

Mapping Knowledge

Cross-Pollination in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages



Edited by
Charles Burnett & Pedro Mantas-España



CNERU – The Warburg Institute

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Averroes and Averroisms in Portuguese Medieval and Early Modern Scholastic Authors*

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University of Porto

This study is focused on the influence that a Cordovan philosopher exerted on Portuguese thinkers. Glossing Burnett's title in his contribution to this same book, we cannot draw a direct road between Córdoba and Lisbon or Coimbra in the Middle Ages in what regards Averroes' influence, but we can find some bits of Averroes' influence in Portuguese authors through the intellectual roads which led them to Paris, Oxford, Sevilla, Naples or Pavia during the Middle Ages and Early Modernity.

If we look at the *longue durée* in this peripheral intellectual context we realise how Averroes was praised or criticized and the various ways in which the label 'Averroism' was used in the context of Christian philosophical historiography. Portugal was once regarded as one of the few places where Averroes' influence survived, prolonging scholasticism until the 19th century. In 1852 Ernest Renan wrote in *Averroès et l'averroïsme*:

'L'Espagne et le Portugal, où la scolastique s'est continué jusqu'à nos jours, virent aussi se prolonger plus longtemps l'autorité d'Averroès. Antonio a recueilli les éloges qui lui ont été donnés par un grand nombre de médecins espagnols et portugais. Il est pourtant jugé d'une manière fort sévère par les jésuites de Coïmbre'.¹

* This paper is part of the project 'Iberian Scholastic Philosophy at the Crossroads of Western Reason: The Reception of Aristotle and the Transition to Modernity' (PTDC/FIL-FIL/109889/2009). I want to thank Pedro Mantas-España and Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala for their kind invitation to collaborate in the Colloquium on knowledge transfers. I specially thank Charles Burnett for reviewing and polishing my English text.

¹ E. Renan, *Averroès et l'averroïsme. Essai historique*, Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1882 (4th ed.), pp. 426-427. Renan's source is undoubtedly the article on Averroes in Bayle's dictionary, where the same quotations of the Conimbricenses are cited; cf. Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 4 vols., Amsterdam–Leiden–The Hague–Utrecht: 1740 (5th ed.), s.v. 'Averroes', vol. 1, pp. 384-391, at pp. 385-386. On Renan's book and ideological positions and the influence of his findings and misinterpretations, see A. de Libera's preface in E. Renan, *Averroès et l'averroïsme*, Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1997; and J. Marenbon, 'Ernest Renan and Averroism: The Story of a Misinterpretation', in A. Akasoy and G. Giglioli (eds.), *Renaissance Averroism and Its Aftermath: Arabic Philosophy in Early Modern Europe*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, 211, Dordrecht: Springer, 2010, pp. 273-283.

Renan made no further statement concerning the history of Averroism in Portugal other than this comment on the deep and lengthy local authority of Averroes, whose origins and profile were uncertain and whose followers are laconically mentioned. Beyond expressing the belief that Averroes' influence lasted longer ('until his days', he says), this excerpt highlights the dual assessment of the authority of Averroes: the praise of doctors, the severe criticism of philosophers.

As besides this short comment Renan did not present more on Latin Iberian Averroism, I shall try to sketch the presence of Averroes and Averroism in scholastic Portuguese thinkers, gathering the available elements in a lacunose and open but short dossier.²

We can begin by looking at those very Coimbra Jesuits quoted by Renan, who cites Bayle and António. In the *Commentary of the 'De Anima'*, published in 1589, in the discussion of the unique possible intellect for all humankind, Averroes is sharply and ironically refuted:

'This statement of the Commentator, or better the falsifier (*commentitoris*) on the unity of the intellect, is so foolish that Scotus, precisely in the 4th book of the *Sentences*, distinction 43, question 2, said that, because of nonsense like this, Averroes was worthy to be exorcised (*averruncetur*) from the community of men. Others, however, called this his monstrous invention, than which the thick forest of the Arabs has created nothing greater. Certainly this alone should have been enough to refute them: that they cherish so much the Son of Rois that they say his soul is the soul of Aristotle'.³

² Cf. J. Ferreira, 'Averroísmo em Portugal', in *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, ed. J. Serrão, Porto: Figueirinhas, 1985, vol. I, pp. 258-259; F. da Gama Caeiro, 'Averroísmo em Portugal', in *Logos. Enciclopédia Luso-brasileira de Filosofia*, 5 vols, Lisbon: Verbo 1990-1992, I, col. 548-552; J. P. Gomes, *Dicionário de filosofia portuguesa*, Lisbon: D. Quixote, 2004², s.v. 'Averroísmo', pp. 52-59; J. Meirinhos, 'Was there a Portuguese Averroism in the 14th Century? Alphonsus Dionisii and Thomas Scotus', in A. Musco (ed), *Universalità della ragione, pluralità delle filosofie nel Medioevo / Universalité de la Raison. Pluralité des Philosophies au Moyen Age / Universality of Reason. Plurality of Philosophies in the Middle Ages. XII Congresso internazionale di Filosofia Medievale, Palermo, 16-22 Settembre 2007*, Palermo: Officina di Studi Medievali, 2012, vol. III, pp. 93-104.

³ 'Haec commentatoris seu commentitoris potius de unitate intellectus sententia adeo stulta est, ut merito Scotus in iv Sent. d. 43, q. 2, dixerit dignum esse Averroem qui ob has ineptias ex hominum communione averruncetur, alii vero hoc ejus figmentum monstrum vocarint quo nullum majus Arabum sylvae genuerint. Certe hoc unum sat esse debuisse ad eos coarguendos qui filium Rois tanti faciunt, ut ejus animam Aristotelis animam esse dicant.' See *Commentarij Collegij Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu in tres libros de Anima Aristotelis Stagiritae*, Conimbricae, typis et expensis Antonij à Mariz, 1598, Lib. II, Cap. 1, quaest. 7, art. 2, p. 81. Averroes' theory of the unicity of the intellect is once again presented and refuted among the theories on the externality of the intellect, considered to be erroneous, see id., Lib. III, Cap. V, quaest. 1, art. 1, pp. 320-321. Both passages are quoted by Bayle.

Based on the arguments of Thomas Aquinas, Scotus and others, Manuel de Góis' commentary severely criticizes Averroes' theory of the unique possible intellect and his Latin followers. But considering how often they quoted the commentaries of Averroes on many other issues – even in this same *De anima* – we shall note that this complete rejection of specific theories of Averroes did not affect the philosophical interest that the Conimbricenses placed in him.⁴ Averroes is quoted abundantly, most of the time as clarifying the positions of Aristotle, at others times as part of the consensus of interpreters,⁵ at still other times even as a philosopher in his own right. They quoted him without praise, just as would be prescribed in the final drafting *Ratio Studiorum* of the Jesuits published in 1599.⁶ The various references to Averroes did not show a direct reading of his work, or a reassessment of his philosophy, but only a general and indirect examination of his thought, with some rhetorical emphasis on the severity of criticism of the so-called anti-Christian positions attributed to the philosopher of Córdoba. But this, of course, could not be reason enough to include the Conimbricenses among the Averroists; in fact, they reject all the theories usually identified with Latin Averroism⁷ and, as Renan said after Bayle, they criticized Averroes severely.⁸

⁴ On the commentaries on Aristotle's works by the Jesuits of Coimbra, see António Manuel Martins, 'The Conimbricenses', in M. C. Pacheco and J. Meirinhos (eds.), *Intellect et imagination dans la Philosophie Médiévale / Intellect and Imagination in Medieval Philosophy / Intelecto e Imaginação na Filosofia Medieval*, Brepols: Turnhout, 2006, vol. I, pp. 101-117; A.A. Coxito, *Estudos sobre filosofia em Portugal no século XVI*, Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2005; and the numerous studies by Mário Santiago de Carvalho, including the book *Psicologia e ética no curso Jesuíta Conimbricense*, Lisbon: Edições Colibri, 2010.

⁵ In one case at least they argue with the consensus of interpreters and the context of Aristotle's words in order to reject the position of Averroes, simply considered to be wrong, according to which the beginning of the *Physics* addresses the question of the eternity of motion, but referring only to the celestial sphere: see *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis Stagyrtae*, Conimbricae: Antonii a Mariz Vniversitatis Typographi, 1592, VIII, cap. I expl., p. 700.

⁶ 'Regulae professoris philosophiae: (...) 3. Auctores male de christiana fide meriti. Aristotelis interpretes male de christiana fide meritos, sine magno delectu aut legat aut in scholam proferat; caveatque ne erga illos afficiantur discipuli. 4. Averroes. Eam ob rem nec Averrois (idem de eiusmodi aliis iudicium) digressiones in separatum aliquem tractatum conferat; et, si quid boni ex ipso proferendum sit, sine laude proferat; et, si fieri potest, id eum sumpsisse demonstret. 5. Nulli sectae adhaerendum. Nulli sectae, ut averroistarum, alexandraeorum, et similium vel se vel suos addicat; nec Averrois, aut Alexandri aut ceterorum errata dissimulet; se inde acrius deprimat eorum auctoritatem'. See *Ratio atque Institutio Studiorum Societatis Iesu* [1599], ed. Ladislaus Lukàcs (Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Iesu, 5 = Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, 129), Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1986, pp. 357-454.

⁷ See for example the association of Averroes with all those who defend the theory of the eternity of the world (e.g. Proclus, Simplicius, Avicenna), *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis*

The other Portuguese scholars Renan was thinking of assumed a different position. They merely praised Averroes' intelligence and philosophical contribution in a broad sense, but not on any single philosophical doctrine in particular. These authors are all physicians and in this case Renan's source is the Spanish polygraph Nicolás Antonio.⁹

The physician Abraham Zacuto¹⁰ especially praised the *Colliget* and used it in his works without restriction. While admiring Averroes as a philosopher and as a physician, Zacuto blamed the bad translations for spoiling his vast work of commentary on the entire Aristotelian corpus.¹¹ But it was Averroes' authority as a physician that Zacuto was prolonging. Another Jewish physician, Amatus Lusitanus,¹² praised Averroes in the same way. His words quoted by Antonio are no more than a way to strengthen the medical authority of Averroes.¹³ Zacuto's and

Societatis Iesu in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis Stagyrtae, Lib. VIII, cap. 2, q. 4, art. 2, p. 723, Averroes' arguments are not discussed nor detailed.

⁸ See M. S. de Carvalho, 'Averroycae... philosophiae sunt vehementer addicti. La critique d'Averroès dans les Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu', in A. de Libera, B. Kreisl and J. Lonfat (eds.), *Averroès, l'averroïsme, l'antiaverroïsme*, forthcoming.

⁹ N. Antonio, *Bibliotheca Hispana vetus, sive, Hispani scriptores qui ab Octaviani Augusti aeo ad annum Christi MD floruerunt*, Matriti: Apud Viduam et Heredes d. Ioachimi ibarrae Regii quondam Typographi, 1788 (2nd ed.), s.v. 'Averroes', vol. II, pp. 240-248, at pp. 242-243. Incidentally it is worth noting that Bayle regretted not having access to Antonio's work, which he could only refer to indirectly, cf. Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, p. 388.

¹⁰ Zacutus Lusitanus or Abraham Zacuto was a Jewish Portuguese physician born in 1575 in Lisbon as Manuel Álvares de Távora and died in Amsterdam in 1642, see J.O. Leibowitz, 'Zacutus Lusitanus', in F. Skolnik (ed.), *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Detroit: Macmillan Publ., 2007, vol. 21, p. 437; S. Jarcho, 'The Style of Zacutus Lusitanus and its Origins', *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 44 (1989), pp. 291-295.

¹¹ 'Averrhöes plusquam commentator, seu malleus medicorum verius appellandus, dictus Arabice *Abenrast*, vir acutissimus, subtilissimus et philosophandi scientia clarus adeo ut priscorum philosophorum et medicorum dicta, exacto examine, non solum ad Aristophanis, sed ad Cleanthis lucernam pensata explicuerit. Constat hoc aperte ex vasto illo, quod super omnia Aristotelis opera conscripsit, volumine ingeniosissimo et laboriosissimo, sed ob temporis tunc incuriam ineleganter admodum traducto. Scripsit opus *Colliget* (Latine sonat *universale*), in septem distinctum libros, in quibus summam eruditionem, rarum ingenium, reconditamque doctrinam palam fecit. Dignus certe, ut cum priscis illis comparetur': Zacutus Lusitanus, *Operum* tomus I: *De medicorum principum historia* [1629], Lugduni: sumptibus Ioannis Antonii Huguetae filii -et- Marci Antonii Ravaud, 1649, 'Operis auctores', s.p., also cit. by N. Antonio, p. 242-3.

¹² Amatus Lusitanus, e.g. João Rodrigues de Castelo Branco (1511-1568), was a Portuguese Jewish physician, see Joshua O. Leibowitz, 'Amatus Lusitanus', in Fred Skolnik (ed), *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 2, pp. 34-35.

¹³ Zacuto named Averroes as a 'philosophum post Aristotelem admirandum' and as 'insignem philosophum; non adeo tamen in medicina excellentem, ut illi auctoritatem dare debemus'; see Amatus Lusitanus, *Curationum Medicinalium Centuriæ Septem*, Florentiae: cudebat

Amatus' medical works testified the continuous authority of Averroes in authors of Portuguese origin, even though they just repeat trivial judgements of their time. These Sephardic physicians are the only sources from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on whom Renan based his judgment on the continuity of Averroes' influence in Portugal and Spain. And as we have seen the open positive appreciations mainly concern his medical work.

It is a fact that we can find some other authors mentioning Averroes during the eighteenth century, generally in a critical way. In 1759 the Marquis of Pombal decreed the closure of the Order of Jesus and the expulsion of the Jesuits from the country and from all the schools they headed, including the Universities of Coimbra and Évora (Royal decree of June the 28th, the Jesuits' teaching was replaced with different courses on humanities, including Philosophy), and their expulsion from Portugal or incarceration (Royal decree of September the 3rd). Among some other political reasons, obscurantism and the opposition to the new ideas in philosophy and science were the alleged causes, because they continued to teach only the work of Aristotle, deformed by Averroes.¹⁴ Manuel de Azevedo Fortes (1660-1749), an engineer who had been a professor of philosophy at the University of Siena, in 1744 published a handbook for the reform of the sciences influenced by Cartesianism. Fortes seeks to retain some central guidelines of Aristotelian logic, attributing to Avicenna and Averroes the 'chimeras and superfluties' that 'deformed' Aristotle's philosophy.¹⁵ During the eighteenth century several reforms of Philosophy were proposed in Portugal, some based on Aristotle,¹⁶ others against Aristotle and Scholasticism.¹⁷ It was in this current that two

Laurentius Torrentium, 1551, Cent. IV, 44 in scholiis (only the first sentence is cited by N. Antonio, p. 243).

¹⁴ See J. Caeiro, *História da expulsão da Companhia de Jesus da província de Portugal: (séc. XVIII)*, 3 vols, Lisbon: Verbo, 1991.

¹⁵ 'Do que fica dito se segue que a filosofia que hoje se ensina nas escolas não é a mesma que Aristóteles nos deixou escrita; e se é a mesma, se acha adulterada e viciada (...). Avicena e Averróis, dois famosos médicos africanos, começaram a ensinar publicamente a filosofia de Aristóteles e a encheram de mil entidades quiméricas e supérfluas naquilo em que não entenderam bem a mente de Aristóteles': Manuel de Azevedo Fortes, *Lógica racional*, ed. by P. Calafate, Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2002, p. 45; in fact this text is the first part of a longer treatise to reform sciences: *Logica racional, Geometria, Analítica, obra utilíssima e absolutamente necessária para entrar em qualquer sciencia e ainda para os homens que em qualquer particular quizerem fazer uso do seu entendimento e explicar as suas ideias em termos claros, próprios e intelligiveis*, Lisbon: Antonio Plates, 1744; cf. Luís M.A.V. Bernardo, *O projecto cultural de Manuel de Azevedo Fortes: um caso de recepção do cartesianismo na ilustração portuguesa*, Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda, 2005.

¹⁶ As an example, see, João Baptista, *Philosophia aristotelica restituta et illustrata, qua experimentis, qua ratiociniis nuper inventis*, Ulyssipone: typis Regalibus Sylvianis Regiaeque Academiae, 1748. Its 520 pages are a new presentation of the Aristotelian *Organon*.

Carmelite fathers proposed their own reformed textbooks, both based on the work of John Baconthorpe or Baconius O.Carm (c. 1290-c. 1348), the *doctor resolutissimus* and *princeps averroistarum*, but in none of these works is there an explicit defence or discussion of Averroes' positions or his contributions to the understanding of Aristotle.¹⁸ It is even unlikely that these authors had any direct knowledge of the work of Averroes or cared about the kind of Averroism followed by Baconthorpe. If Renan had leafed through these works, maybe he would have found in some of them other examples of the continuing influence of Averroes.

As for earlier periods, what can we find in Portugal in regard to the influence of Averroes?

Manuscripts containing Averroes' works are very few in Portuguese libraries,¹⁹ not to mention the absence of commentaries or works based on them. For this reason to assert the presence of Averroes or the influence of "Averroism" we must seek within the works written by Portuguese authors.

In recent historiography the discussion on 'Averroism' has captured some attention. But, what exactly is Averroism? Over the last decades, a lengthy and interesting controversy has taken place about the issue.²⁰ Averroism is above all a

¹⁷ The most famous polemic is a work written as a series of letters by Luis António Verney, *Verdadeiro Método de estudar, para ser útil à República e à Igreja: proporcionado ao estilo, e necessidade de Portugal*, Valença: Oficina de Antonio Balle, 1746. It was written in Italy and published anonymously. Letters 8-11 are on Philosophy, in defending Descartes and Locke he promotes an attack on Aristotle and Scholasticism. In fact, Father Verney criticises the Catholic Church's canonisation of Aristotle and the Arabs: 'o costume da Igreja Católica que canonizou as obras de Aristóteles e também a doutrina dos Árabes'; see L.A. Verney, *O verdadeiro método de estudar*, 5 vol., ed. A. Salgado Júnior, Lisbon: Sá da Costa, 1949-1952, vol. III, pp. 8-9.

¹⁸ Manuel Inácio Coutinho, *Compendium philosophico-theologicum ... iuxta scripta doctoris resoluti Joannis Baconii*, Ulyssipone Typographia Augustiana, 1734; Manuel Inácio Coutinho, *Integer philosophiæ cursus juxta inconcussam, singularemque doctrinam Joannis Baconii doctoris resoluti*, 4 vols, Ulyssipone: Typis Michaelis Rodrigues 1750; Miguel de Azevedo, *Opusculum Philosophico-baconicum*. In I. Logices, II. Ethices, III. Metaphysices, IV. Physiologices Libros, ... in multiplicibus propositionibus problemata evisceratum ab Fr. Joachim de Azevedo, Fr. J Joachim a S. Jacobo, necnon Francisco Tavares, Emmanuele Pacheco de Rezende, Ulissipo, 1765.

¹⁹ An exception is the manuscript Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Geral 2299 [14th century], that among anonymous texts and works by Avicenna, Siger of Brabant, Thomas Aquinas, Gundissalinus and many others, contains Averroes' *De substantia orbis* (ff. 89v-96r) and a *De luce* attributed to him (ff. 307r-309v), and Thomas Aquinas' *De unitate intellectus contra averroistas* under the title *De intellectu pluralitate* (ff. 60v-73r). The ms. was first noticed by F. Stegmüller: 'Neugefundene Quaestiones des Siger von Brabant', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 3 (1931), pp. 158-182. For more on this ms. see M.-T. D'Alverny, *Avicenna latinus. Codices, addenda collegerunt S. Van Riet - P. Jodogne*, Louvain-la-Neuve - Leiden: E. Peeters - E.J. Brill, 1994, pp. 245-252.

²⁰ On the Latin fortune of Averroes and the historiographical discussion of the uses and misuses of the label 'Averroism', see G. Fioravanti, 'Boezio di Dacia e la storiografia

historiographical label and, as such, its philosophical boundaries are not precise. There are serious difficulties in outlining Averroism as a unified philosophical movement – even in defining those theories which have to be upheld for one master or author to be considered an Averroist. And those who were originally labelled as ‘averroistae’ by medieval authors do not hold the same philosophical positions.²¹ John Marenbon proposed a non-ideological description of the common positions defended by Averroes’ Latin followers: a) as Arts Masters they were devoted to expounding Aristotle accurately, and turned especially to Averroes’ commentaries for help; b) They accepted Averroes’ interpretation that there is only a single potential intellect for all humans; c) As natural philosophers they accepted Aristotle’s view that the world is eternal; d) They had an elevated view of the happiness attainable by humans in this life and devoted themselves to philosophy; e) They adopted some sort of strategy in order to explain why, though Christians, they followed (b), (c) and (d).²²

In the last decades a conspicuous change in the uses of the label *Averroism* can be noted. To understand this change, we must go back to Renan again and remind ourselves of his sketch of the radical position of Renaissance Averroists:

‘La philosophie italienne, se dégageant des discussions abstraites du moyen âge, en était venue à se résumer dans quelques questions d’un matérialisme fort simple:

sull’Averroismo’, in *Studi Medievali* 7 (1966), pp. 283-322; R.-A. Gauthier, ‘Notes sur les débuts (1225–1240) du premier Averroïsme’, in *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 66 (1982), pp. 321-374; R. Imbach, ‘L’averroïsme latin du XIII^e siècle’, in R. Imbach and A. Maierù (eds.), *Gli studi di filosofia medievale fra otto e novecento*, Rome: Ed. di Storia e Letteratura, 1991, pp. 191-208; F. Niewöhner – L. Sturlese (eds.), *Averroismus im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance*, Zürich: Spur Verlag, 1994; A. Zimmermann, *Propos sur l’averroïsme*, in *Actes del Simposi internacional de Filosofia de l’Edat Mitjana*, Patronat d’Estudis Osenencs, Vic, 1996, pp. 79-84; B.C. Bazán, ‘Was There Ever a First Averroism?’, in J.A. Aertsen and A. Speer (eds.), *Geistesleben im 13. Jahrhundert*, Berlin – New York: W. de Gruyter, 2000, pp. 32-53; V. Sorge, *Averroismo*, Napoli: Guida, 2007; J.-B. Brenet (ed.), *Averroes et les averroïsmes Juif et Latin. Actes du Colloque (Paris, Juin 2005)*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2007; D. Calma, *Études sur le premier siècle de l’averroïsme latin: approches et textes inédits*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2011.

²¹ The first appearance of the word *averroistae* is to be found in Thomas Aquinas *De unitate intellectus*, I.17 (the word was later introduced into the title of the work); on this work see A. de Libera, *L’unité de l’intellect. Commentaire du De unitate intellectus contra averroistas de Thomas d’Aquin*, Paris: Vrin, 2004; the thesis of de Libera is that ‘plusieurs théories averroïstes ont été formés par le De unitate’ de Thomas’ (p. 19), theories that have thereafter been assumed by Arts Masters. ‘Averroista’ was used shortly after by Peter John Olivi, cf. S. Piron, ‘Olivi et les averroïstes’, *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 53 (2006), pp. 251-309; D. Calma, *Études sur le premier siècle de l’averroïsme latin*, namely its first section ‘L’averroïsme se dit en plusieurs sens’ with the chapter ‘Occurrences et citations’, pp. 9-21.

²² Cf. J. Marenbon, *Medieval Philosophy. An Historical and Philosophical Introduction*, London – New York: Routledge, 2007, pp. 255-256.

que l'immortalité de l'âme a été inventée par les législateurs pour maintenir le peuple; que le premier homme s'est formé par des causes naturelles; que les effets miraculeux ne sont que des impostures ou des illusions; que la prière, l'invocation des saints, le culte des reliques sont de nulle efficacité; que la religion n'est faite que pour les simples d'esprit. Voilà ce qu'on appelait averroïsme, voilà ce que les gens d'esprit soutenaient dans les cours et dans les cercles lettrés, affectant de mettre le représentant de cette doctrine au-dessus des évangélistes et des apôtres, et de faire de ses écrits leur lecture favorite. Cet averroïsme des hommes du monde est bien celui de Pomponat. Peu s'en faut qu'il ne renouvelle le blasphème des 'Trois Imposteurs'.²³

Averroists are simply debased philosophers, unbelievers and impious materialists, nothing more than libertines. Prolonging the invention of a non-existent school, Pierre Mandonnet defined as 'Averroist teaching' the attack on faith and Christian life with disrespectful assertions in the second half of the thirteenth century:

[...] des théories qui allaient être condamnées quatre mois après, et qui étaient la conséquence de la position prise par la philosophie averroïste à l'égard de la foi et de la vie chrétienne [...]. La théologie est fondée sur des fables; les sages de ce monde sont les seuls philosophes; le christianisme est un obstacle à la science; il n'y a de bonheur qu'en ce monde; la mort est la fin de tout; il ne faut pas se soucier de sa sépulture; on ne doit se confesser qu'en apparence; il ne faut pas prier; la fornication n'est pas un péché.
[...] elles étaient l'aboutissant logique et pratique de l'enseignement averroïste, une fois qu'on en avait écarté le respect équivoque et tout nominal qu'il professait à l'égard du christianisme'.²⁴

Here Mandonnet is clearly targeting the positions condemned by Bishop Tempier in Paris in 1277, whose extreme philosophical bases are plainly identified as coming from 'Latin Averroists'.²⁵ But we know that they are not, since we cannot find these positions expressed in this way in Averroes' works or even in Arts Masters sympathetic to the thinking of Averroes.²⁶ Renan and Mandonnet created this kind of Medieval or Renaissance philosopher, worthless in Christian eyes, that

²³ Renan, *Averroès*, pp. 357-358.

²⁴ P. Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant et l'averroïsme latin au XIII^e siècle*, 2 vol., Louvain: Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, 1911, vol. I, p. 212.

²⁵ '(...) événements qui entraînent à leur ruine les deux principaux chefs de l'averroïsme parisien, Siger de Brabant et Boèce de Dacie', see Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant*, vol. I, p. 213.

²⁶ This non-coincidence between Averroes' own works and the positions attributed is a problem that has been pursued for a long time; see A. Akasoy, 'Was Ibn Rushd an Averroist? The Problem, the Debate, and its Philosophical Implications', in Akasoy and Giglioni (eds.), *Renaissance Averroism and Its Aftermath*, pp. 321-347.

was colourfully described by a subsequent cohort of historians whose views have only been questioned in recent years.²⁷

It was this historiographical current that caused the identification of some Portuguese authors as Averroists or at least reflecting Averroist positions.

The humanist João the Barros (c. 1496-1570), published in Lisbon in 1452 *Ropica pñefma* (i.e. *Mercadoria espiritual*, ‘spiritual commodity’), an allegorical moral dialogue in Portuguese between Will, Intellect and Time, arguing against Reason on (1) the mortality of the soul, (2) the lack of necessity for punishment or reward of the soul, and (3) other errors of Christian doctrine.²⁸ At the end of each one of the three parts, Will, Intellect and Time recognise the strength of the arguments of Reason and admit their defeat. In João the Barros’ work Averroes is quoted twice but only for secondary reasons associated with several disputes and never on the central problems under discussion. The materialistic positions of Will and Intellect (inspired by pre-Socratic physics that they quote through Aristotle, ignoring the philosophers’ refutation) led several scholars to argue that Barros took the criticised theories from a popular form of Paduan Averroism, which would have spread to Portugal.²⁹ But in fact there isn’t a shred of evidence for these claims and the criticised position on the mortality of the soul is a classical topos in polemical texts, or could have other sources than the alleged ‘anti Christian Paduan materialism’.

A more interesting and philosophical presence of Averroes is to be found in two other contemporary authors active in Italy. The first one is Gomes of Lisbon who wrote a question against Nicolet of Vernia on the true object of *Physics* and on the subalternation of the sciences.³⁰ The question was published in an uncer-

²⁷ See n. 20 above.

²⁸ Reason says: ‘Este escriba em três cousas, correspondentes ao corpo, parecer e cor que disseste terem as tuas peças: ua tem *dúvida na imortalidade da alma*, outra *na sua pena e glória*, outra *na Lei de Cristo*. E porque tu mesma [sc. Will], se és quem eu cuido, irás descobrindo *teus infernais propósitos*, não falarei mais em eles, porque ainda a majestade de meu ofício se ofende em te sofrer, se a esperança de te converter a melhor caminho não fosse’, João de Barros, *Ropica Pñefma* [Lisboa 1452], I.S. Révah (ed.), 2 vols, Lisbon: INIC, 1983, vol. II, p. 18 (italics are mine).

²⁹ A.J. Saraiva *História da cultura em Portugal*, vol. II, Lisbon: Jornal do Fôro, 1953, pp. 576-579.

³⁰ *Quaestio perutilis de cuiuscumque scientie subiecto, principaliter tamen naturalis philosophiae*, s.d.; the first edition was reprinted, edited and translated into Portuguese in Frei Gomes de Lisboa, *Questão muito útil sobre o objecto de qualquer ciência e principalmente da filosofia natural (Quaestio perutilis de cuiuscumque scientie subiecto, principaliter tamen naturalis philosophiae)*, ed. and trans. by M.P. Meneses, Introd. by J.C. Gonçalves, Lisbon: Instituto de Alta Cultura, 1964; A. d’Ors, ‘Gometius Hispanus Ulixbonensis O.F.M.Conv. (†1513)’, *Análise* 24 (2003), pp. 95-144, which includes a large bibliography at pp. 125-133; J. Meirinhos, ‘Metaphysics and the *modus multiplicandi scientias* in the *Questio perutilis de cuiuscumque scientie subiecto* by Gomes of Lisboa (c. 1497)’, in R. H. Pich (ed.), *New Essays on Metaphysics as Scientia Transcen-*

tain date between 1485 and 1492 by this Franciscan master of Theology at the University of Pavia from 1482 to 1511. Throughout his *Very useful question concerning the subject of any science and especially that of Natural Philosophy* none of the positions condemned as Averroistic appear, nor is there even any reference to the condemnation of the theory of intellect of Vernia by the Bishop of Padua in 1489. Gomes of Lisbon uses Averroes, always named as Commentator, in an interpretation of Aristotle *ad mentem Scoti* to state that the object of Physics or Natural Philosophy is the mobile body,³¹ rejecting Vernia and all those who identified the *ens mobile* as being the subject matter for this science. Arguing against an Averroist, Gomes does not attempt to criticize or devalue Averroes. His strategy is clear: to interpret closely the text of Aristotle with the support of Duns Scotus, ‘the greatest of all Aristotelians’,³² to show that Vernia’s interpretation is simply wrong. Gomes quotes the comments to the *Physics* and *Metaphysics* and always appreciates the clarification of Averroes, even when it is reinterpreted, going so far as to identify Aristotle and the Commentator as Philosophy itself.³³ Undoubtedly, Averroes is introduced as a reliable authority on physical questions, a philosopher particularly skilful in helping to a better understanding of Aristotle and his questions on the natural world, matter and movement.³⁴ Gomes of Lisbon is one of those Masters who follows the positions of Averroes and values their contribution to the understanding of the text of Aristotle, without following any of the positions traditionally assigned to ‘Averroists’.

Another Renaissance author of Portuguese origin who follows Averroes explicitly without following any of the Averroistic positions is Leo Hebraeus or Judah Leon Abravanel (c. 1465 - c 1523). A Sephardic Jew born in Lisbon, Leo lived

dens, (Textes et Études du Moyen Age, 43) Louvain-la-Neuve: FIDEM, 2007, pp. 321-341 (in the title read ‘c.1484-1492’ instead of ‘c. 1497’, at p. 324, n. 6).

³¹ The title of the question is formulated as ‘Vtrum secundum Philosophi et sui Commentatoris sententiam corpus mobile sit naturalis philosophiae subiectum primum’, Gomes de Lisboa, *Questão muito útil*, p. 40.

³² ‘Ad hanc quaestionem dissolvendam imitaturus ad unguem subtilissimum doctorem Ioahnem Schotum summum aristotellicum sic procedam’, Gomes de Lisboa, *Questão muito útil*, p. 40.

³³ ‘natura ponitur a Philosopho et Commentatore (...), ideo ab ipsa philosophia, principium effectivum per se ipsius motus (...)’, Gomes de Lisboa, *Questão muito útil*, p. 50.

³⁴ See R. GLASNER, *Averroes’ Physics: A Turning Point in Medieval Natural Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Glasner introduces Averroes as an original thinker on physics with a major role in the history of atomism, or *minima naturalia*. The study goes deeper into Averroes’ Arabic texts and, at the end, Glasner stated that ‘The impact of Averroes’ Aristotelian atomism on Christian scholasticism, and especially upon the Latin Averroists, is a subject that calls for further study’. At least, it seems that he had a much more silent influence in physics than that in psychology and cosmology, but this deserves to be more studied, as the case of Gomes underlies.

and died in Italy where he wrote the *Dialoghi d'amore*,³⁵ a work of Platonic and Neoplatonic inspiration, where Filone and Sofia through dialogue seek a universal definition of love and its place in the universal order. Averroes is quoted at two important points as defending positions opposite to other Arabs.³⁶ Near the end of the second dialogue they try to understand how love can be the principle of cosmic order. Filone explains the position of the 'prima academia degli arabi, Alfarabio, Avicenna, Algazeli e il nostro rabi Moisé d'Egitto' who argue that each celestial orb is powered by two intelligences, one that moves by an efficient cause, the other by a final cause. Those 'filosofi arabi' claim that the first mover is not the supreme God, but that God is the end for which the first mover acts. Against this position Filone explains the position of 'Averroes e degli altri che da poi hanno commentato Aristoteli' and for whom the number of intelligences is equal to the number of celestial spheres and that God is the first mover. Although Filone justifies the position of Averroes as being based on a principle of parsimony, not multiplying entities more than reason demands, Sofia concludes that the opinion of Averroes seems more limited than that of other philosophers. Filone is then compelled to explain the interpretation of Averroes of the identity asserted by Aristotle between the first mover and God and that God is the most excellent final end of all movers. Even assuming some distance from the position of Averroes, this serves to explain that the supreme happiness is the union with God, which all intelligences desire.³⁷ In the third dialogue, about the origins of love, again Filone brings back the opposition between Arab schools. On one side is again 'la scuola di Avicenna and Alfarabi e il nostro Rabbi Moisé e altri' who claim that the first cause is above all the intelligences that move celestial spheres; for this reason it is the cause and the end loved by everything. For these authors the hierarchy of contemplations produces successive celestial orbs and intelligences in a processive scheme descending until the soul of the world and human intelligence. Sofia concludes that for 'questi arabi' there is a scheme of gradual procession of love from the first to the last degree of the underworld and thence rising again by degrees up to the first principle. Once again Averroes is introduced as the author who opposes this hierarchical way of understanding the

³⁵ *Dialoghi d'amore* di Maestro Leone Medico Hebreo, a cura di Mariano Lenzi, Roma: per Antonio Blado d'Assola, 1535; I quote from the Italian edition in Leão Hebreu (Iehudah Abrabanel), *Diálogos de amor*, 2 vol., ed. and trans. by Giacinto Manuppella, Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, Lisbon 1983; English translations: L. Ebreo, *The Philosophy of Love*, trans. F. Friedeberg-Seeley and J. H. Barnes. London: The Soncino Press, 1937; L. Ebreo, *Dialogues of Love*, trans. by D. Bacich and R. Pescatori, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

³⁶ See J.J. Vila-Chã, *Amor intellectualis? Leone Ebreo (Judah Abravanel) and the Intelligibility of Love*, Braga: Publicações de Faculdade de Filosofia de Braga, 2006, pp. 447-483 on the Arabs and Averroes.

³⁷ Leão Hebreu, *Diálogos de amor*, vol. I, pp. 137-139.

world, because he did not find this procession theory in Aristotle.³⁸ For Averroes, as a pure Aristotelian, the divine beauty without intermediates impresses itself on all motor intelligences, and all intelligences, their orbs, the species, the human intellect and matter proceed directly from God and therefore are eternal.³⁹ At the end of his explanation of the position of Averroes and some other ‘Arabs’, Filone summarises that, despite their differences, they contribute to the knowledge on the origin of love. And Sofia agrees that, although being different, both theories explain how love depends on the angelic world not only in the celestial world but also in the underworld. This discussion of the positions of Averroes is far from the problems of ‘Latin Averroism’ and, according to Shlomo Pines, Leo Hebreo’s source is Averroes’ *Tahafut al-Tahafut* or *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*,⁴⁰ rather than any of the Aristotelian commentaries. Although Leo does not express a clear preference for Averroes’ positions, his detailed exposition witnesses the prestige Averroes enjoyed in the context of Jewish or Sefardic intellectual communities of the Italian Renaissance, as a philosophical alternative to the Neoplatonic tendency of the other Arab thinkers.

In the previous two hundred years there are no significant traces of the presence of Averroes in Portuguese authors, but it is a fact too that there are very few Portuguese with known works at this time. We have to go back to the first half of the fourteenth century to find two interesting cases associated with the history of Averroism.

The more bombastic of these characters, present in Portugal and identified by nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians as an Averroist, was Friar Thomas Scotus, active in Lisbon and Coimbra in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. Everything we know about this Thomas Scotus comes from the section devoted to him in book V of the *Collyrium fidei adversus haereses*, a work by Alvarus Pelagius finished after 1344. Alvarus’ denunciation begins with these words:⁴¹

³⁸ ‘Già credo di avverti detto un’altra volta che Averrois, come puro aristotelico, le cose che non trovò in Aristotele (o perché a le sue mani non pervenissero tutti i suoi libri, massime quelli de la metafisica e teologia, o per non essere de la sua opinione e sentenza) s’affatigò contradirle e annullarle. E come questo incatenamento de l’universo nol trovasse in lui, ha contradetto in quello agli arabi suoi antecessori, dicendo che non è de la filosofia di mente d’Aristotile’: Leão Hebreu, *Diálogos de amor*, vol. I, p. 244.

³⁹ Leão Hebreu, *Diálogos de amor*, vol. I, pp. 244-246.

⁴⁰ S. Pines, ‘Medieval Doctrines in Renaissance Garb: Some Jewish and Arabic Sources of Leone Ebreo’s Doctrine’, in B. Dov Cooperman (ed.), *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge Ms.: Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 365-398, reprinted in S. Pines, *Studies in the History of Jewish Thought*, (Collected Works, 5) Jerusalem: Magnes Press 1997.

⁴¹ Álvaro Pais, *Collyrium fidei adversus haereses*, Pars V, Error VII; vol. II, p. 40. The *Collyrium fidei adversus haereses* [concluded after 1344] is published in Frei Álvaro Pais, *Colírio da Fé contra as heresias*, 2 vols, ed. and trans. by M. P. Meneses, Lisbon: Instituto de Alta Cultura, 1954-1956.

These are the heresies and errors that Thomas Scotus, apostate of the Friars Minor and Preachers, has made public in different parts of Hispania and some other places – some of those were confessed in court and led him to be imprisoned in Lisbon.⁴²

Alvarus Pelagius presents Thomas Scotus as an extremist provocateur, repeating old heresies and creating some new. Thomas is denounced with vigour, but without much detail of argument because Alvarus prefers to take refuge in biblical authority and canon law. Alvarus asks with horror: ‘What fool or heretic taught as this Thomas has done in the Schools?’⁴³

The harsh and succinct way in which Alvarus describes the doctrines of Thomas does not suffice to verify the nature of the arguments of this mysterious master. But all the doctrines attributed to Thomas confirm that this is someone advocating the superiority of natural reason and that some of his arguments explicitly invoke Aristotle.⁴⁴ For a reader of the nineteenth century the positions that he takes, on the eternity of the world and mankind,⁴⁵ or in defence of the superiority of the natural way of speaking of the philosophers and the refusal by natural reason of creation *ex nihilo*,⁴⁶ a criticism of miracles explaining them through nature or magic,⁴⁷ the superiority of philosophy in what regards Canon Law and Scripture,⁴⁸ the devaluation of the moral authority of saints,⁴⁹ even the

⁴² ‘Hae sunt haereses et errores de quibus Thomas Scotus, apostata Fratrum Minorum et Praedicatorum, est publice diffamatus in quibusdam partibus Hispaniae et alibi, et de quibusdam confessus in iure, et de quibusdam conuictus qui Vlisbone in carcere detinetur’, Álvaro Pais, *Collyrium*, Pars V, Error VII; vol. II, p. 40.

⁴³ *Collyrium*, Pars I, xl error, p. 144.

⁴⁴ *Collyrium*, Pars V, xv error, p. 58: ‘dicit Philosophus naturaliter loquens *De nichilo nichil fit*’; error xix, p. 66: ‘cum suo idolatra Aristotele mundum ponit aeternum’; error xxi, p. 68 ‘ponit cum pagano philosopho mundum aeternum’; error xxii, pp. 70, 72: ‘quod melior erat Aristoteles quam Christus qui fuerat homo malus et suspensus pro suis peccatis, et qui separabat se cum mulierculis loquens’ and ‘philosophum Creatori suo Domino Ihesu Christo [...] comparat’; error xxiii, p. 72: ‘quod Aristoteles fuerat sapientior, subtilior, et altius fuerat locutus quam Moyses’.

⁴⁵ *Collyrium*, Pars V, xix error, vol. II, p. 66 and *Collyrium*, Pars V, xix error, vol. II, p. 66.

⁴⁶ ‘What natural reason can infer that something comes from nothing? This is why the Philosopher [sc. Aristotle] says, naturally speaking, that nothing comes from nothing, and because of this he said the world is eternal, but he fell into heresy, because he had no faith / Quae ratio naturalis potest induci quod de nichilo aliquid fiat? Unde dicit Philosophus naturaliter loquens *De nichilo nichil fit*, et ideo dixit mundum aeternum, sed haereticavit quia fidem non habuit’, *Collyrium*, Pars V, xv error; vol. II, p. 58; on the superiority of philosophy see errors 19, 21, 22 and 23.

⁴⁷ *Collyrium*, Pars V, xxv error; vol. II, pp. 74-77, and error xvii.

⁴⁸ *Collyrium*, Pars V, xv error; vol. II, p. 56.

⁴⁹ *Collyrium*, Pars V, xvi error, pp. 62-64.

thesis of the ‘three impostors’,⁵⁰ just to give some examples — all these configured an unorthodox thought that fits perfectly into this version of the degenerate philosopher described as ‘Averroist’,⁵¹ though the name of Averroes was never cited in setting out these positions.⁵² The association of Thomas Scotus with Averroism began with its recovery by Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo in the first volume of his *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, with these fierce and sarcastic words:

‘In general, the impious men of the Middle Ages were hypocrites and cautious: they slipped their daring ideas into the interpretation of a text, or placed them in the mouth of an infidel. But in Spain there was an exception to this rule, an obscure character almost unknown until today: the friar Thomas Scotus. (...) A sort of disgusting wicked, impure and blasphemous apostate friar that – unlike other Averroists – owns the merit of frankness; indeed he would have appeared on the front line if he had been born four or five centuries later among the Diderots, La Mettries,

⁵⁰ *Collyrium*, Pars V, ix error; vol. II, pp. 48, 50. On Alvarus Thomas and the “three impostors”, see M. Esposito, ‘Una manifestazione d’incredulità religiosa nel medioevo. Il detto dei “Tre impostori” e la sua trasmissione da Federico II a Pomponazzi’, *Archivio storico italiano*, serie VII, 16 (1931), pp. 3-48, at 38-41. A recent approach on the “three impostors” is to be found in G. Russino, ‘Un medioevo incredulo. A proposito di scetticismo e imposture’, *Mediaeval Sophia* 3 (2008), pp. 162-168, <http://www.mediaevalsophia.net> (last visited 25/07/2013).

⁵¹ An example: ‘Dois ou três aspectos se nos apresentam, portanto, em Tomaz Escoto: é um filósofo averroísta, que põe Aristóteles acima da tradição cristã; é um herético em pontos de Teologia; e é um rebelde às autoridades constituídas da Igreja. O seu radicalismo (se não é um produto da imaginação de Alvaro Pais) é notável, mas mais notável ainda é o facto de ter encontrado audiência em Portugal, e principalmente o de ter sido apoiado aqui por frades mendicantes’: A.J. Saraiva, *História da Cultura em Portugal*, Lisbon: Jornal do Fôro, 1950, vol. I, p. 266. See also Menéndez Pelayo quoted below n. 53.

⁵² Among the historians that dubbed Thomas Scotus an Averroist we must cite: M. Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, 3 vols, Madrid: F. Maroto e hijos, 1880-1882, vol. I, pp. 504-505, 311-314 (quoted below); R. Scholz, *Unbekannte Kirchenpolitische Streitschriften aus der Zeit Ludwig des Bayern (1327-1354). Analysen und Texte*, 2 vols, Loescher and C. (W. Regenber), 1911-1914, vol. I, p. 200, n. 2 (edition of excerpts on vol. II, pp. 492-514); J. Carvalho, ‘Aditamentos e notas’ to F. L. Ferreira, *Notícias chronologicas da Universidade de Coimbra*, 3 vol. [Lisbon: 1729], Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1937-1944, vol. I, pp. 638-642, at 642; M. Martins, ‘As acusações contra Tomás Escoto e a sua interpretação’, *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 8 (1952) pp. 29-49; Saraiva, *História da Cultura em Portugal*, vol. I, p. 266. More recently the association of Thomas with Averroism was rejected by Mário Santiago de Carvalho, ‘O sedutor Tomás Escoto’, *Humanística e Teologia* 11 (1990), pp. 171-198, now in M.S. Carvalho, *Estudos sobre Álvaro Pais e outros franciscanos (séculos XIII-XV)*, Lisbon: INCM, 2002, pp. 95-120, at 122. For a tentative association of Alvarus with ‘political Averroism’ through the errors xv (Collyrium, p. 60), xviii (p. 66) and xx (p. 68), see F. Bertelloni, ‘Sobre la existencia de un averroísmo iberico en los siglos XIII y XIV’, in J.A.C.R. Souza (ed.), *Idade Média: tempo do mundo, tempo dos homens, tempo de Deus*, Porto Alegre: Ed. EST, 2006, pp. 470-481, at 478-481, and n. 28.

Holbachs and the rest of the materialists and atheist gangs of little consequence, those who without great effort, explained everything by cheating, evasion and confusion. A pity they hadn't heard of such an eminent predecessor! (...) If the label 'De tribus impostoribus' corresponds to a book, and not just to a simple blasphemy, *repeated by many Averroists* but unwritten by anyone, who could have a better claim to be the author than Thomas Scotus? But, did the book really exist? Everything points to believing that it didn't'.⁵³

The passionate words of Menéndez Pelayo were followed by a long succession of historians who, without any textual or documentary basis, associated Thomas Scotus with 'wicked Averroists' which took refuge in the sophistry of the double truth that allowed them to affirm by faith what they denied by reason.⁵⁴ But in fact neither does Alvaro connect the name of Averroes with the positions held by Thomas Scotus, nor does his evidence allow one to conclude that his thought was grounded on the tradition of the Arts masters. More illustrative is the charge made against Thomas Scotus that he was a Judaizer and was always close to the Jews.⁵⁵ This charge can sustain the possibility that those doctrines of Thomas that were more connected with philosophy could have come from direct contact with Hebrew philosophy or some intellectual community in Lisbon. But also in this case we do not have any other documents or testimony to support the conjecture.

⁵³ 'Generalmente, los impíos de la Edad Media eran hipócritas y cautelosos: deslizaban sus audacias en la interpretación de un texto, o las ponían en boca de un infiel. Pero en España hubo una excepción de esta regla, un personaje hasta hoy casi desconocido: Fr. Tomás Scotto. (...) Este tipo repugnante de fraile malo, impuro, apóstata y blasfemo, pero que tenía, a diferencia de otros averroístas, el mérito de la franqueza, hubiera figurado en primera línea, a haber nacido cuatro o cinco siglos más tarde entre los Diderot, La Mettrie, Holbach y demás pandilla de materialistas y ateos de escalera abajo, que, sin gran fatiga, lo explicaban todo por impostura, trápala y embrollo. ¡Lástima que no hubieran tenido noticia de un predecesor tan egregio!

Si el rótulo *De tribus impostoribus* corresponde a un libro, y no a una simple blasfemia, repetida por muchos averroístas y por nadie escrita, ¿quién más abonado que Tomás Scotto para ser el autor? Pero ¿ha existido el libro? Todo induce a creer que no'. M. Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, pp. 504-505 (italics are mine).

⁵⁴ On the genesis and content of 'Latin Averroism' according to Menéndez Pelayo, in the footprints of Renan, see M. Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles*, pp. 502-504, who concludes: 'Así se encontró el filósofo cordobés á mediados del siglo XIV transformado, de sabio pagano que había sido, en una especie de demonio encarnado, cuando no en blasfemo de taberna, á quien llamó Duns Scotto, *iste maledidus Averroes*; el Petrarca, *canem rabidum Averroeu*, y Gerson, *dementem latratorem*'.

⁵⁵ *Collyrium*, Pars V, viii error; vol. II, p. 42 (iudaizans cum eis); ix error, p. 50 (cum sua haeresi iudaizat); xxv error, p. 75 (cum iudaeis iudaizat. Nam cum eis nocte et die conuersatur); xxvi error, p. 76 (iudaizans cum iudaeis).

That the thought of Averroes had philosophical credit and had followers in Portugal at this time, can easily be confirmed by a contemporary of Alvarus Pelagius. But it is a distinct kind of Averroist, very different from those that were criticized by Ramón Llull, Peter John Olivi, or Thomas Aquinas.

Alfonso Dinis (Alphonsus Dionisii Vlixbonensis) was a contemporary of Alvarus (and the fantastical Thomas Scotus), and is an example of another Averroism, without any defence of the thesis that characterized 'Latin Averroism' but of Averroes himself as a wise and public man.⁵⁶ Between c. 1325 and 1345 Alfonsus was in Paris successively Arts master, a master of medicine commenting on Avicenna's *Canon*, and later a Theology master who lectured on the *Sentences*. Between the completion of his medical license and the return to Paris to study Theology, Alfonso was a court physician in Portugal in Spain. In this context he translated some works, always with the help of Jewish interpreters. These translations were made between c. 1333 and 1335 in Seville and Toledo, when Alfonso was a doctor to the Queen of Spain and daughter of his protector, the King of Portugal. The *Tractatus Averrois De separatione primi principii* is the only extant complete translation. In this short text Averroes opposes the followers of Avicenna, defending, on the basis of Aristotelian authority and with reference to other works of his own, that the existence of the first principle only can be proved by physics and not by metaphysics.⁵⁷ This translation had very little influence but contributed to the survival of Averroes' text, as the original Arab is lost. And it serves to give an idea of the praise and merits of Averroes in Alfonso's mind. The translation is preceded by a prologue on the correctness of the attribution of the text to Averroes, and is accompanied at the end by an *accessus ad auctorem* in defence of Averroes. Some of Averroes' works are quoted and this is a clear sign of the direct acquaintance Alfonso had with the *Commentary on Physics*, the *Commentary on Metaphysics*, the *De substantia orbis*, and the *Abbreviatio Alma-*

⁵⁶ See A.D.S. Costa, 'Mestre Afonso Dinis, médico e secretário de D. Afonso IV, professor na Universidade de Paris', *Itinerarium* 3 (1957), pp. 370-417, 491-607; A. Birkenmajer, *Études d'histoire des sciences et de la philosophie du Moyen Age*, Wrocław-Warszawa: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1970, passim; C. Steel and G. Guldentops, 'An Unknown Treatise of Averroes Against the Avicennians on the First Cause. Edition and Translation', *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 64 (1997), pp. 86-135; W. J. Courtenay, *Parisian Scholars in the Early Fourteenth Century. A Social Portrait*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 66, 99, 220, 130-131; Averroès, *La béatitude de l'âme*, ed. M. Geoffroy and C. Steel, Paris: Vrin, 2001, pp. 87-91, 127-128; J. Meirinhos, 'Afonso de Dinis de Lisboa: percursos de um filósofo, médico, teólogo, tradutor e eclesiástico do século XIV', *Península. Revista de estudos ibéricos* 4 (2007), pp. 47-64.

⁵⁷ The work was published and translated by C. Steel and G. Guldentops, *An Unknown Treatise*, pp. 94-134, see B. Parolin, 'Il trattato *De separatione primi principii* attribuito ad Averroè', *Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale* 36 (2011), pp. 33-88, with a discussion on the translation and a tentative dating of the short tractate within the Averroes corpus.

gesti.⁵⁸ He commented briefly on the differences between two Latin translations of Aristotle's *Physics*.⁵⁹ Drawing from Saracen chronicles on the reasons for the exile and the king's pardon, Alfonso praised above all the wisdom and piety of Averroes,⁶⁰ and commended his qualities as judge and lawmaker.⁶¹ From these two texts we can deduce in what sense Alfonso was an Averroist: not only was he an admirer of his thought on the demonstration of the first being only through natural knowledge, against Avicenna who based his argument on metaphysics; above all he testified to the high and noble qualities Averroes had in public affairs, and how as a lover of truth he suffered exile for eleven or twelve years. According to Alfonso this was the period of the composition of the greater part of his philosophical works. It is possible that Alfonso composed both texts against some negative legends concerning Averroes that had spread among Latin writers as part of the criticism of his philosophical positions or at least to undermine his authority among Arts masters. We should note one of the constants in the above-mentioned authors who gave positive judgements on Averroes. In this case the translated work must have been received directly from an Arab community or in contact with Arabic philosophy, but the translation itself was done with the aid of a Jewish convert.

For the history of a possible Averroism in Portugal we must mention Ferrandus Hispanus, dean of Burgos and bishop of Coimbra in 1302-1303, who was identified with the homonymous 'Averroist' philosopher, author of the question *De specie intelligibili* and of other unpublished works, among them a *Metaphysics*

⁵⁸ Averroes, *De separatione primi principii*, ed. by C. Steel and G. Guldentops, *An Unknown Treatise*, cit., p. 94 (Praefatio interpretis), p. 132 (Postscriptum).

⁵⁹ Averroes, *De separatione primi principii*, ed. by C. Steel and G. Guldentops, *An Unknown Treatise*, cit., p. 100 (digressio interpretis).

⁶⁰ Averroes, *De separatione primi principii*, ed. by C. Steel and G. Guldentops, *An Unknown Treatise*, cit., pp. 130-131: '(...) iste solempnissimus amator phisice veritatis precipuus ac philosophie Aristotelis singularis emulator, quem nos communiter vocamus Commentatorem, Averrois, zelo veritatis et bono vero publico ductus fecit unum dictamen in quo rex suus, scilicet Cordubensis et Marchitanus, vocabatur rex barbarorum / (...) that most venerable and distinguished lover of truth about the physical world, Aristotle's unique emulator, whom we Christians usually call the Commentator, Averroes was led by his love of truth and the genuine common good to make a statement in which his king (...) was called the King of the Barbarians'.

⁶¹ Averroes, *De separatione primi principii*, ed. by C. Steel and G. Guldentops, *An Unknown Treatise...*, pp. 134-135: '<Rex> fecit eum acaldum suum generalem apud Cordubam et apud Marchos, et erat officium gubernationis regi quantum ad iustitiam et tunc Averrois optime statuit et rexit leges civiles secundum principia philosophie quibus hodie se regent Saraceni. / Averroes held the position of judge (...) in service of the king's government, and in that period he promulgated and enacted very good civil laws in accordance with the principles of philosophy, laws by which the Saracens still govern themselves today'.

commentary.⁶² Given that Ferrando was in Coimbra for only one year it is difficult to believe that he engaged in any philosophical activity. The unique known manuscript containing his commentary on book III of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Oceanomica*⁶³ is the only piece that identifies Ferrandus as the bishop of Coimbra, but the text does not bear any trace of Averroism, positive or negative.

To complete the dossier on the first stage of the entrance of Averroes in the West,⁶⁴ we conclude with a mention of the *Sententia cum questionibus in libros De anima Aristotelis I-II* attributed to Petrus Hispanus – we are unconfident about the authorship and the place of composition: perhaps in Southern France around 1245.⁶⁵ Among other sources, namely Avicenna's *Liber de anima*, or the pseudo-Augustinian *De spiritu et anima*, Averroes' *Commentarium magnum in Aristotelis De anima* is the only commentary on the *De anima* used by Peter. The author shares with Averroes explanations about difficult passages in Aristotle's *De anima*, but he does not work on controversial issues concerning the intellect (perhaps they have been lost or were never commented).⁶⁶ Only a brief passage mentions Aristotle's *intellectus speculativus* as the highest power of the soul but, following

⁶² A. Zimmermann, 'Ein Averroist des späten 13. Jahrhunderts: Ferrandus de Hispania', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 50:1-2 (1968), pp. 145-164; id., 'Aristote et Averroès dans le Commentaire de Ferrandus de Hispania sur la Métaphysique d'Aristote', *Diotima* 8 (1980), pp. 159-163; id., 'Remarques et questions relatives à l'oeuvre de Ferrand d'Espagne', in H. Santiago-Otero (org.), *Diálogo filosófico-religioso entre cristianismo, judaísmo e islamismo durante la Edad Media en la Península Ibérica. Actes du Colloque international*, Turnhout: Brepols, 1994, pp. 213-228; Z. Kuksewicz, 'Ferrandus Hispanus *De specie intelligibili*', *Medioevo. Rivista di Storia della Filosofia Medievale* 3 (1977), pp. 187-326; G. Galle and G. Guldentops, 'Ferrandus Hispanus on Ideas', in C. Steel, G. van Riel, C. Macé and L. van Campe (eds.), *Platonic Ideas and Concept Formation in Ancient and Medieval Thought*, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004, pp. 51-80.

⁶³ The first edition is included in C. Fouto, *Ferrandus Hispanus: Commentarium in Oeconomica Aristotelis* (Paris, BnF, Lat. 16133, ff. 69r-73v), Lisbon: Dissertação de Mestrado em Estudos Clássicos, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 2007.

⁶⁴ On the 'first Averroism' (until c. 1250 and characterized by the idea of a personal intellect), see R.-A. Gauthier, 'Notes sur les débuts (1225-1240) du premier Averroïsme', pp. 363-366 and M.-R. HAYOUN – A. de LIBERA, *Averroès et l'averroïsme*, pp. 78-79; the concept is discussed and largely rejected (as the idea of a personal intellect is previous to the reception of Averroes and genuinely Latin) by B.C. BAZÁN, 'Was There Ever a First Averroism?'; D. Calma, *Études sur le premier siècle de l'averroïsme latin* (All quoted above n. 20).

⁶⁵ Pedro Hispano, *Comentário al 'De anima' de Aristóteles* (Obras Filosóficas II), Edición, introducción y notas por el P.M. Alonso S.I., Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1944; see J. Meirinhos, *Metafísica do homem. Conhecimento e vontade nas obras de psicologia atribuídas a Pedro Hispano (século XIII)*, Porto: Afrontamento 2011.

⁶⁶ In fact, the commentary is incomplete. It covers only the first third of book I, and the first half of book II.

Averroes literally, this is excluded from the natural science of the soul.⁶⁷ Averroes' commentary is also a source of historical information, as when he explains the differences between the theories of Plato and Aristotle on the origin of the knowledge of things. But it also deviates from the idea of an Averroes introducing the theory of the dual knowledge of the soul, a *phantasma* and a *suo creatore*.⁶⁸ The author prefers another theoretical frame to explain knowledge and the soul-body relation, based on ibn Gabirol's hylomorphism and the theory of the double face of the soul. In the quoted and other passages Averroes is used primarily as a source of philosophical or historical information, and as the commentator who offers clear explanations of difficult passages of Aristotle. This more didactic use shows no indication of the strong controversy and influence of some of the positions of Averroes in the following centuries. The *Sentences and questions on the soul* are probably one of the first Latin commentaries on Aristotle's *De anima*, and its author already shows knowledge of Averroes's works, without being a follower on issues that in the near future would be discussed by Latin philosophers. The text shows a discrete presence and a calmer influence of Averroes, before the theories become the centre of philosophical controversy.

The powerful change Averroes introduced in philosophical argumentation, and his own theories in a variety of fields transmitted to the next centuries, changed the profile of philosophy. So there is much sense in Robert Pasnau's assertion that we should 'think of modernity as coming in the late twelfth century, with Averroes's magisterial commentaries on Aristotle.'⁶⁹

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⁶⁷ Peter's comment on Aristotle's words 'De speculativo autem intellectu alia ratio est' (415a11) is: 'Deinde speculativum intellectum qui est supremus inter omnes virtutes anime, excludit ab aliis virtutibus propter sui nobilitatem dicens quod de ipso est altera ratio, quia de ipso est sermo extra naturam, cum non videatur esse anima vel pars anime sed videatur habere diversitatem ad alias anime differentias et esse ex natura superiori que est supra animam', *ibid.*, II, 9, sent., pp. 718, 29-719, 3. Literally from Averroes: 'Deinde dixit Sermo autem de speculativo intellectu, etc. Idest, sermo de eo est ita quod sit extra istam naturam; existimatur enim quod non est anima neque pars anime. Et innuit nobilitatem eius, et diversitatem illius ad alias partes; opinandum est enim quod est ex natura superiori nature anime', Averroes, *Commentarium magnum in Aristotelis de anima libros*, ed. S. Crawford, Cambridge 1953, II, 32, p. 178, 32-37; see Averroes, *Long Commentary on the De anima of Aristotle*, trans. with introd. by R. Taylor and T. Anne-Druart, New Haven - London: Yale University Press, 2009, p. 141.

⁶⁸ Pedro Hispano, *Sententia cum questionibus in libros De anima I-II*, Quest. preamb. 1, q. 2, sol., ed. Alonso, p. 65, 23-66, 24.

⁶⁹ R. PASNAU, *Metaphysical Themes 1274-1671*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011, p. 1.

Between the thirteenth and the eighteenth centuries we find the presence in Portuguese authors, direct or indirect, positive or negative, of the work of Averroes, or at least of some elements of his thought. In some cases, there is nothing more than a polemical element appearing in discussion; in others, only the distant echo of old controversies, without direct knowledge of his work. In its sobriety the alleged cases are also a good testimony of the movement of ideas and transfer of knowledge throughout the Middle Ages and Early Modern period. The roads along which knowledge of Averroes's texts travelled are many. However, among these authors there is not a line of continuity; there is not a school or a common road. So it is not possible to confirm the permanence over time of Averroes's influence, unlike what Renan's passage quoted above would suggest.

The mode of presence of Averroes in the above-mentioned authors is very diverse. Regarding the criticism of Averroes, as exemplified by the Conimbricenses, what we see is mostly based on the rejection of positions already discussed at length, as being contrary to Christian doctrine, without thereby rejecting the thought of Averroes as a whole, because on many other non-contentious points he continued to be used as the most important interpreter of Aristotle. Authors who followed Averroes explicitly, did it for the sake of authority (as in the quoted cases in medicine), or as a source for philosophical insight on Aristotle's works, as in the majority of non-controversial questions. Gomes of Lisbon adds something, using Averroes in a polemical context against the Averroist Nicoletto Vernia. As we saw in Leo Hebraeus, the thought of Averroes (in this case not the commentaries) can be a further contribution, pitting it against the Arab authors whom he opposed, and combining all of them in an eclectic composition; and then the resulting theory of cosmic love rests with only a small presence of Averroism or Aristotelianism, given that Neoplatonic elements are preponderant. Of a different nature are the cases of Alfonso Dinis and Thomas Scotus: Alfonso is indeed an enthusiastic admirer who highly praised Averroes. However, the little work that he 'translated' and introduced into Latin did not have influence as it remained in a single manuscript. The excessive and enigmatic figure of Thomas Scotus, of which whom we know so little, was included in the list of Averroists only by historians, without any textual evidence to substantiate this association. From what we know, nothing connects Thomas with Averroes, but of the authors mentioned he is the one who has been most insistently considered an Averroist.

There is still another important element that should be stressed: almost all the authors mentioned who make a positive presentation of Averroes received him through the schools or in a Hebrew context: not only the Sephardi Abraham Zacuto or Leo Hebraeus, but also Alfonso Dinis was aided by a Jewish convert, who may even have been the one who supplied the *De separatione primi principii* and other texts of Averroes. Even the ghostly Thomas Scotus, whom tradition dubbed an Averroist, was in fact accused by his denunciator of Judaizing, not of

'Averroizing'. So greater attention is owed to the role of the continuing Jewish line of transmission of the thought of Averroes to the Latin world from the Middle Ages until the end of the Renaissance.

None of these authors seems to have read Averroes deeply, and none positioned himself as a plain follower of his thought. They are examples of the plurality and richness in the transmission of Averroes; his influence as a major commentator lasted continuously, but there was also continuous background noise affecting discussion of his own philosophical thought. And this noise also disturbed the very interpretation of Averroes and 'Averroism' by historians of philosophy.