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Are there Second Intentions in De Interpretatione *16 a 3-8?*

The Hebrew Aristotelian Commentary Tradition in the 13th-15th centuries

Yehuda Halper

Abstract
Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* 16 a 3-8 describes the relationship between writing, words, meanings, and things. Christian and Jewish interpreters took different approaches to interpreting this passage. Scholastic thinkers tended to examine the differences between meanings and the meaning of meanings, or first-second intentions, and this terminology is even reflected in William of Luna's translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on this passage. The 14th c. Jewish interpreters, who relied on Jacob Anatoli's 13th c. translation of Averroe's *Middle Commentary*, tended not to find the first-second intention distinction in *De Interpretatione* 16 a 3-8, and instead took Averroes' account of meaning at face value. This changed in the 15th c. when Jewish thinkers began to engage more directly and more significantly with Latin scholastic works, and began to interpret Aristotle accordingly.

On March 18, 1229, after successfully negotiating a peace treaty with the Ayyubid Sultan, al-Kamil, Frederick II was crowned king of Jerusalem. This marked the greatest territorial achievement of the Holy Roman Empire, an empire that now extended from Southern France to Jerusalem, and from Southern Italy to Northern Germany. Frederick II also sought to usher in a new era of intellectual dominance in Europe and to that end sponsored an extensive project translating crucial Arabic scientific works, particularly Averroes' commentaries, from Arabic into Latin.[1] At least 15 translations of Averroes' commentaries were produced between 1224 and 1250 by this group of thinkers, the most prominent of whom were Michael Scot and William of Luna.[2] These translations

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[1] See, e.g., E.H. Kantorowizc, *Frederick The Second: 1194-1250*, trans. A.O. Lorimer, Ungar, New York 1931, pp. 132-5, 197-205, 338-50. On Frederick II's contribution to science and the translation of scientific works see *Le Scienze alla corte di Federico II (= Micrologus 2)*, Brepols, Turnhout 1994. On Frederick II's connections with Arab scholars and the possibility, attested by Giles of Rome, that Averroes' sons may have themselves been in contact with the Emperor, see Ch. Burnett, "The 'Sons of Averroes with the Emperor Frederick' and the Transmission of the Philosophical Works by Ibn Rushd", in G. Endress - J. Aersten - K. Braun (eds.), *Averroes and the Aristotelian Tradition*, Brill, Leiden 1999, pp. 259-99. Frederick II was not the only sponsor of these Latin translations. On papal support for this work, see A. Paravicini Bagliani, *Medicina e scienze della natura alla corte dei Papi nel Duecento*, Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, Spoleto 1991, pp. 55-84, esp. pp. 58-62.

[2] See D.N. Hasse, "Latin Averroes Translations of the First Half of the Thirteenth Century", in A. Musco (ed.), *Universality of Reason. Plurality of Philosophies in the Middle Ages*, Officina di Studi Medievali, Palermo 2012, pp. 149-77 and Id., "Influence of Arabic and Islamic Philosophy on the Latin West", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/arabic-islamic-influence/>. On what is known of Michael Scot's role in this translation project see Ch. Burnett, "Michael Scot and the Transmission of Scientific Culture from Toledo to Bologna via the Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen", in *Le Scienze alla corte di Federico II* (above, n. 1), pp. 101–26. Burnett traces Michael Scot's movements from Toledo to Bologna to

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made their way to Paris, Cologne, and throughout Western Europe as they were read, studied, interpreted, and discussed in the universities and studia.[3]

Now, Frederick II's patronage spurred a rebirth of Aristotelianism not only in Latin, but also in Hebrew. The central figure for providing Hebrew readers with foundational texts of Aristotelian science was a man named Jacob Anatoli, who had emigrated from Provence to Naples in 1231 and translated into Hebrew Averroes' five major logical Middle Commentaries: *Isagoge*, *Categories*, *De Interpretatione*, *Analytica Priora* and *Posteriora* along with Averroes' *Epitome* of Ptolemy's *Almagest*.[4] In a note at the end of his translation of *Analytica Posteriora*, i.e., at the end of his translations of the Organon, Anatoli thanks God for granting Frederick the means to support him materially by providing him with food and money.[5] Anatoli does not say that Frederick II sponsored his Hebrew translations, but only that the Emperor was his patron.[6] Indeed, it seems possible to me, especially given Anatoli's knowledge of Arabic and interest in Averroes' logical works, that Frederic extended his patronage to Anatoli so that he might contribute to the Latin translations of Averroes via some

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Frederick's court in Palermo. On William of Luna, to whom the translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on *De Interpretatione* is attributed, see the introduction to Averroes, *Commentum Medium Super Libro Peri Hermeneias Aristotelis*, trans. Wilhelm De Luna (attributed), ed. R. Hissette, Peeters, Louvain 1996, pp. 1*-7*. Hissette sees the attribution of this work to William of Luna as probable, though not beyond all doubt.

[3] See, e.g., P. Glorieux, *La Faculté des Arts et ses maîtres au XIIIe siècle*, Vrin, Paris 1971, vol. 1, pp. 38-48 and M. Asztalos, "The Faculty of Theology", in Hilde de Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *A History of the University in Europe*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 1992, vol. 1, pp. 409-41, esp. pp. 420-33. See also L. Bianchi, "Aristotle Among Thirteenth-Century Franciscans: Some Preliminary Remarks", in K. Emery, W. Courtenay, S. Metzger (eds.), *Philosophy and Theology in the Studia of the Religious Orders and at Papal and Royal Courts*, Brepols, Turnhout 2012, pp. 237-60. See also the rest of the volume.

[4] Critical editions of the *Middle Commentaries* on the *Isagoge* and *Categories* are in Averroes, *Commentarium Medium in Porphyrii Isagogen et Aristotelis Categorias*, ed. H. Davidson, The Mediaeval Academy of America, Cambridge (Mass.) 1969. Anatoli's introduction to his translation project is on pp. 1-3. For an English translation of these texts, made on the basis of Averroes' original Arabic, William of Luna's Latin translation, and Anatoli's Hebrew, see Averroes, *Middle Commentary on Porphyry's Isagoge and Aristotle's Categoriae*, trans. H. Davidson, The Mediaeval Academy of America, Cambridge (Mass.) 1969. Davidson includes a translation of Anatoli's introduction to this passage on pp. 3-5. Anatoli's other translations have not been edited, but exist only in manuscripts.

[5] 49 manuscripts of Anatoli's translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on *Analytica Posteriora* survive (these are listed on dare.uni-koeln.de/), but Anatoli's note is not found in most of them. I have seen it in three manuscripts (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, *heb*. 925, f. 211v and *heb*. 928, f. 146r, and Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, B.H. 11, f. 114r), all viewable via the National Library of Israel. After thanks to God for finishing the work, and after words of praise for Averroes and Aristotle, Anatoli expresses his hope that he will translate more works of Aristotelian logic, but notes that before doing so he intends to correct the translations he has already made. He then makes the following remarks: "After I have completed this [*sc*. his corrections] I shall apply my hand to completing the work [*sc*. the translations of the other logical works] with the aid of Him who helps all and, moreover [BnF, *heb*. 925 and the Leipzig, B.H. 11 have "who helps all who are enlightened] He who put it in the heart of our lord, the emperor Frederick, who loves science and those who seek it, to feed me and sustain me abundantly. May God increase His loving-kindness towards him and raise him above all the kings of the nations. May He bring the king [BnF *heb*. 928 adds: messiah] in his days that our eyes may see [BnF 928 adds: Amen]". (ואחר השלימי זה אשלח ידי להשלים המלאכה בעזר העוזר לכל ועוד [פריז 925 וליפציג: נעור] אשר נתן בלב אדוננו האנפרדור פרדריקו אוהב החכמה ודורשיה לזון אותי ולכלכל אותי לשבעה, יגדל השם חסדו אתו לנשאו על כל מלכי האומות ויבא המלך [פריז 928 מוסיף: המשיח] בימיו ועינינו רואות [פריז 928 מוסיף: אמן], my translation).

[6] E. Renan - A. Neubauer, *Les Rabbins français du commencement du quatorzième siècle*, Imprimerie nationale, Paris 1877, pp. 586-7, translated the postscript I cited in the previous note to read "il [Anatoli] se mettra à l'œuvre, 'pour accomplir, ajoute-il, le désir de l'empereur Frédéric, l'amateur de la science, qui me soutient'". This translation, which is not, as far as I know, supported by any manuscript, might suggest that Frederic had a specific project he paid Anatoli to undertake. Yet this is not, in fact, stated anywhere by Anatoli. Cf. G. Weber, *Studies on R. Yaaqov Anatoli's Malmad Ha-Talmidim*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 2019, pp. 2-3 and the sources cited therein.

kind of interaction with the translators. Anatoli, indeed, refers to Michael Scot as "the great sage" and notes that they worked together for some time.[7] Whatever the nature of their collaboration and whatever Frederick II hoped to achieve through his patronage, one chief result was Anatoli's production of a complete set of translations of Averroes' *Middle Commentaries* on logic (from the *Isagoge* to the *Analytica Posteriora*) into Hebrew. Although there were still no translation of works on dialectics, rhetoric, or poetics, after Anatoli, Hebrew readers could, for the first time in history, gain a comprehensive education in Aristotelian logic according to Averroes' *Middle Commentaries*. That is, Anatoli's translations made possible a university-style philosophical education in Hebrew.[8] Shortly thereafter, Anatoli's brother-in-law, Moses ibn Tibbon, perhaps also at the invitation of Frederick II, supplemented Anatoli's logical translations with translations of a number of Averroes' commentaries on physics and metaphysics along with an important medical work.[9] In subsequent generations, other 13th-14th century translators, including Jacob ben Makhir ibn Tibbon, Samuel ben Judah of Marseilles, and Qalonimos ben Qalonimos, translated numerous other works of Averroes, such that by the mid-14th century a Hebrew reader would have a complete curriculum of Aristotelian works he could read via translations of Averroes' commentaries.[10] Not only did Hebrew scholars read and study this curriculum, by the 14th century they also began to write commentaries on Averroes'

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[7] See Jacob Anatoli, *Malmad Hatalmidim*, ed. M'kize Nirdamim, Siebert, Lyck 1866, introduction (unpaginated). Cf. Renan - Neubauer, *Les Rabbins français* (above, n. 6), p. 586. This passage and its variants in the manuscripts are reproduced in Weber, *Studies on R. Yaaqov Anatoli*, pp. 3-4, note 11. In all versions Anatoli refers to their connection as lasting "days" (ימים) though in one manuscript it appears as "many days" (ימים רבים). Nevertheless, in Hebrew, particularly in the poetic Hebrew of Anatoli's introduction to Malmad Hatalmidim, "days" is somewhat ambiguous and could easily refer to months or even years. For Anatoli's 20 mentions of Michael throughout the Malmad, see Luciana Pepi's remarks in her introduction to her reprinting of the *M'kize Nirdamim* edition of the *Malmad: Il Pungolo dei discepoli (Malmad Ha-Talmidim). Il sapere di un ebreo e Federico II*, Officina di Studi Medievali, Palermo 2004, vol. 1, pp. 21-7.

[8] The works of earlier translators, including Anatoli's father-in-law, Samuel Ibn Tibbon focused on a different kind of philosophical work. Samuel translated a number of Maimonides' works, including the *Guide of the Perplexed*, along with Aristotle's *Meteorology* and Averroes' three short treatises on 'conjunction'. It is generally thought that his choice of the latter translations was to supplement the science found in *Guide of the Perplexed*. See, e.g., J.T. Robinson, "Samuel Ibn Tibbon", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/tibbon/> and R. Fontaine, *Otot ha-Shamayim: Samuel Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew Version of Aristotle's Meteorology. A Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, and Index*, Brill, Leiden 1995 (Aristoteles semitico-latinus, 8). That is, Samuel apparently sought to center Hebrew philosophic education on the *Guide of the Perplexed*, supplementing it accordingly. Even if he did not, his translations do not give the reader a comprehensive basis for any major field of science and cannot be said to allow for academic study in any way parallel to Christian university study.

[9] Moses Ibn Tibbon translated Averroes' *Short Commentaries* on *Physics*, *De Caelo*, *De Generatione et Corruptione*, *Meteorologica*, *De Anima*, and *Metaphysics* and *Middle Commentaries* on *De Anima* and *Parva Naturalia*. He also translated Averroes' medical summary of Avicenna's *Cantica* (*Šarḥ urǧūzat al-ṭibb li-ibn Sīnā*). See dare.uni-koeln.de/ and H. Kreisel - C. Sirat - A. Israel (eds.), *The Writings of Moses Ibn Tibbon*, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, Be'er Sheba 2010, p. 10, where the editors note that these works appeared after Anatoli's death. For Moses ibn Tibbon's brief sojourn to Naples, likely at the request of Frederick II, see *ibid*., pp. 8-10.

[10] Jacob ben Makhir Ibn Tibbon (c. 1236-1306) translated Averroes' *Short Commentary* on the logical *Organon* and the commentary on *De Animalibus*. Samuel been Judah of Marseilles (1294 - after 1322) also translated Averroes' Short Commentary on the logical Organon and Averroes' Commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics* and Plato's *Republic*. Qalonimos ben Qalonimos (1286 - after 1328) translated Averroes' *Middle Commentaries* on *Topica*, *Sophistici Elenchi*, *Physica*, *De Generatione et corruptione*, *Meteorologica*, and *Metaphysics* and the *Long Commentaries* on *Analytica Posteriora* and *Physica*. Todros Todrosi (born 1313) translated, inter alia, Averroes' *Middle Commentaries* on *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*. There were also anonymous translations produced at this time of the *Long Commentary* on the *Metaphysics*.

commentaries on Aristotle, presumably with some connection to their study of these works in a university-style curriculum of Aristotelian science.[11]

Frederick II's patronage, then, was the efficient cause of the birth of the medieval study of Aristotelian philosophy through Averroes' commentaries in Hebrew. That is, the Hebrew Aristotelian commentary tradition that took Averroes as its starting pointed owed its origins to a source that was one of the main efficient causes of the Latin Aristotelian-Averroan commentary tradition. These Hebrew and Latin commentary traditions have much in common; after all, they are based on a similar body of texts produced by translators active in the same intellectual circles in Southern Italy. Yet, Latin and Hebrew readers approached the texts with different intellectual backgrounds; they studied different texts, both religious and philosophical, and read the texts through linguistic and terminological lenses that varied significantly in Latin and Hebrew. A full characterization of these differences has not yet been made, and indeed may not yet be possible, though it is certainly a *desideratum* for the full understanding of the influence of Aristotelian philosophy on medieval European cultures.

I. De Interpretatione *16 a 3-8: Greek into Arabic into Latin*

Here we shall see how the Hebrew and Latin Aristotelian commentary traditions differed in interpreting a single text: a key passage, much commented upon, that occurs toward the beginning of Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*. This passage was translated into Latin by Boethius in the 6th century and was subsequently studied and commented upon for centuries. It was also translated into Arabic by Isḥāq ibn Ḥunayn (d. 911) and was the basis for the subsequent commentaries of al-Fārābī, Avicenna, Ibn Bāǧǧa, and Averroes. In the first half of the 13th century, Averroes' commentary was translated into Hebrew by Jacob Anatoli and at the same time into Latin by William of Luna. Hebrew commentators, in fact, had no text of Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* and so wrote their commentaries as super-commentaries on Averroes' *Middle Commentary* in Anatoli's translation. Latin commentators, however, used Boethius' translation of *De Interpretatione* as their primary text, though their commentaries had recourse to Averroes' *Middle Commentary* in William of Luna's translation. Additionally, they had access to various important texts of Avicenna, which were translated into Latin in the 12th century and, we shall see, may have colored their interpretation of Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*.

In the passage in question, Aristotle explains, for the benefit of the student of logic, how one can make true statements about what one has experienced with the senses. In the original Greek, Aristotle says:

Now spoken sounds are symbols of affections in the soul, and written marks are symbols of spoken sounds. And just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs of – affections of the soul – are the same for all; and what these affections are likenesses of – actual things – are also the same.[12]	Ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ. καὶ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ γράμματα πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά, οὐδὲ φωναὶ αἱ αὐταί· ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρώτων, ταὐτὰ πᾶσι παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὧν ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα πράγματα ἤδη ταὐτά.[13]

[11] On these commentaries see Y. Halper, "Philosophical Commentary and Supercommentary: The Hebrew Aristotelean Commentaries of the 14th through 16th Centuries", in A. Hughes - J. Robinson (eds.), *Literary Forms of Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, Indiana U.P., Bloomington 2019, pp. 104-32. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine how precisely such commentaries were used to study the Aristotelian curriculum. We do not know, e.g., how many people actually studied such works or whether they did so in classrooms, entirely on their own, or via correspondence through letters. Such knowledge is a *desideratum*.

[12] *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*, trans. J.K. Ackrill, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1963, p. 43.

[13] Aristotle, *De Interpretatione*, ed. L. Minio Paluello, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1949 (OCT).

In this passage, Aristotle presents an analogy comparing the way letters symbolize sounds and the way affections of the soul (παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς) are like actual things (πράγματα). The analogy presents an intriguing account of relations among four components: writing, speech, affections of the soul, and things.[14] Writing symbolizes speech, speech symbolizes/signifies affections of the soul, and affections of the soul are similar to the things themselves. Scientific explanation of things in the world would seem, then, to be mediated through "affections of the soul", though it is not entirely clear what these affections are or how they can be like things in the world. Aristotle defers this discussion to the *De Anima*.

Both Boethius and Isḥāq ibn Ḥunayn convey Aristotle's four component account in a fairly straightforward manner. For Boethius the four components are (1) *ea quae scribuntur*, (2) *ea quae sunt in voce*, (3) *passiones in anima* and *passiones animae*, and (4) *res*.[15] For Isḥāq, the four components are (1) ما يكتب ("that which is written"), (2) ما يخرج بالصوت ("that which is expressed in voice"), (3) الآثار التي في النفس ("the impressions in the soul") and آثار النفس ("impressions of the soul"), and (4) المعاني ("the things").[16] The choice of معاني (*maʿānī*) to translate πράγματα, "things", was probably influenced by Isḥāq's choice to use a more common word for things, أشياء, as part of his translation of the relative pronoun ὧν, "which".[17]

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[14] The account is intriguing because much of the relationship between the components is not clear. Ackrill, *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*, p. 113, notes, "There are grave weakness in Aristotle's theory of meaning. Fortunately, the notion that utterances are symbols of affections in the soul and that these are likenesses of things does not have a decisive influence on the rest of the *De Interpretatione*. (...) The present passage is intended as an argument for the view that language is conventional", i.e., it is not intended in the first place to explain meaning, but the conventional character of language. Norman Kretzmann goes even further: "If it contains no claim at all, explicit or implicit, about a relationship of spoken sounds to actual things, then it is not even a sketch of a general theory of meaning": N.Kretzmann, "Aristotle on Spoken Sound Significant by Convention", in J. Corcoran (ed.), *Ancient Logic and Its Modern Interpretations*. Proceedings of the Buffalo Symposium on Modernist Interpretations of Ancient Logic, Reidel, Boston 1974, pp. 3-21, p. 5.

[15] See Anicii Manlii Severini Boetii *Commentarii in Librum Aristotelis ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ* rec.C. Meiser, Teubner, Leipzig 1887 (Bibliotheca Teubneriana), vol. 1, p. 3.5-11: "Sunt ergo ea quae sunt in voce earum quae sunt in anima passionum notae: et ea quae scribuntur eorum quae sunt in voce. Et quemadmodum nec litterae omnibus eaedem, sic nec voces eaedem. Quorum autem haec primorum notae, eadem omnibus passiones animae et quorum hae similitudines, res etiam eaedem". A slightly, though not significantly different text is printed in Aristotelis Stagiritae *Opera quae extant opera... cum Averrois Cordubensis... Commentariis*, apud Junctas, Venetiis 1562, vol. 1, part. 1, f. 68ra C.

[16] See *Die Hermeneutik des Aristoteles in der arabischen Übersetzung des Isḥāq Ibn Ḥonain*, ed. I. Pollak, Leipzig 1913 (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 13, reprinted Kraus, Liechtenstein, 1966), p. 1: فنقول إن ما يُخْرج بالصوت دال على الآثار التي في النفس وما يُكتب دال على ما يُخْرج بالصوت وكما أن الكتاب ليس هو واحدا بعينه للجميع كذلك ليس ما يخرج بالصوت واحدا بعينه لهم إلا أن الأشياء التي ما يخرج بالصوت دال عليها أولا وهي آثار النفس واحدة بعينها للجميع والأشياء التي آثار النفس أمثلة لها وهي المعاني يوجد أيضا واحدة للجميع.

[17] The pronoun ὧν appears twice in the passage, at 16 a 6 and 16 a 7. In the first instance, our Greek text has ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρώτων. Isḥāq renders this إلا أن الأشياء التي ما يخرج بالصوت دال عليها أولا وهي. In this rendering the Greek ὧν appears to be rendered by the entire, somewhat cumbersome expression ... أن الأشياء التي .... Indeed, these are the only terms which have no other corresponding Greek terms (ما < μέντοι; إلا ... وهي (علي)ها .... يخرج بالصوت < ταῦτα, which Isḥāq apparently takes to refer to the previous mention of φωναὶ at 16 a 5; دال علي < σημεῖα, though this is somewhat interpretive on Isḥāq's part; and أولا < πρώτων). In the second instance of ὧν, we find the same construction. Our Greek text has καὶ ὧν ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα πράγματα ἤδη ταὐτά. Isḥāq renders this والأشياء التي آثار النفس أمثلة لها وهي المعاني يوجد أيضا واحدة للجميع. The Greek ὧν is thus rendered ... الأشياء التي .... Once again, this supplies a correspondence between all the remaining Greek and Arabic terms (و < καὶ; (ل)ها وهي آثار النفس < ταῦτα, which Isḥāq apparently takes to refer to the previous mention of παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς; ل أمثلة < ὁμοιώματα; المعاني < πράγματα; أيضا < ἤδη; and واحدة للجميع ... **يوجد** < ταὐτά [perhaps Isḥāq's text had πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά here or πᾶσι ταὐτά, or perhaps he supplied the πᾶσι on his own]). Cristina D'Ancona tells me that she thinks

Readers of Isḥāq's translation prior to Averroes do not seem to have accepted the translation of معاني (*maʿānī*) for πράγματα. Thus, in his *Long Commentary* on the *De Interpretatione*, al-Fārābī identifies معاني (*maʿānī*) as a kind of intermediary between "impressions in the soul" (الآثار التي في النفس) and "the existing things outside the soul" (الموجودات التي خارج النفس).[18] Zimmermann accordingly translates the term "referent", though he notes that al-Fārābī is not entirely consistent in this.[19] Al-Fārābī may have a similar view of the term in mind in his *Short Commentary* on *De Interpretatione*, but his words are too succinct to be certain.[20] Avicenna, in his account of *De Interpretatione* in the *Healing*, uses *āthār* (اثار) for impressions in the soul and *al-umūr* (الامور) for the things referred to, but he explains that the latter "are called *maʿānī* (معاني), or the intentions of the soul".[21] This phrasing is most likely intended to explain the use of *maʿānī* (معاني) in Isḥāq's translation. It is worth noting that Avicenna does not explain much about the *umūr* (الامور) or *maʿānī* (معاني) here and it is possible that he does not identify them with the actual things in the world, but sees them as "referents" (or "intentions of the soul") that exist outside of the soul as a kind of intermediary, i.e., it is possible that Avicenna follows al-Fārābī in this.

Nevertheless, Averroes' summarizing explanation of *De Interpretatione* 16 a 3-8 apparently uses *maʿānī* (معاني) simply to refer to "meanings" in the soul, i.e., as equivalent to the impressions in the soul. Averroes says:

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that Isḥāq's وهي المعاني is a kind of explanation, added to clarify آثار النفس and so المعاني does not refer to πράγματα at all. Yet, this would mean that πράγματα went entirely untranslated, which seems quite unlikely given its importance to the sentence. One could, I suppose, argue that πράγματα is rendered by الأشياء, but one would then have to explain the presence of الأشياء in the previous sentence where it clearly does not refer to πράγματα, but to "things voiced". Moreover, while the expression, وهي, can be used for an added explanation, I have not seen such a use in Isḥāq's translations. The presence of the expression, وهي, in the previous sentence suggests to me that Isḥāq sees it as part of his translation of ὤν.

[18] Al-Fārābī says, "the impression in the soul are like (مثالات) the *maʿānī* which exist outside of the soul" (my translation). Alfarabi, *Commentary on Aristotle's* **ΠΕΡΙ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ** *(De Interpretatione)*, ed. W. Kutsch - S. Marrow, Imprimerie Catholique, Beirut 1960, p. 24, see also pp. 24-30. That the *maʿānī*, despite existing in the world, are not the things in the world becomes clear in the subsequent discussion. Still, the *maʿānī* are not thoughts, for which al-Fārābī prefers the term معقولات, even when referring to thoughts of sensible objects.

[19] Cf. the English translation in F.W. Zimmermann, *Al-Farabi's Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's De Interpretatione*, Oxford U.P. for the British Academy, London 1981, p. 11, see also pp. 10-15.

[20] See *Al-mantiq ʿinda al-Fārābī*, ed. R. El-Ajam, Dar El-Machreq, Beirut 1985, p. 133: الالفاظ الدالة منها مفردة تدل على معان مفردة, ومنها مركبة تدل أيضا على معان مفردة, ومنها مركبة تدل على معان مركبة فالالفاظ الدالة على المعاني المفردة. Cf. al-Fārābī's use of معنى on p. 23. This statement could be read to say that the terms معان and المعاني are 'referents' outside of the soul, but they could also be 'meanings' inside the soul. One could even read the passage to say that they are the existing things themselves, though there is no reason to assume that al-Fārābī has this mind.

[21] Avicenna, *Kitāb al-Šifāʾ*, al-Mantiq IV, *al-ʿIbāra*, ed. M. Khodeiri - I. Madkour, Dār al-Kātib al-ʿArabī, Cairo 1970, p. 2: وكله بهداية الهية والهام الهى . فما يخرج بالصوت يدل على ما في النفس، وهى التي تسمى اثارا . والتي في النفس تدل على الأمور وهى التي تسمى معانى، اى مقاصد النفس . كما ان الآثار أيضا بالقياس الى الالفاظ معان.

Thus we say that spoken utterances signify primarily the notions that are in the soul, while written letters signify primarily these utterances. Just as written letters – I mean, script – are not one and the same for all nations, so too, the utterances by which notions are expressed are not one and the same for all nations. Therefore the signification of both script and spoken utterances comes from convention rather than nature. And the notions which are in the soul are one and the same for all people, just as the existing things which the meanings in the soul are examples of and signify are one and exist by nature for all people.[22]	فنقول إن الألفاظ التي ينطق بها هي دالة أولا على المعاني التي في النفس, والحروف التي تكتب هي دالة أولا على هذه الألفاظ. وكما أن الحروف المكتوبة – أعني الخط – ليس هو واحدا بعينه لجميع الأمم, كذلك الألفاظ التي يعبر بها عن المعاني ليست واحدة بعينها عند جميع الأمم. ولذلك كانت دلالة هذين بتواطؤ لا بالطبع. وأما المعاني التي في النفس فهي واحدة بعينه للجميع، كما أن الموجودات التي المعاني التي في النفس أمثله لها ودالة عليها هي واحدة وموجودة بالطبع للجميع.

For Averroes here, the four components for the analysis of words and meanings are: (1) script (خط), (2) spoken utterances (الفاظ), (3) notions (معاني), and (4) existing things (موجودات). The result is a more concise rendering of these components, allowing one to express each with a single word. It also means that the Arabic term *maʿānī* (معاني), which was used by Isḥāq to translate πράγματα ("things"), is now used in place of "impressions of the soul" (παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, rendered by Isḥāq, آثار النفس). It is now the *maʿānī* (معاني), the "notions" that are both in the soul and one and the same for all people, i.e., have some kind of universal existence. Averroes follows Aristotle in referring his readers to the *De Anima*, but in the case of Averroes, we would expect to look for the account of *maʿānī* (معاني), "notions", there. I have discussed elsewhere the importance of *maʿānī* (معاني) for Averroes' understanding of "apprehension" (ادراك), both sensory apprehension and intellectual apprehension. Intellectual apprehension is complicated by various factors, but sensory apprehension, in Averroes' *Middle* and *Short Commentaries* on the *De Anima* is relatively straightforward. Sensory apprehension involves grasping in one's soul a notion of the form of a thing in the outside world. This notion is not the same as the form in the outside world, since it is not joined with matter, but is still identifiable with the form in the outside world and related to it.[24] By using the same terminology in the *De Interpretatione* commentary and by specifically referring to the *De Anima* texts, Averroes seems to be suggesting that speech reflects the notions in the soul that are apprehended through the senses or through the intellect. These, in turn, are related to and similar to forms of things in the world outside the soul. Accordingly, it would seem that scientific speech and writing are not directly connected to the outside world, but mediated by notions (معاني) that reflect or are related to forms of things. A major question in logic, then, would seem to be to understand how those notions are reflected in speech and how speech can then reflect the things that exist outside of the mind.

Both William of Luna and Jacob Anatoli provided literal translations of Averroes' statement in the *De Interpretatione* about the connection of language to notions in the soul and to things in the

[22] Cf. Averroes' *Middle Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione*, trans. Ch.E. Butterworth, St. Augustine Press, South bend (IN) 1998, p. 125, translation modified. Butterworth translates معانى, 'ideas', which I have changed to 'notions' so as to have a single English term conveying معانى in all the texts. 'Notions' is how Shlomo Pines usually translates معانى in the *Guide of the Perplexed*. Moreover, it does not suggest Plato's Ideas or other concepts central to the works of other medieval or ancient thinkers.

[23] M. Kassem - Ch.E. Butterworth - A. Haridi (eds.), *Averroes, Talḫīs Kitāb al-ʿIbāra*, American Research Center in Egypt, Cairo 1981, p. 57.

[24] See Y. Halper, "Averroes on Intentionality and the Human Experience of the Natural World", in A. Alwishah - J. Hayes (eds.), *Aristotle and the Arabic Tradition*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 2015, pp. 164-76.

world in their respective translations into Latin and Hebrew. Yet the linguistic and philosophical context in the two languages gave rise to different approaches to understanding this line. William of Luna renders the four components as follows: (1) *littere que scribuntur*, (2) *dictiones quibus ratiocinatur*, (3) *intentiones que sunt in anima*, and (4) *res*.[25] Component 4 is literally the same as we find in Boethius' translation and component 1 is not far off. The second component's use of ratiocinatur is probably an effort to translate the Arabic, *yunṭaqu* (ينطق), which refers literally to speech, but was used more generally to refer to logic or to the faculty of speech, i.e., to human reason. As a result, William of Luna's translation conveys more strongly than the original the sense that reasoning and speaking are strongly connected. Additionally, William of Luna chose to translate Averroes' *maʿānī* (معاني) by the Latin *intentiones*. William's translation thus presents *intentio* as a notion in the soul that is signified by speech and is related to a corresponding form in the thing outside of the soul. That is, the Latin reader would take *intentiones* to be the media, contained in the human soul, between statements about the world and the things in the world.

The 13th century Latin reader might also have been familiar with the term *intentio* as it appears in translations of Avicenna. Such translations appeared in the second half of the 12th century and have been attributed to Spanish translators living in Toledo, including Abraham ibn Da'ud and Dominicus Gundissalinus.[26] We find that Avicenna's Latin translators use the term, *intentiones*, to demarcate Avicenna's important distinction between المعانى المعقولة الاولى, which Michael Marmura transalted, "primary intelligible ideas," and المعانى المعقولة الثانى, which Marmura translated, "second intelligible ideas". It is the latter, viz. the "second intelligible ideas", according to Avicenna's *Metaphysics of the Healing*, which make up the subject of logic.[27] By "primary intelligible ideas", Avicenna means concepts of external things, such as a particular person, i.e., the essences or quiddities of things which are first abstracted from what is perceived by the senses. By "secondary intelligible ideas" Avicenna refers to concepts of primary concepts, such as "man" generally, or the species "human being", or even the universal concept of embodied thing. That is, secondary intelligible ideas refer to intelligible ideas about those primary essences or quiddities, e.g., that "they are predicates, subjects, universals, particulars", etc.[28] For Avicenna, then, to some extent following

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[25] Averroes, *Commentum medium super libro Peri hermeneias Aristotelis, translatio Wilhelmo de Luna attributa*, ed. R. Hissette, Peeters, Leuven 1996 (Averrois Opera. Series B. Averroes latinus, 12), pp. 1-2: "Dicemus ergo quod dictiones quibus ratiocinatur significant primo intentiones que sunt in anima; et littere que scribuntur significant primo has dictiones; et quemadmodum littere scripte, scilicet scriptura, non est una et eadem omnibus gentibus, similiter dictiones quibus interpretatur de intentionibus non sunt une et eedem apud omnes gentes; et propter hoc est significatio harum ad placitum per concordiam, non per naturam. Sed intentiones <...> sunt une et eedem omnibus gentibus, quemadmodum res inuente, quarum intentiones que sunt in anima sunt exempla et significantes ipsas, sunt une et inuente per naturam omnibus". The lacuna is in the Latin text.

[26] On the 12th century translators of Avicenna, see D.N. Hasse - A Büttner, "Notes on Anonymous Twelfth-Century Translations of Philosophical Texts from Arabic into Latin on the Iberian Peninsula", in D.N. Hasse - A. Bertolacci (eds.), *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Physics and Cosmology*, W. de Gruyter, Berlin 2018 (Scientia graeco-arabica, 23), pp. 313-69.

[27] See Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of the Healing*, ed. and trans. M. Marmura, Brigham Young U.P., Provo 2005, p. 7.

[28] See Avicenna, *Healing: Madḫal I.4*, in Ibn Sīnā, *al-Šifāʾ*: *La Logique I – L'Isagoge (al-madḫal)*, ed. I. Madkour - M. El-Khoderi - G. Anawati - F. El-Ahwani, Imprimerie Nationale, Cairo 1952, pp. 23-4. This translation is cited from Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of the Healing*, p. 384 Marmura, n. 3. On the 12th Latin translation of the section of Avicenna's *Healing* parallel to Porphyry's *Isagoge* see S. Di Vincenzo, "Avicenna's *Isagoge*, Chap. I, 12, *De Universalibus*: Some Observations on the Latin Translation", *Oriens* 40 (2012), pp. 437-76.

al-Fārābī,[29] logic concerns predicates, subjects, universals, particulars, etc., but not the essences of things. This distinction appeared in the 12th century Latin translation as referring to *intentiones intellectae primo* and *intentiones intellectae secundo*, with the latter as the subject of logic.[30]

A 13th century Latin reader of William of Luna's translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* who was familiar with Avicenna's writings in their 12th century Latin translations might wonder to what extent the *intentiones* which according to the Latin Averroes are media between speech and the things in the world are *intentiones intellectae primo* or *intentiones intellectae secundo*. Averroes himself, however, does not, as far as I am aware, assign any importance to the distinction between primary and secondary notions, either in his logic or in his metaphysics. Nevertheless, we find various commentators appealing to the distinction between first and second intentions in the explanations of *De Interpretatione* 16 a 3-8. Thus, e.g., Roger Bacon brings this distinction using the same Avicennian terminology into his treatise, *De Enuntiatione*, which is parallel to the opening of *De Interpretatione*.[31] William of Ockham dedicates a full chapter of his *Summa Logicae* to explaining this Avicennian distinction, locating it in the context of *De Interpretatione* 16 a 3-8.[32] Thomas Aquinas does not use the Avicennian language of first and second intentions in his commentary on *De Interpretatione*, but nevertheless identifies passiones of the soul with *intellectus conceptiones*, "conceptions of the intellect" and raises the question as to whether the conceptions refer to particular things or to natures that are abstracted from particulars.[33] So, does the term, *homo*, refer to a specific person or to human nature in abstraction from specific human beings? That is, Aquinas is aware of and interested in the distinction between first and second intentions, even if he does not use that language. The distinction is particularly important for Aquinas since proper nouns can refer to conceptions of the mind and to things in the world, while common nouns refer to universal essences that exist in the mind only (second intentions).[34] Giles of Rome adopts similar concerns to his teacher in his own commentary on *De Interpretatione*, but also without the terminology of intentionality.[35] None of the Latin commentators mentioned here, in fact, mentions William of

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[29] A nearly identical distinction between first and second intelligibles along with the claim that logic is concerned with "second intelligibles" goes back to al-Fārābī and is found in his long commentary on the *De Interpretatione*. See N. Germann, "Imitation - Ambiguity - Discourse: Some Remarks on al-Fārābī's Philosophy of Language", *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 66 (2015-2016), pp. 135-66. Germann is primarily concerned with al-Fārābī's *Book of Letters*, but the similarity to the *De Interpretatione* commentary is unmistakeable.

[30] Avicenna, *Liber de philosophia prima sive Scienta divina*, Édition critique de la traduction latine médiévale, ed. S. van Riet, Peeters, Louvain 1977-1983, I 2, p. 10.73-77. See also D.N. Hasse, *Avicenna's De Anima in the Latin West*, The Warburg Institute, London 2000, p. 129.

[31] A. de Libera, "Les *Summulae dialectices* de Roger Bacon. I-II. *De Termino. De Enuntiatione*", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 53 (1986), pp. 139-289, esp. p. 226. See pp. 146-51 for de Libera's brief account of Bacon's use of Aristotle and Averroes. Bacon seems to engage primarily with Boethius here.

[32] William of Ockham, *Summa Logicae*, ed. Ph. Boehner - G. Gál - S. Brown, Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure (N.Y.) 1974, Part I, Cap. 12, pp. 41-4. Ockham relies on Boethius' translation of *De Interpretatione* 16 a 3-8 and does not make any obvious reference to Averroes. The editors note (p. 41, n. 1) that Ockham is likely referring to the passage from Avicenna's *Metaphysics of the Healing* cited here (my note 30 above). See also references to Avicenna on *intentio* in, e.g., I.14, p. 48.

[33] Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio libri Peryermeneias*, ed. and trans. J.T. Oesterle, Marquette U.P., Milwaukee 1962, I.1.5.

[34] For a recent and detailed account of Aquinas' interpretation of the opening of *De Interpretatione*, see F. Amerini, "Aquinas' Philosophy of Language in his Commentary on *De Interpretatione*", *Divus Thomas* 118 (2015), pp. 80-113, esp. pp. 92-8.

[35] Aegidius Romanus, *Expositio super Perihermeneias*, Simon de Luere, Venetiis 1507, pp. 47b-48r.

Luna's translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on *De Interpretatione*.[36] Still, the approach of all of them seems influenced by Boethius' translation and commentary and the distinction between primary/secondary intentions deriving from Avicenna. It is possible that William of Luna was influenced by an already existing trend of reading Boethius' translation in light of this Avicennian distinction when he chose to translate Averroes' *maʿānī* (معاني) by the Latin *intentiones*. Perhaps he even hoped that future commentators would use his translation to support interpretations precisely of that kind.

II. 13th-14th century Hebrew Commentaries on De Interpretatione *16 a 3-8*

However concerned Latin commentators were with the relationship between first and second intelligibles and between intelligibles and Averroes' *maʿānī* (معاني), Hebrew commentaries took no interest in such connections until the 15th century, at which point these questions begin to demand rather extensive discussions. What is the reason for the different interests among Hebrew commentators and their Latin counterparts? The interests of the Hebrew commentators, especially the earliest ones, were determined by the texts available to them and the resonances of the language used in them.

The primary source, and in many cases the only source for the *De Interpretatione* in the 13th and 14th centuries was Jacob Anatoli's translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary*. There was no Hebrew translation of Aristotle's text itself, i.e., no Hebrew equivalent of Boethius, and certainly no translation of Boethius' commentaries on Aristotle.[37] Additionally, most of Avicenna's *K. al-Šifāʾ* was not translated into Hebrew in the Middle Ages. Parts of it appear in Samuel ibn Tibbon's *Maʾamar yiqqavu hamayim* and in various writings of Shem Tob Falaquera. Sections of Avicenna's *al-Naǧāt* and *al-Šifāʾ* were translated into Hebrew before 1340 by Todros Todrosi.[38] Additionally, Avicennian teachings entered Hebrew through the two, perhaps three 13th-14th century translations of al-Ġazālī's *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa*, Narboni's commentary on it, as well as various other works.[39] Nevertheless, I have yet to find a Hebrew version of Avicenna's discussion of "primary and secondary intelligible ideas", i.e., a parallel to the discussion of intentiones intellectae primo or intentiones intellectae secundo in a Hebrew text associated with Avicenna. I cannot rule out that such a discussion did appear in a 13th or 14th century text and was attributed to Avicenna, but if it did, it did not seem to impact the Hebrew Aristotelian commentators.

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[36] Amerini, "Aquinas' Philosophy of Language", p. 84, says that "Thomas seems not to know or, at least, to disregard William of Luna's translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* with the translation included therein". Note, however, that the *Middle Commentaries* did not include translations of Aristotle's texts, though the *Long Commentaries* did.

[37] In fact, most works of Aristotle, in fact, were not translated into Hebrew in the Middle Ages, but were studied only through Averroes' commentaries on them. See Halper, "Philosophical Commentary and Supercommentary" (above, n. 11), pp. 105, 124.

[38] On the transmission of Avicenna in these sources see G. Elgrably-Berzin, *Avicenna in Medieval Hebrew Translation: Ṭodros Ṭodrosi's Translation of Kitāb al-Najāt, on Psychology and Metaphysics*, Brill, Leiden 2014 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, 91).

[39] These translations are by Isaac Albalag and Judah ben Solomon Nathan. There is also an anonymous translation that may be a revision of Judah's translation on which Narboni commented. The logical part of this anonymous translation (or revision) is edited in translated in G. Chertoff, *The Logical Part of Al-Ghazālī's Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa*, Ph.D. Diss., Columbia University, 1952. See also Ch. Manekin, "The Logic of the Hebrew Encyclopedias", in S. Harvey (ed.), *The Medieval Hebrew Encyclopedias of Science and Philosophy. Proceedings of the Bar-Ilan University Conference*, Springer, Dordrecht 2000, pp. 287-92.

Anatoli's translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on *De Interpretatione* has nothing in it that would suggest a comparison of first and second *maʿānī* (معاني) or the like. His translation renders *maʿānī* (معاني) consistently by its Hebrew cognate *ʿinyanim* (ענינים), and translates the other components as (1) האותיות הנכתבות (*haʾotiyyot hanikhtabot*), (2) התיבות שידובר בהם (*hatebot sheyedubbar bahem*), and (4) נמצאים (*nimṣaʾim*).[40] This formulation is unambiguous and Anatoli's *yedubbar* (ידובר) preserves all the connotations of Averroes' *yunṭaqu* (ينطق) without the possibility of being understood to refer to intellectual thought that we saw in William of Luna's *ratiocinatur*.[41] The Hebrew, *ʿinyan* (ענין) for *maʿana* (معنى), likely chosen because of the early translators' preference for cognates, was later picked up by Moses ibn Tibbon in his translations of Averroes' *Short* and *Middle Commentaries* on the *De Anima* and *Middle Commentary* on the *Parva Naturalia*. Other translators adopted the term as well, but it seems to have been most common in accounts of sensation or in the meanings of terms, and much less frequently associated with intellect. Hebrew translators, in fact, tended to be consistent in translating the Arabic for "intelligible", *maʿaqūl* (معقول), by the Hebrew *muskal* (מושכל), and never, to my knowledge, translated it *ʿinyan* (ענין). In contrast, Latin translators of Avicenna, as we saw, did sometimes translate the Arabic *maʿaqūl* (معقول) by the Latin *intentio*. Additionally, Anatoli rendered other Arabic terms by the Hebrew *ʿinyan* (ענין), including, *ḥāl* (حال), "state" or "condition", and *amr* (امر), "thing" or "object". Later translators, including Moses Ibn Tibbon, followed in translating all three Arabic terms, *maʿana* (معنى), *ḥāl* (حال), and amr (امر) by the Hebrew *ʿinyan* (ענין). Still, I am not aware of the term *ʿinyan* (ענין) ever being used to render "intelligible". The same term in idiomatic medieval philosophic Hebrew also took on the meaning of "meaning", "gist", or "intent" as in "Aristotle's intent here ...". This latter use is similar to what we find for *intentio* in many Latin authors, including Aquinas. Yet, in general, the Hebrew *ʿinyan* (ענין) gained a rather different field of meanings than the term *intentio* in Latin, despite some shared roots in translating the term *maʿana* (معنى).

As a result, the term was not compared to intelligibles among the Hebrew commentators of this passage in the 14th century. These commentators, whom we might speak of as the "first wave" of commentators, grew up around Levi Gersonides. Gersonides, who was likely the father of Aristotelian Hebrew commentaries, wrote the earliest comprehensive commentaries on Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle and these spurred other 14th century Provençal thinkers to produce similar kinds of works, either as students continuing the work of their master or else as opponents seeking to correct Gersonides' mistakes.[42] Later, in the 15th century, various other commentators arose in Spain, Italy, and around the Aegean, who had different concerns in their commentary writing and often wrote with greater engagement with Latin texts. We shall see that commentators of this "second wave" did take an interest in the connection between *ʿinyan* (ענין) and intelligibles, but this concern did not captivate the commentators of the first wave, beginning with Gersonides himself.

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[40] Anatoli's Hebrew translation of the relevant section is: ונאמר שהתיבות שידובר בהם מורות תחלה על הענינים אשר בנפש והאותיות הנכתבות מורות תחלה על אלו התיבות. וכמו שהאותיות הנכתבות ר״ל הכתב אינו אחד בעצמו לכל האומות, כן התיבות שיסופר בם על הענינים אינם אחדות בעצמן אצל כל האמות. ולזה היתה הוראת אלו בהסכמה לא בטבע, אבל הענינים אשר בנפש הם אחדים בעצמם לכל כמו שהנמצאים שהענינים אשר בנפש המשלים להם והמורים עליהם הם אחדים ונמצאים בטבע לכל. Anatoli's translation has not yet been edited, and is available only in manuscript. This text is based on Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, *Heb*. 106, f. 32v-33r, compared with Ms. Paris, BnF, *heb*. 929, f. 9r-v.

[41] In his introduction to the *Isagoge* and in his postscript to the *Organon*, both of which are cited in note 3 above, Anatoli refers to logic as *ḥokhmat ha-dibber* (חכמת הדבר), using a word with the same root as yedubbar and also recalling the Arabic *manṭiq*.

[42] See Halper, "Philosophical Commentary and Supercommentary" (above, n. 11), pp. 106-11.

Take, for example, Levi Gersonides' commentary on *De Interpretatione* 16 a 3-8, which I cite here in full in my own translation: [43]

Levi said: the meaning of this is that the existing things are one in themselves for all peoples. For it has already become clear that the existing things are the ten categories which he mentioned earlier. Therefore, it necessarily follows that the notions that are in the soul which are examples of and signify existing things are one in themselves for all peoples. He said, "are examples of and signify", because there was a dispute among the ancients with regard to the existence of the intelligible, according to what is mentioned in the *Metaphysics*. But there is no way for this art [viz. logic] to verify which of these views is correct. Accordingly, he adopted language that would be pleasing to every view. The import of "signification" will be discussed further in the proper way in the book, *De Anima*. However, the refutation of the other views will be discussed in the *Metaphysics*. The utterances signify primarily those notions that are in the soul which are one for all peoples. But these utterances are not one for all peoples just as writing the letters which signify primarily these utterances is not the same for all peoples, but one [nation's] writing is different from another's. The case of utterances is similar. Accordingly, signification of utterances is by convention, not by nature. For if there were single notions which these utterances signified by nature, then it would not be possible for there to be different utterances among the peoples. But it is clear from the senses that they are different. Therefore, it follows necessarily that their signification be by convention, i.e., according to what people agreed each utterance ought to signify.	אמר לוי: הרצון בזה שהנמצאות הם אחדות בעצמם לכל האומות כי כבר התבאר שהנמצאות הם העשרה מאמרות אשר קדם זכרם. ומפני זה יחויב שיהיו הענינים אשר בנפש שהם המשלים ומורים על הנמצאות, אחדים בעצמם לכל האומות. ואמרו המשלים ומורים עליהם ומפני שהיה בזה המציאות המושכל מחלוקת מה בין הקודמים כפי מה שנזכר במה שאחר הטבע ואין מדרך זאת המלאכה במה שהיא התחלה שתאמת אי זה מאלו הדעות הוא הצודק. ולזה לקח לשון נאות לכל אחת מהדעות. וצד ההוראה כבר ידובר בו על דרך האמת בספר הנפש. ואולם סתירת שאר הדעות ידובר בו במה שאחר הטבע. והתיבות מורות תחילה על אלו הענינים אשר בנפש אשר הם אחדים לכל האומות, ואין אלו התיבות אחדות לכל האומות כמו שאין כתיבת האותיות אשר מורות תחלה על אלו התיבות אחדות לכל האומות, אבל כתיבת זה זולת כתיבת זה. כן הענין בתיבות. ולזה היתה הוראת התיבות בהסכמה לא בטבע שאם היו הענינים האחדים יורו עליהם אלו התיבות בטבע לא היה אפשר שתהיינה התיבות מתחלפות באומות, והוא מבואר מצד החוש שהן מתחלפות. ולזה יחויב שתהיה הוראתם בהסכמה ר"ל לפי מה שהסכימו עליהם האנשים שתורה עליו התיבה.

It is clear from this that Gersonides's primary interest is in explaining how notions, *ʿinyanim* (ענינים) are the same for all people by nature, even as spoken words differ from language to language. Gersonides is also interested in signification which can be natural (e.g., notions signify existing things and categories) or conventional (e.g., writing signifies speech and speech signifies notions). He makes no mention of notions signifying notions or of any differences between signifying the essences of things and signifying their species, genera, etc.

It might, at first glance, appear that Gersonides is referring to an Averroes vs. Avicenna dispute about first and second intentions when he mentions the dispute "with regard to the existence of the

[43] Gersonides' commentary on Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on *De Interpretatione* survives in several manuscripts, including Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, *Heb*. 269 and 289; Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *Urb. ebr.* 35; New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, Ms. 2440; Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Ea 140b; Warsaw, Library of the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, 476; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale del France, *heb*. 920; Napoli, Biblioteca nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, F 10; Mantova, Biblioteca della Comunità ebraica, Ebr. 68; London, British Library, *Add*. 18687; and Torino, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, A I 14.The Hebrew text here is from a provisional edition supplied to the author by Charles Manekin, based primarily on *Vat. Urb. ebr.* 35.

intelligible". Yet this dispute is cited as among the ancients, i.e., among the ancient Greeks. Moreover, though it is relevant for psychology and signification, it is discussed, according to Gersonides, in the *Metaphysics*. Gersonides intended to write a commentary on the *Metaphysics*, presumably on Qalonimos b. Qalonimos' Hebrew translation of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, but he either never did or it is now lost.[44] So there is no way to know where exactly in the *Metaphysics* he is referring. My guess is that it is to *Lambda* 10 (1075 a 25 – 1076 a 4) where Aristotle criticizes earlier theories of first principles. These earlier theories, which are presented in slightly modified form in Averroes' *Middle Commentary*, include those of the materialists who deny existence of the intelligible and especially the intelligible as a mover of the universe.[45] In any case, there is no reason to think that he has in mind disputes about the kind of existence or being that an intelligible has.

Another 14th century thinker, Abraham Avigdor, wrote a philosophical poem known as *Segullat Melakhim* and a commentary on that poem which also treats the relevant section of *De Interpretatione*[46]:

Aristotle mentioned that the terms that signify notions are noun, verb, and a letter. But a letter does not signify by itself and its meaning cannot be envisioned. For example, "ah" or "ee", for by themselves these do not form a vision of a notion, but when they are gathered together, they make a noun which encompasses a meaning. A noun essentially signifies a separate notion without signifying time. A verb essentially signifies a notion and the time of that notion.	ארסטו' זכר שהמלות המורות על העניינים שם ופעל ואות. והאות לא יורה בעצמו ולא יצוייר הבנתו המשל אה או אי, כי אלו לבדם לא יציירו עניין אבל מקבוצם יעשה השם אשר בו יוקף ההבנה. והשם מורה בעצמו העניין הנפרד מבל[ת]י שיורה על זמן. והפועל יורה בעצמות העניין ועל זמן זה העניין. והאומר ממנו שלם וממנו בלתי שלם.[46]

Here Abraham Avigdor identifies *ʿinyanim* (עניינים), "notions", as the envisioned meanings of nouns and verbs. Yet, in neither the poem nor the commentary on it does Abraham Avigdor explain how he uses the term for notion, *ʿinyan* (ענין). Rather, he appears to assume that his readers already have a certain familiarity with it.

In a more detailed 14th century Hebrew commentary on *De Interpretatione* attributed to an Avigdor who may be the same Abraham Avigdor, we find someone who is primarily interested in the distinction between unchanging natural things/notions (*ʿinyanim*, עניינים) and variegated, conventionally grounded, spoken words and writing. In the course of making this distinction, Avigdor apparently notes that these notions are found "in the power of man's intellect and through movements in the soul".[48] After this, Avigdor appends the following note:

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[44] For some speculations on what might have been included in this commentary on the *Metaphysics*, see R. Glasner, "Gersonides' Lost Commentary on the *Metaphysics*", *Medieval Encounters* 4 (1998), pp. 130-57.

[45] For the Hebrew text of this section in both translations, see M. Zonta, *Il Commento medio di Averroe alla Metafisica di Aristotele nella tradizione ebraica: Edizione delle versioni ebraiche medievali di Zeraḥyah Ḥen e di Qalonymos ben Qalonymos con introduzione storica e filologica*, I-III, Pavia U.P., Pavia 2011, vol. 2, pp. 290-2.

[46] On the character and content of this poem see S. Harvey - Ch. Manekin, "The Curious Segullat Melakhim by Abraham Avigdor", in J. Hamesse - O. Weijers (eds.), *Écriture et réécriture des textes philosophiques médiévaux. Volume d'hommage offert à Colette Sirat*, Brepols, Turnhout 2006 (Textes et Études du Moyen Age, 34), pp. 215-52.

[47] The Hebrew text is from Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, *heb*. 990, f. 5r and Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, cod. 3030, f. 186. The text still awaits a critical edition.

[48] See Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, *heb*. 63, f. 236v-237r. The Hebrew of this quotation, which appears on the top of f. 237r, is: הוא מצא מכח שכל האדם ומהתנועות אשר בנפש.

But notions in the soul, which are signified by speech, and which are intellectual movements that go out of the speaking faculty, i.e., out of the intellect – these [notions] are one in themselves for all, i.e., for the species of man. Similarly, the existing things which are outside of the soul and which are signified by the notions in the soul [are the same for all]. But even we who are inquiring into this could not understand how this could be a natural notion!	אבל עניינים אשר בנפש שהדיבור יורה עליהם שאכן תנועות שכליות יוצאות מכח מדב ר, ר"ל משכל, הם אחדים בעצמם לכל, ר"ל למין האדם, כמו שהנמצאים שהם חוץ לנפש העניינים אשר בנפש מורים עליהם ואיך יהיה זה לא נוכל להבין עתה אנחנו המעיינים שזה העניין טבעי.[48]

Avigdor's characterization here connects notions in the soul to some kind of intellectual movements, which are again media between words and the outside world. Yet, he does not give much detail. Instead, he proclaims that he does not understand how the notions in the soul, or perhaps the existing things, could really be a natural notion.[50] Like Gersonides, Avigdor shows no interest in discussing notions of notions or of notions of a thing's essence and notions of universal species and genera of things.

We find a similar situation in some short, marginal notes found in a unique mid-to-late 14th century manuscript of Anatoli's translation of Averroes' *De Interpretatione* Commentary[51]:

[Thus we say that spoken utterances signify primarily the notions that are in the soul] Commentary: and secondarily the things outside of the soul. [Written letters signify primarily these utterances]. Commentary: and secondarily the notions in the soul, and, even further away, [they signify] the things outside of the soul. [Therefore the signification of both script and spoken utterances comes from convention rather than nature]. That is: by choice and not by universal signification. "Rather than nature", i.e., through choice, inquiry, and human signification. [And the notions which are in the soul are one and the same for all people.] Commentary: Man's envisioning is that which a rational animal attains and is one for all who envision it.	[ונאמר שהתיבות שידובר בהם מורות תחלה על הענינים אשר בנפש] פי' ובשניות על אשר חוץ לנפש. [והאותיות הנכתבות מורות תחלה על אלו התיבות פי'] ובשניות על הענינים אשר בנפש וביותר רחוק על אשר חוץ לנפש. [ולזה היתה הוראת אלו בהסכמה לא בטבע ר"ל בבחירה] להוראה כוללת. לא בטבע, ר"ל בחירה ועיון ובהוראה אשת. [אבל הענינים אשר בנפש הם אחדים בעצמם לכל] פי' כי ציור האדם אשר הוא המגיע מחי מדבר אחד לכל מי שיצירהו.

At first glance, the text might appear to make use of the Avicennian distinctions in question, namely between primary and secondary notions or intentions and universal and particular

[49] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, *heb*. 63, f., f. 237r.

[50] Note that Avigdor here considers himself among the inquirers, the Hebrew of which, *me'ayyenim* (מעיינים), shares a root with *'inyan* (עניין). It is thus possible that he is suggesting in a somewhat poetic manner that as an inquirer, he has and uses notions (*'inyanim*) even though he does not understand what they are. Still, this does not stop him in the rest of his commentary from making reference to the *'inyan* of nouns and verbs without further consideration of their meaning.

[51] *Vat. Urb. ebr.* 37, f. 1r. The square brackets indicate the text of Averroes in Hebrew; the contribution of the anonymous marginal annotator is not in brackets. The manuscript contains a number of marginal notes, not all from the same hand. In some places, notes in different hands from those copied here are attributed to one "Moses" (e.g., ff. 2v and 40r-v). This suggests that it may have been used in an instructional setting of some kind. The manuscript is written in a Spanish hand and has watermarks from the mid-14th century. See B. Richler - M. Beit-Arié - N. Pasternak, *Hebrew Manuscripts in the Vatican Library*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 2008, p. 622.

signification. However, the commentator is in fact applying similar terminology in a distinctly non-Avicennian manner. Thus the primary and secondary refers not to notions and notions of notions, but to stages in the transmission of things to writing. For example, writing is a primary signifier of words, a secondary signifier of notions, and a tertiary signifier of things, where secondary and tertiary refer to the number of mediators in the signification. Further, "universal signification" for our anonymous commentator refers to "that which a rational animal attains and is one for all who envision it". That is, it refers to the basic and natural operation of the human faculty of envisioning. This envisioning is, it would seem, of a thing in the world, but is still what an Avicennian would call a "first intention". As with the other 14th century Hebrew commentators, there is no interest in the first and second intention distinction.

III. 15th century Hebrew Commentaries on De Interpretatione *16 a 3-8*

This changes dramatically in the 15th century, where we find Hebrew commentaries on the *De Interpretatione* dedicating extended and complicated discussions to the question of whether the "notions", *ʿinyanim* (ענינים), described as means between speech and the world refer to particulars or universals and to first or second intentions. We find such extensive discussions in a series of three 15th century manuscripts, one in Berlin[52] and two in Oxford,[53] which all originated in Spain and are similar enough to be either of the same school or produced in some connection to one another. Two of these are anonymous and one is attributed to an otherwise unknown Eli the Sage (החכם עלי).[54] In addition to questions of primary and secondary intentions and notions of universal or particular existence, these commentaries contain more detailed references to other logical works, the *De Anima*, and also to the *Metaphysics* where they claim there is a complete discussion of the different kinds of intentions and their relation to the world. These commentaries do not mention any Latin works,[55] though the connection of intentionality to *Metaphysics* has a Latin Avicennian feel that is probably due to the influence of scholasticism.

Another 15th century commentator from Italy, Judah Messer Leon, takes a different approach to describing notions, an approach motivated by realism, likely the realism of Walter Burley and others who were then in vogue at the University in Padua.[56] Judah Messer Leon was a major figure of the Hebrew commentary tradition who was one of the first to have an official affiliation with the University of Padua. He wrote commentaries on *Isagoge*, *Categories*, *De Interpretatione*, *Prior Analytics*, *Posterior Analytics*, *Physics*, *De Anima*, *Metaphysics*, and *Ethics* as well as Hebrew works on grammar, logic, and rhetoric that were influenced by renaissance humanism, and commentaries on the Bible and Avicenna's medical *Canon* along with various *Quaestiones*.[57] His commentary on

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[52] Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, *Or. Qu.* 831, f. 27v.

[53] Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Christ Church* 200, f. 43r-v, and *Huntington* 519, f. 89v.

[54] Oxford, Bodleian Library, *Hunt*. 519, f. 1r and 32v.

[55] See M. Steinschnieder, *The Hebrew Translations of the Middle Ages and the Jews as Transmitters.* Vol. 2: *Logic*, trans. by Ch. Manekin, Springer, Dordrecht (forthcoming).

[56] On the connection between Judah Messer Leon and Walter Burley and the Paduan realists, see I. Husik, *Judah Messer Leon's Commentary on the 'Vetus Logica'. A Study Based on Three Mss., with a Glossary of Hebrew Logical and Philosophical Terms*, Brill, Leiden 1906. The recent publication of A. Conti (ed.), *A Companion to Walter Burley: Late Medieval Logician and Metaphysician*, Brill, Leiden 2013 (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, 41) is a sign of renewed interest in Burley. We hope to pursue the connection between Messer Leon and Burley's thought in the future.

[57] On the life of Judah Messer Leon, see Y. Halper, "Messer Leon, Judah b. Jehiel", in M. Sgarbi (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Renaissance Philosophy*, Springer Nature 2018, and the sources listed therein.

De Interpretatione is the only Hebrew commentary I am aware of that seeks to define the Hebrew term *ʿinyan* (ענין), which I have been translating "notion".[58] After ruling out other possibilities, Messer Leon settles on a definition of "notion" as "some likeness in the soul that signifies something outside of the soul".[59]

Messer Leon identifies the following problem with taking notions in the soul to be the *media* between speech and existing things in the world:

Further, if a name were necessarily to be assigned to a notion in the soul, i.e., to a likeness of a thing, then the following premise would be true: "man is the likeness of man which is in the soul", since the subject and the predicate would indicate one notion. For there is no doubt that the utterance, "the likeness of man", indicates the likeness of man and that the name, "man" would then indicate "the likeness of man". It would necessarily follow from this that these two names are assigned to one thing. Therefore if this premise were true, man would be the likeness of man.	עוד אם השם בהכרח יושם אל העניין אשר בנפש ר"ל אל המשל הדב ר, היתה זאת ההקדמה אמתית: האדם הוא המשל האדם אשר בנפש למה שהנושא והנשוא יורו על עניין אחד, כי אין ספק שזה הקול המשל האדם מורה המשל האדם. וזה השם אדם א"כ יורה על המשל האדם ויתחייב זה שאלה השני שמות יושמו לדבר אחד. והנה תהיה זאת ההקדמה אמיתית האדם הוא המשל האדם.[59]

To solve this difficulty, he brings in a solution he attributes to Boethius:

Boethius says here that the utterance primarily indicates something in the soul and subsequently indicates the thing outside.	ואמר בואיציאו בזה המקום שהקול מורה קודם דבר מה בנפש ואחר כן יורה על הדבר אשר מחוץ.

That is, Messer Leon distinguishes between signification of notions in the soul and signification of things outside of the soul, arguing that words in fact signify both, though not in the same way. Later, he identifies the things outside of the soul with notions outside of the soul, and restates the Boethian principle accordingly, though now attributing the view to Aristotle:

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[58] Judah Messer Leon's Commentary on *De Interpretatione* was edited by Isaak Husik, but never published. Husik's handwritten version of this edition was left to the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York under the manuscript code 10935. The section quote here begins on f. 283.

[59] Jewish Theological Seminary, 10935, f. 283: העניין בנפש ... המשל מה בנפש מורה על דבר שהוא חוץ לנפש. The possibilities Messer Leon rules out for the meaning of *ʿinyan* (ענין) are that it be (1) "a characteristic of the soul whose meaning is expressed in speech, such as love or hatred or other ethical qualities, or the things related to the desiring soul" (תכונה מה נפשית אשר התבאר עניינה במאמרות, כמו האהבה והשנאה וזולתם מהמדות ומהדברים המיוחסים לכח המתאוה) or (2) "a science or knowledge, such as logic, astronomy or others" (חכמה או ידיעה, כמו הגיון ותשבורת וזולתם).

[60] Jewish Theological Seminary, 10935, f. 283. He goes on to identify other difficulties and list the opinions of numerous other thinkers, but this deserves further study.

So, we say that Aristotle understood [the notions in the soul and the notions outside of the soul] with the assumption that things are grasped and understood by the intellect. Man seems able to make known his views about what he has grasped of notions by making utterances and phrases which at first indicate the notion envisioned in the intellect on the one hand and in the second place indicate the notions outside [of the intellect].	וכן נאמר שארסטו ... לקחם עם ההנחה שהדברים יהיו מושגים ועומדים בשכל. ויראה האדם להודיע דעתו ממה שהשיג מן העניינים שזה יעשה בקולות ובסיפורים אשר הם תחלה יורו על העניין המצוייר בשכל מזה הצד ושנית על העניינים אשר מחוץ.[60]

The language of notions that Messer Leon employs here allows him to speak of different manners of signification assigned to a single word. A word can indicate both a notion in the soul and a notion outside of the soul, but not in the same way. While it is not entirely clear, it seems to me that Messer Leon's switch to discussing "notions outside the soul" rather than "things outside of the soul" is motivated by an effort to take what we saw earlier as Aristotle's four component analysis of words and meanings and make it a five component analysis. In Messer Leon's new version, the five components are (1) written words, (2) utterances, (3) notions in the soul, (4) notions in the world, and (5) things in the world. Yet, for Messer Leon, utterances can refer to 3 and/or 4 and perhaps even 5 as well. Further, 3 need not refer to 4 or 5.

We are, unfortunately, still far from an adequate understanding of Messer Leon's interpretation of *De Interpretatione*. Yet, we can see that he approaches the relationship between words, things, and notions in a way that is far more complicated than the thinkers of the 14th century. Moreover, he is interested in the distinction between notions of things and notions of notions, a distinction which entered scholastic thought through translations of Avicenna that did not make it into medieval Hebrew. Moreover, Messer Leon has a much greater range of sources available to him as he seeks to reconcile Aristotle, Averroes, the Hebrew Aristotelian commentary tradition with Boethius and Latin scholastic commentators.

Conclusion

This survey of how Hebrew commentators in the 14th and 15th century treated the opening lines of Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* suggests that, while the Hebrew commentary tradition may owe its launch to the patronage of Frederick II and the Latin translation movement in Southern Italy in the 12th century, it nevertheless developed in a direction that was different from, if in some ways parallel to that of the Latin Aristotelian commentary tradition. This is especially apparent in their treatment of "notions" – *ʿinyanim* (ענינים) in Hebrew, intentiones in Latin – as intermediaries between voiced speech and things in the world. These terms take up parallel places in the translations of Averroes' *Middle Commentary* on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* by Jacob Anatoli and William of Luna. Yet the terms have different resonances in Latin and in Hebrew. To a Latin reader they may recall Avicenna's discussions of first and second intentions, as the Latin commentators sought to determine what exactly is explained by scientific speech about experiences of the outside world: is it the essence of a thing or notions of the essence? In what way are those different? In the Hebrew tradition, in contrast, either there was no clear Avicennian notion of first and second intentiones or else it was not considered so important as to make its way into commentaries on Averroes. The translations

[61] Jewish Theological Seminary, 10935, f. 284.

which served as the basis for the Hebrew Aristotelian commentary tradition began with Anatoli and followed his lead. Accordingly 14th century Hebrew commentators seem to have adopted a rather simple view of notions, *ʿinyanim* (עניינים), as mediators of experience: speech, including scientific speech, signifies notions, which in turn signify things. The interest of these commentators was not in the ontological character of these notions, but in what it means for notions to be natural and to be signified by conventionally determined language. Such questions are, it would seem, related to the question of how scientific language can accurately depict notions in the soul. That is, such questions lie at the heart of developing a scientific language of demonstration that can accurately describe the world.

In the 15th century, however, Hebrew commentators had much greater and much more direct contact with the Latin commentary tradition and accordingly turned to ask questions about whether these notions in fact signified the outside world, rather than other notions. If logic concerns primarily second intentions, as Avicenna suggests, then it is even further removed from direct description of the outside world. Yet, Judah Messer Leon introduces a series of questions about the complicated relationship between things, notions, and words, seeking to explain how Aristotle thought people could understanding and talk scientifically about things at all, without being reduced to logical redundancies. In short, as the late Mauro Zonta pointed out, contact with scholastic philosophy in the 15th century re-oriented certain views found in the Hebrew Aristotelian commentary tradition and placed them on an entirely new trajectory.

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