forms of the celestial bodies do not subsist in their subjects, for if they did, their motions would be finite.

And an opponent [Averroes has in mind Avicenna] should not say that the forms by which the celestial bodies are moved are different from those toward which they are moved and those forms which must be absolutely without matter and without position are those forms toward which the spheres are moved and not those by which they are moved, inasmuch as those by which they are moved are forms in matters even though they are not divisible by the division of their matters. For if this what the opponents would say were true, the forms by which the celestial bodies are moved would be subsisting in their subject and, hence, moved by the motion of their subjects. But if this were so, they would be divisible by the division of their subject, for with regard to that which is moved, if it is moved essentially, that is, in the case of a body, it is divisible essentially and if it is moved accidentally it is divided accidentally. Therefore, there is nothing in the celestial body whereby the form by which the motion takes place

differs from that toward which the motion tends, but they are one and the same form differing only in disposition. Furthermore, were the opponent correct in his contention that the form toward which the celestial body is moved is different from that by which it is moved, then the latter in causing motion would itself be moved and consequently the motion would be finite, for that which is moved while producing motion cannot be a principle for eternal motion. This is in accordance with what Aristotle has already stated. Furthermore, in opposition to the opponent's view it can be shown by the analogous fact that the intellect and the intelligible in the celestial body are one and the same thing, that the form toward which the sphere is moved and the form by which it is moved are one and the same. All this concerning the intellect and the intelligible has already been explained in other places.

And the heavens are said to possess a soul only in virtue of a desire existing in them and in virtue of possessing locomotion. Now, the desire which belongs to the celestial body exists only insofar as this body has life in virtue of itself and desire in virtue of itself, and not in virtue of a force existing in it which is divisible by the division of this body, for, if the latter were the case, the celestial body would be generated and destructible. And the celestial body is said to undergo motion on account of a principle which exists in it as something separate from it, and not on account of a principle which exists in it as something which is a part of it, and in the same manner it is said to be living and thinking by means of a part of itself, it would not be thinking in virtue of itself and the celestial body would be thinking like man, for a man is thinking by means of a part of himself and in like manner it is through part of himself that he is living, desiring, and moving in place. And generally, since it is clear that the activity of this body is eternal, it is also clear concerning the nature of its form that it does not subsist in a subject, and that its subject is simple, not composed of matter and form, for if the latter were the case, the celestial body would be generated and corruptible.

Some of those who philosophize have said that the souls of the celestial bodies are forms in their respective matters which cannot subsist apart from a subject and that they acquire eternal existence from forms which do exist apart from matter. This statement is devoid of any meaning. For if it were true, it would follow that something which according to its nature cannot be eternal acquires eternal existence from something else. All this is absurd, since a

nature which is generated and corruptible cannot receive eternal existence from something else. All this is clear to him who is familiar with the fundamental principles of Aristotle.⁹

Let us proceed to comment upon this, inasmuch as there are some difficulties in it. We say: By stating, *since it became clear to him* [sc. Aristotle] *concerning the celestial bodies that their forms settle upon their subjects in such a manner that they are not divisible by the division of their subjects*, he means that which became clear prior to this, namely, *that it is impossible for them* [sc. the celestial bodies] *to receive the determinate dimensions except in virtue of their forms, and also that they do not receive their forms by means of the indeterminate dimensions, as is the case with the generated and corruptible forms*. And this coincides with our statement that they are not a force in a body, I mean, that they [sc. the forms] do not settle by means of the dimensions which constitute the corporeal form, and neither are they distributed through them. It is, rather, that the dimensions which are in the element of celestial beings are one of its properties.

And by stating, *they have no subsistence in the subject*, he means that they are not mixed with it. And the meaning of our stating, "forms settling on subjects" is that the subject is with them, and that it is a subject with respect to perfection, I mean, for the reception of perpetual existence, even though there is no potentiality for corruption in them.

And by stating, *the form by which it is moved is the same as that toward which it is moved*, he means that *the form by which it is moved*, namely, soul with respect to desire and locomotion, *is the same as that toward which it is moved*, inasmuch as the object of desire is the same as the object of intellection. *And the intellect and the intelligible in the celestial bodies are one and the same thing*.

And by stating, *and the heavens are said to possess a soul only in virtue of a desire existing in them and in virtue of possessing locomotion*, he means that [this is so] inasmuch as desire and motion are characteristic of whatever possesses soul, since desire and voluntary motion constitute the specific activity of soul.

And by stating, *for a man is thinking by means of a part of him-*

self, he means [that this is so] inasmuch as the imaginative soul to which is connected this disposition in a conjunction of inexistence is a part of himself. *And in like manner it is through part of himself that he is living, desiring, and moving in place*, whereas the celestial body is one in its substance, simple, desiring by its essence, and moved on account of the separate principle within it, but not on account of a principle which would be a part of it or conjoined to it.

By stating, *some of those who philosophize have said*, he is alluding to Alexander, Avicenna, as well as to our Master, Moses [Maimonides], peace be upon him, who followed them inasmuch as he only saw their opinion.¹⁰

And by stating, [the souls of the celestial spheres] are *forms in their respective matters*, he means that *they cannot subsist apart from a subject*. And by stating, *that they acquire eternal existence*, he means the heavens, that is to say, the celestial bodies and their souls. And by stating, *for if it were true, it would follow that something which according to its nature cannot be eternal acquires eternal existence from something else*, he means that [this is so] inasmuch as the celestial body would acquire eternality from forms which are not in them, hence in their very essence there would exist a potentiality for corruption, inasmuch as they would be composites. For every composite is generated and corruptible, and every generated and corruptible thing is composite.¹¹ And understand this.

This is what I have seen fit to set forth here for you from the words of Ibn Rushd which bear on this question together with my explanation of it. I shall explain this for you even more in what is to come, with the help of God, when he asserts that they cause motion only in the sense of being a final cause.¹² Now let us return to where we were in commenting on this treatise.

Now, by stating, *inasmuch as the hylic intellect does not possess any of the forms, the closest resemblance is to the souls of the celestial bodies*, he means [the closest resemblance which obtains] when animated things are distinguished. Then he stated, *this is because the nature of soul in them only means desire for motion during their apprehension of that separate form with respect to reception*, by

which he means that, similarly, the hylic intellect is only a kind of desire for apprehending the Active Intellect with respect to reception and unification.

And by stating, *whereas he [sc. man] is a generated and corruptible being*, he means the reception [is generated and corruptible], since at one time it is *in potentia* and at another time *in actu*. And it is as if it were "the flaming sword which turned every way" (Gen. 3:24).¹³

SECTION TEN

Ibn Rushd said:

You must know that men differ in this possibility due to their difference in three matters: one of them being acquired perfection; the second being the strength of the hylic intellect; and the third being the facility with which it is emptied of those forms which alter it.¹ The question of whether it is possible that this state be attained by an individual without study is one which allows for considerate investigation. When the acquired intellect is corrupted and obliterated in this state, the other faculties of the soul are obliterated. For the interaction of the forms is like what we have said concerning the interaction of the individuals, I mean, that the stronger overshadows the weaker. It was to this that He, blessed be He, alluded by his statement, "... Thou shalt not see me; but behold the creation—if its place be sought, then thou shalt see Me. And when God appeared unto him at the mountain, he scrutinized the event carefully" (cf. Quran 7:142).² And Moses perceived the lightning bolts and the quaking which passed before them until death and destruction were made known to them. By this they comprehended reality, and that only God, may He be praised, is in existence and that He brought into being all the existents. This is the unity.

And this is directed against those who err in saying of the Messiah that he is the son of God, and that the divinity came forth out of a woman, and that the deity entered the womb of Mary, who bore the Messiah. From this³ they bring proof in that they say

symbolically that the deity proceeds from the Father just as fire has flames from one of which many heavy objects are burned. Such is their final intention.

You must know that when the psychic forms perfect one another as a result of the stronger causing the weaker to disappear and as a result of one of the two, which exists in perfection, weakening the other, there comes to be that which resembles the separate forms. Therefore, we find that each one of the separate intelligences possesses two functions; one function proceeding from the first [intelligence], namely the diurnal notion, and a function by which each one is specified.⁴ For the action of those which form a conception of the first [intelligence] is that first function itself, . . . ,⁵ while for that which we conceive as their essence, there exists that function by which they are specified, namely, the motion of the celestial matter, which is characteristic of each intellect. This is the meaning of the philosopher's dictum, "that which is more proximate to the first sphere will move more slowly."⁶

The Commentary:

Ibn Rushd stipulated three conditions for this perfection and ascribed the difference between men for the possibility [of attaining perfection] to the degree of difference between them to these three things. The first is *acquired perfection*, by which he means perfection of the rational conceptions, I mean, the acquired intelligibles. They are called in this way because we acquire them by means of definitions and demonstrative proofs and, generally, through the study of the sciences and the speculative [intelligibles]. The second is the *strength of the hylic intellect*, by which he means its perfection from the very beginning of its natural condition.⁷ This, in turn, depends on the perfection of the imaginative faculty from the outset of its natural condition—[the imagination being] the substrate of the disposition connected with it—together with the imaginative forms and the imaginative faculty. The third is the *facility with which it is emptied . . . of that which alters it*, by which he means the elevation and the purification. And it is this which is called the Divine aid according to the truth. This will not obtain in those who follow after the corporeal pleasures and temporal vani-

ties. Hence, he did not enumerate the perfection of moral virtues since it is implicit in his statement. But he does mention it explicitly toward the end of the treatise.⁸

Then he said, *the question of whether it is possible that this state be attained by an individual without study is one which allows for considerable investigation*. Know that Ibn Rushd will explain below that this is impossible. Abū Hamid, however, in the *Intentions*⁹ (Physics; section five; ninth paragraph, property two), explained concerning the speculative faculty that it is one of the wonders and signs that just as we see men whose mental abilities are so quick that they reach the very limit of understanding of whatever subject and language they be instructed in, it likewise comes to pass that one ascends to a sufficient level of learning without a teacher to disclose unto him all of the intelligibles. Of such a man, he [Abū Hamid] says that he is a prophet or an apostle, and of such [a phenomenon] that it is a wonder or a sign. Furthermore, *Ḥayy ben Yaqzān*¹⁰ agrees with and attests to this.

By saying, . . . *concerning the interaction of the individuals, I mean, that the stronger overshadows the weaker*, he means, like the behavior of the burning candle which flickers and is finally extinguished by the approach of a large flame.

The commentary to the verse he cited in his statement, *it was to this that he alluded by his statement, "Thou shalt not see me: but behold the creation—if its place be sought, then thou shalt see me . . ."* is: "*Thou shalt not see me*" means that the hylic intellect will not perceive the Active Intellect from the outset. The proper sequence for this, however, is that it should *behold the creation*, meaning that its existence be perfected by [becoming] the acquired intellect. "*If its place be sought*" is like his saying, "the place thereof shall be recognized no more," i.e., the acquired intellect is ultimately obliterated by the elevation and the purification. "*Then thou shalt see me*" is similar to what he [Elijah] said, ". . . if thou see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so unto thee . . ." (II Kings 2:10), for Elijah symbolizes the acquired intellect, which is continuously in the process of becoming, I mean, the developing intellect, whereas Elisha symbolizes the hylic intellect, since it is saved and eternal.¹¹ And he said that with the obliteration of the

acquired intellect, the hylic intellect will achieve conjunction. This is the mystery to which Elijah, may peace be upon him, alluded to his disciples, using their names to make the lesson concrete when he was requested to impart a knowledge more supernal than the acquired intellect by his [Elisha's] petition, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me" (II Kings 2:9).

Now how is it that a verse from their Law accords with the secrets of reality? And how is it that statements from that Law offer instruction in the divine secrets?¹² No one who has understood what our Master Moses [Maimonides], peace be upon him, explained in his book—*the Guide* (II:40)—concerning his division of the religions will be amazed by this. And understand his intention. For he explained there that those

... regimens with regard to which the claim is made that they are prophetic; some of them are truly prophetic—I mean, divine—while others are nomoi, and others, plagiarisms. Accordingly if you find a Law the whole end of which and the purpose of the chief thereof, who determined the appropriate political behavior for the abolition of injustice and oppression alone without view to speculative matters and without attention to perfecting the rational faculty and without regard to opinions being correct or faulty, then you must know that that Law is a nomos and the one who promulgates it in truth belongs to the third class, I mean, those who are perfect only in their imaginative faculty.¹³

Here he alludes to the Law of one who speaks in parables, as he explained in (II) chapter 37: "... that some people belonging to this third class have—even while they are awake—extraordinary imaginings, dreams, and amazed states, so that they consider themselves to be prophets." The sages of Israel, peace be upon them, have stated, "If it is said to you that *Torah* exists among the nations, have no credence; as it is said, "Her king and her princes are among the nations, [where] the *Torah* is no more" (Eccles. 2:9).¹⁴

... If on the other hand, you find a Law all of whose ordinances pay attention, as was stated before, to the soundness of circum-

stances pertaining to the body and also to the soundness of belief—a Law that takes pains to inculcate correct opinions with regard to God, may He be exalted in the first place, and with regard to the angels, and that seeks to make man wise, to give him understanding, and to waken his attention, so that he should know the whole of that which exists in its true form—you must know that this regimen comes from Him, may He be exalted, and that this Law is divine.

It remains for you to know whether he who lays claim to such is a perfect man to whom it was given in prophecy, or whether he is one who claims credit for those dicta given in prophecy having plagiarized them.¹⁵

This would be like those who plagiarize our perfect Law or the prophecy of Abraham,¹⁶ who fulfilled the *Torah* in its entirety and who commanded it to his children in the form of a testament.¹⁷ Then arose a man¹⁸ who claimed credit for his prophecy of that testament, calling it a Law.

... The way of putting this to a test is to consider the perfection of that individual, and to investigate and examine his actions. The strongest of his credentials is renunciation of bodily pleasures, especially with regard to the rejection of copulation.¹⁹

As was said to Moses, our Master, peace be upon him, "But as for thee, stand thou here by Me . . ." (Deut. 5:28), and it was said, "that he had married a Cushite woman" (Num. 12:1), which means that he abstained from her, to say nothing of other women.²⁰

... For this reason God has stigmatized through it all who lay a claim for prophecy, so that the truth should be made clear to those who seek it and they should not go astray and fall into error.²¹

And in Daniel . . .²² Alluded to is the one who, choosing copulation, is famous.²³ And understand this intention.

Let us return to our subject and say that when Ibn Rushd explained from his Law that which attests to the truth of this matter, I mean, the act of elevation and purification, that is to say, to

elucidate this from that which they related from our holy Torah, he said: *"And when God appeared unto him at the mountain, he scrutinized the event carefully."* And Moses perceived the lightning bolts and the quaking . . . [by interpreting it to mean] *until destruction and death were made known to them.* He termed the lightning bolts and the quaking, elevation and purification. This is what he considered to be the meaning of His statement, "and all the people perceived the voices and the lightning bolts" (Exod. 20:18), since it is said there, "But let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exod. 20:19). *By this they comprehend reality, and that only God, may He be praised, is in existence, and that He created all the existents.* He means that God, may He be exalted, is the true existent, one without triunity. Since he thought that the Christians derive the trinitarian belief from this verse, namely, that it is Wisdom, Omnipotence, and Will²⁴—albeit, the true interpretation of this verse is far from this opinion—he reiterated and said, *this is the true unity. And this is directed against those who err in saying of the Messiah that he is the son of God, and that the divinity came forth out of a woman, and that the deity entered the womb of Mary, who bore the Messiah. From this they bring proof in that they say symbolically that the deity proceeds from the Father just as fire has flames . . .* and that this is symbolized in the people's perception of those lightning bolts at the Gathering at Sinai.

Moses said: Upon seeing that the philosopher Ibn Rushd applied himself to elucidating the mysteries of the Gathering at Sinai, I could not restrain myself from speaking (cf. Job 4:2). It is my intention here to elucidate that very Gathering. And I say that according to the opinion of our Master, Moses [Maimonides], this is not the proper understanding of the lightning bolts. Not all of them attained the degree of the true conjunction, despite the fact that all of them were prophets with respect to the perception of those visions and the hearing of those voices, "for the day of the Gathering at Sinai was a day of dense clouds and light dew."²⁵ I have seen fit to elucidate for you the truth concerning that Gathering according to the opinion of the Master [Maimonides] without superfluity or insufficiency.

When God, may He be exalted, desired to make of us perfect men and to order the affairs of our multitude through His practical laws, this being impossible prior to attainment of the rational opinions, the first of which is apprehension of Him,²⁶ may He be exalted, according to our ability, which in turn is impossible without mastery of the divine science²⁷—the divine science being unattainable until after mastery of physics—He placed at the very beginning of His book, may He be exalted, the Account of Creation, I mean, the principle from which the creatures derive, as is known from the definition of nature. Afterwards, He made known to them His divinity, may He be exalted; as it is said, "And you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Exod. 19:6), meaning, through knowledge of Him, may He be exalted.

A man should not hasten too much to accede to this great and sublime matter prematurely, without being accomplished in the sciences and without having purified the moral virtues. But when the virtues are purified, and he has achieved and acquired knowledge of the rules of logic and the construction of demonstrative proofs and the various ways of guarding himself from errors of the mind, then he should proceed in investigating this matter.²⁸

This is the intention of His dictum, may He be exalted, ". . . and let them wash their garments" (Exod. 19:10); then, "Be ready on the third day" (Exod. 19:15); then, "And let the priests also, that come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves" (Exod. 19:22).

Inasmuch as human apprehension is limited, He stated, "Thou shalt set bounds for the people . . ." (Exod. 19:12).

. . . Matter is a strong barrier to the apprehension of the separate intellect . . . for everything that is apprehended in a vision of prophecy is only a parable for some notion. And that great vision was greater than any other prophetic vision. . . . His appearance, may He be exalted, in a dense cloud was to indicate that the apprehension of His true reality is impossible for us . . .²⁹

It is as if the prophet at the moment of prophecy were himself an

impedance, a covering, and a hindrance to receiving the impression. Know that

... the causes which prevent the commencement of instruction with divine science ... and the presentation of it to the multitude are five. The first cause is the difficulty, subtlety, and obscurity of the matter itself. ... The second cause is the insufficiency of the minds of all men at their beginning. ... The third cause lies in the length of the preliminaries. ... The fourth cause is to be found in the natural aptitudes ... and the effervescence of nature and the recklessness of youth. ... The fifth cause is to be found in the fact that men are occupied with the necessities of the bodies ...³⁰

which are attractive for man and which he considers to be amenities. For this reason the Torah stated, "And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were voices and lightning bolts"—these being the fiery torches—"and a thick cloud on the mountain ... 'and the mount was altogether on smoke' ... and the voice of the horn exceedingly loud" (Exod. 19:16, 18). Now all that is seen in a prophetic vision is a parable for some notion. This being so,

... the Torah was presented in such a way that the young, the women, and all the people could begin with it and learn it. It is not within their power, however, to understand these matters as they truly are. Hence they are confined to the tradition with regard to every true matter ... and with regard to every representation—and this in such a way that the intellect is led toward the existence of its object but not toward grasping its essence as it truly is.³¹

Since it is impossible to instruct the multitude in the methods of speculation on the true things, He commenced with them through the representation of things as they are; as it is said, "... and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off" (Exod. 20:18); and it is said, "Go thou near and hear ..." (Deut. 5:24) the representation and the truths, "then thou shall speak to us" (ibid.) in the manner of guidance³² concerning reality and with imaginative similes. "And the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near unto

the dense darkness where God was" (Exod. 10:18). He knew everything that is possible for man to know without there remaining in him any absence at all.

You must know in regard to the Gathering at Sinai that despite the fact that they all perceived the great fire and heard awesome, terrifying voices in a wondrous way; as it is said, "and all the people perceived the voices ..." (Exod. 20:18), these voices were merely the sound of the *Shofar* and the thunder and other such sounds.

... As for the "voice of the Lord," I mean the created voice apprehended from the Lord from which the speech of the Lord was understood, They only heard it once ... "this was the voice on hearing which their soul went out of them"—

(Sh.ha-Sh. Rab. 5:6) [due to its strength and power.]—

And through which they apprehended the "first two commandments ..."³³

[which occurred when the voice broke forth from the cloud; as it is said, "... Lo I came unto thee in a dense cloud, that the people may hear when I speak to thee" (Exod. 19:9)].³⁴ As for the rest of the Logoi,

... they heard the great voice, without discriminating the thing ... this is "their [sages] dictum,"³⁵ 'They heard "I" and "Thou shalt have" from the mouth of the Force.' They mean that these words reached them just as they reached Moses, our Master, and that it was not Moses, our Master, who communicated them to them ...

[Furthermore,]³⁶

... these two principles, I mean, the existence of God and His being one are knowable by human speculation alone. Now with regard to everything that can be known by demonstration, the status of the prophet and that of everyone else who knows it are equal; there is no superiority of one over the other.³⁷

For this reason they heard that which they already knew, and were able to discriminate the words in that voice. But this was the very limit of their ability, since after hearing that first voice there occurred what was mentioned of their fear of the matter and their great fright. And due to the magnitude of the medium of this Speech,

... he [Onqelos] stated, [Speech] "should not be spoken with us on the part of the Lord" (Targum Onqelos, Exod. 10:16). Know this and remember it. For it is impossible to expound the Gathering at Sinai to a greater extent than they spoke about it, since it is one of the mysteries of the Torah. The true reality of that apprehension and its modality are quite hidden from us, for nothing like it happened before and will not happen after.³⁸

"Forever, O Lord, Thy word standeth fast in heaven" (Ps. 119:89); and the lowly objects are but instruments, but the supernal beings are the agents. Know it.

SECTION ELEVEN

Ibn Rushd said:

We also find that the characteristic function of intellect is to render that which is many by accident, one in essence. For it is clear from the character of the intelligible forms that they were many by accident, but that they are one in essence.¹ And if what the intellect comprehends of their being as one is not false and incongruent with their nature, and if it is the function of intellect to be the rendering of that which is many by accident, one in essence, then it is indeed that which causes it to return to the essential state by divesting of it the accidental state. Now it is also clear from the character of the intelligible which stems from us,² that it is certainly subject to multiplicity of accident. And this is because I project it in images different from your images and from those of all men who behave in a natural way.

Now it is necessary that the time comes for the hylic intellect to shed this state of multiplicity which befalls it as was its function. Indeed it is the projection of that which is essential out of that

which is in accident. From here it is clear that the form itself possesses degrees; a degree in matter, a degree in our intellect, and a degree in the Active Intellect—the two latter degrees being attained by it due to an accidental state,³ while by nature it possesses no multiplicity at all. Would that I knew whether it also possesses degrees in the separate existence. For if it were not to possess such degrees, in what way would the separate intellects be superior.⁴

Since this possibility⁵ has already been explained to you, and it certainly appears in it in one and the same state for me and for you,⁶ let us investigate when and how it is possible that it occurs. We say: It is to be considered that this state of abstraction from multiplicity will only be attained by that whose nature is that of the intelligibles which arise; and [attained by] speculation upon [the intelligibles] during the first stage of investigation through which you are led to grasping the universal, I mean, the conception and verification which encompass the individuals by induction.⁷ And it would seem that the function most closely resembling induction of the perfect is that by which the individuals are perfected, or most of them.

Therefore, the perfection of the speculative intellect is one of the conditions for this conception. And it is not farfetched that some men enjoy a superiority over others in this induction, and that divergent conclusions are reached by it which are considered to be true, but which are not. It is from here that error enters the one⁸ who sought to attain this cognitive state without the prerequisite speculative sciences, just as what befell many of those "sharp-witted" ones, the Sufis, and many of those who opined that this science⁹ exists without study, and to a degree which is greater than that which would be considered [to be attainable] from the intelligibles of the spiritual beings, especially the intelligibles of intellect.

The Commentary:

He means to explain with an additional demonstration that the hylic intellect will perceive the separate [intellect], and that this possibility is necessary.

He stated, *we also find that the characteristic function of intellect*

is to render that which is many by accident, one in essence. He means [that this is] so, because it is the definition of truth that it is in agreement with essential existence.¹⁰

Then he stated, *for it is clear from the character of the intelligible forms that they were many by accident*, meaning that the human form, for example, is many by virtue of the varying matter which bears it. And were this not so, only a single thing would derive from that which bestows or from that which moves. Hence his statement, *that they are one in essence*, by which he means [that they are one] with respect to themselves without regard to the variance in substrates.

Then he stated, *and this is because I project it in images different from . . . images*, etc. He means that a particular intelligible is presented to me in order that I may apprehend it through the medium of imaginative forms which differ from the images which present it to you. In other words, there are those who conceive some form and then abstract it after some images, while there are those whose intellect is not stimulated by them but who will abstract it after other images in accordance with the illumination¹¹ and in accordance with the man's different nature. It is like what we find when someone discerns a form after hearing a certain definition, but who will not discern it in another definition which is worded differently, even though a single object of definition does not have two definitions. Moreover, as Ibn Rushd stated in the book, *De Anima*, ". . . for our intellect derives from the imaginative forms which are derived from particulars which differ from those observed in the time of Aristotle and Socrates."¹²

Then he stated, *now it is necessary that the time comes for the hylic intellect to shed this state of multiplicity which befalls it*, meaning [the time] when it will not apprehend it [the Active Intellect] through the medium of the imaginative forms, at all. And not by means of definitions and propositions, as well. For all this entails multiplicity. But [it will apprehend the Active Intellect] by a simple, unified knowledge which is devoid of the multiplicity which befalls it, albeit in a way which derives from it [multiplicity] due to the cause of the bodies, something which is not the case in the other separate [intellects]. Therefore, it [the Active Intellect] is

called "Prince of the Presence."¹³ And here, the very limit of that which it is possible to explain of the true reality of the Active Intellect has been made clear, wherein is a great indication concerning the true reality of the First Intellect.

And by stating, *indeed it is the presentation of what . . .*, he means the presentation and abstraction of that which is essence, namely, [the presentation and abstraction] of unity from that which is in accident, I mean, multiplicity.

Then he stated, *and that the two latter levels are attained by it due to an accidental state*, meaning [an accidental state which is due to] either the matter which is divisible into many individuals, or on account of [its] being consequent to varying images and its presentations prior to its conception being different in man's soul. For there are those who conceive a species of form in one way and after certain imaginative forms, while there are those who conceive it in another way and after other images, in accordance with the variance in the natures of man, his time, and sense percepts. And it is in this respect that multiplicity arises in the intelligible which stems from us, something which is not so for the Active Intellect.

Then he stated, *and it certainly appears in it in one and the same state*. By *in it* he means, in the form. And it [will appear in one and the same state] when the acquired intellect is obliterated, whereupon the hylic [intellect] will conjoin with the separate [intellect].

Then he stated, *we say: it is to be considered that this state of abstraction will only be attained . . . [by] the conception and verification which encompass the particulars by induction*. He means, *we say: it is to be considered that this state of a form's abstraction from multiplicity will only be attained by that whose nature, i.e., the nature of intellect, is that of the intelligibles which arise, and [attained] by speculation upon them during the first state [of investigation]*, i.e., it being acquired in the manner of induction, *from which one is led to grasping the universal, i.e., the conception and verification which encompass the particulars by induction*. Now generally, this state of abstraction is the conjunction, the relation of which [state] to the speculative intelligibles is the relation of the conception-and-the-verification to the particulars which are subsumed by them. And so, just as the conception and the verification

only occur after the induction of the particulars and the completion of the parts, so too conjunction with the separate [intellect] and abstraction from multiplicity will only occur after the arrival of the speculative intelligibles and their perfection. And because investigation and induction consist in species, he explained this by saying, *and it would seem that the function most closely resembling*, etc.

And by stating, *and to a degree which is greater than that which would be considered* [to be attainable], he means [as considered] by that sect.¹⁴ It is possible that he was indicating here that they think this more with regard to physics and metaphysics than to mathematics. And of these, as well, only with respect to certain of them [i.e., some of these sciences]. For some men discuss this, but they err in that they think that they have attained it.

SECTION TWELVE

Ibn Rushd said:

We also say that if it were impossible for the hylic intellect to apprehend that which is separate, it would only be impossible because it is a force with a body rather than a force in a body.¹ Therefore, it has already been explained that every force in a body receives form without form. We find this in the case of the simple bodies and in the composites. Hence, Aristotle's dictum in his *De Anima*: Our thoughts at the end hinge on "whether or not it is possible for us to think anything of those abstract beings, even though it be devoid of magnitude."²

We say: It has already been explained that the receiving forces are of two species. [There is a species] of forces which constitute a condition for the existence of that which is received. I mean, the form.³ This is the nature of the forces belonging to bodies which are generated and corruptible, I mean, the forces which inhere in composite bodies and which are not devoid of forms. As for the second species, it consists of those receiving forces which do not constitute a condition for the existence of that which is received. This is the nature of the celestial bodies in relation with the sepa-

rate intellects, as has been explained in the divine science.⁴

Inasmuch as this is so, it is necessary that we investigate the cause on account of which these two forces are dissimilar. It would appear that the force which constitutes a condition for the existence of what is received, is that force, the creation in which of what is received, is consequent on an alteration preceding it in the recipient. This being so, the cause on account of which the forms of the celestial bodies are not preceded by the forces in which they are perfect is nothing else except the existence of those forms in them, namely, reception without alteration befalling the recipient.⁵ Therefore, they are not subject to weariness or exhaustion, as is the totality of objects composite of forms, the existence of which is consequent on alteration. Furthermore, that in them which serves as the recipient is not subject to alteration at any time. Hence, it is certainly a necessary result that it is possible for it to receive the separate forms.

Now if the assertion were made: It would follow from this that its⁶ existence does not constitute a condition for the existence of the speculative intelligibles. However, the demonstration was established that it is indeed a condition for their existence; we would state: Insofar as it is subject neither to affection nor to alteration⁷ at the moment it receives the forms of the speculative intelligibles, it does not constitute a condition for their existence. However, the conditionality of the existence of the speculative intelligibles is, rather, generated and corruptible, and not due to their being perfected by a force not subject to affection. Since this is so, it is clear that this force does not constitute a condition for the existence of that which is perfected from the outset and [perfected] by virtue of essence. However, were this to be so, it would amount to being an accident, as what befell it as a consequence from the intelligibles of objects which are generated and corruptible.

Since it has been explained that the corruption which befalls the forms of the speculative intelligibles is not due to their matter, but to their being the intelligibles of generated and corruptible objects, it is clear that by their substance and by their nature, primarily, and by essence, they indeed receive the separate forms.

For if they were not to receive the separate [forms], then their reception would be a condition for the existence of that which they do receive. Now, they, by necessity, receive that for whose existence they do not constitute a condition. And that which enjoys this attribute is separate. And if they were not to receive objects absolutely devoid of magnitude—since they themselves are not absolutely devoid of magnitude—it would be impossible for the celestial bodies to receive the separate intellects.

And if someone were to assert: Perhaps the manner in which the celestial bodies think those beings is such that due to their being eternal, they do not subsist there, inasmuch as they are not affected by that which is received; we would say to him: If the eternal *qua* eternal is only received by an eternal force, then the eternal force only receives something eternal. This necessary conclusion is self-evident. For if man *qua* man laughs, then that which laughs would be identical to man. And if the eternal force only receives something eternal, then prime matter would not receive something created, inasmuch as it is eternal. It would then follow that a created force receives both something eternal and something not eternal. However, the reception by something not eternal constitutes some affection,⁸ . . . or are joined to something received which suffers affection, even though they were not to suffer affection as in the case of the hylic intellect in relation with the corporeal forms. However, that force which receives something eternal is that whose reception does not entail affection as is the case of the hylic intellect in relation with the incorporeal forms, among which are those of the celestial souls.

The Commentary:

He now means to explain, by demonstration, the impossibility that it should be of the nature of the impossible for the hylic intellect to apprehend the Active Intellect. Rather that it is necessarily possible. And he stated, *if it were impossible for the hylic intellect to apprehend that which is separate, it would only be impossible because it is a force with a body rather than a force in a body*. The commentary of this demonstration consists of describing this impossibility. If it is [impossible], it is either because it is a force with a body or

because it is a force in a body. It is not, however, because it is a force in a body. Hence, there is no alternative except that it is [impossible] because it is a force with a body. And at the end he states, however, that it is not impossible. Hence it is possible. *Hence, it is certainly a necessary result that it is possible for it to receive the separate forms.*

You ought to understand his statement, *force with a body*, [as meaning] that it is connected by a connection of inexistence, not a connection of admixture, and that it is not borne by the matter of that body. And understand his statement, *force in a body*, [as meaning]—connected by a connection of admixture.

Now the truth of the first alternative, namely, that it is not impossible because it is a force in a body, is obvious inasmuch as the hylic intellect is not a force in a body. Therefore, we need only to explain that it is not a force in a body. He explained this with the second figure. He stated, *therefore, it has already been explained that every force in a body receives a certain definite form*, as in the sense of sight, which only perceives visible objects, and the sense of hearing, which only perceives sound. “For a single angel does not perform two missions.”⁹ And the force which is in the elements only receives forms of something vegetative, for example, while the hylic intellect receives all forms. And because it receives all forms due to its being a force with a body, Aristotle raised the question of whether it apprehends the separate form. This is his statement, *hence, Aristotle’s dictum: our thoughts at the end*, etc.

After this, he explains the truth of the alternative, namely, that it is not impossible because it is a force with a body, rather its possibility is necessary. [Ibn Rushd does] this by explaining the nature of forces in general, and by dividing them into two species. He explains that when the hylic intellect receives something separate, it is operating on the level of the soul of the sphere when it receives the separate [form], even though its¹⁰ body is altered due to its being with a body, but not in a body. This is [the meaning of] his statement, *we say: it has already been explained*, etc.

And by stating, *forces which constitute a condition for the existence of what is received, I mean, the form*, he means—their forces

and reception are a condition for the existence of what is received, I mean, the form, and are prior to it. Then he stated, *this is the nature of the forces belonging to bodies which are generated and corruptible, I mean, the forces which inhere in composite bodies and which are not devoid of forms*. He means [that this is so] because there exists in the recipient a form contrary to that on account of which it is affected. For it is in accordance with the forms which inhere in the substrates, that there will be the species of forces which exist in them. And the forces are a condition for the existence of the forms which are received.

The explanation of this is:¹¹ When matter is invested with form, that form prepares the matter to receive another form, and endows it with potentiality—thus, to receive another form. And by virtue of this predisposition, it [sc. matter] will receive that form existing *in potentia* when the first form becomes absent. Now that predisposition and its reception constitute a condition for the existence of that form, inasmuch as without them it will not come to be. The cause for this, I mean, for the predisposition in matter which bears existing things being a condition for the existence of the form, is that the creation of the received forms is consequent to an alteration preceding it in the recipient, I mean, in this predisposition and its substrate. Now the cause on account of which the forms of bodies which are generated and corruptible are preceded by predispositions in which they are perfected is nothing else except the existence of those forms in them being a reception by means of an alteration which happens to the recipient by necessity prior to this, even though the dispositions already exist. For the predisposition within the matter is due to the existence of some form for the receiving of another form when that prior form suffers privation. There is no doubt that the potentiality already exists, only that it is altered when it suffers privation, whereupon it receives the form which is *in potentia*. Hence, his statement, *that force, the creation of which of what is received is consequent to an alteration preceding it in the recipient*. He means [that this applies to the case] when that which is affected possesses a form which is contrary to that on account of which it is affected in the manner of generated and corruptible things. For it is necessary that its affection be alteration

and change-of-opposites at the time when it corrupts that contrary form. And corruption is, by necessity, an alteration.

Then he stated, *the cause on account of which the forms of the celestial bodies are not preceded by the forces in which they are perfected is nothing else except the existence of those forms in them being a reception without alteration befalling the recipient*. He means that there is no contrary form in the recipient which would be altered so as to suffer privation. Moreover, the forms do not settle on the substrates by means of dimensions, that is to say, they are not forces in bodies. And they do not belong to a substrate which receives the dimensions in a primary reception, so that their forms would be divisible by the division of their substrate.

Then he stated, *Hence, it is certainly a necessary result that it is possible for it to receive the separate forms*. He means [that this is so] inasmuch as their nature is such that it will receive them with a force which does not constitute a condition for their existence, and that the force which receives them will do so in such a way that no alteration will befall the substrate of the force. And this attribute is to be predicated equally of the hylic intellect when it conjoins.

And know that the change-of-opposites, as was mentioned, consists of two species. One of them is the alteration of the state of that which is undergoing change and the arrival of some state in which it exists, as when the tree becomes fire. The second [species] entails an alteration leading to a state of perfection and existence without something in that which is altered being so altered that it suffers privation, as when the non-understanding [man] becomes understanding, and such is the reception of the hylic intellect.

You ought to know, however, that when the force possesses a psychic form, the only alteration in the recipient, in this case, is the passing of something in potentiality to actuality inasmuch as there is no contrary form in the recipient. Therefore, true affection does not occur, to say nothing of manifestation. But inasmuch as it is a force in a body, it is impossible that some alteration does not occur. And it is something resembling an intermediate between true affection, namely, the alteration of the substrate during reception, and untrue [affection] which occurs in the actualization of perfection alone. And it is alteration in the category of quality.

Inasmuch as the hylic intellect, however, is not mixed in a substrate, then it is even further removed from true affection. Nothing of the state of affection which pertains to the senses is found in it. Neither is it altered in any way. Nevertheless, untrue affection may be predicated of it in a metaphorical fashion with respect to its reception of the intelligibles. And know this.

Then he stated, *now if the assertion were made: it should follow from this that its existence does not constitute a condition . . . we would state: insofar as it is neither*, etc. He means: If it were asserted: Now it should necessarily follow from what you [sc. Ibn Rushd] have posited that the cause on account of which the force constitutes a condition for that which is received, and is prior to it, is [the fact] that the object received is consequent to an alteration of the recipient. And generally that the thing perfected in the force of that which is affected, undergoes essential change. You have posited that the hylic intellect is not affected inasmuch as both it and the body with which it exists do not undergo alteration. And that the existence of perfection is impossible unless the substrate remain as it was prior to perfection without something in that which is altered being so altered that it suffers privation. Now it necessarily follows from this that the existence of the hylic intellect does not constitute a condition for the existence of the speculative intelligibles, just as it is not a condition for the existence of the separate [form]. *However, the demonstration has already been established that it is indeed a condition for their existence.* Now from this, the different demonstration follows, and your demonstration that the hylic [intellect] receives the separate [intellect] is refuted.

He [sc. Ibn Rushd] replies that this happens with respect to the intelligible, not with respect to the receiving faculty.¹² Hence, his statement, *we would state: insofar as it is subject neither to affection nor to alteration at the moment it receives the forms of the speculative intelligibles*, by which he means that no alteration and affection occur here, except for the passing of something potential to actuality. Its affection is not alteration and change-of-opposites which is the true affection, namely, the corruption of the contrary

form. This is entirely in the manner of the simple forms, even though it is a non-total corruption in the manner of what happens to the simple forms when the forms of the homogeneous bodies settle on them.

And by stating, *and not due to their being perfected by a force not subject to affection*, he means [that the conditional existence of the speculative intelligibles] is not due to their being ontologically perfected by a force not subject to affection. For a force which is not affected insofar as it receives without being affected does not constitute a condition for the existence of that which is received inasmuch as the latter's existence is not consequent to an alteration of the force. Moreover, it is for this reason that the force *per se* is not prior to it. Hence it is clear that this force is neither primarily nor essentially a condition for the existence of the speculative intelligibles. [That there is a condition for the existence of the speculative intelligibles is] rather due to an accident insofar as they *are the intelligibles of objects which are generated and corruptible*. And for this reason, it *per se* is not preceded by it inasmuch as it is not consequent to an alteration of the force which would be prior to it. However, it is preceded by it with respect to that which is received, the nature of which necessitates that it only come to be in this force which precedes it. For this reason, I say that even though this force is preceded accidentally with respect to [being] that which is received, it, nevertheless, is prior to it in a truer sense of priority inasmuch as it exists in its perfection without a prior alteration.

Then he stated, *since it has been explained that the corruption which befalls the forms of the speculative intelligibles is not due to their matter, but to their being the intelligibles of generated and corruptible objects*. He means: It has already been explained in what preceded, that the force subject to affection constitutes a condition for the existence of that which is received, and is prior to it. For there is no doubt that that which is received is generated and corruptible in the case when the recipient constitutes a condition for its existence. And since this is so, and since the hylic intellect is only a condition for the existence of the speculative intelligibles

with respect to its being a force not subject to affection, it is clear *that the corruption which befalls the forms of the speculative intelligibles is not due to their matter*, that is to say, due to the hylic intellect, inasmuch as its alteration is not prior to them. But [the corruption] is due to that which befalls them being a condition for their existence, namely, their being the intelligibles of *generated and corruptible objects*.

Having explained this, it is clear by a conjunctive, hypothetical syllogism that the forms of the speculative intelligibles, in and of themselves, and by their nature, primarily, and essentially, receive the separate [forms] when the speculative intelligibles are obliterated by the obliteration of the acquired intellect. Then the forms ascend on the levels of unity and abstraction when the hylic intellect conjoins with the Active Intellect. Now this syllogism generates the denial of the antecedent by affirming the denial of the consequent. The syllogism is constructed in this way: It is not in the nature of the intelligible forms to receive something separate, if their reception constitutes a condition for the existence of that which they receive. But their reception does not constitute a condition for the existence of that which they receive. Therefore, they indeed receive something separate. Moreover, the premise—namely, “their reception does not constitute a condition for the existence of that which they receive”—may be verified by that which was stated previously, that corruption does not arise with respect to their matter as the premise which is explained in the disjunctive syllogism.

Then he stated, *and if someone were to assert: perhaps the manner in which the celestial bodies think those beings is such that due to their being eternal, they do not subsist there, inasmuch as they do not suffer affection from that which is received*. He means: *perhaps the manner in which the celestial bodies think those beings [is such] that they do not subsist in them*, that is to say: That the heavens do not constitute a condition for their existence, is due to the heavens’ being eternal, for inasmuch as they are eternal, they will not be affected by that which is received, for which reason they do not think them.

SECTION THIRTEEN

Ibn Rushd said:

Furthermore, it is necessary that we investigate the formulation of Aristotle’s dictum in this matter, namely, his statement: Our thoughts at the end hinge on “whether it is possible for the hylic intellect to think of any being which is devoid of magnitude.”¹ We say: That which necessitates its being devoid of forms is so that it thinks the forms. But, that which brings it to be devoid of magnitude is so that it will apprehend those forms which inhere with magnitudes. Therefore, it is impossible for that which is absolutely devoid of magnitude to apprehend the forms which are in magnitudes.² And would that I knew whether it does so analogously to the conditionality of that which apprehends the forms in magnitudes, that it not be itself devoid [of magnitude], so that in a similar fashion it is one of the conditions of that which apprehends those forms absolutely devoid of magnitude, that it be itself absolutely devoid of magnitude, or whether it is not one of its conditions. However, those forms devoid of magnitudes³ are indeed apprehended by whatever is abstracted from the forms irrespective of whether it is absolutely devoid of magnitude or not devoid⁴ [of magnitude].

Now we say that if we have stipulated that when they apprehend the forms devoid of magnitudes that it [the agent of apprehension] not be with a magnitude at all, then this contradicts us with respect to the celestial bodies; since the faculties by which they form a conception of the separate [forms] inhere with magnitudes in that they perceive the existence of the soul through the cause of their state of abstraction. And inasmuch as separation from magnitude is not one of the conditions for the conception of the incorporeal beings, then it certainly remains [unchallenged] that their representation by the hylic intellect is possible, even though it itself is not devoid of magnitude . . .⁵ for us, the connection of those celestial forces in magnitudes will be in a mode without connection.

And it may be said to the one who might assert that the

"two—I mean, that the connection of the celestial force within the magnitude of the celestial body differs from the connection of the hylic intellect with our magnitude—connections are different. This is because the connection with the imaginative faculty is connected to magnitude, whereas the celestial bodies possess no imaginative faculty—according to what Aristotle believed⁶—on account of which they do not apprehend any of the forms which exist here. And were it to be so that in some way conjunction with them obtains, (I mean, that the [two kinds of] connections were of one and the same degree), it would necessarily follow that it does apprehend what exists here." To be sure, according to the view of Avicenna, this difficulty would be removed: since according to him the celestial bodies do indeed possess imagination; and it is not one of the conditions of the imaginative forms that they pass through the senses, in that many animals by nature possess many imaginative forms which do not proceed from the senses, e.g., many animals flee from the lion without ever having seen one [before].

We say in reply to this [difficulty], that when the two conjunctions arise with our intellect in magnitude, as was previously stated in our treatise, the first conjunction resembles the conjunction of the psychic forces with the celestial bodies insofar as that force inheres in a substrate without being mixed with any of the forms, while the second conjunction is its conjunction with beings possessing imagination, from which it receives them, whereupon they are transformed into universals. Therefore, it is this conjunction with magnitude which is a condition for its apprehending the forms in magnitude, and not the first conjunction, for in its apprehending the separate forms its nature would resemble the nature of the celestial bodies. But on the whole, it is in need of some intellect in magnitude all the while that it is still not devoid of magnitude. For only that which is in magnitude will conjoin with that which once was in magnitude. The converse is not so, I mean, it is not necessary for the agent apprehending that which is not with magnitude to be itself with magnitude.

And I think that it is this kind of investigation which Aristotle had promised. And it is unique among the methods dealing with this question.

The Commentary:

Now he will explain whether it is possible for it to apprehend that which is absolutely separate from magnitude, insofar as the separate form is separate from magnitude, whereas the hylic [intellect] inheres with magnitude.

He stated, *furthermore, it is necessary that we investigate the formulation of Aristotle's dictum . . . "which is devoid of magnitude."* He means that it will apprehend those forms absolutely devoid of magnitude by virtue of its being devoid of magnitude inasmuch as it does not conjoin with a connection of admixture. By all of this, he means to say that it is not absolutely devoid, but that it conjoins with it in two species of conjunction, as will [be stated] in what is to come.

And by stating, *but, that which brings it to be devoid of magnitude*, he means that it is not in magnitude, but with magnitude. And by stating, *therefore, it is impossible for that which is absolutely devoid of magnitude*, he means [that which] neither conjoins in a connection of admixture, nor in a connection of inexistence. And by stating, *that which apprehends the forms in magnitudes that it not be itself devoid*, he means, absolutely [devoid].

Then he stated, *since the faculties by which they form a conception of the separate [forms] inhere with magnitudes in that they perceive the existence of the soul through the cause of their state of abstraction*, meaning that they are conjoined to and connected with them. He only stated this in conventional terms, because this opinion is more popular, and is not profound. He did, however, allude to the true opinion in what was said before, when he stated that *the emanated intellect and the Active Intellect are one and the same in the substrate, analogous to the celestial bodies* [in relation] *with the separate intellects*,⁷ in accordance with how we interpreted it and in accordance with how he explained this in full in the citation we brought from his *Treatise on the Substance of the Celestial Sphere*. He was merely proceeding here as a kind of intermediary between his own opinion and the opinion of Avicenna. For he [sc. Avicenna] posited the celestial beings to be possessors of faculties of the soul, except that they are conjoined to them in a connection of inexistence, not that they are forms in their matters. And by

stating, *due to its connection with the imaginative soul*, he means that [this is so] because it [sc. the hylic intellect] is with it [sc. the imaginative soul]. And by stating, *on account of which they do not apprehend any of the forms which exist here*, he means—with respect to their being speculative intelligibles. Then he stated, *and were it to be so that in some way conjunction with them obtains, it would necessarily follow that it does apprehend what is here*, meaning—but it does not apprehend, hence we are not one and the same.

Then he stated, *that when the two conjunctions arise with our intellect in magnitude*, meaning conjunction of inexistence and conjunction of perception; and, generally, the conjunction of the perfect form with the deficient, that is to say, that it conjoins with it in an absolute conjunction of inexistence, together with causing the deficient form to advance in rank and perception. For this reason, the deficient form conjoins with it in a conjunction of perception. Then he stated, *insofar as that force inheres in a substrate without being mixed with any of the forms*, meaning that its matter and the matter which receives some form are not one and the same thing, inasmuch as it conjoins with a body, not in a body.

And by stating, *while the second conjunction is the conjunction with beings possessing imagination from which it receives them, whereupon they are transformed into universals*, he means that the imaginative forms, I mean, the images, are altered into becoming abstract universals, thereby becoming intelligibles.

And by stating, *and not the first conjunction*, he means [that this is so] inasmuch as it resembles the sphere, and it does not apprehend them.

Then he stated, *it is in need of some intellect in magnitude . . . still not devoid of magnitude*, meaning [that is in need of such an intellect] so that it may apprehend both that which is not devoid and that which is devoid [of magnitude].

After having explained this, he mentions an objection and meets it, whereupon he completes the explanation of his problem, and he states:

SECTION FOURTEEN

Ibn Rushd said:

The strongest objection which might be raised in this matter would be the assertion that it is not the nature of the disposition which is essentially one to receive two different things unless both of them are absolutely different. This is the disposition's function in receiving the hylic, intelligible forms when it is posited as the recipient of the separate forms. For were there to be here a disposition which receives the separate forms, it is declared in equivocation relative to the disposition which receives the intelligibles of generated and corruptible objects. It was this that led Abū Nasr (al-Fārābī) to assert in his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* that man's only perfection consists of the speculative sciences. He stated, furthermore, that the dictum that man becomes a separate being is "an old women's tale," since that which is generated and corruptible will not become eternal.¹

The answer to be given is that within our rational soul are two dispositions, a first and a second. The first is joined to the imaginative forms in the same mode in which the disposition in the writing slate is connected with the slate itself.² This disposition is a condition for the existence of those speculative intelligibles which it receives. Now the second disposition is that which will be joined to the forms of the speculative intellect when it is perfected within us, since it is like the intelligible of a form arising in its matter—from which state it is evident that a second disposition other than the first disposition will be joined to it which perfects that form. So too must it be regarding our final forms. To wit: just as when the forms of the elements arrive in the prime matter, a second disposition for receiving the forms of homogeneous objects is joined to them; and just as when the forms of the homogeneous objects attain actualization, a third disposition for receiving the nutritive soul is joined to them; and a fourth disposition for receiving the sensible forms is joined when the nutritive soul is attained; and a fifth disposition for receiving the imaginative forms is joined to the sensible forms; and a sixth disposition for receiving the speculative

intelligibles is joined to the imaginative forms; so too it is a necessary consequence that a seventh disposition for receiving a seventh form is joined to the speculative intelligibles. Now it is clear that this cannot proceed *ad infinitum*. It must necessarily terminate with the disposition for receiving a form, which [disposition] is not a condition for its [the form's] existence; rather, it, i.e., the form, is a condition for its existence, as is the case of the celestial bodies. Such obtains not for the forms, but for the simple bodies; for water is earth's perfection, air is water's, fire is air's, the celestial matter is fire's, and the separate forms are the celestial matter's.

From this argument it has been made clear that when the speculative intellect is perfected, there must come to be one form due to the nature of the recipient itself—otherwise the disposition would be superfluous—and one due to the nature of the agent—otherwise it would have no nature in this matter, thereby being superfluous. Therefore, it necessarily moves so that its activity is identical with its essence, as was stated already in this treatise.³ Furthermore, there is nothing to come about except the direct appearance of the Intellect to us without the mediation of the speculative intellect, for this is the first appearance. And it is plain that this kind of motion most befits the separate intellects, for they move by virtue of being the final cause; whereas all other movers do not move by virtue of being the final cause, but rather by virtue of being the efficient cause alone, in which case that which is moved is more noble than it [the mover], while its [the mover's] perfection is due to that which is moved. Now if the Active Intellect were not to cause motion by its very essence, then that which is moved by it would be more noble than it. However, since its rank is lower than the rank of the two movers of the celestial bodies, it does not, from the outset, cause motion as a final cause. Neither does it ever cause the motion of something which consists of one individual, as does the mover of the celestial body, but rather of that which is a single species, namely, man. Nonetheless, what the separate intellects endowed to this intellect from the outset is not ultimately impossible, namely, that it will cause motion by virtue of being a final cause in actuality.⁴

When you come to know that this Agent will cause us to move by virtue of its essence, then you will come to know the philosopher's dictum in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.⁵ Man, even though he dies, should conceive what is possible for him of his essence itself, or else his substance will perish into death. Hence, who should revile in his soul one who dies, for in him exists a part of the possibility for receiving intimacy with the eternal reality and for the attainment of some renewal with his ability to attain it. Hence, how good is that which He said, "And I shall not reveal man's deficiencies"⁶—his deficiencies in the lack of ability to attain it.

Now it has been definitely explained that the first mover within us necessarily causes motion by virtue of its essence. And whoever is familiar with the demonstrative proofs wrought by the philosophers in physics and in the *De Anima*, and those who accept their demonstrative proofs, must by necessity accept these demonstrations or else make no claim to science at all. Let him bring demonstrations to refute these demonstrations.

Even though this argument is rhetorical, it still provides an additional measure of satisfaction, as He has said, may He be exalted, "The believer is confirmed by the increase in Laws."⁷

The Commentary:

By stating, *in the same mode in which the disposition in the writing slate is connected*, he means to say that just as that disposition existing in the surface of the slate is not mixed with the slate or immersed in it, so that the slate's reception of writing would be an affection, so too is the intellect related with the intelligibles. And this disposition whose existence is conditional on the imaginative forms, and which [disposition] is not a condition for the reception of the speculative intelligibles, is, however, a condition for their [the intelligibles'] existence.

Then he stated, *so too it is a necessary consequence that a seventh disposition for receiving a seventh form be joined to the speculative intelligibles*, meaning: The intelligible forms are a condition for the existence of the disposition, not for its [the disposition's] reception of the seventh form. Moreover, they [the intelli-

gible forms] will be obliterated. Concerning this disposition, the Prophet [Samuel] stated, "And thou shalt be turned into another man" (I Sam. 10:6).⁸

And by stating, *the two movers of the celestial bodies*, he means the specific mover and the universal,⁹ although it might be thought that he means soul and intellect.

Then he stated, *neither does it ever move something which consists of one particular*, meaning that it [the Active Intellect] is not with a single particular as is the separate form in the celestial body, rather it is with many individuals from a single species. For this reason, it is characterized by multiplicity, on account of which it is called "men,"¹⁰ even though its substance is a simple unity. Because of this, the Active Intellect is one, in that it is separate [and] not conjoined in the disposition; and it is many, in that it is conjoined with different dispositions which are numbered according to the number of imaginative [faculties] with which it is connected. But it is one in its substance [and] simple. For this reason we say that it will apprehend itself [in the sense of when] "Lot separated himself from him" (Gen. 13:4).¹¹

Then he stated, *what the celestial intelligences endowed to this intellect from the outset is, ultimately, not impossible, namely, that it [too] will cause motion by virtue of being a final cause in actuality*, meaning that [the Active Intellect will function] similarly to the function of the separate intellects which only move with respect to being a final cause. This is the final cause of existents as a whole.

Moses [Narboni] stated:

You must know that according to the true opinion of Ibn Rushd, this too is different, for that form by which man apprehends, I mean, the disposition, is other than that [form] toward which he is moved, namely, [toward] the Active Intellect, even though the disposition is absolutely devoid of magnitude and the substance of the Active Intellect is absolutely separate; whereas those forms by which the celestial bodies are moved are not other than those toward which they are moved. Rather, they are one and the same form itself, absolutely separate from magnitude. They do, however, differ in disposition, I mean, [their being] one in the

same substrate, but two in definition, as [mentioned] before.

Now I have seen fit to provide for you an extensive explanation of this in this place, and to cite statements by Ibn Rushd which attest to this [subject] inasmuch as he dealt briefly with this question in this place. I shall also cite the opinion of our Master, Moses [Maimonides], peace be upon him, on these questions. Then I shall explain to you, with the help of God, the relations and differences [which obtain in the various intellects], whereupon the sacred work shall be completed.

I say: Ibn Rushd wrote in his [Long] *Commentary* to Lambda of the *Metaphysics*, as follows:

It has already been explained that we are dealing here with an eternal substance which perpetually causes motion. For this reason, there is no use in positing an eternal substance in which there is no principle of motion, as did those who indeed posited this by saying of the forms that this substance has no usefulness in the existence of eternal motion. But nature does nothing in vain.

Inasmuch as the Prime Mover moves without being moved either essentially or accidentally, as the soul within a body is moved, it necessarily follows that this Mover only causes motion in the way that the objects of desire and delight cause them [Arabic original: us] to move, and especially so in the case of the intelligibles whose function we observe to be good. Inasmuch as the kinds of objects of desire which cause motion in us are not identical with the kinds of intelligibles which move us, to the extent that these two causes of motion are largely opposites, I mean, that the motion caused by desired objects is different than the motion caused by intelligibles, then it is clear regarding these principles which are in the celestial bodies that the object of desire for them is identical with the intelligible itself. [This is so] because the object of desire for us is separate from the intelligible by virtue of the differing faculties which perceive the objects of desire and the intelligibles, [Arabic original adds: namely, the object of desire is perceived by the sense, it (the object of desire) being something pleasant; whereas the intelligible (is perceived) by the intellect], it [the intelligible] being something the carrying out of which is beautiful. As for the celestial bodies, inasmuch as they do not possess sense perception—sense perception properly belonging only to animals for the sake of their well-being—the object of desire

is not different from their intelligible. For the intelligible mover moves with respect to being something beautiful as well as being something delightful. This is the purport [Arabic adds: of his (i.e., Aristotle's) statement] that, "The delightful [lit. primary object of appetite] and the intelligible are the same" (*Metaphysics* XII:7 1072^a27).

From this it is absolutely clear that the celestial bodies possess souls, and that they possess only the faculty of intellect and appetite from among the faculties of the soul, I mean, locomotion. This will become clear from what I shall say. For it has already been explained that the mover of these celestial bodies does not inhere in matter and that it is a separate form. This is [explained] in *Physics* VIII. And it has been explained in the *De Anima* that the separate forms are intellect. It necessarily follows from this that this Mover is an intellect and that it moves insofar as it is the agent of motion and insofar as it is the final cause of motion. For in our case alone is this different and numerically multiple; I mean, that which moves us in place in the sense of agent and that which moves us in the sense of final cause [are different], because it [the cause of motion] has two existences—an existence within the soul and an existence outside the soul. Now insofar as its existence is within the soul, it constitutes the agent of motion; whereas insofar as its existence is outside of the soul, it moves as a final cause. For example, the bath-house has two forms, a form within the soul and a form outside of the soul. When the form within the soul arises in us, we desire [Arabic adds: it] and are moved toward it, I mean, toward the form which exists outside of the soul, that is to say, to enter it. Now either the form of the bath-house is, with respect to being within the soul, the agent of desire and motion; or, with respect to being outside of the soul, it is the final cause, but not the agent. But were the form of the bath-house, for example, not to be in matter, then it would cause motion with respect to being both an agent and a final cause without it being subject to multiplicity at all. In such a way must it be understood concerning the movers of the celestial bodies: they move in both modes without thereby being multiple. Hence, the same intelligibles are their forms, causing motion with respect to being an efficient cause; and insofar as they are their final cause, they [the celestial bodies] are moved by them with respect to desire.

And if it were asserted: If what has been conceived of those forms constitutes their existence, what is their need for motion? For were

the mere conception of the closet by the artisan to constitute the very existence of the closet, he would not move himself to construct the closet. We would reply: They only move because they think in their souls that their perfection consists solely in the act of motion [Arabic adds: similar to the one who moves in order to preserve his health, thinking that the preservation of his health consists solely in the act of motion]. Moreover, they apprehend that motion is the cause on account of which something in the separate forms is brought to pass from potentiality to actuality, namely, the hylic forms. For it is apparent that these forms have two existences; an actual existence, namely, the hylic existence which they possess, and a potential existence, namely, the existence they possess in those [separate] forms.

By potentiality, I mean something analogous to our saying that the productive forms have an actual existence in matter, and a potential existence in the soul of the artisan. And it is because of this that it is held that these forms have two existences; a separate existence and an existence in matter, with the separate [existence] being the cause on account of which it is in matter. This is what was desired by those who spoke about the forms, but who fell short of it.

However, their motion is not due to the passing of these forms from potentiality to actuality inasmuch as this [motion] constitutes their first entelechy, while this [passing from potentiality to actuality] is merely consequent to their first entelechy. For example, the first intention of one who is striving to guard his health by doing some work is to guard his health, while his second [intention] is constituted by the acts of that particular work.¹²

End of citation.

I [Narboni] state: He [Ibn Rushd] means that in a similar fashion the first intention of the celestial bodies is directed toward their own perfection and for themselves. The secondary consequence is that they actualize the hylic forms, I mean, that which exists in a more praiseworthy existence in the separate [forms] is caused to arise in [hylic] existence. They exist *in potentia* in order to be *in actu*. By *in potentia*, I mean the possibility of their existence prior to their [actual] existence. And this [state of potentiality] consists in either their preparing matter or their bestowing forms, even though they do not know what is here, just as the Active Intellect does not know what is here, even though it bestows the

forms. For it bestows them in such a way that its knowledge of them is a knowledge devoid of multiplicity. And it is characterized by their bestowal. Inasmuch as their existence in it is closer to their existence than to the other supernal forms in which they are, it is appropriate that it be the Bestower or the Actualizer or that which Brings [into existence]. Know this.

Now I have shown to you that the forms of the celestial bodies, and especially the distant, encompassing body, are, in one respect, soul. And this is by virtue of the desire which arises in them, I mean, in the object of desire which is the intelligible; and the motion, I mean, the appetitive faculty which is the cause of locomotion, both being one and the same. In this respect it is soul, for they constitute the specific function of soul, I mean, desire and locomotion. However, insofar as the object of desire is an intelligible, the mover is an intellect. Hence, with respect to motion, it is called soul, while with respect to itself, it is called intellect.

And it is the first, simple form in which the celestial animal is compounded of one and the same mover and moved. For it moves only in the sense of being a final form as opposed to the animals which are here. For it appears that the mover in the latter is composed of two movers; the [animal] soul and the appetitive [soul] whose appetite is [stimulated] from outside, which [in turn] moves the soul. Hence that which is moved by them is found to be composite, and not simple. And, therefore, the celestial body is analogous to being the matter of this separate form, but a matter which exists *in actu*. Therefore, nothing exists in them which would resemble matter, except its being a matter which subsists for the reception of form. Hence, the term substrate is a truer one for them than the term matter. For the matter which is here is termed matter because it is potentially the form which is created in it, and termed substrate because it supports the form. And it is a part of the composite [made up] of itself and form.

Now it is manifest that the celestial bodies are not a condition for the existence of their form, as is the case of the bodies of animals which are here. For it is manifest that the nature of the animals which are here is such that their souls are a condition for the existence of their matter, and that they would not be safe were it

not for that which is preserved in the sensitive and imaginative soul. However, inasmuch as the celestial body is simple and not subject to change from the outside, it does not need a sensitive soul for its existence, nor [does it need] an imaginative soul. It only needs a soul to move it in place and a force which is neither a body nor a force in a body with which to acquire eternal duration and eternal motion. They have neither a beginning nor an end, in that as bodies, they do not possess this, even though [as bodies] there is no potential for corruption in them. It is, rather, with respect to their separate forms which are neither bodies nor a force in a body [that they have no beginning and no end].

After having made clear to you the opinion of the philosopher, Ibn Rushd, concerning the separate forms, the divine beings, and the hylic intellect, I shall make clear to you the opinion of the divine philosopher, Rabbi Moses, peace be upon him, concerning them so that you may see that the matter of contradiction between them concerning the Active Intellect follows from their disagreement concerning the forms of the spheres. He wrote in the *Guide*, chapter four, of the second part, as follows:

With regard to the opinion of the latter philosophers that there are ten separate intellects, it may be explained by the fact that they counted the globes in which there are stars as well as the all-encompassing sphere, although in some of these globes there are several spheres. The globes are nine according to their reckoning; namely, the one that encompasses the universe, the sphere of the fixed stars, and the spheres of the seven planets. The tenth intellect is the Active Intellect, whose existence is indicated by the facts that our intellects pass from potentiality to actuality and that the forms of the existents that are subject to actuality and that the forms of the existents that are subject to generation and corruption are actualized after they have been in their matter only *in potentia*. Now everything that passes from potentiality to actuality must have necessarily something that causes it to pass and that is outside it. And this cause must have belonged to the species of that which it causes to pass from potentiality to actuality. For a carpenter does not build a storehouse *qua* a maker, but because there subsists in his mind the form of the storehouse. For it is the form of the storehouse subsisting in the mind of

the carpenter that caused the form of the storehouse to pass into actuality and to be reified in timber. In this way the giver of a form is indubitably a separate form, and that which brings intellect into existence is an intellect, namely, the Active Intellect. Thus the relation of the Active Intellect to the elements and that which is composed of them is similar to the relation obtaining between every separate intellect particularly related to a sphere and that sphere. Furthermore the relation of the intellect *in actu* existing in us, which derives from an overflow of the Active Intellect and through which we apprehend the Active Intellect, is similar to that of the intellect of every sphere that exists in the latter, deriving its being in it from the overflow of a separate intellect—an intellect through which the sphere apprehends the separate intellect, forms a conception of the latter, desires to become like it, and in consequence is moved.

In this connection (Aristotle) deals further with a matter that has already been demonstrated, namely, that God, may He be magnified, does not do things in a direct fashion. Thus He burns by means of a fire, and this fire is moved by means of the motion of the sphere, and the sphere in its turn is moved by means of a separate intellect. For the intellects are the angels, which are near to Him, by means of whom the spheres are moved. And as by reason of their being separate from matter, no multiplicity due to a difference between their essences is at all possible with regard to them because they are not bodies, it follows necessarily that the deity, may He be exalted, brought into existence the first intellect, who is the mover of the first sphere in the way that we have explained. Again the intellect that causes the second sphere to move has as its cause and principle the first intellect, and so on, so that the intellect that causes the sphere that is contiguous with us to move is the cause and principle of the Active Intellect. With the latter the separate intellects come to an end, just as bodies begin similarly with the highest sphere and come to an end with the elements and what is composed of them. It cannot be true that the intellect that moves the highest sphere could be identical with the necessary of existence. For it has in common with the other intellects one separately conceivable thing, namely, that represented by the act of causing bodies to move. Now every intellect is distinguished from any other intellect with respect to one separately conceivable thing. In consequence each one of the ten intellects is endowed with two separately conceivable things. Accordingly there can be no doubt that all of them have one first cause. This is the

assertion and the opinion of Aristotle; and his proofs for this, insofar as they are probable, are set forth in the works of his followers. All his disquisition may be summed up as follows: All spheres are living bodies, endowed with a soul and an intellect, having a mental representation and an apprehension of the deity and also mental representation of their own first principles. In existence, there are separate intellects that are in no way a body. All of them overflow from God, may He be exalted, and they are the intermediate between God and all these bodies.¹³

You who see the method of the Master [Maimonides] and the extent to which he differs from the opinion of the philosopher, Ibn Rushd, in these matters, [will notice] that not identifying the mover of the distant, encompassing [sphere] with the Necessary Existent did not suffice him, but rather he identified its mover with something other than its form and with a separate intellect above it.¹⁴ Thus, there would be eleven separate Intelligences.¹⁵ But his demonstration is invalid, inasmuch as the two moved ones would be separate in that the one, I mean, is totally, while the second is partially, necessary. And this is clear.

He is, furthermore, separate, for according to the opinion of Ibn Rushd, the statement of the philosopher [Maimonides], *thus the relation of the Active Intellect to the elements and that which is composed of them is similar to the relation obtaining between every separate intellect particularly related to a sphere and that sphere*, is a true opinion to the extent that it is their principle and their mover, while they are its substrate with respect to perfection and are not conditions for its existence. However, the sphere does not possess another form different than the separate [form], as will [be explained] forthcoming.

Also his [Maimonides'] statement, *furthermore the relation of the intellect in actu existing in us, which derives from an overflow of the Active Intellect and through which we apprehend the Active Intellect, is similar to that of the intellect of every sphere that exists in the latter, deriving its being from the overflow of a separate intellect—an intellect through which the sphere apprehends the separate intellect, forms a conception of the latter, desires to become like it, and in consequence is moved*, leaves room for differences [between Mai-

monides and Ibn Rushd]. As for the first:¹⁶ Here [regarding the intellect *in actu*], there is no external agent existing in such a way that it is not understood in its connection with its disposition, as he implied by his statement, *which derives from an overflow of the Active Intellect*, wherein he likened it to a separate intellect, which is not the form of the [celestial] body. Second: The sphere does not possess an intellect other than the separate intellect, as previously [mentioned]. Third: Ibn Rushd would not consider asserting that such-and-such a mover arose from such-and-such a mover, or that it derived from an overflow,¹⁷ but [he does assert that] intellect and intelligible are, respectively, something which perfects and something perfected. Now the perfection of each one is the forming of a conception of its specific cause together with the conception formed of the First Cause, for each of them forms a conception of it in varying ways. Fourth: The opinion of the Master [Maimonides] is that acquired knowledge is eternal, and that the eternal does apprehend the eternal. Ibn Rushd, however, asserts that we do not apprehend the Active Intellect by the intellect *in actu*, it being the acquired intellect. Rather, the speculative intelligible forms are obliterated, inasmuch as every generated object is corrupted. Then the disposition which is with them remains, divested [of forms], whereupon its existence is connected with the Active Intellect inasmuch as it [the Active Intellect] alone is its condition. "Then it will be kissed by the kisses of his mouth" (Song of Songs 1:2),¹⁸ whereupon it will apprehend the Active Intellect in its own light which it causes to shine upon it.

Therefore, the relation [posited by Maimonides] is not true in existence, for they are things which have absolutely no existence. And nature does not act in vain. According to Ibn Rushd, we must assert that the relation of the Active Intellect, insofar as it conjoins with us—it being a form within us—is the relation of the separate Intelligence with the sphere in one respect, I mean, in certain ways, but different in certain ways, as is clear from what has already preceded.

Moses [Narboni] said:

We want to gather the relations and the differences, and let the

Intelligences remain in their apprehension of the Separate [Beings].

"Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest know, that the Lord, He is God . . . in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else" (Deut. 4:35, 39); "for He rideth upon the heavens . . . and in His excellency on the skies" (Deut. 33:26); and that the separate [Intelligences] settle in substrates in such a manner that they are not divided by the division of their substrates, inasmuch as they do not settle by means of the dimensions. In this way it was explained that these forms are not forces in bodies, I mean, they neither have subsistence in the substrate nor are they distributed and entangled [in it]. They are, rather, separate in their existence and in their essence; I mean, they are not forces in them, i.e., they do not subsist in them, that is to say, that their essence is not supported by and conjoined to their essence, or entangled, or distributed, or immersed [in the substrate]. Moreover, they do not exist by virtue of their existence. In addition, they are not connected with them in such a way that their matter and the matter which receives the form of the substrate would be one and the same. These are the three characteristic differences distinguishing that which is borne from that which bears, especially with regard to the mover of the distant body. As the poet stated, "Extol him that rideth upon the skies, whose name is the Lord, and exult ye before Him" (Ps. 68:50), for the very essence of apprehension is *araboth*.

And just as they are not forces in bodies, so too they are not forces with bodies, but rather the bodies are with them. Therefore, there is nothing within them that would resemble matter, except that it is a subsisting matter for the reception of form. Hence, the term substrate is truer than the term matter regarding them. For the matter which is here is never found by itself without a form to lend it subsistence, neither is form found without matter in which to subsist. Therefore it lends subsistence to matter in order that it might subsist therein. And it is called matter by virtue of its being *in potentia* the form which is created in it, while it is called substrate by virtue of its supporting the form and its being a part of the compound of itself and form.

Hence, the term substrate as applied to this [i.e., the celestial

body] is not perfectly true, inasmuch as the substrate supports the form at the same time that it dwells on it. But the celestial bodies are not a condition for the existence of their forms. Neither are they [the forms] distributed through them. They are called, nonetheless, substrate by virtue of their partaking in perfection from the separate forms which are in them and which provide them with perpetual duration, perfect figure, and perpetual motion. In general, they are called substrate by virtue of their receiving from the forms that which a substrate should receive from the forms—perfection of the level of existence and other [such] things. But the forms are not perfected by them, inasmuch as it is the substrates which certainly receive absolute existence from the forms. It is, moreover, on account of this, that the world necessarily came to be from them [the forms].

Moses [Narboni] said:

After your having seen all this, it will not be difficult to form a conception of the way the Active Intellect conjoins with man in the sense of its being our form. And this is the question concerning which our intention was primary [and which includes]: the way in which its [the Active Intellect] dwelling in us is similar to the dwelling of the celestial forms [in their substrates], as well as the way in which this differs, this pertaining to the first hylic intellect; and the way in which the second hylic intellect is inferior to the first, as in the difference with respect to its rank; and the way in which this is similar.

I say: The relation of the Active Intellect to the elements and that which is composed of them is the relation of every separate intellect particular to a sphere and that sphere, for it is their principle, and it moves them, while they are its substrate in the sense of absolute existence and are not a condition for its existence. However, the sphere has no other form, for which reason it is its substrate in the sense of ontological perfection, I mean, a grade of existence relative to absolute existence. And just the separate Intelligences only move in the sense of being a final cause—and because every [other] mover moves, not as a final cause, but as an efficient cause alone, then that which is moved by them is more

noble than it, and its perfection is due to the perfection of that which is moved—so too the final cause of the motion caused by the Active Intellect is that its essence be apprehended. For were it not to move itself, *than that which is moved by it would be more noble than it. However, since its rank is lower than the rank of the two movers of the celestial bodies*, i.e., volitional and determined, *it does not move man from the outset as a final cause. Neither does it ever move something which consists of one particular, as does the mover of the celestial bodies.* Rather it acts on many species and *moves that which is a single species, namely, man. Nonetheless, that which the celestial intellects bestowed upon it, from the outset is not ultimately impossible for this intellect, namely, that it will cause motion by virtue of being a final cause in actuality.*

This [will occur] when it moves the second hylic intellect. However, that by which it is moved is absolutely other than that toward which it is moved, something which is not so with regard to the celestial bodies in accordance with truth, except for [the distinctions of] disposition and aspect [which obtain in the relation of the separate form and the celestial body]. Consequently, the mover of this hylic intellect, namely, the Active Intellect is not the cause for locomotion during its [the hylic intellect's] apprehension of that form in the sense of reception; as it is said, "But as for thee, stand thou here by me" (Deut. 5:28) and, "He was there with the Lord" (Exod. 34:28) [in the sense] of time which the Master [Maimonides] interpreted.¹⁹ This is different in the case of the celestial body and for that which resembles them, as well. For then, I mean at the moment of conjunction, the disposition is not connected with the speculative forms with the result that the Active Intellect would be connected with them. Rather it is ontologically connected with the Active Intellect, for it necessarily must terminate at a disposition which receives a form that is not conditional on its [the disposition's] existence. For it is not created as are the speculative intelligibles, rather it, i.e., the form, is a condition for the existence of the disposition in the sense that it is its function as is the case with the celestial bodies.

Now it is clear that the relation which we have stated concerning the Active Intellect [is formulated] with respect to itself and to

its being a separate substance or to its being conjoined in a perceptual conjunction. However, with respect to its being conjoined with us in a conjunction of form with matter, I mean, a conjunction of inexistence with the two dispositions which are in us, not a conjunction of perception, then its dwelling in them resembles the dwelling of the celestial forms [in the manner] which I shall state.

First: It is a form which settles in a disposition which is not divisible. For the disposition is not a faculty mixed with the imaginative forms or with the imaginative soul. And it has no absolute conjunction with magnitude. Neither is it a force in a body, I mean, it has no subsistence in the substrate, i.e., [no] distribution, mixture, immersion, entanglement, or duration—for subsistence may certainly be called duration. But it is separate in existence by itself in such a manner that it is not connected with them in a connection of admixture, with the result that it is not impeded; and in such a manner that it does not subsist and is not immersed in them, or distributed [through them]. For it is not a physical form, nor does it possess a bodily instrument, after they [the imaginative forms] become intelligibles. For if the imaginative forms were a condition for the existence of this disposition such that it would exist by virtue of their existence, this would only be so because it is a faculty with a body and not in a body. But they are only a condition for its existence in the sense that they constitute a cause for its creation and subsistence. For they are not a condition for its reception of the intelligibles, so that they would be able to divest themselves and subsist within their own substance after being altered into abstract universals. For this reason, were they to bear the speculative forms in the true sense of bearing, I mean, a connection of admixture, they would bear themselves after being changed into abstract universals. And the nature of image would be itself the nature of intelligible.

Moreover, just as the second hylic intellect is not with absolute magnitude, so too we are not absolutely with magnitude, I mean, we are not with it at all. Therefore, it does not apprehend anything which is in magnitude.

There is another difference in that the first hylic intellect, I

mean, the one composed of the disposition and the Active Intellect, is not separate in existence in such a manner that it would not be connected to the imaginative souls and the imaginative forms in a connection of inexistence. For the first hylic intellect, I mean, the first disposition, is indeed connected to the imaginative soul and the imaginative forms in a connection of inexistence. As for the celestial forms, even though they are with the celestial bodies, the substrates are not a condition for their existence, it is rather, they who are a condition for the substrate. But since the hylic intellect exists with a substrate, it is different, namely, it is with a substrate in such a manner that the substrate is a condition only for its existence.

Similarly, even if the recipient of the Active Intellect is not a condition for the latter's existence, it is a condition for the state of existence in which it is, I mean, apprehending that which is here. And generally, it is its condition by that which it sees by means of speculation.

Moreover, inasmuch as the hylic intellect is that by which it is moved, although it itself is not with absolute magnitude, it, nevertheless, is with magnitude of two conjunctions by virtue of its connection with the imaginative soul and its conjunction with beings which possess imagination from which it receives them, and which certainly are changed into universals. But the celestial forms are absolutely devoid of magnitude. So much so that this is one of the properties of the celestial body itself.

It [the Active Intellect] is also different [from the celestial Intellects] inasmuch as that by which it is moved is absolutely other than that toward which it is moved, and [inasmuch] as it is connected with something other than itself. With regard to this, the two dispositions are alike; for the second one is also something other and connected with the speculative forms.

[It is] also [different] inasmuch as the celestial forms are not characterized by multiplicity with respect to their settling on a substrate, whereas the Active Intellect is subject to multiplicity with respect to its settling on a disposition in such a manner that the status of its knowledge is altered. For it is borne by things which

constitute a condition for its [the disposition's] existence. Moreover, it [the Active Intellect] settles on dispositions, the existence of which is conditional on many substrates.

The explanation of this [is]: The Active Intellect is a praiseworthy, simple, unified knowledge, without multiplicity. And it is self-apprehending. In this respect, it constitutes a condition for the forms which are here due to their relation with it. But with respect to its conjunction with the disposition in us, it is not self-apprehending, whereas it does apprehend the existents which are here. Now inasmuch as there are many dispositions due to the number of their substrates, [and] even though in itself it is an eternal existent, separate, incorporeal, self-apprehending, and without multiplicity, it will not be subject to multiplicity alone when it is in this attribute. It will be divested of those other attributes with the exception of eternality when it is connected with that disposition which is with a body. But that simple knowledge will become multiple, I mean, with respect to the number of dispositions with which it is connected. However, in the sense that the dispositions are not distributed through the substrate, it is correct [to state] that the Active Intellect is one in us, inasmuch as the simple, unified, praiseworthy knowledge is in itself one.

Similarly, it [the Active Intellect] is different [from the celestial Intelligences] in that it never moves something which is one in particular, but rather something one in species. And it is not from the outset that it itself is a final cause, as is the case regarding the celestial forms. And all this is due to the inferiority of its level from their level. For the praiseworthy existents are differentiated by praise, simplicity, and unity.

An abbreviated, comprehensive analogy would be: Just as the heart is the most characteristic thing in this context, so too the largest circle in the heavens is the most characteristic thing in the context of the heavenly form, as in the region of the zodiac. Therefore the fastest circle and the retrograde motion in these things are not innate.²⁰

May God be pleased with us. We have written this question and the explanation of its true meaning; for there is no man whose knowledge is without error. Just as the continual practice of sin is

characteristic of Satan, so is the knowledge of everything in obscurity in the most praiseworthy fashion the exclusive attribute of God, may He be praised. And we have written this question according to the unique, true opinion of the perfect philosopher, Ibn Rushd, even though a number of his statements have fallen into dispute, as we have pointed out. But we should not be considered guilty on account of this.

And the discussion has reached the desired limit at which to cease speaking of it, inasmuch as that which we promised to explain concerning this question is completed. Now let us return to where we were in explaining the words of the philosopher.

SECTION FIFTEEN

Ibn Rushd said:

Since it has already been explained that this state, namely the felicity, by necessity belongs to man not insofar as he dies, but rather due to the attribute and form by which he is immortal, what is the way to its attainment? We say that the way to attaining the [Active] Intellect is study and speculation, in accordance with what has been recorded by the peripatetic sages, since it may be considered that their opinion concerning the existents is the truest opinion.¹ And since it has already been explained that the psychic forms impede each other due to their existing in one and the same substrate, it is necessary to perfect the substrate [by removing] all forms for the sake of seeking this form. This will occur by forsaking all passions and sensible forms belonging to the animal soul, and by the strength of the yearning and love for the intelligible forms, especially the First Form. And since the perfection of the soul from all forms is demanded for the attainment of this form . . .² it is necessary because it is impossible that a form be acquired by the soul with this form. The Prophet says of Him, may He be Exalted, "I delight in the associate from the associate."³

This is the state attained by the pure ones and those from the elite who preceded them, like Socrates and others. They chose isolation and separation from mankind and being perpetually

alone with themselves, with the result that the masters-of-heart came to believe that by this exclusive devotion and total surrender to speculation upon the said forms, the First Form will be attained in apprehension. And inasmuch as the *Shari'a* was established for remembering God and for remembering the spiritual world, spoken of as the intelligences, attachment to these activities has a great impact on the attainment of this felicity. For this reason, they believed that with these deeds, together with the soul's forsaking of all other forms, this felicity will be attained.

And inasmuch as prayer was established for us to remember God and to turn away from iniquities, its effectiveness in this is the most complete of all acts. This is indicated by His statement, may He be exalted, "Who remember Allah, standing . . ." (Quran 3:190),⁴ which means—so that you will remember Me through them; and by His statement, "Prayer restrains from conduct that is abominable and unlawful, whereas remembrance of Allah is something greater" (Quran 29:44),⁵ [He means] that the remembrance of Allah is a greater obligation for one, than one's restraining to do that which is abominable and unlawful. And He, may He be exalted, indicated the opposite of this by stating, "If you forget Allah, behold He shall forget you" (Quran 9:68), for it is the remembrance of Allah which is the cause for the attainment of felicity. And it is for this reason, that remembrance is so extolled in our Law that it is said of it that it is better than anything else. This being so, the way to attain this felicity entails study together with the deed which necessitates the remembering of God, and forsaking the state of knowledge of all forms which impede it.

And when men, through experience, came to understand that the other psychic forms impede the noble, intelligible forms, they believed the soul's felicity arises upon separation from this body; for when it separates from it, it is saved from all of the sensible forms, whereupon it perfects speculation of the intelligible forms. Therefore, the pure ones command forsaking passions and considered fasting⁶ to have a great impact on the conjunction of the intelligibles and on the creation of prophecy. Therefore, it is said that the proper conjecture from the proper man is silence.⁷

Thus, the mass of the ancients—the Empedocleans, the Pytha-

goreans, and the Platonists—thought that the soul was created from the outset in order to speculate upon the intelligible forms.⁸ Together with this an inclination for the sensible forms was placed in them which makes the assimilation of the sensible forms impossible, even though one were to speculate upon the intelligible forms, it is moved and speculates upon the sensible forms. Now it worries in its descent to the world of generation and corruption and settles in bodies. Now when they reviled the presence of these forms in the body and gazed upon the intelligible form, they were saved from this world and returned to their first world. This is a true metaphor, an allusion to which is certainly found in present-day Laws which derived it from the story of Adam.

We have mentioned these allusions for the sake of evidence as a sign and signal for what demonstrative proof has provided understanding. This matter of the state of felicity was apprehended by the ancients in antiquity, about which they gave indication with these allusions—whether because it was the fashion in teaching the sciences to speak in allusions,⁹ as the physicians think,¹⁰ I mean, that they do not imitate it; or whether they offered allusions to the multitude while providing truthful explanations to the sages, and what the sages possessed was lost when the sages disappeared, leaving only allusions to conjunction with the rest of the multitude until our own time. And those considered to be the first of those to apprehend these matters from among those whose story has reached us, and who provided these allusions are the Chaldeans¹¹ who dwelled in antiquity in Egypt—for as it is said, science was already perfected in their time.

The Commentary:

Having explained the necessity of the possibility of conjunction, the vision belongs to man—and lives,¹² he means to provide a way "for them who dwell before the Lord, to eat their full, and for him who covers the things related by the Ancient Days" (cf. Isa. 23:18)¹³ to attain this final, true felicity. Then he cites testimony for this from that which is found in present-day Laws, and offers instruction on this.

He stated, *since it has already been explained that this state,*

namely the felicity, by necessity belongs to man not insofar as he dies, etc. He states this in opposition to the acquisition of money and the other temporal vanities, for they do not belong to man *qua* man in eternal truth.

And by stating, *it is necessary to perfect the substrate* [by removing] *all forms*, he means to expand from and to divest from the state of peace. Similarly [to be understood] in his statement, *and since the perfection of the soul [from all forms]*.

And by stating, "*I delight in the associate from the associate*," he means that He takes delight in association with the forms.¹⁴ But he prefers association with Him, and "cleaving unto Him" (Deut. 11:22).

And by stating, *the first form will be attained in apprehension*, he means—God, may He be exalted [will be attained]. The opinion of the venerable Abū Bakr Ibn Tufayl attests to and agrees with this in his book, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzān*,¹⁵ in his description of conjunction and His being apprehended, so much so that he relates about him who said, "I am the Truth."¹⁶

Then he stated, *attachment to these activities has a great impact on the attainment of this felicity*. For this reason, David commanded his son, Solomon, "Know the God of your father, and serve Him" (I Chron. 28:9).¹⁷

And his statement, *inasmuch as prayer*, etc., is true. As our sages, peace be upon them, stated, "this is the service of the heart" (*Ta'anith* 2a). And Yossifon stated, "He who prays, speaks with his Lord; and he who reads the book of his Lord's Law, his Lord speaks with him."¹⁸

This he stated, and it is for this reason that remembrance is so extolled in our Law that it is said of it that it is better than anything else: which is true, for this is a very special matter. Therefore, He, may He be exalted, stated, "Turn ye not unto the idols" (Lev. 19:4); [meaning], "Turn ye not unto that conceived in your own mind," inasmuch as these forms impede the apprehension of this Form [i.e. God]. By stating, "Turn ye not unto that conceived in your own mind," he means—this is what occurs when you "turn to the idols." Rather you must turn to God alone. And it is as if it were to be vocalized *Ēl*, with a *Sere*, as well.¹⁹

Then he stated, *therefore the pure ones commanded forsaking*

the passions and considered fasting to have a great impact on the conjunction of the speculative forms and on the creation of prophecy. He explained this because the matter of fasting and forsaking passion is great inasmuch as it has an impact on the true conjunction of the forms, as well as the imaginative [conjunction of the forms] for the other prophets. For prophecy arises in them in such a way that the prophet who has attained unification will only know that which is devoid of magnitude and its various stages in that it is somewhat particularized. Therefore, if this is possible²⁰—with respect to the true prophet—it is only after his descent following his ascension above which occurred previous to his present attainment, inasmuch as some of this perfection flows over into the imaginative faculty.²¹ This [flowing over] is not impossible at that time, but is [impossible] during his vision of the true [beings]. They have already attributed this to the cause of matter. Generally, fasts and forsaking passions which impede are useful in the perfection of forms and in the conjunction of the intelligibles. Therefore, they are chosen by those who attain unification for just this [purpose]. It is not the intrinsic intention to mortify the body, as if God were to despise it [the body], as do those lunatics who are not of our people who think that mortification constitutes conjunction with God. Hence, the prophet related of God's statement, may He be exalted, "When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh month . . . did ye at all fast unto Me, even Me?" (Zech. 7:5). Understand this.

And by stating, *which derived it from the story of Adam*, he meant Adam's dwelling in the Garden of Eden, and his standing naked without embarrassment. There is no need to expatiate on this, for these matters are secrets of the *Guide* which have become all too well known by those who philosophize in our time. Other men have already revealed them. And in our opinion, we would rather have seen them remain hidden at this time.

And by stating, [leaving only allusions] *to conjunction with the rest of the multitude*, he means—because they are the many. And by stating, [science] *was already perfected in their time*, he means—even though it was corrupted afterwards until Aristotle, the master of knowledge,²² began to perfect it.

SECTION SIXTEEN

Ibn Rushd said:

In that all this is as we have described, it has been made clear to you that the felicity will not be attained by study alone or by action alone, but it will be attained by both things together; and that it is only attainable in this life; and that those whose life is cut off while still in this existence will certainly enter a never-ending state of non-being or a never-ending state of pain, since the decree of destruction for the soul is an extremely harsh one, especially for the hylic intellect.¹

Inasmuch as it appears that this disposition potentially conjoins with what constitutes its perfection, it might be thought that it is not merely a disposition, but rather a substance subject to felicity insofar as it is an intellect *in potentia*. Now that which is an object *in potentia* is in its existence analogous to an intermediary between potentiality and absolute privation. Therefore Themistius held the opinion that it is as if it were a part of the intelligibles.² And if this were so, it would be eternal inasmuch as a potential substance is neither generated nor corruptible. Other men hold the opinion that this potentiality will acquire intellect from that which is mixed in matter. They are the ones who conjecture that knowledge is recollection.³ Whatever the case may be, no doubt exists about the possibility of this felicity's existence; for indeed it does exist if acquired knowledge is eternal in accordance with what many of the commentators conjecture. Now there is no error or absurdity in that the eternal comprehends the eternal. This means of explanation suffices for our intention together with the intention of brevity.

And yet an objection does arise here in that it may be asserted that it would appear from this treatise that the regimen of one who attains felicity is the regimen of the solitary. But it has already been stated in political science that this felicity will be attained by man and that he is part of society. The answer: this is true insofar as nothing exists in this society to impede the attainment of felicity. On the contrary, all that exists in that society is an aid for its attainment because that society existed to aid in the attainment of

this felicity. Accordingly, Plato believed that when the great philosophers reached old age, they were relieved from governing, whereupon they retired from active life and proceeded to the "Isle of the Blessed,"⁴ free to speculate upon that Intellect. However, in these states separation from, forsaking of mankind is impossible. Hence it will be that due to his association with men, one will acquire those forms which impede the attainment of felicity. Abū Bakr ibn al-Sa'igh has already sought to establish the order for the regimen of the solitary in these lands. However the book is incomplete, and its intention, moreover, is difficult to fathom. We have given an indication of its intention in another place; in that he spoke about it in a singular way, no other person anticipated him.⁵

The Commentary:

Here he means to explain that inasmuch as this felicity will only be attained through study and action, one is in need of this human life.⁶ And he explains that this possibility is true, something upon which all the opinions of the commentators of the soul agree. Therefore he cites their opinion in order to show that he is not separate in his opinion concerning the speculative intellect so that the possibility of its felicity be verified. But it is verified by all the opinions, in consequence of which the truth of his explanation of this question is strengthened. Then he resolves an accidental objection which is attached to this.

He stated, *in that all this is as we have described*, etc., meaning—concerning that which leads to felicity. Then he stated, *and that those whose life is cut off while still in this existence will certainly return to a never-ending state of non-being or enter a never-ending state of pain*, meaning—in accordance with both opinions.⁷ Therefore He, may He be exalted, stated, "And the soul which sins will be cut off."⁸ Now because this life is necessary for this felicity, and the animal soul requires bread to eat and a garment to wear, and this requires money, the necessary amount of money is required for this. And its acquisition in this amount must take priority over study and action. Therefore, Cain preceded Abel, and Abel [preceded] Seth.⁹

By stating, *a potential substance is neither generated nor corrup-*

tible he means—as is the case with prime matter. And by stating, *the ones who conjecture that knowledge is recollection*, he alludes to Plato. As for his statement, *many of the commentators*, as you will have observed, our Master, Moses [Maimonides], peace be upon him, is among them.¹⁰

By stating, *this felicity will be attained by man and he is a part of society*, he means that man, who is political by nature, needs society. And by stating, *that society existed to aid in the attainment of this felicity*, he means—when the leaders are golden, i.e., philosophical.¹¹ By this [society], he is alluding to a Platonic polity and to that which resembles it. He [Plato] stipulates *great philosophers* in order that the speculative intelligibles be perfected and so that a second disposition be created with them. By stating, [they] *proceeded to the "Isle of the Blessed,"* he means just as he explains, *free for speculation upon the Active Intellect*. What Plato calls the "Isle of the Blessed," the Torah calls the Garden of Eden.¹² Eden is the felicity and the conjunction. Jacob called it "the-House-of-the-Lord" (Gen. 35:15). David called it "the Mount-of-the-Lord" (Ps. 24:3). "But the name of the city was Luz at the first"¹³ (Gen. 28:19). It is pointed to with the finger, "This is my God, and I shall extol Him" (Exod. 15:2).

Concerning his statement that he was *given an indication of its intention in another place*, it [Ibn Rushd's indication] has not yet reached us,¹⁴ just as the book of Abū Bakr ibn al-Sa'igh has not reached us. But, God, may He be exalted, brought to us the book, *Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzān*, by Abū Bakr Ibn Tufayl, which describes the regimen of the solitary and the essence of attaining conjunction. And if the Lord will lengthen our days, we shall comment upon that book after our commenting on this book.¹⁵ At this time, however, it is impossible because of the many impedances from without. And were it not for the great compulsion which I felt, I certainly would have been prevented from accomplishing what I did in commenting upon this [book], by the troubles which impede us. For the great King, the King of Aragon, may his majesty be exalted, is afflicting us in this land of Rousillon.¹⁶ But the truly Perfect One will give peace to the land. And then we shall consummate our desire concerning this.

Praise to God who helped us with our commentary on this [book]. In His mercy He shall bring us to the isle of felicity. Amen.

APPENDIX

Moses said:

After this noble treatise, Ibn Rushd set forth one more short chapter which I have seen fit to cite here.¹ It is this:

I have stated: You must know that any intellect which exists with this knowledge only does so insofar as it apprehends that object whose form is identical with the totality of that whose existence is an existence of the intelligibles, and whose creation² stems from forming a conception of or [insofar] as it is one of those existents which has been separated from the other intellects and which departs from them and whose creation is in accordance with its proximity or distance from the First Principle, may It be exalted. And it is the First Principle, may It be blessed, which thinks all existents by Its very essence and which represents them in a fashion more supernal than all of the representations wrought by any of the existents which are beneath It. The proof for all this is that the human intellect apprehends all existents in a mode of representation which is determined by its natural constitution, and whose existence consists of nothing but this very representation.

Inasmuch as it [human intellect] derives its existence from an incorporeal intellect, and inasmuch as the agent endows effect with something resembling its own essence, then it necessarily follows that the form of this Intellect is nought but its conception of all existents in a mode unique to its own level—not in the mode of human intellect's representation, but in a fashion more supernal than it, namely, in its representation being beneath that of the First Intellect and other than that of the intellects preceeding it, even if it were the case that it stems by necessity from the First Intellect through the mediation of a single intellect.³

And if it is possible for man in the course of manifesting his perfection that he represent the existents, [then] this Intellect, in the mode which characterizes it, I mean, the Active Intellect, is his.

Now this is the final felicity for man and eternal life subject to neither alteration nor corruption. But we have already spoken of this possibility in another place.⁴

The Commentary:

His statement, *the form of this intellect*, indicates the Active Intellect which causes our intellect to pass from potentiality to actuality. Hence, it is termed the Agent's intellect who is the Prince of the World, the giver of all forms, the Prince of the Presence.⁵

As for the matter of praise for the act of representation, we have already commented upon it in our commentary to this treatise. Moreover, we have composed an epistle dealing with this matter which is based on the *Shi'ur Qomah*,⁶ which serves as a commentary on The Song of Songs. He who seeks to understand this should look to what is written there. Therefore, its order suggests that it be joined to what is stated here.

God, may He be praised, will illumine us with His beneficent light.

I have completed the commentary on this noble treatise in the year 5104, on the seventeenth day of the month Tammuz, in the city of Perpignan—may the Supernal keep it stable. “And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there” (Ezek. 48:25). Praise to Him who gives aid, may He be exalted and glorified without end. Amen.⁷

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. This passage bears a striking resemblance to the words of Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, X:7, 1177^b26–1178^a8: “We must . . . so far as we can, make ourselves immortal, and strain every nerve to live in accordance with the best thing in us; for even if it be small in bulk, much more does it in power and worth surpass everything . . . for man, therefore, the life according to reason is best and pleasantest, since reason more than anything else is man. This life therefore is the happiest” (translated by W. D. Ross).

2. Isaac Israeli seems to be the first to have introduced this verse into Jewish philosophy. Cf. A. Altmann, *Isaac Israeli* (Oxford, 1958), p. 195. Narboni's immediate source, however, is Maimonides, *Guide* I:40. While Narboni lets this verse pass in silence in his own *Commentary* to the *Guide*, cf. the remarks of the other commentators *ad locum*. Cf. *Guide* I:70.

3. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 560, n. 13, where the term is shown to derive from the *De Anima* II:2, 414^a19–22. In Hicks's comments on these lines, he calls our attention to the *De Sensu* VI:446^b25 ff.

4. The passage is not authentically Platonic. A. Altmann suggests that this passage may have occasioned the illustration used by Israeli. Cf. *Isaac Israeli*, p. 127. Unfortunately, Steinschneider was misled by his use of the Munich MSS., which in turn led to the difficult translation offered by A. Altmann. The best reading with manuscript support is *yitahhed*, not *yitahher*. As for the actual source of this Platonic tradition, we may exclude Plotinus. However, in the *Tahafut*, Ibn Rushd says that “the soul is closely similar to light; light is divided by the division of illuminated bodies, and is unified (*yattahidu*) when the bodies are annihilated, and the same relation holds between soul and bodies” (*Tahafut al-Tahafut*, trans. S. Van Den Bergh, vol. I, p. 16). As Van Den Bergh points out in his note on this passage, vol. II, p. 15, n. 2, the metaphor of light goes back to Plato, *Republic*, VI, 508b, c, 509b. For a discussion of the simile used by Ibn Rushd, cf. S. C. Tornay, “Averroes' Doctrine of the Mind,” *Philosophical Review*, LII (1943), pp. 277f.

5. Cf. Narboni's *ShQ*, 1.87 (p. 258), p. 274. The source is the *De Anima* III:4, 429^b31–430^a1, which in turn goes back to Plato, *Theaetetus*, 191d, 194c, both of which constitute the classical background for Locke's famous *tabula rasa*.

6. Strictly speaking, it is not God but the Active Intellect which operates on man's intellect.

7. Cf. section three for a discussion of this terminology.

8. Aristotle discusses "priority" at *Categories* XII; *Physics* VIII:7, 260^b15–261^a27; and *Metaphysics* V:11. Narboni uses the term "prior" here in the sense described by Aristotle second in the *Categories*, and first in the *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, i.e., without the hylic intellect conjunction cannot occur, but the hylic intellect can exist without necessitating its perfection in conjunction. Perhaps Narboni specifies "prior in nature" in order to avoid the assumption that the hylic intellect is also prior in time. Aristotle distinguished between an individual's knowledge and knowledge in the universe: "Actual knowledge is identical with its object; in the individual, potential knowledge is in time prior to actual knowledge, but in the universe as a whole it is not even prior in time." *De Anima* III:5, 430^a20–25. It therefore follows that Narboni should study the texts concerning the hylic intellect prior to a study of the texts dealing with its perfection.

9. A second reason for taking up this treatise first is the promise of Aristotle himself to discuss this question. Cf. J. Hercz, *Drei Abhandlungen*, p. 23, n. 36, where similar passages by Ibn Rushd are cited and discussed (text, p. 6). Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, p. 445, which cites the *Middle Commentary*. Cf. Hannes, p. 20, nn. 1, 2, where he discusses the significant change in formulation of Aristotle's question by Ibn Rushd. The passage in question is *De Anima* III:7, 431^b14–16.

10. The reference to Abū Bakr may just as well point to Ibn Tufayl, inasmuch as both he and Ibn Bājja share in this name. In this case Narboni has in mind his *Commentary to Ḥayy ben Yaqzān* (completed 1349), rather than his *Paraphrase of the Tadbir*. Cf. *HebU*, p. 192, n. 615, where Steinschneider is unequivocal in the identification with Ibn Tufayl.

SECTION ONE

1. Cf. n. 9 of Introduction. Hannes, p. 20, n. 1, quotes the opening lines of the Arabic original, the only portion of the text in Ibn Rushd's own words. The Hebrew translation is slavishly literal.

2. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, for a similar passage in the *Middle Commentary*, p. 445; and in the *Long Commentary* (trans. Arthur Hyman, pp. 315 f.), where the same argument is reproduced. As Hannes notes, p. 21, n. 2, Ibn Rushd has adopted the argument from Alexander.

3. Cf. Hannes, p. 22, n. 2.

4. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 244, n. 11. Mackenna translates *Enneads* II:4, 8, "... settles upon it ..."

5. Cf. Hannes, p. 23, n. 2.

6. Narboni quotes this passage in almost literal fashion in *PerS*, p. 76.

7. Cf. n. 7 of Introduction for the bibliographic identity of the critical edition published by A. L. Ivry. Munk, *Mélanges*, already called attention to this interpolation on p. 505, n. 2.

8. Cf. *PerS*, p. 5, l. 10–p. 9, l. 3, and Ivry's notes.

9. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 560, n. 13.

SECTION TWO

1. Ibn Rushd refers to the Aristotelian conception of the unity of the soul developed in part at *De Anima* I:5, 411^b5–30.

2. Cf. *De Anima* I:5, 411^b27ff., and III:3, 327^b14, for the interrelationship of the various operations of the soul. By final perfection, Ibn Rushd is referring to a distinction developed by Aristotle at *De Anima* II:1, 412^a11–412^b5. Cf. Hannes, p. 28, n. 1.

3. Cf. Hannes, p. 29, n. 1.

4. Cf. Aristotle's treatment in his *De Somniis* and *De Divinatione Per Somnum*.

5. The "divine malady" is epilepsy. Cf. *PerS*, p. 80 and n. 335, p. 49. Cf. Aristotle at 956^a16 and Plato, *Phaedrus*, 244 f., where Socrates discusses "a madness which is a divine gift," and which is the source of the chiefest blessings given to man, e.g., prophecy and poetic inspiration.

6. As G. P. Klubertanz shows, the argument over the bodily localization of the psychic powers is of Galenic, rather than of Aristotelian, origin. In his valuable study, *The Discursive Power* (St. Louis, 1952), p. 111, Klubertanz translates the following text from Ibn Rushd's medical compendium known as the *Colliget*, Bk. II, col. 20: "The powers of the brain, that is, the imaginative and the cogitative, and the reminiscing and the conserving powers, although they do not have members or instruments, nevertheless have proper places in the brain, in which their operations are manifested. . . . We say that the imaginative power stands in the prow of the brain. . . . But the cogitative is more manifest in the middle chamber. . . . The place of the reminiscing and conserving power is in the stern or rear part of the head." Cf. also the passage in the *Long Commentary*, ed. Crawford, p. 415, "... dicitur quod virtus ymaginativa est in anteriori cerebri, et cogitativa in medio, et rememorativa in posteriori." A masterful discussion of the so-called internal senses to be found in H. A. Wolfson, "The Internal Senses in Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew Philosophic Texts," *Harvard Theological Review*, XXVIII (1935), pp. 69–133. For Ibn Rushd in particular, cf. pp. 107–13, where Wolfson discusses the threefold and fourfold classifications employed by Ibn Rushd.

7. Discussed by Aristotle at *De Anima* III:1, 425^a27 and *De Memoria* I, 450^a10–13. Cf. W. D. Ross, *Aristotle* (Cleveland, 1960), pp. 138–40.

8. Cf. Hannes, p. 31, n. 2, and A. Altmann, "Ibn Bājja," p. 55, for a discussion of this hierarchical structure.

9. Cf. Hannes, p. 34, n. 1.

10. Cf. Hannes, p. 36, n. 2.

11. This passage is quoted by Narboni in his *PerS*, pp. 75 ff. Cf. Ivry's citation from the *Parva Naturalia* where Ibn Rushd says, "... there is no body in animals which is the substrate of the soul except the natural heat."

12. As is clear from the parallel passage at *PerS*, p. 77, Narboni's elliptical style demands that we complete the thought by returning to the text of Ibn Rushd, i.e., *it necessarily follows that some of the forms will impede upon each other*, which in turn needs the following paragraph in the *Commentary* to finish the exegesis.

13. Cf. *PerS*, p. 78.

14. Narboni refers to Ibn al-Sid al-Batalyawsi, the Spanish philosopher (1052–1127), whose *Kitāb al-Hada-iq* includes a philosophic allegorization of the "ladder-motif" of Muhammed's famous vision during the "night-journey." The text was easily accessible to medieval Jewish philosophers. No less than three Hebrew translations are known to us. Narboni used the translation prepared by Moses Ibn Tibbon, entitled *Sefer ha-'Agulloth ha-Ra'yonioth*, and published by David Kaufmann, *Die Spuren al-Bataljasis in der jüdischen Religionsphilosophie* (Leipzig, 1880). Our passage appears at pp. 17 f. Discussion of the life and works of this philosopher is found in M. Cruz Hernandez, *Historia de la Filosofía Española: Filosofía Hispana-Musulmana*, vol. I (Madrid, 1957), pp. 307–22. The Arabic text was published and translated by Asin Palacios, *Al-Andalus*, vol. V (1940), pp. 63–154. For the Hebrew translations, cf. *HebU*, pp. 186–288; and G. Vajda, "Une version Hébraïque Inconnue des 'Cercles Imaginaires' de Batalyawsi," *extrait du Semitic Studies in Memory of Immanuel Loew* (Budapest, 1947), pp. 3–5.

15. Narboni also identifies the imagination with an angel in his *ShQ*, I. 69 (p. 257), p. 272, n. 52.

16. Plotinus, *Enneads* IV: 4,25 says that when man is absorbed in the Intellectual, "vision and the other acts of sense are in abeyance for the time."

The superiority of Moses' prophecy compared to that of Muhammed is established by the fact that Moses did not use the faculty of imagination. Cf. A. Altmann, "The Ladder of Ascension," *Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to Gershom G. Scholem* (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 10 f. For Maimonides this is one of the distinguishing features of Moses' prophecy, cf. *Hilkhoth Yesode ha-Torah*, VII:6. Leo Strauss wrote an important study of the philosophical background of Maimonides' prophetology, wherein he directly treats the matter of the case of imagination; cf. his *Die philosophische Begründung des Gesetzes: Maimunis Lehre von der Prophetie und ihre Quellen* (in his *Philosophie und Gesetz* [Berlin, 1935], pp. 87–122), pp. 101–105. Cf. F. Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam* (London, 1957), pp. 36–45.

17. Narboni offers a slightly different interpretation of this verse in *ShQ*, p. 263, II. 230 ff.; 284, n. 112.

18. Cf. *PerS*, p. 88, esp. nn. 399, 400. Cf. *De Anima* III:7, 43^b 17.

19. Cf. *PerS*, p. 88, n. 402.

20. Cf. *De Anima* III:7, 431^a 1. Here too Narboni is invoking the epistemic and noetic hierarchy of perfected forms.

21. The parallel passage in *PerS*, p. 89, is no less elliptical. By opposite case he means with respect to the higher form, which is not elevated in its level of existence.

22. Cf. *PerS*, p. 90.

23. Cf. *PerS*, pp. 90–92, for the parallel passage.

24. Cf. *PerS*, pp. 93–95.

25. Cf. *PerS*, p. 95.

26. For bibliographic data, cf. above, p. 14, n. 8.

27. In Ahwani's edition p. 80. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges* p. 443, n. 1.

28. Cf. *PerS*, pp. 79 f.

29. Cf. *PerS*, pp. 82 f.

30. This passage is taken from Maimonides' *Commentary on Avoth* II:13, the Arabic original of which is cited by Hannes, pp. 16f. Cf. *PerS*, p. 83. An English translation of the *Commentary* was published by A. David in *Moses Maimonides: The Commentary to Mishna Aboth* (New York, 1968), cf. esp. p. 38.

31. As in *PerS*, Narboni abruptly cites a passage from the "Eight Chapters" (*Shemonah Peraqim*), which constitute Maimonides' Introduction to *Avoth*. The Arabic text is available in M. Wolff, *Musa Maimuni's Acht Kapitel* (Leyden, 1903²). The Hebrew version, with an annotated translation, was published by J. Gorfinkle, *The Eight Chapters of Maimonides on Ethics* (New York, 1912).

SECTION THREE

1. The antecedent of "his" is Aristotle, the passage *De Anima*, 431^b 17.

2. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, "The terms *Tasawwur* and *Tasdiq* in Arabic Philosophy . . .," *Moslem World*, XXXIII (1943), pp. 114–28. Also to be considered is Aristotle's statement at *De Anima* III:3, 428^a 17: "Neither is imagination any of the things that are never in error . . . for imagination may be false."

3. Cf. Hannes, p. 37, n. 1. At *De Caelo* I:9, 279^a 12 Aristotle asserts that "it is therefore evident that there is no place or void or time outside the heaven." Cf. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 343 f.

4. Cf. Hannes, p. 38, n. 1.

5. For a full discussion of the classification of sciences, cf. H. A. Wolfson, "The Classification of Science in Medieval Jewish Philosophy," *Hebrew Union College Jubilee Volume* (Cincinnati, 1925), pp. 263–316.

6. Ibn Rushd himself says, in describing the argument of section four, "There

is no method more appropriate than this method . . ." Narboni is merely anticipating the forthcoming section by using this quotation to create a transitional passage.

SECTION FOUR

1. Literally, the very soul (*nafs*, *nefesh*) of perception. Ibn Rushd also uses the term "soul" for essence in the *Epitome* of the *Metaphysics*; cf. S. Van Den Bergh, *Die Epitome der Metaphysik des Averroes*, (Leiden, 1924), p. 135, l. 9. The same usage is employed in the *Long Commentary (Tafsir) on the Metaphysics*, ed. M. Bouyges, vol. III (Beirut, 1948), p. 1649, l. 8—a passage cited by Narboni in his *ShQ*, p. 275. Cf. Hannes, p. 40, n. 1.

2. Cf. Hannes, p. 40, n. 2, where Ibn Rushd's modification of a strict Neo-Platonic doctrine is discussed.

3. For a discussion of this term, cf. the article cited above, p. 132, n. 2, "The Terms *Tasawwur* and *Tasdiq*."

4. Ibn Rushd only hints here at what he spells out in great detail elsewhere, i.e., his theory of God's knowledge as a kind of knowledge that transcends the distinction between universal and particular. Cf. the following note.

5. In the *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, Ibn Rushd says that "our knowledge is the effect of the existents, whereas God's knowledge is their cause . . . for it is His knowledge which produces the existents, and it is not the existents which produce His knowledge." (ed. S. V. D. Bergh, p. 285). Cf. G. Vajda, *Albalag* (Paris, 1960), pp. 83 ff. In his *Pirqe Moshe*, Narboni also alludes to this doctrine in the context of prophetic foreknowledge. (Cf. "*Pirqe Moshe le-Moshe Narboni*," ed. C. Sirat, *Tarbis*, XXXIX [1970], p. 303.) Narboni also elaborates on this doctrine throughout his *ShQ*, cf. especially, pp. 271–78.

6. I.e., existence and perception.

7. Cf. *ShQ*, especially pp. 274–78.

SECTION FIVE

1. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 186 f., for a discussion of the interesting history behind this translation; cf. also p. 417, n. 30. Cf. Job 23:3.

2. A striking similarity is found in al-Fārābī's *Letter Concerning the Intellect*, trans. A. Hyman, *Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1967), pp. 218 ff. Cf. *Risalah fi-'l Aql* (ed. M. Bouyges), pp. 23 ff., 11. 30 ff. Cf. Hannes, p. 43, n. 1; p. 44, n. 1.

3. I.e., the Active Intellect.

4. And in section eight, as Hannes points out, Ibn Rushd will argue that the hylic intellect can "become" eternal.

5. Cf. Hannes, p. 46, n. 1.

6. Literally, an element, principle, or letter. Cf. *Metaphysics* I:9, 995^b18, for a characteristic usage, elements. Narboni uses this seemingly inappropriate term for God in his *Commentary on the Guide*, ed. J. Goldenthal (Wien, 1852), at I:62 (p. 10b) and III:18 (p. 55a). Cf. G. Vajda's explanation for this usage as reported by Ch. Touati, "Dieu et Le Monde selon Moïse Narboni," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinaire et Littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 1954, p. 199. Touati concludes that Narboni intentionally employs this ambiguous term in order to emphasize the esoteric, mystical aspect of his thought. We agree with A. L. Ivry, however, that Touati has misread Narboni's essentially philosophic posture. Cf. A. L. Ivry, "The Perfection of the Soul," *JQR*, LVII (1966), p. 288, n. 26.

7. Aristotle's well-known, but difficult, theory of prime matter is discussed at *De Generatione et Corruptione*, II:1, esp. 329^a24–35.

8. Cf. H. A. Wolfson's awesome discussion of the origin, history, and meaning of this term for Avicenna ("predisposition of matter to receive corporeal dimensions"), al-Ghazālī, and Averroes ("dimensionality as such, indeterminate, and limited"), found in *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 579–90. Cf. especially p. 586 for Narboni's summary of the topic, taken from his *Commentary on the Guide*, I:64.

9. A. Hyman has published a critical edition and translation of this text as his dissertation, *Sermo de Substantia Orbis*, Harvard University dissertation, 1953. A partial English translation prepared by Hyman is now accessible in *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Hyman and J. J. Walsh (New York, 1967), pp. 307–14. P. Duhem offers a summary of this work in *Le Système du Monde*, vol. IV (Paris, 1954), pp. 532–59. Narboni completed his *Commentary on the Ma'amar* in 1349. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, p. 504; *HebU*, p. 184. It is possible that Narboni interpolated these lines from that *Commentary*, in the same fashion that he incorporated a section from *PerS* in section one.

10. Aristotle did not say this. Narboni's source was the *Guide*, II:22, which in turn was inspired by Avicenna. Cf. A. Altmann's remarks at *ShQ*, p. 269, n. 38.

11. Cf. *Guide* III:15, and Narboni's comments *ad locum*, p. 36a. For additional material on the medieval conception of God's relation with the impossible, cf. H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza* (Cambridge, 1934), vol. I, pp. 198, 312, 409, 415.

12. The interpretation of this verse is based on the numerical value represented by 'arb'a, four. Cf. Ibn Ezra on Genesis 23:2 as well Rashi. For the Rabbinic background of their comments, and for a fuller appreciation of Narboni's twist, cf. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. VI (Philadelphia, 1928), p. 94, nn. 512, 513. The usual explanation for the town's name is the fact that four giants inhabited the place.

13. Narboni means to distinguish between pre-Aristotelian science, which restricted itself to particular, discrete phenomena, and post-Aristotelian science, which was devoted to explaining nature as a whole. Cf. Aristotle's grand review of science before him in Bk.I of the *Metaphysics* and *Physics* II:2, 194^a19–20.

Aquinas makes a similar statement in the *Disputations, III de Potentia*, 5 (quoted and translated by Thomas Gilby, *St. Thomas Aquinas* [Oxford, 1951], pp. 130 f.).

14. Cf. below section fourteen, p. 86.

15. Cf., e.g., *De Anima* II:1, 412^a10; *Physics* II:1, 193^b7 ff.

16. The literature on this famous controversy is overwhelming. A convenient bibliographic guide is provided by G. Vajda, *Albalag*, (Paris, 1960), p. 34.

SECTION SIX

1. Cf. *De Anima* III:5, 430^a10 ff.

2. Cf. *De Anima* III:5, 430^a15.

3. Cf. Hannes, p. 47, n. 5, where he correctly sees the Aristotelian distinction between intuitively grasped first principles (*archai*) and empirically acquired deductive truths.

4. At *De Anima* II:1, 412^a20–28, Aristotle distinguishes two levels of entelechy in soul, mere possession of knowledge and the actual exercise of knowledge.

5. Cf. Hannes, p. 49, n. 2.

6. Cf. *PerS*, p. 101, where Narboni reproduces this passage. Cf. the comments of Hannes, p. 50, n. 1.

7. The meaning of this passage was one of the questions which prompted Sha'ul ha-Kohen to write to Abrabanel. Cf. *She'eloth Sha'ul ha-Kohen* (Venice, 1574), p. 20b.

8. As Hannes notes, p. 52, n. 1, this marks the end of the first proof for conjunction.

9. For the parallel passage in *PerS*, cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 91 f.

SECTION SEVEN

1. The passage could also be translated: Therefore, only God knows His essence, just as only God knows God. Cf. *ShQ*, p. 260, l. 168; p. 279, n. 79. Cf. *Guide* I:59, 72; II:21.

2. This follows the reading *tavriah*; the more usual idiomatic usage would be *takhriah*, in which case the translation would be: God's knowledge of the future renders the contingent necessary. Both readings have manuscript support. In 1361 Narboni wrote an *Essay on the Freedom of the Will* which was occasioned by the fatalistic determinism espoused by the apostate Abner of Burgos. For the text, cf. *Ma'amar ha-Be'irah*, ed. Eliezer Ashkenazi, *Divre Hakhamim* (Metz, 1849), pp. 37–41; for a discussion of the substance of Narboni's Averroistic position, cf. J. Guttmann, *Philosophies of Judaism* (Garden City, 1966), pp. 232–36; for the historical background of Abner, cf. I. Baer, *The History of the Jews in Christian Spain* (Philadelphia, 1966), pp. 327–54. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, p. 502, n. 1.

SECTION EIGHT

1. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, p. 451; P. S. Christ, *The Psychology of the Active Intellect of Averroes* (Philadelphia, 1926), pp. 52–56. The most penetrating discussion set in the context of the “rational mysticism” of Neoplatonism is to be found in P. Merlan, *Monopsychism Mysticism Metaconsciousness: Problems of the Soul in the Neoplatonist and Neoplatonic Tradition* (The Hague, 1963), pp. 94–102. It would be misleading and imprecise to say that the acquired intellect was annihilated by the Active Intellect.

2. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, pp. 451 ff., and Hannes, p. 54, n. 1.

3. Ibn Rushd develops this argument in section twelve.

4. Aristotle already stated that intellect could be an object of itself, a doctrine that is systematically connected to his doctrine of the Prime Mover developed in *Metaphysics* XII:9, 1074^b33 f. (“Therefore it must be of itself that the divine thought thinks . . . and its thinking is thinking on thinking.”) Cf. *ibid.* XII:7, 107^b19 ff. (And thought thinks on itself because it shares the nature of the object of thought; for it becomes an object of thought in *coming into contact* with and thinking its objects, so that thought and object of thought are the same.) And in the *De Anima*, III:4, 429^b5–430^a9, he defends the view that “mind too is then able to think itself.”

SECTION NINE

1. For a grand review of the development of Aristotle's psychology in Arabic philosophy, cf. S. Munk, *Le Guide des Égarés*, vol. I (Paris, reprint 1960), pp. 305–308. Cf. F. Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam* (London, 1957), pp. 11–29. The proliferation of terminology describing the various stages of the intellect's development is evidence of the subtle distinctions of nuance imposed by later authors on Aristotle. Gauthier reports having discovered no less than twenty-seven different terms without claiming to have exhausted the literature. Cf. L. Gauthier, *Ibn Rochd* (Paris, 1948), p. 238, n. 3. Ibn Rushd reduces this abundance of terms by using an “Ockham's razor” to show that the perfection of the acquired intellect is tantamount to becoming the Active Intellect.

2. A summary of Ibn Rushd's theory of metaphysical symmetry is provided by H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 605–11.

3. There are two possibilities here; Ibn Rushd is referring either to the souls and intellects of the celestial spheres or to the Active Intellect and any given celestial sphere.

4. Cf. *De Anima* II:2, 414^a16 and the fuller discussion at *Metaphysics*, VII:7–8. Cf. Wolfson, *op. cit.*, pp. 573–76.

5. Since the hylic and Active intellects are being discussed here, Narboni understands this verse to mean simply that intellect grasps the essences of things. “Man” can refer to hylic intellect. But Narboni may also have in mind the identi-

fication of Active Intellect with *ishim* (men) made by Maimonides in his *Hilkhoth Yesodē ha-Torah*, II:7.

6. Cf. *Physics* V:3, 226^b24 f.; *Nicomachean Ethics* II:6, 1105^a29.

7. Cf. *De Anima* III:10, 433^a30 f., and I:2, 405^b10 f.

8. For bibliographic data, cf. above, p. 119, n. 9. Our passage is taken from the first chapter of the *Treatise*. Cf. Hyman's dissertation, p. 8, l. 5–p. 9, l. 25 (trans. pp. 155–77).

9. These are the most important Aristotelian passages reflected here: *Physics* II:3, 194^b29–195^a3, II:7; *Metaphysics* V:2, 1013^a7–9, 1013^b3, discuss the discrete identity of efficient and final causes for sublunar bodies; *Metaphysics* XII:7, 1073^a3–13 treats the unmoved substance; *Physics* VII:5, 6, 256^a33–259^a19, and *Metaphysics* XII:8, 1073^a23–1073^b1, argue that the mover of the celestial sphere is unmoved. Cf. also *Metaphysics* XII:9, esp. 1075^a3–5; VII:7, 1072^a19–1072^b2, and 1072^b27–31.

10. Cf. above, n. 2. Narboni is historically accurate. Cf. *Guide*, p. cviii.

11. Cf. *Metaphysics* VIII:5, 1044^b26, 1075^a5–11; *De Generatione et Corruptione* II:7, 8.

12. This is discussed in section fourteen.

13. Cf. Maimonides' use of the verse in his Introduction to the *Guide*, ed. S. Pines, p. 7 (in the Vilna edition, p. 5b).

SECTION TEN

1. Cf. Munk's discussion of these three elements at *Mélanges*, p. 452. Paraphrasing the third element, Munk says: "L'infusion plus ou moins prompte de la forme destinée à transformer l'intellect en acte." With Narboni, Munk sees here a hint of a doctrine of divine grace involved in the process of conjunction. But cf. A. Altmann, "Ibn Bājja on Man's Ultimate Felicity," pp. 65–70. For Ibn Rushd and Narboni, there is no evidence that they believed in a supernatural intervention during the process leading up to and including conjunction.

2. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, p. 453, for a discussion of this remarkable passage. Also to be consulted is H. Corbin, *Histoire de la Philosophie Islamique* (France, 1964), p. 342.

3. Although Ibn Rushd seems to be saying that the Sinaitic theophany was given a trinitarian interpretation, I have not found a direct usage of these passages for such a purpose. Cf. John 15:26 (. . . even the Spirit of Truth who proceeds from the Father . . .). Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, vol. 1 (ed. 3) (Cambridge, 1970), p. 300. Islamic philosophy directed a great deal of polemical attention to the dogma of the Trinity, an antipathy inherited from the *Quran* itself. Cf. *Suras* 4:171, 5:71 f., and 9:30. References to this literature, including the Averroan corpus are provided by M. Steinschneider, *Polemische und Apologetische Literatur in arabischer Sprache* (1877).

4. This was the standard view in medieval astronomy. The entire heavens

made a daily circuit (twenty-four-hour) around the earth, while each sphere within the heaven moved in its own particular orbit. Cf. *De Caelo* II:6, 8; *Metaphysics* XII:8.

5. The text seems to be corrupt here inasmuch as it implies a cessation of the heavenly circuit. But cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 631, n. 9.

6. Ibn Rushd probably has the following passage in mind: "One characteristic is that their movements are faster or slower according to their distances. That is, once it has been admitted that the outermost revolution of the heaven is simple and is the fastest of all, whereas that of the inner spheres is slower and composite . . . the nearer in a longer time, the farthest in a shorter." *De Caelo* II:10.

7. Cf. H. Malter, "Medieval Terms for Nature, *Festschrift zu Hermann Cohen's Siebzigstem Geburtstag* (Berlin, 1912), pp. 253–56.

8. Cf. below, section fifteen.

9. The well-known *Maqāsid al-Falāsifah* by Al-Ghazālī, a compendium of the views of the philosophers against which al-Ghazālī fought with great passion. One of Narboni's earliest works was a *Commentary* on the *Kawwanoth*. Cf. *HebU*, pp. 296–301, 311–19. Cf. Vatican Ms. 260, 79v–80r, for our passage and Narboni's comments.

10. In Ibn Tufayl's philosophic romance, the hero *Hayy ben Yaqzān* (literally—The Alive Son of the Awakened One) is able to attain a state of perfect metaphysical knowledge by sheer application of his innate powers without the benefit of books or instructors.

11. Cf. Narboni's passing reference to this exegesis in *ShQ*, p. 280, n. 83.

12. The force of Narboni's almost rhetorical question derives from the fact that only a divinely revealed, authentic Scripture should be able to allude to metaphysical truths in a popular garb addressed to the vulgar. Narboni cannot deny Ibn Rushd's interpretation, so he resorts to Maimonides' solution by declaring the *Quran* a plagiarism.

13. Cf. *Guide*, trans. S. Pines, p. 383 (Vilna ed. p. 84b). The passage immediately following is found on p. 374 (Vilna, p. 81a).

14. Cf. *Ekhah Rabbah* II:13 (in the Soncino edition of the English translation of the Midrash, p. 176).

15. Narboni returns to *Guide* II:40, trans. S. Pines, p. 384 (Vilna, p. 84b).

16. The respect paid to Abraham by Muhammed in the *Quran* is well known. Cf. *Sura* III:60—No: Abraham in truth was not a Jew, neither a Christian; but he was a Muslim and one of pure faith (trans. A. Arberry). In his study of the Jewish influence on the second and third *Suras*, A. I. Katsh quotes Baiḍāwī, who affirmed that "(the sect) of Islam is essentially the sect of Abraham." Cf. A. I. Katsh, *Judaism and the Koran* (New York, 1962), p. 105.

17. That Abraham fulfilled the entirety of Jewish law, including the later Rabbinic elaborations, is well known in Jewish tradition, although this was not a unanimous opinion. Cf. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. V (Philadelphia, 1925), pp. 187, n. 51; 235, n. 40; and 259, n. 275. The "testament" was a

popular literary genre in medieval Jewish life. While children were required by law to obey their father's wishes, the halakhic status of the testament was vastly inferior to that of the Torah. Hence even if Abraham obeyed the entirety of Jewish law, which was only to be officially promulgated at Sinai, the authority of his commanding it to his children was severely restricted. Narboni is echoing the Maimonidean position that the Law derives its sole authority from the legislative activity of Moses at Sinai. To grant Abraham's authority as a legislator would have serious implications for the inviolability of the *Mosaic* Law. The details of this argument will have to be developed in another context. For a selection of the medieval testaments, cf. I. Abrahams, *Hebrew Ethical Wills* (Philadelphia, 1926). Cf. *Guide* II:39.

18. The reference, although veiled, is to Muhammed.

19. Narboni returns to *Guide* II:40, trans. S. Pines, p. 384 (Vilna, pp. 84b–85a).

20. Narboni is alluding to the Rabbinic tradition concerning Moses' abstention from sexual contact with his wife. Cf. Ginzberg, *op. cit.*, p. 419, n. 122. According to some traditions, it was Moses' continence that led Miriam and Aaron to criticize him, thereby bringing a punishment upon themselves. "Miriam said: 'The Word is upon me, but I did not keep away from my husband.' Aaron said: 'The Word was upon me, but I did not keep away from my wife. . . . But he [Moses] because of his presumptuous spirit, kept away from his wife.'" Cf. *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, trans. J. Goldin (New Haven, 1955), p. 55.

21. Narboni returns to *Guide* II:40, trans. S. Pines, p. 384. (Vilna, p. 85a).

22. The text escapes my understanding. The context is sexual abstention. The manuscripts offer no help.

23. What is clear, however, is that the polemical thrust of this passage is directed against Muhammed, whose incontinence is a popular theme in anti-Islamic literature.

24. I have not been able to discover any use of Exodus 20:18 as a proof text for the trinitarian doctrine.

25. Narboni is quoting the *Guide* III:9, trans. S. Pines, p. 437 (Vilna, p. 12b).

26. Cf. Maimonides, *Hilkhoth Yesodei ha-Torah* I:1. For a discussion of the background and substance of Maimonides' views on the relation between knowledge of God and the love of God, cf. G. Vajda, *L'Amour de Dieu dans La Théologie Juive du Moyen Age* (Paris, 1957), pp. 118–40.

27. Or, metaphysics.

28. Narboni is quoting the *Guide*, I:5, trans. S. Pines, p. 29 (Vilna, pp. 20b–21a).

29. Narboni now skips to *Guide* III:9, trans. S. Pines, pp. 436, 437 (Vilna, p. 12b).

30. Narboni is highlighting the *Guide* I:34, trans. S. Pines, pp. 72–79 (Vilna, pp. 52b–55a).

31. Narboni, following his own organization of Maimonides' views, now quotes the *Guide* I:33, trans. S. Pines, p. 71 (Vilna, p. 52a).

32. Maimonides defines guidance at *Guide* I:46: "... guidance (*hayasharah, irshād*) leading to the knowledge of the existence of a thing can be had even if that should be through the accidents of the thing or through its acts or through a relation—which may be very remote from the thing . . ." trans. S. Pines, p. 97 (Vilna, p. 63b).

33. Narboni now quotes a long passage from *Guide* II:33 interrupted by his own choice of Biblical proof texts or comments. For a different, more apologetically traditional understanding of Maimonides, cf. A. J. Reines, *Maimonides and Abrabanel on Prophecy* (Cincinnati, 1970), esp. pp. 28–48. Brackets indicate Narboni's interpolations. In S. Pine's translation, the text commences on p. 365 (Vilna, p. 71a)—but Narboni rearranges the sequence of Maimonides' argument.

34. Narboni's interpolation emphasizes the people's ability to comprehend what God will say.

35. Cf. *Makkoth* 24, *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* I:2.

36. A transitional word interpolated by Narboni.

37. *Guide* II:33, trans. S. Pines, p. 364 (Vilna, p. 70a).

38. *Guide* II:33, trans. S. Pines, p. 366 (Vilna, pp. 71b–72b).

SECTION ELEVEN

1. Cf. *De Anima* II:5, 417^b22.

2. Multiplicity derives from its association with matter. Contrasted to the content of the Active Intellect, the abstractions performed by the intellect derive from a number of sense perceptions of things materially existing in the physical world. Cf. *Metaphysics* VIII:6, 1045^b23, a passage which to Ibn Rushd's mind referred to the separate intellects. "And all things which have no matter are without qualification especially unities."

3. Inasmuch as the Active Intellect is accidentally related to the hylic intellect, it is accidentally compromised by contamination with multiplicity. But the Active Intellect *per se* is absolutely simple. In the *Long Commentary on the De Anima*, Ibn Rushd formulates the argument in this way: "For since conception by the intellect, as Aristotle says, is like perception by the senses—but perception by a sense is accomplished through two principles, one of which is that *object* through which sense perception becomes true (and this is the sensible outside the soul), and the other is that *subject* through which the sense perception is an existing form (and this is the first actuality of the sense organ), it is likewise necessary that the intelligibles in actuality have two principles, one of which is the object (subjectum) through which they are true, namely, the forms which are the true images, the other one of which is that subject (subjectum) through which the intelligibles are one of the existing things in the world, and this is the material intellect" (Crawford ed., p. 400; Eng. trans., A. Hyman, pp. 317 f.).

4. For Ibn Rushd the relative rank of the various separate intelligences depends on the quality of their knowledge of God, but not on their position in the

causal chain of emanations originating with God, the view espoused by Avicenna. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, "The Plurality of Movers in Aristotle and Averroes," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, LXIII (1958), p. 245.

5. I.e. the possibility for the hylic intellect of breaking its connection with the implied multiplicity of the imaginative forms.

6. Once the intelligible has been abstracted from the particular set of imaginative forms unique to each person, like mathematical truths, the intelligible will be the same for any man who possesses it.

7. For "conception" and "verification," cf. H. A. Wolfson, "The Terms *Tasawwur* and *Tasdiq* in Arabic Philosophy and their Greek, Latin, and Hebrew Equivalents," *Moslem World*, XXXIII (1943), pp. 114–28. For induction, cf. *Posterior Analytics* II:19, 100^a14–100^b17; *Nicomachean Ethics*, VI:3, 1139^b26–34. Cf. W. D. Ross, *Aristotle* (New York, reprint 1962), pp. 42–44.

8. Perhaps Ibn Rushd is thinking of al-Ghazālī.

9. By science, Ibn Rushd probably means knowledge of the divine realm of celestial intelligences.

10. For a general discussion of the conceptions of truth in medieval philosophy which reflect Aristotle's twofold criteria of self-evident and self-consistent, cf. H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, vol. II (New York, 1958), pp. 98 ff.

11. A rhapsodic term for the actualization of the hylic intellect by the Active Intellect.

12. Narboni is not explicit as to which of Ibn Rushd's works on the *De Anima* he is quoting. We may exclude the *Long Commentary*. Perhaps what Narboni has in mind is this passage from the *Epitome*: "My intelligible of 'man,' for example, is different from its intelligible for Aristotle. For its intelligible for me is certainly based on images of men which are different from the men upon whose images the intelligibles of Aristotle were based" (Ahwani ed., p. 82).

13. So too in *ShQ*, cf. p. 267, 21.

14. I.e., the Sufis.

SECTION TWELVE

1. As Narboni will emphasize, the distinction between a force-with-a-body and a force-in-a-body is just another way of formulating the distinction between a connection of inexistence and a connection of mixture. Since it has already been shown that the hylic intellect is linked with the imaginative forms by a connection of inexistence, i.e., it is with-a-body, conjunction would be impossible only if this were to be false.

2. Cf. *De Anima* III:7, 431^b17.

3. The sensible forms, for example, are a necessary condition for their transformation by the imagination into imaginative forms.

4. Or, in metaphysics. This was the subject of the passage from the *Sermo de Substantia Orbis* cited in the *Commentary* on section nine.

5. That the celestial bodies do not undergo change and are therefore not subject to weariness, is also taught by Ibn Rushd in the *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, vol. I, ed. S. Van Den Bergh, p. 111 (cf. n. 3); and p. 294 (cf. n. 6). The Aristotelian background is: *De Caelo* II:1, 284^a13 and *Metaphysics* IC:8, 1050^b24.

6. I.e., the hylic intellect. The argument raises this question: since the hylic intellect is like a celestial body, then it is not a condition for the intelligibles. But Ibn Rushd has argued that although not a sufficient condition, the hylic intellect is a necessary one.

7. The subject is the hylic intellect. Cf. *De Anima* III:5, 430^a18 ff.

8. The text appears to have suffered corruption here, as the abrupt switch from a singular to plural language seems to indicate.

9. Cf. *Genesis Rabbah* 50:12 and parallels.

10. I.e. the body to which the hylic intellect is tethered by a link of inexistence.

11. What follows here is Narboni's summary of the general doctrine of change widely held in the Middle Ages. For a helpful overview, cf. S. Kurland's English translation of Ibn Rushd's *Middle Commentary* on Aristotle's *De Generatione et Corruptione* (Cambridge, 1958), p. 141. For a general discussion of Aristotle's opinions on motion and change, cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 498–503, 523–26, 531–33.

12. Narboni alludes to the already familiar double-subject argument employed by Ibn Rushd. Cf. above, p. 125, n. 3. Also to be consulted is A.L. Ivry, "Averroes on Intellection and Conjunction," *JAOS*, LXXXVI (1966), pp. 80–82.

SECTION THIRTEEN

1. Cf. *De Anima* III:7, 431^b17.

2. The underlying philosophic principle implicit here, as it is throughout the work, is the Empedoclean principle that "like knows like."

3. An equally valid translation would be: abstracted [by intellect] from magnitude.

4. Cf. above, n. 3.

5. The text is difficult and seems to have been corrupted. The manuscript variants are of no help.

6. This is another of the well-known points on which Averroes differed from Avicenna on the understanding of Aristotle's admittedly unclear opinion concerning the separate intelligences. "... like Alexander, he [sc. Avicenna] does not include sensation among the faculties of the soul mentioned by him, though, without any precedent, he includes among them imagination. ... Averroes, however, explicitly says that the celestial body is in no need of a "sensitive or imaginative soul" (H. A. Wolfson, "The Problem of the Souls of the Spheres from the Byzantine Commentaries on Aristotle through the Arabs and St. Thomas to Kepler," offprint from the *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* #16, p. 85). Cf. *Die Metaphysik des Averroes*, trans. M. Horten (Halle, 1912), p. 166, l. 36:

Tahafut al-Tahafut, vol. I, ed., S. Van Den Bergh, p. 301—"I say: What he [sc. Ghazālī] mentions here is, to my knowledge, not said by any philosophers except Avicenna, namely, that the heavenly bodies have representations." This passage is cited by Shem-Tov Falaqera in his *Moreh ha-Moreh*, ed., M. Bisliches (Pressburg, 1837), p. 79.

7. Cf. above p. 52, n. 1.

SECTION FOURTEEN

1. Al-Fārābī originally subscribed to the possibility of conjunction, but later changed his mind. Cf. above, p. 15, n. 24. In the first of the two smaller treatises written by Ibn Rushd, *Drei Abhandlungen über die Conjunction*, ed., J. Hercz (Berlin, 1869), pp. 7, 9 [Hebrew text], al-Fārābī is subjected to an *ad hominem* attack. Falaqera is understandably skeptical of the ability of philosophers to serve as dependable guides. Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 111 f. Cf. *Gorgias* 537.

2. Cf. above, p. 114, n. 5.

3. Cf. above, p. 118, n. 1.

4. Cf. Ibn Rushd's remarks here with al-Fārābī, *The Letter Concerning the Intellect*, trans. A. Hyman, *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed., A. Hyman and J. J. Walsh (New York, 1967), p. 220. Narboni quotes this passage in his *ShQ*, p. 257, l. 78, p. 273, n. 56.

5. The identification of this passage escapes me.

6. This passage, too, perhaps from the *Quran*, eludes identification.

7. Cf. I. Goldziher, *Die Zahiriten* (reprint, 1884), pp. 94–102, for the most plausible source of this expression. The phrase is ascribed to Muhammed by all authorities, and reflects the response of Islamic jurists to the divergent legal opinions generated by the use of hermeneutical principles like *Qiyas* (analogy).

8. The other "man" (*'ish*) alluded to is the Active Intellect. When the hylic intellect actualizes its first disposition by becoming an acquired intellect, the acquired intellect constitutes a second disposition which is actualized through conjunction with the Active Intellect, and which results in the obliteration of the acquired intellect. Echoed in Narboni's exegesis is the tradition of identifying the Active Intellect with the name "Men" (*'ishim*). Cf. Maimonides, *Hilkhoth Yesodē ha-Torah*, II:7. Cf. below, no. 10.

9. I.e., the diurnal and specific motions of each sphere.

10. In addition to the passage in the *Hilkhoth Yesodē ha-Torah* II:7, cf. also Joseph Ibn 'Aqnin, *Hitgalluth ha-Sodoth* (*Divulgatio Mysteriorum Luminumque Apparentia*), ed. and trans. A. S. Halkin (Jerusalem, 1964), p. 6, l. 14. "And we entitle this rank [the Active Intellect]—Men, because it is close to men inasmuch as it delivers the word of the Creator to them." The Active Intellect is considered to be the separate intelligence which moves the moon. It was a striking discovery to learn that in ancient Babylonian mythology, Sin, the Moon-God, was sometimes called "Men." Cf. F. Cumont, *Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans* (New York, 1912), p. 125.

11. In this exegesis Lot represents the first hylic disposition which is obliterated when the second disposition (Abraham) conjoins with the Active Intellect.

12. Narboni is quoting the *Tafsir on the Metaphysics* at C. 36. It will be found in M. Bouyges, *Averroes Tafsir Ma Ba'd At-Tabi'at* (Beyrouth, 1948), pp. 1592–96 in vol. III. Cf. *HebU*, pp. 171–77. Narboni seems to be citing Moses Ibn Tibbon's translation of this section.

13. Narboni is citing *Guide* II:4, trans. S. Pines, pp. 257–59 (Vilna, pp. 20a–21b). Cf. Munk's notes *ad locum*, and the passionate tone of the traditional commentators who contrast Averroes and Maimonides.

14. Narboni unequivocally joins with Ibn Rushd in identifying God with the Prime Mover. For the literature, cf. G. Vajda, *Albalag* (Paris, 1960), p. 32. Of great value is S. Pine's discussion, found in his introduction to his translation of the *Guide*, pp. cxiii–cxv, where Maimonides' contradictory assertions on this matter are given a judicious evaluation. It has already been shown that this crucial disagreement stems from the divergent interpretations of Aristotle by Alexander and Themistius. Themistius argued that God—the Cause of all being—transcends the physical cosmos, whereas Alexander, consistently the "naturalist," affirmed God's identity with the Prime Mover. Cf. G. Vajda, ed., "Moses b. Joseph Ha-Levi, *Ma'amar Elohi*," *Revue Thomiste*, 48 (1948), pp. 480–508; H. A. Wolfson, "Notes on Proofs of the Existence of God in Jewish Philosophy," *HUCA*, I (1924), pp. 590 ff., and "Averroes' Lost Treatise on the Prime Mover," *HUCA*, XXIII (1950–51), pt. 1, pp. 683 ff.; and A. Altmann, "Aristotelianism, Jewish," *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Also to be consulted are: Abrabanel, *Atereth Zeqenim* (Warsaw, 1874), pp. 15b ff.; H. A. Davidson, *The Philosophy of Abraham Shalom* (Berkeley, 1964), pp. 48 ff.; and Joseph Albo, *Sefer ha-'Ikkarim*, ed. and trans. I. Husik (Philadelphia, 1946), vol. III, pp. 31 ff.

15. This is exactly Joseph Ibn 'Aqnin's conclusion—cf. *loc. cit.*

16. Cf. H. A. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle*, pp. 605–11.

17. Ibn Rushd originally subscribed to the emanation schema. Narboni is quoting here from the *Tafsir on the Metaphysics*. Cf. A. Altmann's nn. 62, 64, in his edition of the *ShQ*, p. 274, where Narboni cites the same passage.

18. The philosophic allegorization of Canticles was initiated by Maimonides and consummated by Joseph Ibn 'Aqnin's threefold *Commentary* (literal, midrashic, philosophic). Cf. *Guide* III:51. Also to be consulted is A. S. Halkin, "Ibn 'Aqnin's Commentary on the Song of Songs," *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume*, pp. 389–424.

19. Cf. *Guide* III:51, trans. S. Pines, p. 623 (Vilna, p. 66).

20. The meaning of this passage escapes me

SECTION FIFTEEN

1. Ibn Rushd's admiration for the peripatetic school of philosophy is an extension of his exalted opinion of Aristotle. P. Duhem has collected Ibn Rushd's encomia in vol. IV of *Le Système du Monde* (Paris, 1954), pp. 310–13. Cf. J.

Tahafut al-Tahafut, vol. I, ed., S. Van Den Bergh, p. 301—"I say: What he [sc. Ghazālī] mentions here is, to my knowledge, not said by any philosophers except Avicenna, namely, that the heavenly bodies have representations." This passage is cited by Shem-Tov Falaqera in his *Moreh ha-Moreh*, ed., M. Bisliches (Pressburg, 1837), p. 79.

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Hercz, *Drei Abhandlungen über die Möglichkeit der Conjunction* (Berlin, 1869), p. 1, n. 1.

2. The text is difficult.

3. Although Narboni forces an interpretation upon this verse, we may safely assume that the translator mangled the original Arabic, either for spite or because of an innocent misunderstanding. Would that it read—"I take no delight in being associated."

4. The translator was inaccurate, perhaps in this case for reasons of piety, as evidenced in his substitution of pronouns for the name of God.

5. It would be difficult to underestimate the place of prayer in Islam. But implicit in Ibn Rushd's exegesis is a qualitative distinction establishing a hierarchy of prayer. On the lower level is the kind of prayer (*ṣalāt*) established as an aid for man in preserving the societal and moral obligations and values of the community. At a higher level is the contemplative concentration on God (*dhikr*). For the Islamic mystics, the Sufīs, *dhikr* is the means leading to an ecstatic, intuitive experience of the divine which has the tendency to overcome man's consciousness of his ego-identity. For the philosopher, *dhikr* is the mind's exclusive preoccupation with the metaphysical truths which provide a clear and distinct idea of God's unity. It is what Maimonides described as "intellectual worship" of God (*Guide* III:51). Ibn Rushd represents the philosophic tendency; and although his thought is surrounded by controversy, Avicenna represents the mystical. Cf. his use of this same verse in *Risālah fī Mahiyyat al-Ṣalāt* (Traité sur la Nature de la Prière), ed. M. A. F. Mehren, *Traites Mystiques d'Abou Ali . . . ou d'Avicenne* (Leyde, 1899), p. 39 (text), p. 22 (paraphrase). Cf. L. Gardet, *Le Pensée Religieuse D'Avicenne* (Paris, 1951), pp. 135–38.

6. Fasting (*ṣaum*), like prayer, is an integral part of Islamic piety. Cf. *Quran* II:178–83; and the article in the *El*, vol. IV, pp. 192–99.

7. The source and import of this passage escape me.

8. Cf. above, p. 117, n. 28.

9. This touches upon the so-called Averroistic doctrine of the double truth, the literature and debate over which grow unabated. For a recent discussion that shows familiarity with the scholarly debate, cf. P. Merlan, *Monopsychism Mysticism Metaconsciousness* (The Hague, 1963), pp. 102–13. Of inestimable value is G. Hourani, *Averroes on the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy* (London, 1961).

10. Cf. the uncomplimentary remarks by Maimonides on the physicians who refuse to recognize the pedagogic techniques of the Rabbis in his *Haqdamah le-Pereq Heleq* (Jerusalem, 1960).

11. Cf. al-Fārābī, "The Attainment of Happiness," *Alfarabi's Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle* (Ithaca, 1969), p. 43; and *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, ed. S. Van Den Bergh, vol. I, p. 299, n. 2.

12. Narboni may be playing on the warning expressed in Exodus 33:20.

13. The verse literally rendered reads, "for them who dwell before the Lord to eat their fill, and for stately clothing." Narboni is following Maimonides' use of

the Rabbinic understanding of the verse, cf. *Guide* III; Introduction, trans. S. Pines, p. 415, n. 3.

14. The interpretation seems forced.

15. *Ibn Thofail: Hayy Ben Yaqdhan*, ed.², ed. and trans. L. Gauthier.

16. The passage is found in the work cited above, n. 15, p. 3, and is traditionally associated with the martyr Hallāj. Cf. *HebU*, p. 339, n. 552.

17. Maimonides' use of the verse is probably Narboni's source. Cf. *Guide* III:51, trans. S. Pines, p. 621. Narboni cites this verse but interprets somewhat differently in chap. 2 of his *Pirqē Moshe*. There it is taken to mean that perfection consists of worship and deeds, so that the one who does not obey the ritual laws is guilty of "cutting the saplings." Cf. "*Pirqē Moshe le-Moshe Narboni*," *Tarbiš*, XXXIX (1970), p. 304.

18. Cf. Joseph ben Gorion ha-Cohen, *Sefer Yossipon*, ed. H. Hominer (Jerusalem, 1967), p. 10, where the phrase is somewhat but insignificantly, different. For the ultimate source and context of this passage, cf. Josephus, *Antiquities* X:11, 5. Cf. *Sanhedrin* 93b and J. Goldin's edition of the *Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*, pp. 34f. Finally, cf. Daniel 6:11, 17, and L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. VI (Philadelphia, 1925).

19. Cf. *Shabbath* 149 and *Guide* III:51, trans. S. Pines, p. 622. Thus a single passage may be read in any one of three ways, Biblical, Rabbinic, Philosophic, something I tried to convey in the translation.

20. I.e., if it is possible for the true prophet, Moses, to know things in their particularity . . .

21. Cf. *Guide* II:36, trans. S. Pines, p. 369. This theory was taken from al-Fārābī, Cf. F. Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam* (London, 1957), pp. 36–44.

22. The appreciation for Aristotle was not restricted to Ibn Rushd, cf. above, p. 129, n. 1.

SECTION SIXTEEN

1. In addition to the literature already cited above, p. 130, n. 9, the following should be consulted, B. H. Zedler, "Averroes and Immortality," *New Scholasticism*, XXXVIII (1954), pp. 436–53.

2. Cf. O. Hamelin, *La Théorie de L'Intellect d'après Aristote et ses Commentateurs* (Paris, 1953), pp. 48–53; P. Merlan, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–51, 54–56, 58 f., 122–24.

3. Cf. *Epitome on the De Anima*, ed. Ahwani, p. 80.

4. Cf. *Gorgias* 526, and 523 for the myth; *Symposium* 180b; *Republic* VII:519c.

5. Cf. above, p. 16, n. 34.

6. This raises the interesting question of what attitude should be taken toward a martyr. Al-Fārābī cites with approval the example of Socrates, "for when he knew that he could not survive except by conforming to false opinions and lead-

ing a base way of life, he preferred death to life." "The Philosophy of Plato," *Alfarabi's Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle*, trans. M. Mahdi (Ithaca, 1969), p. 64. For Ibn Bājja, cf. L. Berman's partial translation of the *Regimen* in *Medieval Political Philosophy*, ed. R. Lerner and M. Mahdi (New York, 1963), pp. 130 f. For Narboni's *Paraphrase* of the *Regimen*, cf. "Hanhagath ha-Mitbodeded," *Qobes 'al-Yad*, XI, ed. D. Herzog, pp. 13 f.

7. I.e., whether or not conjunction is considered as a possibility.

8. Narboni conflates the Biblical idioms.

9. Narboni's fondness for discovering philosophic doctrines in personal names finds expression here too. Cain represents material acquisition—cf. Gen. 4:1, where the Biblical derivation is based on the root *QNH*, to acquire. There is also a series of ancient traditions which ascribe to Seth great wisdom, especially in astronomy, and no doubt they were in Narboni's mind. Cf. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. V (Philadelphia, 1925), p. 149, n. 53.

10. I.e., Narboni understands Maimonides as having accepted the doctrine of the immortality of acquired knowledge, and the substantiality of the soul. Yet Maimonides is ambiguous on these points, perhaps by design. In *Guide* I:70, the material intellect is defined as a mere disposition (Vilna, p. 70a), and in I:72, it is described as being "in the body and inseparable from it" (Vilna, p. 115a). But in the same chapter (p. 115b), he argues that the "acquired intellect is not a faculty in the body but is truly separate from the organic body and overflows toward it."

11. The association of philosophers with "golden" is somewhat obscure. In the *Cratylus* 398c, gold is said to connote the good and the noble, and in the *Republic* V:468e, it is said that the hero-guardians who die gloriously in war are members of the "golden race." Cf. *Republic* III:415a, and Ibn Rushd's *Commentary on Plato's Republic*, trans. and ed. E. I. J. Rosenthal (Cambridge, 1956), p. 143.

12. Isaac Israeli was among the first to have linked traditional Jewish eschatology with the Neoplatonic tradition. Cf. A. Altmann and S. M. Stern, *Isaac Israeli* (Oxford, 1958), p. 192. Paradise is identified with intellectual communion with God by Hillel of Verona, *Tagmulē ha-Nefesh* (Leiden, 1888), p. 21b. Narboni makes a parallel assertion in *Pirqē Moshe*, chap. 1. Cf. "Pirqē Moshe le-Moshe Narboni," ed. Colette Sirat, *Tarbiš*, XXXIX (1970), p. 303.

13. Echoed here are the Rabbinic traditions which teach that the angel of death has no power over the inhabitants of Luz. Cf. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. VI (Philadelphia, 1928), p. 186, n. 28.

14. Cf. above, p. 16, n. 34.

15. A promise which Narboni met in 1349.

16. Cf. Munk, *Mélanges*, p. 503, n. 2. Narboni's salutation to Pedro IV of Aragon is not a perfunctory exercise of etiquette. Pedro IV was a true patron of the sciences and of the Jews, although his record is not altogether clear of blight. Cf. I. Baer, *The History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, vol. II (Philadelphia, 1966), pp. 24 f., 28–34, 88–92.

APPENDIX

1. Cf. *HebU*, p. 197 f.

2. I.e., the creation or generation of that human intellect.

3. I.e., this would not *a priori* preclude forming a conception.

4. The reference may very well be to our text, for which reason Narboni decided to append it.

5. Cf. *ShQ*, p. 267, n. 21.

6. For the bibliographic entry, cf. above, p. 17, n. 38.

7. These last lines are missing in the Bodl. Ms. Mich. 119.

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