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ELIJAH DEL MEDIGO AND PADUAN ARISTOTELIANISM

Investigating the Human Intellect



MICHAEL ENGEL

B L O O M S B U R Y

Elijah Del Medigo and Paduan
Aristotelianism

Bloomsbury Studies in the Aristotelian Tradition

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This book is dedicated in the loving memory of Shaul Karni

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Introduction

This book concentrates on the philosophical activity of the fifteenth-century Jewish philosopher, Elijah Del Medigo. Although the name of Del Medigo is known to many of those who work in the field of Jewish studies, he became known mainly for the composition of *Behinat Ha-Dat*, his last work, in which one of his main aims was to establish the rational foundations of Judaism. Del Medigo's philosophical works, conversely, have received much less scholarly attention. The current study focuses on one of these works and on Del Medigo's activity as an Averroist philosopher and, more specifically, Del Medigo's theory of intellect. The work in question is Del Medigo's *Two Investigations on the Nature of the Human Soul* (henceforth *Two Investigations*), where Del Medigo seeks to explain and contextualize Averroes's theory of intellect in the *Long Commentary on the De Anima* (henceforth the *LCDA*). The chief goal of this book is to introduce the reader to the first treatise of Del Medigo's *Two Investigations*, while highlighting the significance of this work in three main areas:

1. Although composed in a fifteenth-century setting, the *Two Investigations* still serves as a useful gateway for the modern reader to Averroes's ideas.¹ Explicating Averroes was, in fact, Del Medigo's chief intention, as he composed the treatise at the request of Count Pico della Mirandola, who wished to have a better grasp of Averroes's theory of intellect. Del Medigo does not merely paraphrase Averroes's arguments in his attempt to explain them but, rather, he conducts a close reading of the *LCDA*, cites lengthy passages from the text, and supplements them with explanations and comments of his own as well as with excerpts from other works by Averroes. In addition, Del Medigo's close scrutiny of the text allows one to reconstruct some of Averroes's ideas, as will be illustrated when discussing Del Medigo's treatment of the *LCDA* III.5 399.351–56.
2. Apart from clarifying Averroes's terminology and explaining the structure and purpose of his arguments, Del Medigo also offers original interpretations that carry Averroes's ideas further, particularly on themes that were controversial within the Averroist tradition to which Del Medigo belonged. Such themes, for instance, are the presence of intelligible species

in Averroes's system and the relation between the Material and Agent Intellects, and they are treated in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of this book, respectively. In developing his original interpretations, Del Medigo borrows materials from other works by Averroes, some of which were available in Hebrew translations only and therefore were unfamiliar to Latin readership. In his reliance on Hebrew sources in the *Two Investigations*—a work originally composed in Latin and aimed primarily at Latin readers—Del Medigo was bridging the Latin and Hebrew Averroist traditions, as he did through his activity as a prolific translator.¹

3. Certain features of the *Two Investigations*—found also in Del Medigo's other Averroist compositions—clearly betray the affiliation of this work, and of Del Medigo's activity as a whole, to the Paduan Averroist tradition. Through the *Two Investigations*, one learns of the intellectual tastes, methods of inquiry, and common sources of authors who, like Del Medigo, were working in Padua and were committed to Averroes's doctrines and methodology. At the same time, other features of the *Two Investigations* distinguish Del Medigo from the mainstream current of the intellectual activity in Padua. In fact, the *Two Investigations* illustrates the difficulty of employing the notion of "Paduan Averroism" too sweepingly. The way in which Del Medigo's thought represents the dominant intellectual currents of his time yet also stands apart from them will be discussed in detail in Chapter 1 and commented on throughout this book.

The book therefore has two primary aims. One is to examine Del Medigo's heavy reliance on Averroes; the second is to examine the close textual ties between the *Two Investigations* and the *LCDA*. Del Medigo's affiliation to fifteenth-century Paduan Averroism is treated in less detail, and that is for two main reasons. First, although reacting to contemporary challenges, Del Medigo's Averroism manifests itself in the *Two Investigations* almost exclusively through his reliance on the works of Averroes himself, not through his reliance on the works of a contemporary school. Second, the current state of research, and in particular the lack of critical editions of fifteenth-century works on Aristotelian psychology, renders it difficult to supply a thorough contextualization of Del Medigo's thought against the backdrop of Renaissance Averroism in the same way as we can contextualize his thought against the works of Averroes himself. Nonetheless, the book does draw several conclusions concerning Del Medigo's relations with his contemporaries, and it is hoped that future research will allow these primary observations to be developed further.

Finally, a few words ought to be said concerning the *Two Investigations* within the context of the Jewish philosophical tradition. As the bibliography of this book clearly illustrates, Del Medigo is mainly considered against the background of certain trends within Latin scholasticism. This is not to undermine Del Medigo's Jewish affiliation or his commitment to the Jewish tradition as a devout believer, a fact that Del Medigo himself stresses in the opening paragraphs and toward the conclusion of the *Two Investigations*. Yet the only aspect of that work that clearly indicates Del Medigo's Jewish background—from a philosophical point of view—is the usage of the Hebrew translations of Averroes. While the names of several Jewish philosophers are mentioned in the *Two Investigations*—Maimonides, Gersonides, and Ibn Ezra—Del Medigo does not make any use of their arguments in developing his own. In general, and with the sole exception of *Be'inat Ha-Dat*, it would seem that Del Medigo's work ought to be evaluated against the Latin scholastic tradition that influenced his work and to the development of which he contributed. Rather than suggesting that Del Medigo's work has little or no value for those who are interested in Jewish medieval philosophy, the book suggests that the tendency to focus on materials that are "evidently Jewish" has distorted our perception of Del Medigo's intellectual achievement and contribution to the general culture of his days. Consequently, this tendency has clouded our understanding of the ways in which scholastic thought helped to shape Jewish philosophy in the Renaissance. This point will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 1.

Outline of Book

This book follows Del Medigo's reading of Averroes's theory of intellect and is divided thematically, following Del Medigo's main areas of discussion. The first chapter gives a general introduction to Del Medigo's life and work, describes the nature and structure of the *Two Investigations*, and examines its reception thus far in modern scholarship. The second chapter examines Del Medigo's views on the nature of the Material Intellect, and in particular his reception of Averroes's unicity thesis, which the latter introduced in the *LCDA*. The same chapter also highlights the polemical nature of Del Medigo's discussion and identifies his main adversaries as the Paduan Thomists. The third chapter follows Del Medigo's discussion concerning the nature of the Agent Intellect. The fourth chapter examines Del Medigo's position concerning the process of conceptualization. The fifth and last chapter examines the impact of

Aquinas's criticism of the unicity thesis on Del Medigo's discussion in the *Two Investigations*.

The book does not contain a critical edition of the Hebrew *Two Investigations*, and it also addresses readers who are unable to read the Hebrew original. Citations from the *Two Investigations* in the body of the text thus appear in my English translation. The Hebrew is given in the footnotes, based on the more reliable Paris manuscript, while collating Paris and Milano manuscripts. All Hebrew citations are translated into English, except in cases where the Hebrew is given in order to determine linguistic matters. Folio numbers of the Paris manuscript are given first, followed by the Milan folio numbers in parenthesis. Additions from the Milan manuscript are indicated by chevron brackets. Omissions from the Paris manuscripts are indicated by an asterisk. For example, *Two Investigations*, ff. 92v (9v–10r):

אם היה המושכל אשר לו נאמר בשתוף גמור עם אלה המושכלות והסדר ההוא גם כן אשר ישכיל
נאמר בשתוף גמור עם הסדור אשר <לנמצאות> * איך יהיה הסדר ההוא והשכל ההוא סבה לזה
הסדור

Om. P [לא מצאו]

Apart from the *Two Investigations*, frequent references are made throughout the work to Averroes's *LCDA* and to Aquinas's *De unitate intellectus*. Citations from these works are given in the Latin and in their modern English translation (Taylor's translation of the *LCDA*, McInerny's translation of the *De unitate intellectus*). Although Del Medigo made use of the Hebrew version of the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, I only had limited access to the Hebrew manuscripts. References are therefore given to the Latin translation contained in the Giunta edition, accessible to modern readers, and to the passages that correspond to the Hebrew extracts cited by Del Medigo. All references to Aristotle, unless mentioned otherwise, are to the Barnes edition. Square brackets indicate my own suggested readings. Curved brackets indicate suggested readings made in the original.

Del Medigo's discussion, echoing Averroes's discussion in the *LCDA*, is at times difficult and often counterintuitive. For a better understanding of the text, the reader is encouraged to consult the diagram in Appendix II.

Historical and Philosophical Background

Part I Elijah Del Medigo

Biography¹

Elijah Del Medigo was born to a family of Germanic origins that had lived in Crete since the early fourteenth century.² A certain ambiguity surrounds Del Medigo's date of birth, and although it is usually given as 1460, earlier dates have also been suggested.³ Similarly, not much is known about Del Medigo's formative years before his move to Italy. During Del Medigo's lifetime Crete was a Venetian territory, a rule that lasted from 1204 to 1669. In general, it seems that the Cretan Jews were treated better under Venetian rule than in the rest of Europe, apart from occasional tensions that emerged with their Greek neighbors and Venetian rulers.⁴ Some evidence, including Del Medigo's own testimony, suggests that Del Medigo was composing works on Jewish law during his stay in Candia, as he himself indicates.⁵ In addition to his Jewish education, we can also assume that Del Medigo acquired his early knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy while in Crete. An inventory of philosophical compositions in the library of a Cretan Jew of the fifteenth century lends support to this hypothesis. The list includes the *Guide of the Perplexed*, a supercommentary on Averroes by Gersonides (whom Del Medigo mentions in the *Two Investigations*), and *Sefer Ha-ikkarim* by Albo. Furthermore, the Cretan collection of Hebrew manuscripts in the Vatican Library (the Fugger collection) includes philosophical works by Abraham bar Hiyya, Nehemia Kalomiti, and Abraham Ibn Ezra (the latter mentioned in the *Two Investigations*), as well as Hebrew translations of Aristotle.⁶ These sources, along with Del Medigo's recorded philosophical activity upon his alleged arrival to Italy at around 1480, serve as evidence that Del Medigo became familiar with the classic works of the Jewish philosophy while still in Crete.⁷ Evidence concerning the background of Del Medigo's familiarity with Latin scholastic sources is less

conclusive, yet we can assume with a high degree of certainty that he first came across these texts while in Crete as well, based on the multicultural nature of the island and the various backgrounds of scholars traveling through it.⁸ In addition, Latin was the administrative language of Crete, and there is evidence that the Jews of Crete had mastered the language.⁹ Given that Del Medigo was composing translations and treatises in Latin shortly after his arrival in Italy, we can attribute his knowledge of scholastic works to his formative years in Crete. However, it is most likely that Del Medigo became familiar with at least some of Averroes's works during his stay in Italy through early printed editions that came into circulation around that time.¹⁰

As Crete was under Venetian rule, and Del Medigo was a subject of the Venetian republic, he left for Venice around 1480.¹¹ Again, the evidence for this is not conclusive. Del Medigo may have reached the shores of Italy several years earlier, since when he composed the *Two Investigations* in the early 1480s he was already well acquainted with the various philosophical trends in Padua at that time. Concerning the motives that led to Del Medigo's relocation, one conjecture is that he left for Padua in order to study medicine. One finds several references to Del Medigo's activity as a physician or a student of medicine, including a testimony in a letter by Marsilio Ficino. Del Medigo himself refers to his medical activity in his translation of Averroes' *Averroes's Middle Commentary on the De "Inquit Helias: ego vidi in anathomia quod . . ."*¹² Another hypothesis raised by scholars is that Del Medigo was sent to Venice under some formal duty, chosen by the Venetian Senate to judge public disputations in the University of Padua.¹³ In any case, Del Medigo earned his fame in Italy neither as a physician nor as a diplomat but as a translator of Averroes's commentaries from Hebrew into Latin and the author of original philosophical treatises, inspired by the philosophy of Averroes.

During his stay in Italy, Del Medigo traveled much between the years 1480 and 1490, spending time in Venice, Padua, Florence, Perugia, and Bassano. Detailed accounts of these journeys can be found in Steinschneider, Cassuto, Geffen, and Licata, and we will not repeat them here.¹⁴ Yet the city most commonly associated with Del Medigo is Padua, where he lived, taught, and composed his works and translations, and which contributed significantly to the special tenor of Del Medigo's thought. In the late fifteenth century, the University of Padua was the most prominent university in Italy for the instruction of philosophy and a major center for Averroist teachings, while neighboring Venice was becoming the printing center for the works of Averroes.¹⁵ These two factors are clearly reflected

in Del Medigo's professional activity and in the *Two Investigations*, as we shall see shortly. Del Medigo mentions his professional activity in Padua in the *Two Investigations*, referring to his teaching בלשונם בישיבותיהם ("in their language and in their places of study").¹⁶ This activity is also recorded by Del Medigo's student, Shaul Hakohen, who refers to Del Medigo as מלמד in ישיבות הגויים ("an instructor in the Gentiles' places of study").¹⁷ Yet despite his involvement in the intellectual circles in Padua, Del Medigo did not hold a formal position at that university, as his name does not appear in any of its official documents.¹⁸ That Del Medigo was not officially affiliated to the university is relevant to evaluating his general affiliation to the Paduan Averroist school, as will be discussed later.

It is in Padua where Del Medigo first met Pico della Mirandola, who would become his most illustrious student, patron, and personal friend. Pico was drawn to Del Medigo because of the latter's reputation as an authority on the writings of Averroes, and it was at Pico's request that Del Medigo produced several translations and original compositions, including the *Two Investigations*. Pico was only one among several Christian scholars who sought Del Medigo's company; others included Antonio Pizzamanno, Domenico Grimani, and Hieronymus Donatus, all mentioned in the introduction to the 1488 printed edition of Del Medigo's works.¹⁹ Del Medigo records that he discussed philosophical matters with Grimani and Pizzamanno and that Donatus incited him to compose these treatises while the two spent time together "*in hoc studio Patauino*."²⁰ It has also been claimed that Del Medigo was alluded to in one of Agostino Nifo's works, although this claim has been challenged.²¹

While Del Medigo was, to a certain degree at least, integrated into the Christian intellectual circles in Padua and Venice, the same cannot be said of his relations with the Paduan Jewish community. This community originated with Jews who came to northern Italy from southern Germany and established several Jewish institutions in Padua.²² Many of these Jews tended toward *Kabbalah* and were unsympathetic to philosophy, and Geffen has argued that Del Medigo participated actively in the polemics between *Kabbalists* and philosophers that took place in Italy in the late fifteenth century.²³ That Del Medigo was certainly ill at ease with the customs of this community is clear from a passage in the Hebrew version of his commentary on the *De substantia orbis*, where he ridicules the custom of *Tashlich* practiced by the Paduan Jews on *Rosh Hashana* and laments his bitter relations with them.²⁴ Judging from this evidence, we might follow Cassuto in doubting Joseph Shlomo Del Medigo's claim that Elijah Del Medigo served as a ראש ישיבה in Padua, as it is unlikely that the latter held any formal

position within that Jewish community.²⁵ Del Medigo's bad relations with the Jewish community might also have contributed to his decision to leave Italy and return to Candia in 1490, as several scholars have claimed and as we shall discuss later.

Of all Del Medigo's travels in Italy, it is worth mentioning his sojourn in Florence in 1484.²⁶ There, Del Medigo was invited to public disputations held in Pico's home, where he represented the traditional Aristotelian view against the new Platonic trend of Christian Kabbalah.²⁷ Marsilio Ficino, in a letter to Domenico Benivieni, mentions disputations in which "*Helias et Abraam hebrei medici atque peripatetici*" contended against the convert Guglielmo Raimondo di Moncada.²⁸ Del Medigo might have also taught philosophy during his stay in Florence, though no record of such activity is found. If Del Medigo taught in that city he must have done so in the form of private lessons, as he most likely had done earlier in Padua.²⁹

The year 1488 saw the publication of several of Del Medigo's philosophical works in Latin, printed and appended to a volume containing John of Jandun's *Quaestiones* on the *Physics*. That year also saw the printing of Del Medigo's translations to Averroes's commentaries on the *Meteorologica*, together with a letter addressed by Del Medigo to Domenico Grimani.³⁰ Del Medigo thus became one of the first Jewish authors to have his works published during his lifetime.³¹ Del Medigo's last work, *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, was completed in Candia, 18 Tevet 5241, December 31, 1490. As will be illustrated in this chapter, it is this work that brought Del Medigo most of his fame and that caught the attention of most Del Medigo scholars from the nineteenth century until today. According to Kalman Bland, at the heart of this polemical work is Del Medigo's attempt to "differentiate rabbinic Judaism from general philosophy and to demonstrate the pre-eminence of rationalistic Judaism over other religions."³² The treatise also explains the rational foundations of the commandments, contains a critique of Christianity and its irrational foundations, and questions the authenticity of some Kabbalistic works.³³

The completion date of *Be□inat Ha-Dat* seems to suggest that by 1490 Del Medigo was already back in Candia, where, according to the testimony of some, he continued to teach the philosophy of Averroes to a group of Jewish and Christian students.³⁴ The circumstances that led to Del Medigo's return to Candia are still unclear, and various explanations have been suggested by various scholars, a survey of which can be found in Ross's introduction to *Be□inat Ha-Dat*.³⁵ Del Medigo's own remarks indicate that his bad relations with the

Jewish community in Padua, along with anti-Jewish sentiments in northern Italy, may have contributed to his decision to leave Italy and return to Crete.³⁶ As early as 1480, Del Medigo wrote that God had “thrown me away from Candia by reasons of my sins,” explicitly expressing a sense of longing for his homeland.³⁷

The circumstances around Del Medigo’s death are also far from clear. Although most scholars agree that he died around 1493 in Crete, several pieces of evidence suggest that both the place and time of Del Medigo’s death ought to be reconsidered.³⁸

Reception in Modern Scholarship

Elijah Del Medigo has been a popular figure since the mid-nineteenth century for scholars working in the field of Jewish studies as well as for those working on the development of scholastic and Averroist trends in the Italian Renaissance.³⁹ Among the notable first attempts to give an overview of Del Medigo’s thought were the works of Dukas and Steinschneider, who established crucial biographical and bibliographical details. Through the analysis of a manuscript containing Del Medigo’s correspondence with Pico della Mirandola (ms. BnF lat. 6508), Dukas’s *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques* reconstructed the intellectual biography of Del Medigo. However, Dukas’s analysis is often imprecise and betrays a poor understanding of Del Medigo’s Averroist background.⁴⁰ Recognizing the shortcomings of Dukas’s work, Steinschneider offered an alternative biographical account in his *Die Hebräischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters*, indispensable for the study of any work of medieval and Renaissance Jewish philosophy.⁴¹ Steinschneider supplemented his biographical notes with a list of Del Medigo’s original works and translations, found in manuscripts and old printed editions.⁴² The recent comprehensive bio-bibliographical surveys of Cassuto, Geffen, Kieszkowski, Bartòla, and Licata have contributed significantly to the pioneering attempts of Dukas and Steinschneider.

One characteristic feature of the past few decades of scholarship on Del Medigo is the notable emphasis on the theme of reason and revelation. Adolf Hübcsch’s *Elia Delmedigo’s Bechinath ha-Dath und Ibn Roshd’s Facl ul-maqal* (1882) was among the first to consider this theme in Del Medigo’s thought, and some of the most current work still follows in his footsteps. Such, for example, is Carlos Fraenkel’s “Reconsidering the Case of Elijah Delmedigo’s Averroism” (2013), which also supplies a useful survey of previous studies on that theme.⁴³

These accounts rely mainly on the one work that Del Medigo composed originally in Hebrew and for a Jewish readership, his *Be□inat Ha-Dat* (*Examination of Religion*) where Del Medigo considers the rational foundations of Judaism. Del Medigo scholars throughout the decades were usually concerned with the way Del Medigo justified his philosophical activity to his Jewish readers, with his view on the rational foundations of Judaism, and with traces of the so-called double truth theory in Del Medigo's thought. Common to these scholarly attempts is the underlying assumption, explicitly manifested by Hames, that *Be□inat Ha-Dat* is Del Medigo's "seminal and most important work."⁴⁴ Hence, the current situation in which most of Del Medigo's philosophical works—which touch upon Aristotelian physics, metaphysics, and psychology—are to a large degree neglected. Notable exceptions are the studies on the *Two Investigations* by Bland and Sirat; Puig Montada's *Elia del Medigo and his Physical Quaestiones and On the Chronology of Elia del Medigo's Physical Writings*; a section from Geffen's unpublished dissertation dedicated to the *Two Investigations*; and a section in Poppi's *Causalità e infinità*, dedicated to Del Medigo's *De primo motore* and *De mundi efficientia*.⁴⁵ Most notable in this regard are the works of Giovanni Licata, who, in addition to editing the most recent edition of *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, is now editing several of Del Medigo's philosophical works and letters. It is this vein of scholarship to which the current study belongs.

Rather than arguing against Hames's aforementioned assertion, it would be beneficial to examine why *Be□inat Ha-Dat* was perceived as Del Medigo's most important work by generations of scholars. The answer to this question seems to lie in mid-nineteenth-century Germany, when Jewish studies were beginning to take shape as an autonomous academic discipline. As Ross has noted, the search for models of rational Judaism, which were to serve as case studies for the emerging "science of Judaism," carried with it particular significance as the new discipline was struggling for legitimacy and institutional recognition.⁴⁶ The first edition of *Be□inat Ha-Dat* was completed by Isaac Samuel Reggio in 1833 and supplied these scholars with the material they were looking for. Del Medigo was seen as a defender of rational Judaism who was continuing the Maimonidean tradition in the face of irrational tendencies, and the nineteenth-century Jewish scholars praised his battle (which in fact was theirs) against the irrational trend of Judaism embodied in the teachings of the *Kabballah*.⁴⁷ Thus Heinrich Graetz has argued that

it is a striking proof of his sober mind and healthy judgment that Elias del Medigo kept himself aloof from all this mental effeminacy and childish enthusiasm for the

pseudo-doctrine of the Kabbalah. He had profound contempt for the Kabbalistic phantom, and did not hesitate to expose its worthlessness. He had the courage openly to express his opinion that the Kabbala is rooted in an intellectual swap.⁴⁸

This perception of the character of Del Medigo's work has been dominant to this day, and the focus on Del Medigo's rational tendencies is perpetuated as well by those who ultimately object to this portrayal, such as Bland and Ross. While promoting a more nuanced evaluation of Del Medigo than as merely the precursor of Jewish enlightenment, both scholars endorse Graetz's main assumption. They do so inasmuch as they employ the dichotomy between rational and mystical Judaism as a touchstone for evaluating Del Medigo's contribution in the history of thought, although such dichotomy plays no significant role in such works as the *Two Investigations*. The present study, in contrast, is a study on Aristotelian philosophy and on the role played by Del Medigo in shaping this tradition in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

Part II The *Two Investigations*

Structure, Content, and Date of Composition

The *Two Investigations* is comprised of two philosophical treatises that discuss two distinct yet related themes and can therefore be read independently. The first investigation (ms. Paris ff. 79r–150v (Milano ff. 1r–49r)) concerns the unicity of the Material Intellect, and Del Medigo's treatment of the theme will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2. The first investigation also contains other discussions, all related to Averroes's theory of intellect and to the problems it entails. Some of these problems, such as the existence of intelligible species or the type of relationship between man and intellect, were discussed by Averroist thinkers in the centuries prior to the composition of the *Two Investigations*, controversies of which Del Medigo was surely aware and which had an impact on the discussion of the *Two Investigations*.

The second investigation (ms. BnF ff. 150v–177r; ms. Ambrosiana ff. 49r–68r) examines whether man can know the separate substances, and it relies mainly on Averroes's discussion in the *LCDA* III.36. The second investigation, however, which deserves an independent study, is not tackled in this book.⁴⁹

Concerning its date of composition, the *Two Investigations* was one of the first philosophical works Del Medigo composed during his stay in Italy, and he

often refers to it in his later works. The entire treatise was composed throughout the Hebrew month of Shvat, began in Padua, and ended in Venice. The first investigation, which is the focus of the current study, was completed according to Del Medigo over a period of twenty days, from Christmas Eve, December 1481 until mid-January 1482. One may wonder, nonetheless, whether Del Medigo was referring to the date of the treatise's composition or of its translation from Latin into Hebrew. According to Bland, Geffen, and Cassuto, Del Medigo refers to the date of its translation; according to Ross, to the date of its composition. Ross's view appears more plausible, as Del Medigo speaks explicitly of the date of the treatise's composition.⁵⁰

Manuscripts

The *Two Investigations* has never appeared in print, and it survived in three Hebrew manuscripts:

Ms. Paris [=P]: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, héb. 968, ff. 79r–177r [F 12038 in the computerized catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts in Jerusalem]. The manuscript was copied in Venice, 1492. Spanish script, the scribe is Matityahu Hazan. Handwriting is clear, some passages are corrupt. The manuscript contains several marginal glosses, and in addition to the *Two Investigations* the codex contains Del Medigo's commentary on Averroes' *De substantia orbis*, written in the same hand (ff. 1v–74v). The codex was acquired in 1676 by Jean-Baptiste Colbert in Constantinople.⁵¹

Ms. Milan [=M]: Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Sup. 128 X, ff. 1v–68v [F 12038 in the computerized catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts in Jerusalem]. No exact date, sixteenth century. Italian rabbinic script, scribe is unknown, and the handwriting is clear. The manuscript contains the *Two Investigations* alone. On 68v, one finds the signature of the censor "Camillo Jaghel 1611, Lugo." The codex belonged to the collection owned by the Treves brothers of Venice.

Ms. Cincinnati [=C]: Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College, Acc. 140 [= 45703 in the computerized catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts in Jerusalem]. The text derives directly from M, a fact recognized by Steinschneider. It follows M with the exception of some minor differences, due to scribal errors. C does not contain any significant marginal notes, and it cites the passages in M that deal with more general themes rather than with technical philosophical

Table 1.

Ms. P	Ms. M
ואולם שהתורות נופלות בזה הדעת מבואר, וזה שהתורות (f. 79v)	ואולם שזה שהתורות (f. 1v)
כי אם בעבור השכלה נמצאת בנו (f. 80v)	כי אם בעבור השכל הנמצאת בנו (f. 2r) ...
ואמנם הצורה העצמית אינה א' בכל האנשים א"כ השכל אינו א'. חמישית: הפעל האחד יהיה לדבר או מדבר אחד (f. 80v)	Missing from text
ואם ישאלם למי יהיה הפועל הזה אחר המות למורכב או לנפש ישיבו לנפש (f. 83v)	Missing from text

issues (the scribe highlights in bold those passages that he finds particularly significant). C was not consulted, therefore, in the course of this study, and all references are to P and M.

Both P and M occasionally omit parts of the text that can be found in the other manuscript, and both were therefore crucial in the reconstruction of Del Medigo's text. Since different omissions appear in different places of the two manuscripts, we can safely assume that one is not dependent on the other. P is earlier than M and often presents the reader with a readable, coherent text, where M does not. Examples are given in Table 1.

P thus seems to contain a rendition more loyal to the original text. There are, however, cases in which the version in M seems superior to that of P. Table 2 presents such instances.

M, therefore, is indispensable for a reliable evaluation of the text, and the two manuscripts were consulted while reconstructing Del Medigo's text. When

Table 2.

Ms. P	Ms. M
כאשר חייבנו שלכל עניין מתחדש פועל (f. 91r)	כאשר הנחנו או חייבנו שלכל עניין מתחדש פועל (f. 9r)
ואשר מצד זולתו (f. 92v)	ואשר ידענו מצד הכולל ידענו בכח מצדזולתו (f.10r)
שמצד שהוא ידע עצמו לבד ידע כל הנמצאות במציאות אשר היא עילה במציאותם (f. 93v)	שמצד שהוא ידע עצמו לבד ידע כל הנמצאות בידיעה או במציאות אשר היא עילה במציאותם (f. 10v)

citing from the *Two Investigations* in this study, reference is first given to the folio number in P, and reference to M follows in parenthesis.

Scholarly Work on the *Two Investigations*

The *Two Investigations* contains several passages in which Del Medigo justifies his preoccupation with philosophical questions, stating that his philosophical activity does not jeopardize the supreme status of the *Torah* and that philosophical investigations may also contain an inherent value in themselves:

And what I have said always, I will say again. Let no member of our congregation [בעל דת מעמנו] believe that the view which I hold is this one [i.e., the philosophical position]. For my belief, in reality, is the belief of the sons of Israel. . . . My aim in composing this treatise was twofold. First, to let our haters, who brag in wisdom, know that God is with Israel, and that the level of these nations in the sciences is not as they think. Many of them, indeed, understood this upon reading this treatise [i.e., the first of the *Two Investigations*] and my treatise on the prime mover and in the next investigation, as I composed them all in their language and in their place of study where their scholars dwell. . . . The second [justification] is that there are many things which agree with our sacred Torah, and things which do not concern religious matters but are very useful with regard to the sciences.⁵²

Although these passages do not reflect the actual content of the main body of the *Two Investigations*, which is concerned with philosophical and scientific investigations, they nonetheless drew the attention of scholars who employed them to illustrate Del Medigo's more general view concerning the relation between reason and revelation.⁵³ What many of these scholars failed to notice was that Del Medigo made these comments in an apologetic context, justifying the composition of the *Two Investigations* to a traditional Jewish readership, and they are not to be taken out of this context.⁵⁴

Works dedicated solely to the philosophical discussions in the *Two Investigations* are rarer. The most reliable account to date is Kalman Bland's *Elijah Del Medigo, Unicity of Intellect, and Immortality of Soul*, published in 1995. As Bland himself acknowledges, his study is designed to give no more than an overview of the *Two Investigations*, and it does indeed contain a good description of the text and its main arguments. The weakness of Bland's analysis is that although he recognizes Del Medigo's overall reliance on Averroes, his study contains only few references to the *LCDA*, and his analysis of the second investigation fails to recognize that it is, in fact, a close reading of the *LCDA*

III.36. Bland also disregards the historical context of the composition of the *Two Investigations*, namely Paduan Averroism. While mentioning the influence of Thomas Aquinas and John of Jandun on the *Two Investigations*, Bland fails to mention the impact these authors had on the works of many other Renaissance Aristotelians who were working in Padua around the same time as Del Medigo. When he does attempt to place Del Medigo within his appropriate intellectual setting, Bland gives a generic reference only to “the Islamic tradition from whose pages Del Medigo had mined and quarried the bulk of his philosophy.”⁵⁵ Bland also mentions Maimonides, Ibn Ezra, and Gersonides—all of whom Del Medigo alludes to only in passing—in what seems a somewhat forced attempt to place Del Medigo within the mainstream current of medieval Jewish philosophy.⁵⁶

Less reliable is David Geffen’s account in his unpublished doctoral thesis, *Faith and Reason in Elijah Del Medigo’s Behinat Ha-Dat and the Philosophic Backgrounds of the Work*, published in 1971.⁵⁷ In general, Geffen’s thesis is of great merit, and the same could be said of his published *Insights into the Life and Thought of Elijah Medigo Based on his Published and Unpublished Works*. Geffen was well aware of the historical context in which Del Medigo was operating, and he gives a useful description of the intellectual setting in Padua at that time.⁵⁸ His analysis of the *Two Investigations*, however, is superficial and misguided and reveals a lack of familiarity with the Aristotelian context and Averroist sources of that work.⁵⁹ Other references to the *Two Investigations* are Sirat’s *Averroiste envers et contre tout*, published in 2012, and Puig Montada’s *Eliahu Del Medigo, the Last Averroist*, published in 2013. Sirat’s analysis, though thorough and convincing, regards more the philological and biographical aspects of the *Two Investigations* rather than its philosophical content.⁶⁰ Puig Montada’s analysis is not primarily concerned with the *Two Investigations*, and he only dedicates a passage to this work.⁶¹

Paduan Averroism and the *Two Investigations*

The most conspicuous aspect of the *Two Investigations* is the presence of Averroes and his works. The treatise consists of an attempt to determine questions that arise from Averroes’s *LCDA*, and Del Medigo’s way of doing so is by borrowing lengthy citations from other treatises and commentaries by that same author. As in Del Medigo’s other works, Averroes is depicted as a sage (הַכֶּהֵן), as the great commentator (הַמְבַאֵר הַגָּדוֹל), and, in general, as a supreme philosophical authority.⁶²

How should these tokens of fidelity and admiration be contextualized? Geffen had suggested that “Elijah acquired this love for Averroes either because he had a very good teacher in Averroistic thought or else he mastered the material himself since it was available and thus came to regard it quite highly.”⁶³ Yet Del Medigo’s attitude toward Averroes surely cannot be reduced to a matter of personal taste. Mauro Zonta’s observation is more penetrating, in arguing that Del Medigo was “deeply interested in Scholasticism and wished to participate in the development of contemporary Scholastic philosophy.”⁶⁴ While Zonta is right in contextualizing Del Medigo’s philosophical interests against the intellectual setting of his time, his general allusion to “Latin scholastic tradition” seems to be too broad. Rather, the *Two Investigations* should be contextualized within—but not identified with—the Averroist school of fifteenth-century Padua. While this affinity has been acknowledged by several Del Medigo scholars in the past few decades, the present study strives to evaluate more precisely how his work reflects the intellectual activity in Padua at that time.

One distinctive feature of the intellectual activity in Italy between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries was the publication and circulation of new translations by Aristotle.⁶⁵ Along with the university towns of Bologna, Pisa, Siena, Pavia, and Ferrara, Padua was an important center of the study of Aristotle, while the nearby Venetian Press was an important printing center for these works.⁶⁶ In Padua, Aristotle’s influence was mediated through the gradual introduction of his Greek, Arab, and Latin commentators as well as by scholastic influences arriving from Paris and Oxford.⁶⁷ According to John Randall, “What Paris had been in the thirteenth century, and Oxford and Paris together in the fourteenth, Padua became in the fifteenth: the center in which ideas from all Europe were combined into an organized and cumulative body of knowledge [i.e., the philosophy of Aristotle].”⁶⁸ The lack of a strong theology faculty, combined with the introduction of Aristotelianism as it was taught in Paris and Oxford, with its emphasis on physics and logic, gradually made Padua immune to both Renaissance Platonism and the humanist culture of the Italian Renaissance, which emphasized instead the value of ethics, rhetoric, and politics.⁶⁹ This has also led to the popular conception of Padua as a university city with strong secularist tendencies. While the activity of a Jewish scholar working within a predominantly Christian intellectual context might strengthen the depiction of Padua as a place of mutual respect and tolerance, other aspects of the *Two Investigations* might go against it, as will be illustrated in this chapter.

One notable feature of the Aristotelian presence in Italian university cities during the Renaissance, and particularly in Padua, was the increasing popularity of Averroes. This phenomenon is often described as the rise of a Paduan Averroist school. The existence of a distinct, self-proclaimed, and autonomous Averroist school in Padua is still a matter of controversy among scholars, and while the present study does not aspire to settle the debate conclusively, the notion of Paduan Averroism is taken to denote several coexisting phenomena in fifteenth-century Padua, which, when viewed collectively, enable a valid contextualization of the *Two Investigations*.⁷⁰ This is not to suggest that Paduan Averroism is mere historiographical fabrication but rather to point out that the notion is employed in this study for its descriptive value, without succumbing to too-strong ontological commitments.

Following mainly the recent works of Dag Hasse, one may outline four characteristic features of the Paduan Averroist school. Again, this should be taken neither as an exhaustive list nor as a list that draws a strong dichotomy between the intellectual activity in Padua and the activity that has been carried out in other intellectual centers in Italy. Yet these four characteristics do constitute a certain background against which Del Medigo's thought—and the *Two Investigations* in particular—may be comfortably contextualized.⁷¹ The four characteristics are as follows: the translation and circulation of new Hebrew-into-Latin translations of Averroes; evidence of numerous discussions concerning the unicity of the Material Intellect; frequent references to the fourteenth-century philosopher John of Jandun; an open debate among a group of scholars who identify themselves as sharing a common doctrinal ground. While illustrating how each of these features is manifested in the *Two Investigations*, we will also highlight the extent to which Del Medigo's thought retains its idiosyncratic nature against the common features of Paduan Averroist thought in the fifteenth century.

The Renaissance translation movement

Whereas throughout the entire Middle Ages fifteen commentaries by Averroes were translated into Latin, by 1483, with the publication of Nicoletto Vernia's printed edition of Aristotle's works accompanied by Averroes's commentaries, the entire corpus of Averroes's commentaries on Aristotle (apart from the *Rhetorica*) was available in print for Latin readership.⁷² Many of these translations were made from medieval Hebrew renditions of Averroes rather than from the

original Arabic and were mainly the work of Jewish translators.⁷³ Del Medigo belonged to this latter group, and some view him as the single most important figure of the Hebrew translation movement.⁷⁴ Del Medigo was commissioned to translate works in logic, physics, psychology, and metaphysics for his Christian patrons, which also indicates Del Medigo's good relations with at least some of the active figures in the Paduan intellectual scene.⁷⁵ Several of these translations found their way into printed editions already during Del Medigo's lifetime, indicating his affiliation to editorial work done on Aristotle and Averroes in fifteenth-century Padua.⁷⁶ This editorial work was carried out by prominent figures such as Agostino Nifo, Marcantonio Zimara, and, most notably, Del Medigo's contemporary Nicoletto Vernia, who produced a new edition of Aristotelian works accompanied by the commentaries of Averroes.⁷⁷ Del Medigo thus participated with these scholars in a single intellectual endeavor: rendering the complete Averroist corpus accessible to Latin readership, thereby unifying the Hebrew and the Latin traditions, which developed independently throughout the Middle Ages.

Del Medigo's activity as a translator clearly manifests itself in the *Two Investigations*. As illustrated already, the original version of the *Two Investigations*, regrettably now lost, was composed in Latin at Pico's request. The Hebrew version that has survived nonetheless contains lengthy citations from works that at Del Medigo's time were available in Hebrew only, such as the *Epitome of the De anima* and the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*. From this, one learns that Del Medigo had prepared translations of these passages and incorporated them in the Latin original version of the *Two Investigations*. In support of this hypothesis we find a translation of the *Epitome of the De anima* in a Latin manuscript, translated by Del Medigo himself from Hebrew into Latin, with annotations in Pico's hand.⁷⁸ Lengthy sections from the *Epitome* were then incorporated by Del Medigo into the *Two Investigations*.⁷⁹ Del Medigo therefore prepared translations not only at the request of his patrons but also as part of his own writing process. When preparing the Hebrew translation of *Two Investigations*, made of the Latin original, Del Medigo naturally turned to the Hebrew sources (i.e., the Hebrew versions of Averroes's commentaries) and employed them directly in the Hebrew version. This becomes clear in Table 3, which compares sections from the *Two Investigations* with sections from the Hebrew medieval translations of the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* (trans. Kalonymus ben Kalonymus) and of the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* (trans. Kalonymus ben David ben Todros):

Table 3.

(1) The *Two Investigations* and the Hebrew *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*

Two Investigations	The Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics—Hebrew (Moscow [= F 47853])
ואחר יביא המאמר המופתי אשר יתיר אותם המאמרים הנצוחיים הסותרים האלה ויבאר הענין בעצמו כפי האמת f. 79v (1r)	ויביא המאמר המופתי אשר יתיר אותם המאמרים הסותרים . . . ויבאר הענין בעצמו על האמת f. 179v
שאשר יתבאר בזולתו ב' חלקים א' מהם אי אפשר שיתבאר בעצמו . . . והאחר אי אפשר שיתבאר בעצמו ר"ל שהוא כידוע בעצמו ואמנם יהיה ביאורו בזולת בזולתו יותר קל ויותר טוב ff. 84v–85r (4v)	שאשר יתבאר בזולתו שני חלקים אחד מהם אי אפשר שיתבאר בעצמו . . . והשני אפשר שיתבאר בעצמו ויהיה באורו בזולת יותר קל ויותר טוב f. 172r
מי שלא עמד באלה הדברים על המציאות . . . לא יעמוד על הסבה ולא יגיע לו מזה ידיעה אלא מצד שהמציאות אצלו נשען על הפרסום לא על האמת f. 105r (18v)	מי שלא יעמד בראיונין [?] אלה הדברים על המציאות לא יעמד על הסבה אלא מצד מה המציאות אצלו בזה הדבר נשען אל הפרסום לא אל האמת f. 71r

(2) The *Two Investigations* and the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*⁸⁰

Two Investigations	Tahāfut al-Tahāfut (Oxford Bodleian Library ms. Mich. 293 [= 22380])
'שהמורכב הזה הנה הוא מורכב מחלקים כל א מהם תנאי במציאות חברו ומציאותו נתלה במציאות חברו בב' צדדים מתחלפים כענין במורכבים מחומר וצורה f. 121v (28v)	שהמורכב לא ימלט שיהיה כל אחד מחלקיו אשר הורכב מהם תנאי במציאות חברו בשני צדדים מתחלפים כענין במורכבים מחמרים וצורות f. 78r
. . . הצורות המגיעות או המושגות מצורות הנפש נמצאות נקיות מההיולי . . . ידעת שעלת ההשגה ר"ל במשיג הוא הנקיות מההיולי ובעבור שמצאו השכל בלתי מתפעל . . . ידעת שהעלה בהיות הצורה בלתי משגת אינו כי אם להיו' השלמו' מה בכח f. 135r (38r)	ולמה שהשתכלו הצורות המשיגות מצורות הנפש נמצאות נקיות מההיולי ידעו שעלת ההשגה היא ההנקות מההיולי ובעבור שמצאו השכל בלתי מתפעל ידעו שהעלה בהיות הצורה . . . או משגת אינו דבר יותר מאשר היא כשהיתה שלמות מה שבכח f. 101r
שהנמצא ההוא אשר הוא שכל גמור הוא אשר הקנה לנמצאות ההדרגה והסודר הנמצא בפעולתם f. 92r (9v)	שזה הנמצא אשר הוא שכל גמור הוא אשר האציל לנמצאות הסדר והערך הנמצא בפעולותיהם f. 102v

As the table clearly illustrates, Del Medigo is employing verbatim citations from the Hebrew translations of Averroes's commentaries. We can therefore safely assume that the Hebrew translation of the *Two Investigations*, while being translated from the original Latin, nonetheless contains Hebrew sources, that is, Hebrew translations of Averroes. In the Latin original version of the *Two Investigations*, now lost, Del Medigo thus either employed the available Latin translations from the Arabic or else prepared *ad hoc* translations from Hebrew into Latin in accordance with his argumentative needs. This movement to and fro between Latin and Hebrew sources and translations clearly reflects Del Medigo's affiliation to the Renaissance translation movement, so closely associated with the intellectual activity in Padua of the fifteenth century.

The centrality of the unicity thesis

One of the doctrines most commonly associated with Latin Averroism, in general, and with the Paduan Averroist school, in particular, is the unicity thesis, the doctrine according to which there exists one single human intellect, in the activity of which all humans share. It is also this thesis that is at the heart of Del Medigo's first treatise. In his description of the intellectual climate in Padua during the Renaissance, Venetian statesman Gaspare Contarini testified that "*celebris erat apud omnes eius de unitate intellectus positio, ideo ut qui aliter sentirent neque philosophi nomine digni putarentur.*"⁸¹ Dag Hasse also mentions the unicity thesis as one of the characteristic features of Paduan Averroism: "No other Arabic philosophical theory received a similar amount of attention in the Renaissance."⁸² According to Hasse, Paul of Venice, Nicoletto Vernia, Agostino Nifo, and Pietro Pomponazzi, at some point or another in their careers, all promoted the existence of a single human intellect.⁸³ Del Medigo's resolution to compose a treatise while in Padua in which he discusses—and ultimately endorses—the unicity thesis surely reflects his awareness of other discussions and works dedicated to the theme, and consequently tells of his affiliation to the intellectual circles in Padua.

Criticizing John of Jandun

The fourteenth-century Parisian Averroist John of Jandun was a major point of reference for the Italian Averroists from the fourteenth century onward, and it has been suggested that Jandun's authority was equal to that of Averroes in

northern Italy during the Renaissance.⁸⁴ Del Medigo himself often refers to Jandun throughout the *Two Investigations*; in fact, Jandun is the only scholastic author mentioned explicitly in the *Two Investigations* a fact that did not escape the attention of Bland in his study of the *Two Investigations*.⁸⁵ Del Medigo's own annotations on Averroes's commentary on the *Physics* were printed along with Jandun's *Quaestiones* and published in no less than nine editions during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁸⁶

Jandun's reception in Padua was not all positive, however, and various writers expressed highly critical attitudes toward him. Del Medigo's affinity to the Paduan school can be detected here as well, as the vast majority of his references to Jandun in the *Two Investigations* are derogatory. Jandun, according to Del Medigo, mutilated Averroes's ideas beyond recognition in his attempt to clarify them.⁸⁷ Mahoney suggests that it was, in fact, Del Medigo who initiated this stream of criticism against Jandun, to be later carried forward in the works of Nifo, perhaps through the mediation of Pico.⁸⁸

Openly debating Averroes

Hasse sees in the Renaissance Averroist movement "some sort of group coherence, that is, by the members' activity in the same time and region, and by personal relations between their members—at least, by the awareness of one's immediate predecessors and cognates in mind."⁸⁹ Further, he argues that

what is most distinctive of Renaissance Averroism is a wealth of textual interconnections in the writings of the protagonists. . . . In the decades around 1500, the *doctrina Averrois* becomes a matter of several disputes. And this means, first, that Averroes is now fully emancipated from his role as a commentator and treated as a philosopher of his own right, and, second, that Averroism as a movement reaches its culmination in the Renaissance, because it begins to share an important feature with other movements in history: a discussion among its members about its proper direction.⁹⁰

These features are clearly manifested in the *Two Investigations*, though in a qualified sense only. Del Medigo refers to Averroes as an ultimate philosophical authority and presents his own interpretation of Averroes against enemies from without, that is, against scholars who challenged the validity of Averroes's arguments, as well as against enemies from within. This latter group, in Del Medigo's view, consists of those who identify themselves as Averroists, most notably John of Jandun, yet supply false interpretations of Averroes's ideas and doctrines.

Along with other Paduan Averroists, Del Medigo saw his role in pointing to the right method and direction in the interpretation of Averroes's ideas.⁹¹

While Del Medigo definitely structures the *Two Investigations* as a polemical discussion centered around the correct interpretation of Averroes, he refrains from referring explicitly to scholastic authors, either his contemporaries or his predecessors, with the sole exception of John of Jandun. Nicoletto Vernia, who was composing a similar work around the time Del Medigo was composing his *Two Investigations*, is never mentioned in that work.⁹² This fact distinguishes the *Two Investigations* from works of other Averroists in the Renaissance, who criticized each other's ideas openly and explicitly.⁹³ In addition, Del Medigo refrains from relying in the *Two Investigations* on the works of scholastic authors. Instead, he employs the full range of Averroes's work in order to support his reading of the *LCDA*. In other words, Averroes supplies the *Two Investigations* with both its central theme—the controversy concerning the unicity of the Material Intellect—as well as its doctrinal and textual context. That is not to say that Del Medigo refrains from criticizing other philosophers, as he certainly does; yet he constantly attempts to reduce the discussion to arguments and citations borrowed directly from the text of the *LCDA*, as will be frequently pointed to throughout this book.

There are several plausible explanations for Del Medigo's strong reliance on Averroes and his reluctance to engage with his contemporaries in direct confrontations. First, unlike many of his Averroist contemporaries in Padua, Del Medigo was not an official member of that university.⁹⁴ This fact, which most likely has to do with Del Medigo's Jewish background, might have made Del Medigo more vulnerable to personal attacks and, consequently, cautious in directly addressing his contemporaries as he lacked institutional backing. Second, it will be remembered, Del Medigo translated the *Two Investigations* from Latin into Hebrew, addressing a Jewish readership as well. Among Jewish philosophical circles from the thirteenth century onward, Averroes was a well-known authoritative figure whose authority was widespread and far less controversial than in the Latin tradition. In the words of Steven Harvey, referring to the wave of Averroes's translations from Arabic to Hebrew in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, "Averroes became almost over-night the primary philosophic authority among the Jews, at least in the sense that his texts were the ones that were studied most for knowledge of science and philosophy."⁹⁵ By making Averroes his ultimate source of reference, rather than relying on the discussions of the Latin Averroists, Del Medigo seems to be making a conscious concession toward a potential Jewish readership.⁹⁶

In sum, by translating materials from Hebrew into Latin, which he then employed in his original compositions; by focusing on the unicity thesis; and by offering what Del Medigo perceives as the correct reading of Averroes, Del Medigo clearly echoes the Averroist ambiance in which he was operating and, in particular, his affiliation to the Averroist discussions and controversies in fifteenth-century Padua. However, Del Medigo's unique position as a Jew working within a predominantly Christian environment seems to underlie his tendency to avoid direct confrontations with the Paduan Averroists and the scholastic masters and instead to rely solely on Averroes as he develops his discussion in the *Two Investigations*. In other words, though historical circumstances may induce us to refer to Del Medigo as a "Paduan Averroist," Del Medigo's Averroism manifests itself in the *Two Investigations* in his strong reliance on the works of Averroes himself, not in his affiliation to a contemporary school.

Latin and Hebrew Readership

Though the *Two Investigations* is not structured as a running commentary, it is predominantly exegetical in nature, as Del Medigo unfolds his discussion as a close reading of Averroes's *LCDA*. Del Medigo mentions at the beginning of the *Two Investigations* that he composed the treatise at the request of Pico della Mirandola in order to determine the debate over the unicity thesis. That Del Medigo composed the *Two Investigations* in order to determine a scholastic debate at the request of his Christian patron corroborates our hypothesis that the *Two Investigations* was written with a Christian readership in mind. Consequently, the work was written first in Latin and only later translated into Hebrew by Del Medigo himself.⁹⁷ The Latin version of the *Two Investigations*, now lost, seems to appear in two separate inventories of Pico's library, as "*Helias De anima and Quinterni 2 sine principio et fine in philosophiam et credo quod sint Elie Ebrei*."⁹⁸ The Latin version might have been burned in the fire of 1687 that destroyed the refectory of the monastery of the Brothers of San Antonio di Castello in Venice, where Pico's library was kept.⁹⁹ That Pico was familiar with Del Medigo's work may also be gathered from examining the former's *Conclusions*, where he mentions the same conclusion to which Del Medigo's investigation had led, namely the unity of the Material Intellect.¹⁰⁰

However, in translating the *Two Investigations* from Latin into Hebrew, Del Medigo apparently wished to promote the unicity thesis among Jewish intellectual circles as well. This is despite the fact—of which Del Medigo must have been

aware—that the *LCDA*, where Averroes develops his unicity thesis most explicitly and fully, had very little impact on Jewish readership during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Thus, whereas the Hebrew translation aimed to introduce unfamiliar doctrines to Jewish readers, the Latin original was composed with the intention of determining a debate for an audience already highly familiar with the disputed doctrine and the controversies associated with it.¹⁰¹

In the Hebrew version of the *Two Investigations*, one finds passages inserted by Del Medigo that are of little interest to a Christian reader and, apparently, were missing from the Latin original version. In these passages, Del Medigo reassures his Jewish readers that his true belief is that of the *Torah* and, at the same time, that the unicity thesis is compatible with the view of earlier authoritative figures in the history of Jewish philosophy, among them of Maimonides himself.¹⁰² Del Medigo also argues that the nature of the human intellect is a theme worthy of independent investigation, as it includes themes and discussions that are religiously neutral.¹⁰³ Such apologetic remarks, obviously aimed at Jewish readers who are either lacking philosophical training or are otherwise hostile toward philosophy, are of little interest in the context of Del Medigo's actual philosophical arguments, which are the theme of the current study. However, it again becomes clear that while the *Two Investigations* places Del Medigo within the tradition of Paduan Averroism, certain aspects of this work set him apart from that tradition. This point has been discussed already and will be discussed and illustrated time and again throughout the book.

Latin and Hebrew Sources¹⁰⁴

According to Umberto Cassuto, Elijah Del Medigo never considered himself an original thinker but, rather, understood his role as the elucidation of older philosophical ideas. Cassuto mentions the many occasions where Del Medigo employs the verbs *aggregare* (join together) and *compilare* (compile) as indications of this tendency.¹⁰⁵ This estimation of Del Medigo's originality—or better yet, the lack of it—is repeated frequently by scholars throughout the centuries. According to Graetz, “It cannot be maintained that Del Medigo suggested novel trains of thought in his work,” and David Geffen held that Del Medigo “visualized the role of the philosopher as the expositor of the doctrine of the earlier great philosophers.”¹⁰⁶ From a philosophical perspective, Geffen continues, Del Medigo is important primarily because he enables us to assess Averroes's impact in fifteenth-century Italy. Del Medigo's real merit as a thinker,

Geffen concludes, is found only with regard to his approach concerning the relation between Judaism and philosophy.¹⁰⁷

Yet any evaluation of Del Medigo's originality as a philosopher needs to be put in context, missing from Cassuto's and Geffen's somewhat dismissive remarks. In their assessment of Del Medigo's philosophical activity, both seem to presuppose an anachronistic notion of philosophy. Del Medigo's work, however, ought to be evaluated against the notion of philosophy as was perceived and practiced among philosophers in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Put simply, the fact that Del Medigo wrote exegetical works does not mean that he is not an original thinker. Peripatetic philosophy in the Middle Ages (and the Aristotelian schools that continued to flourish in the Renaissance) was in its very nature exegetical, and it seems almost redundant to remind the reader that medieval philosophers—even those whose original contribution to the history of philosophy is undeniable—were working within well-established philosophical traditions, participating in controversies that were generated within these traditions. Against Cassuto's view stands also the testimony of Del Medigo himself: "*Dicta enim aliorum nolo mihi attribuere, hoc enim non est boni uiri.*"¹⁰⁸

How, then, does Del Medigo's originality express itself in the *Two Investigations*? It is certainly not to be found in the famous Averroist doctrine at the heart of the work concerning the unicity of the Material Intellect. Del Medigo's originality seems to lie, instead, in two aspects of his methodology. The first is his method of establishing familiar theses with proofs of his own. For instance, Del Medigo establishes the unicity of the Material Intellect or the agency of the Agent Intellect by recourse to materials that were available in Hebrew sources alone, to which the Latin scholastics had no access.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, throughout the *Two Investigations* Del Medigo weaves together discussions from different sources, such as the discussion concerning God's knowledge in the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* with Del Medigo's criticism of Aquinas's position on the creation of human souls. Second, while explicitly following the ideas of Averroes, Del Medigo presents original views on issues that were disputed within the Averroist tradition itself. Such themes included, for instance, the presence of intelligible species within the cognitive process and the substantial unity between the Material and Agent Intellect. Del Medigo's originality therefore lies in the way he was commenting on and shaping the Averroist tradition that served as his framework and ultimate place of reference. In the course of this work, these original aspects will be highlighted over and again.

As mentioned already, the work that dominates the *Two Investigations* more than any other is Averroes's *LCDA*. Del Medigo incorporates lengthy citations

from the *LCDA* in the *Two Investigations* and comments on them, often supporting his reading of the *LCDA* with citations from other works by Averroes. Del Medigo's close familiarity with the *LCDA* manifests itself in his awareness of different translations (העתקות) of the Aristotelian *lemmata* and in his comments on possible scribal errors.¹¹⁰ Del Medigo's habit of citing long quotations from the *LCDA* stands in contrast to what we find in the works of his contemporary, Nicoletto Vernia. Dag Hasse holds that, "Vernia does not make much use of Averroes' technical terminology and that he does not draw on Averroes' arguments in favour of the unicity thesis, as offered in chapter III.5 of the long commentary on the *De anima*."¹¹¹ The *Two Investigations*, therefore, at least to a certain degree, can be seen as a commentary on Averroes's *LCDA*. Yet Del Medigo's reading of the *LCDA* is heavily influenced by his polemical needs, and in particular his polemics with the Paduan Thomists (see the following discussion).

It could be asserted with a great degree of confidence that, in the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo was employing the Latin version of the *LCDA* rather than the Hebrew rendition that was translated from the Latin in the fifteenth century.¹¹² This could be established on several grounds. First, Del Medigo was composing the *Two Investigations* in Latin, at the request of Pico della Mirandola and within the framework of Latin scholasticism. It is therefore highly unlikely that Del Medigo would have refrained from using the single most important text concerning the issues that he touches upon in the *Two Investigations*, that is, the Latin translation of Averroes's *LCDA*. Second, as the discussion in subsequent chapters will illustrate, citations from the *LCDA* in the *Two Investigations* often reflect the Latin version to a very high degree. By comparing the terminology of the *Two Investigations* and the Hebrew version of the *LCDA* (Table 4), it becomes clear that Del Medigo was not relying on the terminology of the Hebrew translation in his work:

Table 4.

<i>Two Investigations</i>	<i>LCDA—Hebrew version, ms. Napoli III F5 [= F11518]</i>
השכל ההיולאני	השכל החמרי
ההרכבה וההמזוגות	הערוב והמזג
בצורות הדמיוניות	בחיקויים המדומים
השכל . . . אשר יתהוה	השכל הנעשה
נפסד באופן מה ונשאר באופן מה	הוה ונפסד בצד אחד ונצחי בצד אחר
ויהיה מאיר בעבורו	ויהיה לו אורה מפניו
ואלה ההכנות מתחלפות מאד	ואלו השניים הכנות נבדלות

Thirdly, Del Medigo mentions the different translations of Aristotelian *lemmata* in the text of the *LCDA*, a feature typical of the Renaissance Latin editions of Averroes's text.¹¹³

While it seems certain that Del Medigo employed the Latin translation of the *LCDA*, it is more difficult to determine conclusively the extent of Del Medigo's familiarity with the Hebrew version of that text, which was translated into Hebrew from the Latin. As mentioned, a terminological comparison reveals that Del Medigo was not drawing directly from the Hebrew version. However, other passages demonstrate great resemblance between the *Two Investigations* and the Hebrew translation of the *LCDA*, and there is need for further research to determine the matter conclusively. Such passages are presented in Table 5.

The *LCDA* is also the source through which Del Medigo came to know the works of Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, and Avempace. That Del Medigo employed Averroes as a source through which he came to know the Greek sources is significant, since in the Paduan generations that followed, there was a growing tendency to read the Greek sources either in their original or through new Latin translations. In that respect, Del Medigo belongs to the earlier generation of Paduan Averroists.¹¹⁴

Apart from the *LCDA*, Del Medigo relies on other commentaries and works by Averroes, making use of all three types of commentaries by the latter—the short, middle, and long.¹¹⁵ Generally, Del Medigo's claim is that, in his earlier commentaries, Averroes was drawn after commonly held views (הדעות המפורסמות), whereas in the long commentaries he developed his own independent views on various philosophical themes. For instance, Del Medigo argues that, while composing the treatise on the possibility of conjunction and the *Epitome of the De anima*, Averroes embraced the view of Avempace but that further deliberation brought him to change his view on the matter.¹¹⁶ While Del Medigo detects this line of progression in the commentaries, he nonetheless

Table 5.

<i>Two Investigations</i>	<i>LCDA—Hebrew version, ms. Napoli III</i> F5 [= F11518] (Part III begins in f. 101r)
<p>וכאשר הגשם הספירי לא יתנועע מהמראה ולא יקבלנו . . . כן השכל ההיולאני לא יקבל המושכלות אשר הנה f. 131r (35r)</p>	<p>וכמו שהספירי לא יתנועע מן המראה ולא גם כן יקבל אותו . . . כן זה השכל לא יקבל המושכלות אשר הנה</p>
<p>וכאשר האור יעשה המראים אשר בכח שיהיו בפעל באופן שיוכלו להגיע הגשם הספירי f. 131r (35r-v)</p>	<p>וכמו שהאור יעשה המראים אשר בכח מראים בפעל באופן שהוא כחיי להגיע הספירי</p>

advises the reader not to neglect the short and middle commentaries, since “he [Averroes] included in them many good comments, which he did not return to in the long [commentaries].”¹¹⁷ As will be illustrated in Chapter 3, Del Medigo applies this approach as he supports his conclusion on the nature of the Agent Intellect with citations from the *Epitome of the De anima*. Del Medigo does so even though, in the *LCDA*, Averroes has reached an entirely different conclusion concerning the nature of the Material Intellect than in the *Epitome*.

Further, and as mentioned earlier, many passages in the *Two Investigations* are cited from Hebrew translations of Averroes’s works. These include the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, the *Epitome of the De anima*, and the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*.¹¹⁸ Thus, while identifying a Latin “original” and a Hebrew “translation” of the *Two Investigations*, it is important to mention that Hebrew sources also had a direct impact on the original, now lost, Latin version. This fact testifies against Zonta’s view that in the case of Del Medigo’s Latin compositions, “we cannot speak of Hebrew Scholasticism, but of Scholasticism *tout court*.”¹¹⁹

In the *Two Investigations*, Averroes overshadows the influence of any other philosophical source. As for the influence of scholastic authors on the *Two Investigations*, it has already been mentioned that Del Medigo makes explicit references to none but John of Jandun. The other scholastic author who evidently had a major influence on the *Two Investigations* is Thomas Aquinas, yet his name is never mentioned in the text. In his other philosophical works, however, Del Medigo makes occasional references to scholastic authors such as Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, Walter Burley, John of Jandun, Robert Grosseteste, Giles of Rome, and William of Ockham.¹²⁰ The absence of explicit references to scholastic authors in the *Two Investigations*, therefore, does not mean that scholastic ideas and discussions did not make their way into the treatise; only that Del Medigo prefers to discuss them through the conceptual framework of Averroes’s *LCDA*. The most striking example is in the doctrine of intelligible species and its impact on the *LCDA*, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

As to the influence of Hebrew sources on the *Two Investigations*, one clear case of such influence is the usage Del Medigo makes of the Hebrew translations of Averroes’s works. All other forms of Jewish influence on the *Two Investigations* appear to be less direct, such as in Del Medigo’s claim that the unicity thesis does not contradict the view of the *Torah*, or in his occasional mention of Jewish philosophers who allegedly held the thesis as well. For instance, Del Medigo expresses the view that Maimonides himself promoted the unicity of the Material Intellect.¹²¹ The lack of a more direct influence of Jewish sources is due to the fact that the unicity controversy never had a strong impact on the medieval Jewish tradition. As the *LCDA* was translated into Hebrew relatively late and never

gained real popularity, Jewish thinkers who referred to the unicity thesis, such as Hillel ben Samuel, were the exception rather than the rule.¹²² Consequently, while Del Medigo makes explicit references to Maimonides and Abraham Ibn Ezra, he does not make any real use of their arguments in the *Two Investigations*, as both were operating in a different philosophical framework.¹²³

With regard to Hillel of Verona, Geffen has suggested that it is through the latter's *Tagmulei ha-Nefesh* that Del Medigo became aware of Aquinas's work, cited in Hillel's work.¹²⁴ This hypothesis, however, is highly questionable, as it appears to rely solely on the incidental fact that both Hillel and Del Medigo were Jewish authors living in Italy who show awareness to Aquinas's works, in particular to his *De unitate intellectus*.¹²⁵ As will be argued in Chapter 2, as Aquinas's works were widely circulated in Padua at the time Del Medigo wrote the *Two Investigations*, and since Del Medigo could read them in the original, there was no need for him to turn to the Hebrew work of another Jewish author as a source of mediation. Furthermore, Hillel's and Del Medigo's style and terminology are considerably different, and it would seem very unlikely that the latter was drawing from the works of the former. To illustrate this point, let us compare the different manner in which the two philosophers translated a passage from Aquinas's *De unitate intellectus*, which treats the ontological status of the human intellect and its separation from matter (Table 6).

Table 6.

Aquinas	Hillel	Del Medigo
Et paulatim uidemus, secundum quod forme sunt nobiliores, quod habent aliquas uirtutes magis ac magis supergredientes materiam; unde ultima formarum, que est anima humana, habet virtutem totaliter supergredientem materiam corporalem, scilicet intellectum. Sic ergo intellectus separatus est quia non est uirtus in corpora; sed est uirtus in anima, anima autem est actus corporis (<i>De unitate intellectus</i> , I.27, 44.479–487)	כי לפי היות הצורות נכבדות, כך יש למו כחות אחרים נפרדים, מעולים על מדרגת החומר. אם כן הצורה האחרונה, כלומר אותה שהיא נפש אנושית, גם אם יש לה בכל עצמה היות צורת הגוף ופועל הגוף, עם כל זה אינו מן הנמנע המצא בה שום כח נפרד מעולה, סוברא גרנדיאנטי בלע"ז, במדרגה שלא יהיה כח גופיי ולא פועל גופיי, ויפעול פעולה נפרדת, וזהו השכל שהוא נפרד, בעבור שאינו כח בגוף, ואף על פי שהוא כח בנפש, והנפש היא פועל הגוף (<i>Book of the Rewards of the Soul</i> , I.7, 125.405–10)	ואמנם לנפש הזאת כחות מה לא יפעלו פעולתם בכלי גשמי כאלו תאמר ההשכל ויקראו לאלה הכחות עוכרות החמר והם למעלה מהחמר וירצו בזה שלא יפעלו פעולתם בכלי גשמי (<i>Two Investigations</i> , f. 82v (3r–v))

While Hillel gives a verbatim translation of the passage, Del Medigo supplies a paraphrase. Hillel transliterates “supergredientem” as טוברה גרנדיאנטי, while Del Medigo, who consistently avoids Latinisms throughout the *Two Investigations*, translates the notion as הכחות עוכרות החמר והם למעלה מהחמר (“those powers which surpass matter and are above matter”). All evidence therefore indicates that, while Aquinas’s *De unitate* serves as a common source of reference for both philosophers, it is highly unlikely that Del Medigo was in any way influenced by *Tagmulei ha-Nefesh* or, for that matter, by any other Jewish Italian author; this last hypothesis cannot be entirely excluded, yet there is no evidence in the *Two Investigations* to support it.¹²⁶

Also absent from the *Two Investigations* is the direct influence by thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Jewish Averroists, that is, Jewish philosophers who explicitly endorsed the views of Averroes regarding various issues, most notably Isaac Albalag and Moses Narboni.¹²⁷ Three facts prevent one from ascribing such influence. First, Del Medigo does not mention by name any of the Jewish Averroist authors. Second, Del Medigo explicitly refers to Averroes as his ultimate philosophical source, and one can trace back without difficulty nearly all the doctrines endorsed by Del Medigo to Averroes himself, particularly to the *LCDA*. Last, and unlike Del Medigo, Narboni did not promote the unicity thesis, and it seems that Albalag rejected the theory as well.¹²⁸ It is more convincing, therefore, to refer to Averroes as a common source for all three philosophers rather than to detect direct influence by Albalag and Narboni on Del Medigo.

The only Jewish philosopher whom Del Medigo mentions explicitly in the *Two Investigations*, and with whom he shares significant traits, is Gersonides (Levi ben Gershon), the fourteenth-century Provençal Jewish polymath. Like Del Medigo, Gersonides was closely acquainted with the works of Averroes, though probably with a different set of texts. While Del Medigo had access to Averroes’s commentaries in both Hebrew and Latin, Gersonides’ familiarity was restricted to the Hebrew translations of Averroes’s works alone.¹²⁹ Another significant difference is that Gersonides often disagrees with Averroes and goes as far as undermining Aristotle’s authority. In this, Gersonides was unique against the general medieval philosophical background, both Latin and Hebrew. For instance, in his introduction to the supercommentary on the *Organon*, Gersonides declares that his goal is not merely to explain Aristotle’s intentions but to compose original treatises that critically examine issues Aristotle discusses.¹³⁰ Del Medigo, on the other hand, challenges the authority of neither Aristotle nor Averroes, and this difference in approach seems to be the cause

of Del Medigo's accusation against Gersonides that the latter was engaged in the making of a "new philosophy."¹³¹ More specifically, and with regard to their theories of intellect, both philosophers discussed the nature of the Material Intellect at great length against the background of Averroes's commentaries on Aristotle's *De anima*. However, whereas Gersonides had access only to Averroes's *Short and Middle Commentary on the De anima*, Del Medigo relied mainly on the *LCDA*. In the *Wars of the Lord*, Gersonides thus attributes to Averroes the view of the *Middle Commentary on the De anima*, according to which

This disposition [i.e., the Material Intellect] is actually the Agent Intellect itself; but in so far as it attaches itself to the human soul, it is a disposition and has a potentiality for knowledge of terrestrial phenomena.¹³²

We may assume that Del Medigo, who was familiar with all three commentaries by Averroes on the *De anima*, was aware that this view marks only a passing phase in the development of Averroes's thought. Del Medigo thus refrains from mentioning this view in the *Two Investigations* and refrains from analyzing Gersonides' analysis of this view, apart from his dismissive comment already mentioned.

Conclusion

The chapter gave a general survey of the little we know of Del Medigo's life and a fuller account of Del Medigo's activity as a philosopher. This latter theme will be elaborated in subsequent chapters through a detailed examination of the structure and content of Del Medigo's *Two Investigations*. We will first turn to Del Medigo's treatment of the most controversial of all Averroes's theses: the unicity of the Material Intellect.

Del Medigo on the Material Intellect

Introductory Remarks

While the *Two Investigations* deals with several themes relating to the nature of the human intellect, the main concern of the treatise, as its opening lines suggest, is the unicity of the Material Intellect: “whether the human Material Intellect is one in number in all humans, or whether it is multiplied according to the number of humans, so that each of us possesses his own intellect.”¹ Following an outline of the unicity controversy, this chapter moves to describe Del Medigo’s contribution to the debate.

The starting point of the unicity debate is Averroes’s *LCDA*. In section III.5 of that work, following a lengthy discussion that attempts to decipher the meaning of Aristotle’s words in the *De anima* 429a21–4, Averroes concludes that the intellect in its state of potentiality, or the Material Intellect (*intellectus materialis*, in the Latin translation of Averroes’s commentary), is a separate substance, unique in its species, and all humans share in its activity.² We will return to Aristotle’s discussion and Averroes’s interpretation of it later on. For now, suffice it to mention that from the time the *LCDA* was translated into Latin in the thirteenth century, Averroes’s reading of Aristotle incited great controversy among the scholars, not least due to Aquinas’s attempts to refute it in his *De unitate intellectus* and in other works. Debates between the advocates of the unicity thesis—the so-called Latin Averroists—and its adversaries continued well into the sixteenth century, and it is against the background of these debates that Del Medigo’s discussion ought to be evaluated.

With its roots in philosophical controversy, Del Medigo’s discussion unsurprisingly bears a polemical tone. He attempts to establish Averroes’s reading of Aristotle against those who oppose it, employing philosophical argumentation as well as allusions to his adversaries’s poor philosophical skills.³ That the *Two Investigations* was composed with a polemical aim in mind also

explains one of its most characteristic features: the lack of explanatory notes for the basic philosophical notions that Del Medigo employs throughout his discussion. Del Medigo assumes that the reader—Pico della Mirandola being the immediate addressee—is familiar with the notion of “Material Intellect” (*Intellectus materialis*, השכל החומרי) that is at the heart of the discussion, as well as with other fundamental philosophical concepts. Rather than offering an introductory work presenting Aristotle’s theory of intellect, Del Medigo’s intention is to guide the reader to a correct understanding of Aristotle’s theory, marked by a strong commitment to Averroes’s interpretation in the *LCDA* and in other works by the latter.

Methodology and Structure of the Unicity Discussion

Del Medigo’s discussion of the unicity of the Material Intellect starts with a methodological introduction. Following Averroes’s *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, Del Medigo defines philosophical investigation as the presentation of commonly held views regarding a certain topic—views uncertain when examined individually, and mutually exclusive when examined collectively.⁴ The philosopher’s task is to supplement the presentation of these views with a demonstrative proof (מאמר מופתי) that leads to the correct position. Del Medigo emphasizes that it is through the examination of mutually exclusive propositions that truth reveals itself. This is also due to the fact that false propositions, which must ultimately be rejected, nonetheless contain the truth in them to a certain degree.⁵ Del Medigo follows this methodology by presenting two mutually exclusive views at the heart of his investigation: first, that the Material Intellect is a single substance in whose activity all humans share; second, that the Material Intellect is individuated according to the number of humans.⁶ He then examines these two alternatives through the presentation and refutation of various arguments, and his investigation culminates in his endorsement of the unicity thesis. Yet following the methodology borrowed from the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, Del Medigo introduces a modification to the thesis, declaring that the arguments that promote the plurality of Material Intellects should also be taken into consideration. We will return to this last point when discussing Del Medigo’s own account of the unicity thesis.

Del Medigo’s discussion of the unicity of the Material Intellect is divided as demonstrated in Table 7.

Table 7.

Folio Number	Discussion
ff. 79v–81v (1v–2v)	Eight arguments against the unicity thesis. These arguments are attributed not to any particular philosopher but to the works of the “Latin commentators” (מפרשי הרומיים). ⁷
ff. 81v–82r (2v – 3r)	Four arguments supporting the unicity thesis. These arguments are attributed neither to a particular philosopher nor to a particular philosophical school. The implicit source is Averroes’s account in the <i>LCDA</i> . ⁸
ff. 82v–102v (3r–17r)	A discussion of the view of the “theologians,” מדברי הדת, who deny the unicity of the Material Intellect.
ff. 111r–20r (21 ^{bis} v–7v)	A discussion of the view of Alexander of Aphrodisias and Avempace, who deny the unicity of the Material Intellect. ⁹
ff. 120r–5r (27v–31r)	A discussion of the view of Averroes, who promotes the unicity of the Material Intellect. ¹⁰
ff. 146r–50r (46r–8v)	A reply to the eight arguments made at the start of the discussion, which deny the unicity thesis.

Although the structure largely follows that of a scholastic *quaestio*, Del Medigo supplements his account with lengthy discussions concerning the text of the *LCDA*, attempting to elucidate and harmonize Averroes’s own interpretation of Aristotle. Whereas the *quaestio* tradition is a distinct Latin scholastic creation, supercommentaires were more common within the Jewish philosophical tradition. The structure of the *Two Investigations* thus gives indication of Del Medigo’s mixed philosophical background.

As Table 7 indicates, while Del Medigo concludes his discussion by endorsing the unicity of the Material Intellect, the bulk of the discussion is composed of arguments made against the thesis, and Del Medigo first addresses these arguments before establishing Averroes’s conclusion affirmatively. The view that occupies most of Del Medigo’s attention is that of the so-called theologians (מדברי הדת), who argue that the intellect is separate from the body in its existence, yet subject to individuation so that each individual possesses his own intellect.

Given the central role of the “theologians” in the *Two Investigations*, we must first establish their identity before turning to analyze Del Medigo’s treatment of their view. It will be argued that by “theologians,” Del Medigo was in fact referring to the followers of Thomas Aquinas whom he came to know in Padua. Further, the anonymous “Latin commentators” mentioned at the beginning of

the unicity discussion (see Table 7), designate the very same group of Thomist philosophers.

Against the Thomists

Theologians, Latin commentators, and Paduan Thomists

Del Medigo starts his discussion with eight arguments denying the unicity of the Material Intellect. He does not attribute these arguments to any particular philosopher, but he mentions that they can all be found in the works of the “Latin commentators,” (מפרשי הרומיים).¹¹ Later in the discussion, Del Medigo examines and criticizes the view of the “theologians” (מדברי הדתות), who argue for a plurality of human intellects. Both theologians and “Latin commentators” seem to designate the same group of philosophers: those who followed Thomas Aquinas and his critique of Averroes’s theory of intellect. Del Medigo might have been familiar with Aquinas’s position directly through printed editions of his works, as well as through authors who incorporated references to Aquinas in their work, such as John of Jandun in his *Quaestiones De anima*.¹² Yet Del Medigo most likely also had personal contacts with Aquinas’s followers in Padua, as will be illustrated later. The views of the “theologians” and of the “Latin commentators” represent two aspects of a single critical move: the eight arguments of the “Latin commentators” reproduce several of Aquinas’s criticisms in *De unitate intellectus* against the unicity thesis, whereas the view attributed to the “theologians” is, in fact, Aquinas’s own position concerning the existence of a created, immaterial, yet individuated human soul.

Let us first turn to the arguments of the “Latin commentators,” several of which, as mentioned, were drawn directly from Aquinas’s *De unitate intellectus*, although Del Medigo does not refer explicitly to that work in the *Two Investigations*. The third argument attributed to the “Latin commentators” is that once we postulate an intellect separate in its being, it would be the intellect, rather than a particular human being, that will be performing the act of conceptualization.¹³ The argument is found in the third part of the *De unitate intellectus*, where Aquinas argues, against Averroes’s thesis, that “such a conjunction [which Averroes proposes between man and the separate intellect] would not suffice to explain that this man understands.”¹⁴ Another example is the seventh argument, which Del Medigo attributes to the “Latin commentators,” whereby it is argued that the unicity of the Material Intellect would entail that all humans conceptualize the

same intelligible simultaneously.¹⁵ Again, the argument appears in the third part of the *De unitate intellectus*:

If all men understand by one intellect—however it be united to them, whether as form or as mover—it necessarily follows that of all men there would be numerically one act of understanding, which is both simultaneous and of one intelligible object.¹⁶

Another argument that Del Medigo borrows from Aquinas and attributes to the “Latin commentators,” the first in his list, relies on moral and theological grounds:

If the [intellect] were one in all humans, the soul could not be rewarded or rebuked. And, if that were the case, all good deeds and knowledge would not serve any purpose, and all the habitual customs (תורות), the divine as well as the natural, would succumb.¹⁷

In the *De unitate intellectus*, the argument is formulated as follows:

Take away from men diversity of intellect, which alone among the soul’s parts seems incorruptible and immortal, and it follows that nothing of the souls of men would remain after death except a unique intellectual substance, with the result that reward and punishment and their difference disappear.¹⁸

According to Aquinas, the individuation of intellect is a prerequisite for moral responsibility. The reason for this appears in another passage from the *De unitate intellectus*:

The position under discussion could destroy the principles of moral philosophy, for it would take away what is in our power. Something is in our power thanks to will, which is why the voluntary is defined as that which is in our power. But will is in intellect.¹⁹

Aquinas’s argument is that since human will is located in the human intellect, the postulation of a single intellect would entail that all humans share a single will. And, as will is a necessary component of moral action, the unicity of the Material Intellect would undermine the foundations of morality and, consequently, of religious law and of the implementation of divine justice. It is this argument, in its abridged form, that we find also in Del Medigo’s *Two Investigations* as a hypothetical argument against Averroes’s unicity thesis.

In sum, the striking resemblance between the arguments Del Medigo attributes to the “Latin commentators” and those found in Aquinas’s *De unitate*

intellectus indicates that Aquinas's works served Del Medigo as an important source for his discussion in the *Two Investigations*. Yet Del Medigo introduces these arguments only hypothetically, that is, only so he could later refute them and, by so doing, reinforce the view of Averroes. Such dialectical argumentation characterizes both Aquinas's discussion in the *De unitate intellectus* as well as Del Medigo's discussion in the *Two Investigations*, as we shall see presently and in subsequent chapters.

Further indication of Aquinas's presence in the *Two Investigations* is in the view Del Medigo attributes to the "theologians":

The view of most theologians (מדברי הדתות) is that when matter is endowed with qualities which prepare it for the reception of a human form, i.e., the intellectual soul, God then creates *ex nihilo* (מלא דבר במוחלט) a particular form for a particular body, [creating it] not through matter and its capacity (כח) as with the other material forms; rather, He creates it [the soul] first and then places it in the body . . . and these souls are multiplied according to the number of men. And [the theologians] say that this soul is what gives man his essence, and it is by virtue of it that man is man, but that it does not inhere in human matter (בהמר האנושי) through the three dimensions, i.e., length, width and depth, and thus it is indivisible and eternal *a parte post* (ונצחית בסוף). Nonetheless, this soul possesses certain faculties (כחות מה) which do not operate through a bodily organ, namely conceptualization, and they name these the faculties which surpass matter. What they mean by that is that these faculties do not operate through a bodily organ and that they do not need it [for their orderly functioning].²⁰

The view of the theologians is that each human possesses his own individual soul, which is created *ex nihilo* and placed in humans by God. This soul possesses a certain capacity, namely the intellectual power, which is operationally separate from the body as it does not require a bodily organ for its orderly function. This account clearly reflects Aquinas's position in works such as the *Disputed Questions on the Soul* and the *Summa contra gentiles*:

Since, therefore, the human soul, insofar as it is united to the body as to a form, is nevertheless elevated above the body and independent of it, it is clear that it is placed at the boundary of corporeal and separate substances.²¹

It remains therefore that [God] made [the soul] *ex nihilo*, and thus the soul is created. Since, then, creation must be the proper work of God, as was shown above, it follows that [the soul] is created immediately by God alone.²²

While the arguments attributed to the "Latin commentators" reflect the criticism elaborated by Aquinas against Averroes, the view of the "theologians" reflects

Aquinas's own position, according to which "this soul is what gives man his essence and it is by virtue of it that man is man, but . . . it does not inhere in the matter of the human."²³

The indirect impact of Aquinas on the *Two Investigations* is also found in the terminology employed by Del Medigo. The term "theologians" or the Hebrew מדברי הדתות or מדברים, is equivalent to the Latin *loquentes* (متكلمون, θεολόγοι). It was employed, as Wolfson notes, by both Averroes and Maimonides in order to denote Muslim, Jewish, and Christian theologians.²⁴ In the Latin translation of the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, for instance, Averroes describes the "theologians" as promoting unnatural views that contradict basic philosophical principles:

As for those who maintain invention and creation, they claim that the agent creates the existent in its entirety and invents it: they deny that the agent's act is conditioned by the existence of matter on which to act, claiming instead that he is the inventor of the whole thing. This is the well-known view of the theologians both of our religion and of the Christians.²⁵

Here, Averroes attributes to the theologians the erroneous notion of creation *ex nihilo* with regard to the creation of the world, parallel to Del Medigo's accusation of the "theologians" with regard to the creation *ex nihilo* of human souls. For Del Medigo, the theologians defended their view by making recourse to theological rather than philosophical argumentations: "and they could not find a real answer [to the difficulties presented to them], only that this is the way God wanted it to be."²⁶ Del Medigo thus adopts Averroes's derogatory usage of *loquentes*, which for both is associated with the notion of creation *ex nihilo*.²⁷ While Averroes could not have Aquinas in mind when coining the term, *loquentes* nonetheless have become associated in the Latin scholastic tradition with Aquinas and the Thomists. The portrayal of the Thomists as theologians who violate fundamental philosophical principles in their works was common in fifteenth-century Padua, and we may assume that this is the manner in which Del Medigo employs the term in the *Two Investigations* as well.²⁸

Finally, there are Del Medigo's personal circumstances to testify of his acquaintance with Aquinas and his philosophy. Thomism was a living practice in fifteenth-century Padua, where Del Medigo lived and worked. Aquinas was chosen as the patron of the faculty of arts, his feast day was celebrated each year with a mass and a sermon in the local Dominican church, and, by the middle of the fifteenth century, the university offered a course in Thomist theology and metaphysics.²⁹ We also know of Del Medigo's personal contacts with the

followers of *Via Sancti Thomae*, and particularly with Domenico Grimani. The latter, who was very much influential within the Paduan intellectual scene and who would later become the cardinal of San Marco, was a student of Francesco di Neritone, occupant of the Thomist chair at the University of Padua. Antonio Pizzamanno testifies of Grimani's Thomism in his preface to his edition of Aquinas's works: "The most learned man of our times, Domenico Grimani, solved and demonstrated in these writings Aquinas' solutions to these . . . unsolvable problems."³⁰ Del Medigo had close relations with Grimani, to whom he dedicated the translations of the *Middle Commentary on the Meteorologica* I-III and the preface of Book XII of the *Metaphysics*. A letter from Del Medigo to Grimani also contains, among other themes, direct references to the *Two Investigations*.³¹ Del Medigo also criticizes Aquinas's views in his *Commentary on the De substantia orbis*, where he explicitly rejects Aquinas's position concerning generation and corruption.³² Lastly, when contextualizing his polemical stand in the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo makes explicit reference to the teaching of a contemporary school, most likely referring to the followers of Thomas Aquinas: "I only mention this view [i.e., that the soul is created *ex nihilo* by God] because it is very popular these days with the philosophisers among the Christians (מתפלספי הנצרים)."³³ Correspondingly, it has been documented that both Thomists and Scotists shared an aversion to the teachings of Del Medigo.³⁴

Del Medigo also reports in the *Two Investigations* a personal encounter with a Christian philosopher who challenged Averroes's notion of a single Material Intellect shared by all men. According to the anonymous philosopher, a single Material Intellect would entail that two contradictory assertions held by two distinct individuals would exist simultaneously in one and the same intellect.³⁵ This argument is one of the eight against the unicity thesis at the opening of the *Two Investigations*, which implicitly stand for Aquinas's critique of the unicity thesis. We can therefore assume that the anonymous philosopher was a Thomist, or at the least represented the type of criticism that was voiced by the Thomists in Padua.

Criticizing Aquinas

From the evidence presented here it may be determined with a high degree of certainty that although his name is never mentioned in the *Two Investigations*, Thomas Aquinas and his treatment of Averroes's unicity thesis caught Del Medigo's critical attention. Del Medigo was implicitly referring to Aquinas when formulating the views of both the "theologians" and "Latin commentators." Let

us now examine how Del Medigo treats Aquinas's position within his overall attempt to establish demonstrably Averroes's view concerning the unicity of the Material Intellect. Yet, first let us examine the circumstances that led to Aquinas's own criticism of Averroes.

In the *De anima*, Aristotle distinguishes between two aspects of the act of conceptualization. First, "the thinking part of the soul must therefore be . . . capable of receiving the form of an object. . . . Thought must be related to what is thinkable, as sense is to what is sensible."³⁶ Aristotle then goes on to argue that "there is another [type of thought] which is what it is by virtue of making all things: this is a sort of positive state like light; for in a sense light makes potential colours into actual colours."³⁷ Aristotle thus identifies a potential aspect in the process of conceptualization, manifested in the "thinking part" that has the capacity to receive thoughts, just as sense is characterized by its potentiality to receive sense objects. At the same time, the "thinking part" of the soul also contains an element that activates the process of conceptualization, as light actualizes the colors that the eye perceives. This well-known distinction lent itself to various interpretations over the centuries by different commentators who attempted to contextualize the division within a broader Aristotelian framework. One pressing question was whether Aristotle's division reflects aspects within a corporeal act or whether he is establishing the existence of a separate intellect. What contributed to the spread of this controversy—as well as to the difficulty of resolving it conclusively—was that in the *De anima*, Aristotle himself appears to leave the question open.³⁸

Averroes changed his mind several times throughout his career concerning the nature of the thinking part in man and its relation to the human body, and in the present context we will refer to his view as expressed in the *LCDA*.³⁹ Averroes's starting point is the fundamental distinction found in Aristotle:

The intellect existing in us has two activities in so far as it is ascribed to us, one of the genus of affection, namely, understanding, and the other of the genus of activity, namely, to extract forms and denude them of matters, which is nothing but making them intelligible in act after they were such in potency.⁴⁰

In Averroes's reading of Aristotle, the active aspect of conceptualization consists of the generation of the objects of thought, or *intelligibles*, by bringing them from potency to act. The generation of intelligibles is synonymous with their abstraction from imaginary forms, retained in man's corporeal imaginary faculty, through the generative power of the Agent Intellect. When analyzing the passive aspect of conceptualization, Averroes repeats Aristotle's formula that the

intellect “receives the form which it apprehends.”⁴¹ In the *LCDA*, Averroes thus emulates the peripatetic practice of identifying the passive and active aspects of conceptualization with the Material and Agent Intellects, respectively.⁴² The novelty in the *LCDA* is in holding that both the Material and Agent Intellects are immaterial substances that subsist independently of particular humans, and that all humans share in the operation of both Intellects.⁴³ Aquinas, who was also relying on Aristotle’s *De anima* while developing his psychological theory, argued against Averroes’s position in several works, suggesting instead that the soul in its entirety is created *ex nihilo* by God and placed in each man individually. Del Medigo sees in Aquinas’s criticism a major challenge to the unicity doctrine and attempts to refute it as part of his overall effort to defend this theory. This chapter illustrates Del Medigo’s straightforward attack at the Thomist position, to which Del Medigo refers as the view of the “theologians.” Del Medigo’s response to the criticism made by the Thomists—Del Medigo’s “Latin commentators”—will be discussed in the fifth chapter.

According to Del Medigo, the Thomist/theological position contradicts a set of fundamental Aristotelian principles.⁴⁴ One obvious example is the Aristotelian principle that excludes the possibility of creation *ex nihilo*. Del Medigo’s contemporary, Nicoletto Vernia, rejected the Thomist position on similar grounds, “since it was incompatible with the physical principles of the eternity of the world and the impossibility of creation *ex nihilo*.”⁴⁵ As for Del Medigo, he cites from the first book of the *Physics* and from other works by Aristotle that seem to indicate that creation *ex nihilo* was rejected by Aristotle himself.⁴⁶ From *On generation and corruption*, Del Medigo cites Aristotle as arguing against the possibility of generation from *absolute* nonbeing; coming-to-be emerges from a *relative* nonbeing, which Aristotle identifies with potential being.⁴⁷

In addition to his reliance on Aristotle’s authority, Del Medigo also turns to the works of Averroes, and in particular to the *Long Commentary on the De caelo* and the *Middle Commentary on the De generatione et corruptione*, in his attempt to deny the possibility of creation *ex nihilo*. In the *Middle Commentary on the De generatione et corruptione*, Averroes argues that

generation takes place out of something which exists in potentiality, not in actuality, i.e., something of which it may rightfully be said on the one hand that it exists and on the other hand that it does not exist, namely, that it does not exist in actuality, but does exist in potentiality.⁴⁸

Here, Averroes states that generation starts at a liminal stage between existence and nonexistence, and from that one may conclude that absolute nonexistence is

not involved in the process. Del Medigo reaffirms this last claim more explicitly in the *Two Investigations*:

The activity of an agent is not dependent on absolute privation, since where absolute privation is, there is no activity. [In addition, this activity cannot be found] in the complete thing [whose generation] is completed, since the completed thing *qua* completed—as well as each of its parts *qua* completed and actualized—does not require an agent. Thus, the activity of the agent is with respect to a middle ground [between being and privation], which is the potential thing at the time of its actualization.⁴⁹

Del Medigo follows Averroes in rejecting the notion of creation *ex nihilo* and adds that such a notion is incompatible with that of efficient causation. The operation of an agent consists in the actualization of a potency, while absolute privation, in its very essence, cannot be actualized. Hence, no agent can be involved in the process of creation *ex nihilo*.⁵⁰ A similar argument entertained by Del Medigo involves the notion of “possibility” (אפשרות). Every occurrence of generation, he claims, presupposes the *possibility* for that generation to occur. This possibility, in turn, is located in a subject, a preexisting substratum, which underlies it.⁵¹ Hence, creation necessitates a subject. This last argument seems to reformulate in logical terms what was asserted earlier through metaphysical reasoning: that each process of generation requires a subject that can undergo change. In both formulations, the notion of creation *ex nihilo* is excluded. In addition, Del Medigo argues that creation *ex nihilo* would entail the transformation of the nature of nonbeing into that of being. Yet this is a kind of transformation that no agent can bring about.⁵²

In sum, creation *ex nihilo* of a substance, that is, the creation of something out of nothing, is a scenario that Del Medigo vehemently rejects, following Averroes’s line of argument in several works. One may speak of an accidental generation *ex nihilo* (במקרה), Del Medigo admits, as a certain quality comes to be in a substance.⁵³ Yet the possibility of essential creation *ex nihilo* whereby things in the world—in this case human souls—are brought into existence from mere nothingness is excluded, and with it Aquinas’s position is rendered impossible.

Another area of discussion that reveals the febleness of the theologians’s position, according to Del Medigo, concerns the nature and extent of God’s knowledge, as discussed by Averroes in his *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* and the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*. Del Medigo’s point here is that God could not have equipped human beings with their individual intellects, as the theologians hold, since that would entail that God has knowledge of these individual humans, that is, that God has knowledge of particular beings. God’s

knowledge of particulars was a contested theme during the Middle Ages, and Del Medigo builds on both Aristotle's and Averroes's arguments. Del Medigo attempts to establish that God possesses knowledge of His own essence in order to establish the limited scope of God's knowledge, and to do so in the context of his debate with the theologians.

Citing from Averroes's *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, Del Medigo begins by arguing that as the number of members in any given species is infinite, they cannot be grasped through a single act of conceptualization.⁵⁴ Consequently, God cannot be said to possess knowledge of individual human beings.⁵⁵ Again, once this principle has been established, Aquinas's view must be rejected, as God cannot have knowledge of a "particular fetus in the womb of this particular woman at a particular time" and thus is unable to equip these beings with souls.⁵⁶

Averroes discusses God's knowledge in the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* and in his *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, book XII, where Aristotle discusses "the object of the deity's intellection."⁵⁷ Aristotle argues that if one ascribes to God knowledge of beings outside Himself, then divine knowledge would be rendered imperfect, as the actualization and perfection of God's intellect would be dependent on beings inferior to Him.⁵⁸ Thus Aristotle holds that "it must be itself that its thought thinks (since it is the most excellent of things)."⁵⁹

In his *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Averroes follows Aristotle's line of argument:

If [God's] being eternally consists in thinking something else, what is that thing which is always one by itself, without there being with it something else, but is always in someone else's being? This is inconsistent with what had been laid down with regard to the principle [i.e., God], i.e. that the first principle is that which always exists without any need for something else.⁶⁰

Averroes suggests that God's existence is not dependent on the existence of any other being, but rather the existence of all beings is dependent on His. And as God's essence is identical with His knowledge, by thinking an object outside His own essence God's existence would be dependent on beings inferior to Him. This consequence, Averroes declares, is "bad and impossible in the highest degree."⁶¹ Averroes denies the subject/object duality in the mind of God by pointing to the absence of sublunary matter in the translunary realm, removing that duality from all separate intellects:

Their objects [of the separate intellects], the intellect and the act of intellect must be one and the same thing . . . just as it is correct to say that knowledge is the

object known and the object known is knowledge in matter, as is the case with art and the artifact, and we say that the form of the artifact which is in matter and that which is in the soul of the artisan are one and the same thing, how much more fitting it is that the same would apply to intellective things with which matter is not mixed and which are only a form and an essence denoting the existence of the thing.⁶²

In the case of human cognition, one finds an identity between knower and known, as the form of the statue in the mind of the statue-maker and the actual form of the statue carry a formal identity. However, this sameness must be taken in a qualified sense, since numerically the two forms are distinct, one instantiated in the mind of the statue-maker, the other in a particular being in the extramental realm. Yet in the separate realm there exists no sublunary matter to differentiate the form in the mind of the intellect from instantiations outside that intellect.⁶³ Hence, in the separate realm the identity of knower and known is unqualified, formal as well as numerical. Nonetheless, the unity of knower and known is more complete in separate intellects than in the separate human intellect and is nowhere more perfect than in the mind of God.⁶⁴ Since no duality can be found in God's mind He can know nothing but His own self, and consequently God is ignorant of the existence of human beings *qua* external to His own essence.

Averroes thus determines the nature and extent of God's knowledge through the elaboration of two arguments. One builds on the lack of sublunary matter in the superlunary realm, which consequently entails the unity of thought and thought object in the separate realm, and *a fortiori* in the mind of God. The second argument, applicable in the case of God alone, builds on the identity of God's knowledge with God's essence. Consequently, God cannot know beings outside Himself, as that would entail God's essential reliance on beings inferior to Him.

In the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo follows Aristotle and Averroes in his assertions concerning God's knowledge, most significantly that "God knows His own essence alone."⁶⁵ This assertion from the *Two Investigations* is also found in Del Medigo's Latin *De primo motore*, where it is argued that "the cognising being (*intelligens*), the intellect, and the intelligible are one and the same in whichever abstracted entity."⁶⁶ Again in the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo cites from the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, where Averroes argues that God does not possess knowledge of beings in the sublunary world, either *qua* universals or *qua* particulars. The passage in Averroes reads as follows:

The most competent philosophers therefore do not call God's knowledge of existents either universal or individual, for knowledge which implies the

concepts of universal and individual is a passive intellect and an effect, *whereas the First intellect is pure act and a cause*, and His knowledge cannot be compared to human knowledge.⁶⁷

Since God knows Himself only, He cannot possess knowledge of humans in the sublunary world, and a fortiori—returning to the context of the discussion in the *Two Investigations*—to equip them with individual souls. The arguments that Averroes developed in the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* and the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* are thus taken by Del Medigo out of their original context and reintroduced in order to refute the view of the theologians concerning the creation of individual human souls by God. As will be illustrated in subsequent chapters, recontextualizing various discussions from across the Averroan corpus is a dominant methodological feature of the *Two Investigations*.

In sum, Del Medigo has proved that God cannot have knowledge of individuals and hence cannot equip them with their individual intellect. Refuting this fundamental principle of the theologians would allow Del Medigo at a later stage to argue for Averroes's position in the *LCDA* concerning the existence of a single, eternal human intellect, shared by all humans. Yet here, already, Del Medigo recognizes a problem. The view that God creates individual souls for individual humans is not only held by the theologians whose opinion Del Medigo is trying to refute but is also a fundamental tenet in Judaism. According to the traditional Jewish teaching, "nothing escapes God, neither in heaven nor on earth."⁶⁸ Del Medigo acknowledges that the limitations he imposes on God's knowledge seem to undermine important religious notions such as the belief in providence and prophecy, those which presuppose God's direct engagement with particular individuals. Furthermore, Del Medigo recognizes that the Averroist interpretation to the notion of God's knowledge entails the following difficulty:

If the intelligibles which God possesses are designated in complete equivocation with these intelligibles [found in the sublunary world], and the order which God cognizes would be named in complete equivocation with the order of the existents [in the sublunary world], how then would that order [in God's mind] and that Intellect [God's mind] be the cause of the order [in the sublunary world]?⁶⁹

In order to retain God's role as the ultimate cause of the universe, there needs to be a correlation between His knowledge and the intelligible order of the sublunary realm. Del Medigo needs to reconcile the traditional roles commonly attributed to God, and primarily that of creation, with the Averroist dictum according

to which God knows nothing but His own essence.⁷⁰ Del Medigo does so by arguing that while, strictly speaking, God knows nothing but His own essence, He nonetheless possesses knowledge of sublunary beings indirectly. Drawing on the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* and the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, Del Medigo proposes that God knows the existents in the sublunary world through His knowledge of Himself. God's knowledge is characterized by being causative, identified with a spiritual power (כח רוחני) through which God created the world. Del Medigo borrows the idea from Averroes's *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*:

The truth is that because [God] knows only Himself, He knows the existents through the existence which is the cause of their existences. For instance, one does not say, with regard to him who knows the heat of fire only, that he has no knowledge of the nature of heat *qua* heat. Likewise, the first (praise to Him!) is He who knows absolutely the nature of being *qua* being, which is his essence. Therefore, the word "knowledge" is said of His knowledge and our knowledge by homonymy. *For his knowledge is the cause of being and being is the cause of our knowledge.*⁷¹

While all existents share in being to a certain degree, God is being *qua* being, and it is through His knowledge of Himself that the existence of other beings comes about. As Barry Kogan has noticed, this notion of causative knowledge in Averroes is closer to Plotinus's conception of *nous* than to Aristotle's.⁷² It is this Neoplatonic component, incorporated into Del Medigo's philosophical system, that allows the latter to reconcile God's contemplation of Himself with his involvement in the sublunary world.

Yet this modified position appears problematic as far as Del Medigo's general move against the Thomists is concerned, as it could accommodate Aquinas's position quite neatly. Aquinas's theory of providence appears to presuppose the same sort of Neoplatonic indirect involvement with the sublunary world to which Del Medigo alludes. Aquinas, it will be remembered, speaks approvingly of "the opinion of some Platonists who said that divine providence is immutable but that under it is contained some things which are mutable and contingent events,"⁷³ and he also argues in his *De substantiis separatis* that

the knowing of any knower is according to the mode of its substance; all the more so, the divine cognition, which is his substance, is according to the mode of his being. His being is one, simple, fixed and eternal; it follows that, by one simple intuition, God has an eternal and fixed knowledge of all things.⁷⁴

As these passages clearly show, despite Del Medigo's presentation of Aquinas's views (though without referring explicitly to Aquinas), the latter did not claim that God possesses direct knowledge of individual humans, but rather that God's knowledge of the sublunary world is mediated through His knowledge of Himself. This Neoplatonic component, shared by both Del Medigo and Aquinas, obviously renders Del Medigo's criticism less effective, as it enables both Aquinas and Del Medigo to reconcile the attributes of the Aristotelian God with traditional religious roles: creation, providence, and prophecy in Del Medigo; creation of individual souls in Aquinas. As we shall see in Chapter 3, Del Medigo is aware of this weak point in his criticism, and he also offers a solution.

Currently, ineffective as Del Medigo's criticism of Aquinas may appear to be, it again reveals what was outlined more generally in the introduction: that the original contribution of the *Two Investigations* lies not in the elaboration of novel philosophical doctrines but in the manner in which Del Medigo selects, modifies, and recontextualizes familiar Averroist discussions in order to meet his polemical needs.

Let us now return to Del Medigo's discussion. In addition to the two critical moves discussed previously—the rejection of creation *ex nihilo* and the limitations imposed on God's knowledge—Del Medigo continues to illustrate how the view that the human soul is a created individuated substance violates a host of Aristotelian principles. While some of his discussions are long and elaborated, others are rather succinct, as the following example shows. Del Medigo claims that the assumption that a created soul is nonetheless eternal *a parte post* violates the principle that every generable being is also corruptible, a principle deemed “quasi self-evident” by Del Medigo.⁷⁵ Rather than demonstrating the validity of the underlying principle “every generated thing is also corruptible,” Del Medigo simply refers the reader to Aristotle's *De caelo*. In contrast, Del Medigo develops a particularly elaborate discussion on the ontological status of the human soul, which he perceives as a major point of contention between himself—as a true Aristotelian—and the anonymous theologians. We will conclude the present section by examining this discussion, and will begin by clarifying Del Medigo's usage of the terms *material form* (צורה המרית) and *substantial form* (צורה עצמית), which are crucial for the present discussion and which Del Medigo discusses both in the *Two Investigations* and in his commentary on the *De substantia orbis*.⁷⁶

According to Del Medigo, a material form is the constituent in the hylomorphic composite that qualifies the composite's being, either essentially (the form Dog which makes this particular animal a dog) or accidentally (the form White which makes this particular wall white). Unlike Platonic forms, material forms

are generable and corruptible and depend in their existence upon the existence of sublunary matter, which is the principle of generation and corruption in the sublunary world. Since they exist in hylomorphic beings, material forms are multiplied according to the number of these beings. This basic characterization is found in the *Epitome of the De anima*, a work that was partially translated by Del Medigo from Hebrew into Latin:

Two factors characterise all these material forms . . . insofar as they are purely material: one factor is that their existence is consequent upon an essential change . . . the second (factor that characterises all material forms) is that they are essentially numerable in proportion to the enumeration of the substratum, and are correspondingly multiple.⁷⁷

The existence of a material form, therefore, cannot be conceived apart from the concrete hylomorphic composite in which it inheres.

As explained earlier, within the Aristotelian framework in which Del Medigo was operating, every material form is either accidental or substantial. An accidental form qualifies the substance in which it inheres but does not supply it with its essence. A substantial form, on the other hand, gives the hylomorphic substance its essence, determining the type of thing it is. Since it gives the substance its essence by placing it within a particular species (מין), Del Medigo also refers to the substantial form as a specific form (צורה מינית).⁷⁸ Every composite substance in the sublunary world is therefore constituted by a substantial form and sublunary prime matter. The substantial form of Fido, for example, makes Fido a dog rather than a cat, thus placing Fido within the species of dogs, while the reception of the substantial form in matter makes Fido *this* particular dog, differentiating Fido from Rex. Prime matter is the ultimate subject of existence in the sublunary world, and the succession of substantial forms in prime matter is what one refers to as the process of generation and corruption.⁷⁹ As Averroes remarks succinctly in the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, “It is clear that every generation is consequent upon a change in matter.”⁸⁰

Del Medigo further maintains that unlike material forms, a separate form (צורה נפרדת) is not a constitutive part of a concrete hylomorphic composite but rather is a subsistent being. A separate form does not inhere in sublunary matter and is therefore eternal.⁸¹ Del Medigo states that the distinction between a material and a separate form is found in Averroes’s *De substantia orbis*; he is probably referring to the following passage:

Since it became clear to Aristotle concerning the celestial bodies that their forms settle upon their subjects in such a manner that they are not divisible by

the division of their subjects, and the reason for that is that they do not settle upon the subjects insofar as they are divisible, it followed that these forms do not subsist in the subject, but they are separated from the subject in respect to existence.⁸²

Averroes here contrasts separate forms with forms that are divisible by virtue of the divisible nature of their subjects (יתחלקו בהתחלק נושאייהם) and subsist in the subject (להם עמידה בנושא), that is, material forms. Del Medigo repeats this account in his letter to Domenico Grimani:

The principle, which is self-evident for well-disposed minds, is that form which does not inhere in matter by way of the [three] dimensions, i.e., which is not extended (as whiteness, for example, is in the wall), is indivisible, unaffected by corruption, nongenerated and incorruptible, and separate from matter, as the commentator has explained soundly in the treatise *De substantia orbis*, as I noted there. Whoever denies this [principle] denies the foundation of the entire Divine science.⁸³

Del Medigo therefore draws a clear distinction between separate and material forms, and it is in light of this metaphysical distinction that he rejects the theologians's position. The notion being rejected is that of a form that does not depend on matter but nonetheless functions as a substantial form, since "whoever assumes that the intellective soul is our substantial form, must also accept that this form is material."⁸⁴

Although this line of criticism is missing from Averroes's *LCDA*, where the unicity thesis is presented, one does find it in Averroes's *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, placing it in Ghazali's mouth against Avicenna:

And Ghazali adduced against Avicenna the argument that when it is assumed that the souls are numerically differentiated through the differentiation of the bodies, then they are attached to the bodies and must necessarily perish with their decay.⁸⁵

Both Ghazali and Del Medigo in the *Two Investigations* point to the fact that if the souls were individuated, they would be essentially related to the human body or, as Del Medigo states more explicitly, to sublunary matter. The underlying principle at work is that each substantial form belonging to a particular individual is essentially related to matter, generates with the generation of the hylomorphic being, and terminates with its extinction. This principle, although "explicit in the philosophy of Aristotle and Averroes," was overlooked by the theologians, so Del Medigo argues.⁸⁶ This is but a particular example of the theologians's tendency, to

which Del Medigo alludes, to distort fundamental metaphysical principles in the context of their theory of human intellect. By adhering to their confused notion of a substantial form, which nonetheless exists separately from the human body, one would simply be “deceiving himself.”⁸⁷ Del Medigo’s critical attitude toward the theologians’s—that is, the Thomist—position finds its most vivid expression in the following passage from the *Two Investigations*:

There is no point in trying to refute this view [i.e., of the Thomists] or to discuss it at any great length, as it is an unnatural view, [which] contradicts the principles of almost all sciences. And, though the *Torah* might encourage one to believe and accept this [view], scientific investigation (עיון) does not. And, since many of the quasi-philosophers (מתפלספים) attempted to verify this view, it would seem appropriate to confront them through a brief discussion of the principles (שרשים) rather than of the conclusions (ענפים) of this view. I would, therefore, refrain from discussing this view in length.⁸⁸

Besides its manifested criticism, the passage also carries a clear dismissive tone, at least from a philosophical perspective, as Del Medigo agreed that one may find the Thomist position agreeable from a scriptural perspective. Yet rather than being a point in the theologians’s favor, the affinity between their view and the view of the *Torah* only serves to reinforce Del Medigo’s main claim: the Thomists employed theological reasoning in the guise of philosophical argumentation, a methodological blunder that Del Medigo, like Averroes before him, finds entirely unacceptable.

In conclusion, although Aquinas is not mentioned explicitly in the *Two Investigations*, textual evidence leads one to believe that the criticism against the “Latin commentators” and the “theologians” is aimed against those who followed Aquinas’s teaching, most likely those whom Del Medigo came to know during his stay in Padua. The Thomist position was that human souls, along with their intellectual power of conceptualization, are individuated and multiplied according to the number of human beings. These souls have a divine source as they are created by God *ex nihilo* and infused by God into individual bodies at their moment of birth. According to Del Medigo, this position contradicts a host of basic Aristotelian principles, and though one may promote it for theological considerations, it is in no way the fruit of philosophical reasoning. Del Medigo’s criticism of the Thomist position thus illustrates his more general approach, whereby philosophy and theology ought to be differentiated in their methods of inquiry. Nonetheless, Del Medigo himself modifies his view concerning God’s knowledge to make it more congruent with traditional Jewish doctrine. This fact

should not be overlooked when considering the extent to which Del Medigo was a follower of a “double truth theory.” Lastly, despite Del Medigo’s dismissive remarks and alleged reluctance to “discuss their view at great length,” his preoccupation with the Thomists is manifested throughout the *Two Investigations*, also as in passages that do not concern the Thomist view directly. I will return to examine Aquinas’s impact on the *Two Investigations* in later stages of the discussion.

Alexander of Aphrodisias

Having rejected the Thomist position, Del Medigo continues to examine yet another view that promotes the plurality of human intellects—that of Alexander of Aphrodisias. From the testimonies of Zabarella and Ficino, we know of the existence of an Alexandrian school during the Italian Renaissance, and Ficino has gone as far as declaring that “The entire world of the Peripatetics is divided into two sects, the Alexandrians and the Averroists.”⁸⁹ Yet in the *Two Investigations* Del Medigo makes no reference to a specific school of Alexandrians, unlike his collective reference to the “Latin commentators.” Del Medigo instead refers to the view of Alexander himself, as was portrayed by Averroes in the *LCDA*. Another notable difference is that in contrast to the dismissive approach Del Medigo displayed toward the Thomists, viewing them primarily as theologians who disguise themselves as philosophers, Alexander is portrayed as a venerable philosophical authority whose position deserves serious consideration. These two features in Del Medigo’s discussion—referring to Alexander himself rather than to an Alexandrian school, and referring to Alexander with awe—can be both reduced to the same cause: Del Medigo’s reliance on the text of the *LCDA* as he discusses Alexander’s position. We will return to this point later in the discussion.

Similarly to the theologians, Alexander argues for a plurality of human intellects, whereby each human possesses his own individuated intellect. Yet unlike the Thomists, who regard the human intellect as a disposition within a spiritual substance, Alexander promotes a materialistic reading of Aristotle, according to which the Material Intellect inheres in the human body as a corporeal disposition, generable and corruptible with the generation and corruption of the particular human.⁹⁰ Here is Del Medigo’s portrayal of Alexander’s position, as it came down to him in the *LCDA*:

Alexander thought that the Material Intellect is a generable and corruptible power, and he thought that this power and the other powers of the soul were

essentially generated in the body through mixture and compounding⁹¹ and that they are dispositions of some kind. And, that the form or the soul in which these dispositions are found is man's substantial form through which man is generable and corruptible, and it is material like the other material forms, only that it differs from the other [material] forms in degree and perfection.⁹²

In clear contrast to the overtly negative tone that characterizes Del Medigo's portrayal of the Thomist position, here he applauds Alexander for holding a "natural view" concerning the nature of the Material Intellect and for employing philosophical notions coherently.⁹³ Del Medigo also cites Averroes's general approval of Alexander as a worthy commentator.⁹⁴ Nonetheless, Del Medigo follows Averroes in rejecting Alexander's analysis of the nature of the Material Intellect, presenting nine⁹⁵ arguments that he draws from the *LCDA* or—following his usual practice—that he himself elaborates by relying on principles and arguments drawn from other works by Averroes.

Before we turn to the arguments themselves, it is worthwhile to repeat what was hinted already. While Del Medigo is discussing Alexander's view at length, one should not associate him with the growing tendency in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italy: the return to the original Greek sources when evaluating the views of Aristotle's Greek commentators.⁹⁶ Del Medigo cites Alexander neither from the Greek nor from a Latin translation of the Greek source but from the Latin rendition of Averroes's *LCDA*, which in its Arabic source incorporated lengthy citations from the Arabic translation of Alexander's works. In doing so, Del Medigo manifests what was his tendency to employ the texts of Averroes as a source for the Greek commentators, against a certain *zeitgeist* that was in part drifting away from medieval texts as a source for Greek thought.

Let us now return to the arguments that Del Medigo employs against Alexander's position, focusing on those Del Medigo drew directly from the *LCDA*. One such argument concerns the nature of the intelligibles that the Material Intellect receives. Both Averroes and Del Medigo refer to the intelligibles as indivisible and universal, abstracted from concrete images.⁹⁷ The universal nature of the intelligible is a prerequisite for its function, that is, informing the mind with the general essence of a certain species. It is by means of the intelligible that we "make a judgment concerning an infinite multitude and concerning the past, present and future beings with regard to what they share in common, namely the essence of that species."⁹⁸ However, if one accepts Alexander's claim that the Material Intellect is an embodied faculty, then he will encounter a problem explaining how that intellect could receive universal

notions, a scenario akin to the reception of a universal essence by a particular subject.⁹⁹ Underlying the argument is a rejection of the aforementioned scenario and an assumed correlation between the nature of the received form and the receiving subject. If the Material Intellect were indeed a “determined particular,” as Alexander suggests, then the received form would have been particular as well. Similarly, if the received form is a universal essence, as maintained by Averroes and Del Medigo, then the Material Intellect could not be an embodied faculty. “From the nature of the received [object],” Del Medigo repeats the Averroist maxim, “we come to know the nature of the receiving [subject].”¹⁰⁰

Another argument that Del Medigo borrows from the *LCDA* in order to refute Alexander’s materialist position follows from the fact that the intellect can reflect upon its own operation:

The Material Intellect perceives its own operation, namely conceptualization, and it perceives its own essence, to a certain extent. And, [since] no bodily power can perceive its own operation, it follows that the Material Intellect is not a bodily power.¹⁰¹

From the fact that bodily dispositions cannot reflect upon their own operation, and that the intellect does reflect upon its own operation, Del Medigo concludes that the Material Intellect is not a bodily disposition. The argument is found frequently in the works of scholastic authors, its source probably being Neoplatonic.¹⁰² Del Medigo, however, cites the argument from the *LCDA*, where Averroes claims to have found it, ironically enough, in the works of Alexander of Aphrodisias.¹⁰³ According to Averroes, the intellect knows itself indirectly: since the Material Intellect has no determinate essence, it comprehends its own essence through the intelligibles it contemplates. The actualization of the Material Intellect by an intelligible is accompanied by self-awareness of that act of contemplation, which is designated as the Material Intellect’s self-awareness. Such awareness, however, does not accompany instances of embodied cognition, and the intellect therefore cannot be a corporeal faculty.

Del Medigo reproduces this argument in the *Two Investigations* and joins Averroes in suggesting that embodied faculties are unable to perceive their own operation. Perception, Del Medigo explains, is the result of an interaction between a perceiver (משיג) and a perceived object (מושא).¹⁰⁴ In the case of embodied cognition, for example, sight, the eye is the perceiving subject and the sensory impression the perceived object. If the eye were to reflect upon its own operation, the receiving subject would be identical with the received object—a conceptual blunder that neither Averroes nor Del Medigo are willing to accept.

Following Averroes's reasoning, Del Medigo suggests that this is not the case with the Material Intellect, which can reflect upon its own operation because it has no determined essence. By perceiving the external objects that inform the intellect, the Material Intellect is simultaneously (though again, indirectly) engaged in self-reflection.

Before concluding Del Medigo's criticism of Alexander's position, let us examine his criticism to yet another materialistic position, that of Avempace.

Avempace

Another view Del Medigo discusses is that of Abû Bakr Ibn Bâjja or Avempace (referred to by Del Medigo as אבובכר, *Abubachar*). As in the case of Alexander, Del Medigo came to know Avempace's view through Averroes's *LCDA*.¹⁰⁵ Avempace's position, a modification of Alexander's materialistic view, had a strong impact on the young Averroes, who endorsed it in his *Epitome of the De anima*.¹⁰⁶ Yet in the *LCDA*, Averroes came to reject Avempace's account, and Del Medigo's own analysis of Avempace's view follows this less favorable depiction. Like Alexander, Avempace held that the Material Intellect is a disposition that enables man to receive universal intelligibles. Yet while Alexander argued that the Material Intellect is a disposition that exists in the human soul, Avempace locates the Material Intellect as a disposition in the imaginary forms which each human possesses. Avempace seeks to guarantee that while the imaginary faculty receives a particular image, the intelligible is received as a second form through the mediation of the imaginary form. The imaginary form, while in itself a received form, is nonetheless the substratum in which the Material Intellect inheres as a disposition, serving as the subject of the received intelligible.

According to Del Medigo, by positing the Material Intellect as a disposition in the imaginary forms, Avempace was seeking to retain Alexander's basic naturalistic account while avoiding the difficulties it entails. Avempace attempted to achieve this by refraining from identifying the Material Intellect as a disposition that inheres directly in the human soul.¹⁰⁷ Del Medigo, however, rejects this attempt at reconciliation and points out, following Averroes, that the imaginary forms are the *object* rather than the subject within the process of conceptualization. Conceptualization is consequent upon the transformation of imaginary forms by the Agent Intellect and, subsequently, the reception of these intelligibles in the Material Intellect. Hence, if we postulate the imaginary forms as the *subject* of conceptualization, a subject would be receiving itself.¹⁰⁸

Ironically, this very same criticism was voiced by Aquinas in his *De unitate intellectus* against Averroes's position in the *LCDA*.

In addition to the criticism he directly borrows from Averroes, Del Medigo observes that Avempace's position ultimately collapses into Alexander's, which sees the body as the ultimate subject of the intelligibles.¹⁰⁹ If one assumes that the Material Intellect is a disposition in the imaginary forms, and that the imaginary forms inhere in the embodied imaginary faculty, then the human embodied soul is ultimately the subject of the intelligibles in Avempace's system as well. Del Medigo thus presents Avempace's position as essentially materialistic and concludes by informing the reader that most arguments introduced against Alexander could be used against Avempace's position as well.¹¹⁰

In conclusion, Del Medigo examines two models that attempt to explain the individuation of the intellect and finds both unconvincing. One is the materialistic account of Alexander and Avempace, embraced also by Averroes in the *Epitome of the De anima*, which is based on natural individuation through inherence in matter, and Del Medigo follows Averroes's own arguments from the *LCDA* in rejecting this reading of Aristotle. The second model of individuation is the one offered by Aquinas and his followers, which explains the individuation of human intellects with recourse to divine intervention, explaining how the intellects are created *ex nihilo* by God and infused in human bodies individually. While Averroes does not discuss such a position in the *LCDA*, Del Medigo nonetheless rejects it *a priori* as incoherent and repugnant to fundamental Aristotelian principles.¹¹¹

Averroes and the Unicity of the Material Intellect

In the third part of his discussion of the unicity thesis, Del Medigo turns to examine the position he would eventually endorse: the existence of a single, separate Material Intellect, in which activity all humans share. As the main exponents of this view, Del Medigo mentions Themistius and Averroes. Themistius's account, however, is discussed in the *Two Investigations* mainly in relation to the agency of the Agent Intellect,¹¹² and Averroes is, in fact, the single philosophical authority to which Del Medigo turns as he elaborates his own version of the doctrine of a separate, single Material Intellect. Let us now turn to examine the way Del Medigo establishes the unicity of the Material Intellect in the *Two Investigations* and, in particular, to the way in which he relies on the *LCDA* while doing so.

As illustrated previously, Del Medigo starts his discussion by examining and subsequently refuting the arguments of those who promoted a plurality of human intellects: the Thomists, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Avempace. Del Medigo thus initially arrives at the unicity thesis by a method of elimination. Moreover, Del Medigo holds that Averroes himself arrived at the unicity thesis after having rejected the arguments put forward by those who promoted a plurality of intellects.¹¹³ Yet this description corresponds to Averroes's account in the *LCDA* only partially. Averroes indeed rejects the materialistic accounts of Alexander and Avempace, but nowhere in the *LCDA* does he mention a view resembling that of the "theologians," according to which the Material Intellect is both individuated and immaterial. Del Medigo, it seems, attributed to Averroes the refutation of a view that the latter did not even consider, most probably in an attempt to co-opt Averroes's authoritative status within Del Medigo's polemic with the Thomists. We will return to this point later on.

Returning to Del Medigo's discussion, in addition to the elimination process that he proposes, Del Medigo introduces four arguments in support of the unicity thesis.¹¹⁴ The first argument maintains that *qua* separate substance there could only be a single Material Intellect, as individuation occurs either through the presence of sublunary matter or through essential differentiation.¹¹⁵ X and Y are said to be different either as two substances that carry the same essence (e.g., as two dogs), or as two substances that do not carry the same essence (e.g., as a dog and a man). The first type is individuation through matter, the second through essential differentiation.¹¹⁶ Since the Material Intellect resides in the separate realm, where sublunary matter is absent, we cannot differentiate between two material intellects that carry the same essence. One therefore can only postulate the existence of a single Material Intellect, unique in its species.

The second argument for the unicity of the Material Intellect relies on two premises, shared by both Del Medigo and his anti-Averroist adversaries. The first is that the human intellect is the eternal component in each human being. The second is that human beings come to be and pass away in eternal succession. If one adds to these two premises the multiplicity of human intellects, this would entail an infinite number of intellects.¹¹⁷ Since actual infinity is excluded within an Aristotelian framework, the additional premise, that is, the multiplication of human intellects, must be rejected.¹¹⁸

According to the third argument, if the intellects are multiplied according to the number of humans, yet survive their human bodies, these intellects will

be eternally deprived of imaginary forms, which are essential for their orderly functioning:

If there were, in reality, many human souls separate from matter, it necessarily follows that these souls would be denied of their activity, and a thing would be eternally deprived of what it is naturally constituted to receive; yet that is false, and, hence, the previous [assumption] is false as well. The necessity of what has been described is almost self-evident once we assume what seems to be clear enough regarding the nature of this intellect [i.e., the Material Intellect], namely that the Material Intellect does not conceptualize anything in the sublunary world (הנה) if not by means of imaginary forms, and that the existence of the intelligibles in the Material Intellect is dependent upon their existence [i.e., of the imaginary forms], and their absence upon their absence. Thus, the passing away (העדר) of a human [i.e., the human body] would entail the extinction (העדר) of his intelligibles, and his soul would, therefore, subsist eternally without an intelligible, and its existence would be in vain, since the proper activity of this soul is nothing but the reception of intelligibles.¹¹⁹

The role that imaginary forms play within the process of conceptualization will be discussed in Chapter 4. Presently, suffice it to note that here one finds a direct criticism of the Thomist view that holds the existence of a created soul, eternal *a parte post*.¹²⁰ A similar argument, based on the role of the imaginary forms within the process of conceptualization, appears in another section of the *Two Investigations*.¹²¹ There, Del Medigo challenges the Thomist view that the intellect only requires imaginary forms for the *acquisition* of the intelligibles, while once the body perishes the intellect can be engaged in conceptualization without recourse to these images, employing divine illumination instead. Del Medigo remarks, dryly if not mockingly, that as humans find it difficult to employ their intellectual soul when they are unwell, dying then would *a fortiori* impede their cognitive skills.¹²²

It is noteworthy that all three arguments presuppose the separation from matter of the Material Intellect. The individuation of the Material Intellect would only entail actual infinity, as suggested by the second argument, if one assumes that it is a separate, eternal substance. Likewise, a multitude of intellects would be *eternally* denied access to imaginary forms, as suggested in the third argument, only if one assumes that it is a separate substance that survives the loss of human bodies. Del Medigo acknowledges this fact himself, maintaining that the three arguments could only be applied against those who maintain that the intellect is both individuated and separate from matter, that is, the

view of the “theologians,” which we already identified with the view of Thomas Aquinas.¹²³ That Del Medigo has the Thomists in mind is reflected in the fact that all three arguments appear in Aquinas’s *De unitate intellectus* as hypothetical counterarguments that Aquinas presents against his own position and then goes on to refute.¹²⁴ Rather than treating them as hypothetical, Del Medigo finds the arguments persuasive and turns them against Aquinas. Once again, Del Medigo removes arguments from their original context and employs them *ad hoc* in the context of his polemical argumentation. Currently, Del Medigo’s move appears particularly shrewd as he uses arguments against Aquinas that he found in Aquinas’s own works.

Yet Del Medigo changes his strategy when presenting his fourth argument for the unicity of the Material Intellect, presupposing the view of Alexander rather than that of Aquinas. The argument states that a plurality of Material Intellects is irreconcilable with the universal nature of the intelligibles.¹²⁵ A fuller formulation of the argument appeared earlier in the *Two Investigations*, where it is held that a plurality of the Material Intellects *qua* corporeal dispositions would render impossible the universal nature of the intelligibles, since a corporeal disposition cannot receive a universal.

In conclusion, Del Medigo employs two main strategies in his attempt to establish Averroes’s reading of Aristotle’s *De anima*, and in particular the unicity thesis. He first offers counterarguments against the individuation of the Material Intellect, either as a corporeal disposition or as a disposition that inheres in an individuated separate substance. Having done so, Del Medigo seeks to establish the unicity thesis positively, while still implicitly criticizing the view of the Thomists, as three out of the four arguments he presents are taken from Aquinas’s *De unitate intellectus*. These arguments, which Aquinas presents as counterarguments against his own position, are employed by Del Medigo outside their dialectical context, using them straightforwardly as arguments against Aquinas’s own position. Del Medigo’s preoccupation with Aquinas’s view, manifested here and elsewhere in the *Two Investigations*, could possibly relate to the rising popularity of Thomism in Padua during the fifteenth century. As Aquinas’s criticism of Averroes’s unicity thesis was well documented and well known, Del Medigo might have been concerned that his philosophical credibility, alongside that of Averroes, could be undermined under the influence of Aquinas’s followers in Padua, and hence he made a special effort to refute their view. One comment in the *Two Investigations* is particularly revealing in this context. Del Medigo laments the actions of those who “attempt to undermine

what I say, so that their students will not think less of them.”¹²⁶ Considering all of this, one could infer with a high degree of certainty that Del Medigo is referring here to the Paduan Thomists. This could also explain why Del Medigo is more concerned in the *Two Investigations* with Aquinas’s view and its refutation than he is in criticizing the view of Alexander, despite the fact that Alexander’s view carries more philosophical weight in the eyes of Del Medigo.

Resolving Difficulties

Having established the unicity of the Material Intellect, Del Medigo discusses a number of difficulties that arise from that theory. One such difficulty, which Del Medigo designates as “strong,” challenges not the Material Intellect’s unicity but its very existence as a being, which consists of pure reception. The difficulty was initially presented by Averroes in the *LCDA*, where it was attributed to Theophrastus.¹²⁷ In Del Medigo’s formulation, the problem reads:

The Material Intellect is necessarily a certain kind of an existing thing (נמצא משה). If that were not the case, we would find [in the Material Intellect] neither reception nor disposition, since disposition and reception necessarily require a subject, as was made clear previously [in the treatise] and in the first book of the *Physics*. Because it is an existing thing of some sort and does not possess the nature of form, its nature is necessarily that of matter, since a third type of being cannot be postulated [i.e., neither matter nor form]. Yet, this is impossible, since prime matter does not perceive and does not conceptualize. Moreover, how can we say about something which possesses this nature [i.e., prime matter] that it is separate from matter?¹²⁸

One must postulate the existence of the Material Intellect as a being of some sort, for otherwise it could not be disposed to receive intelligibles. Disposition and reception, Del Medigo explains, necessarily entail the existence of a subject,¹²⁹ a principle that Del Medigo claims he had found in the *Physics* and *De caelo*.¹³⁰ At the same time, in the *De anima*, Aristotle explains that in order that it could receive the full range of intelligibles, the Material Intellect must be devoid of any determining form.¹³¹ Within Averroes’s metaphysical scheme, the being devoid of all form is prime matter, disposed to receive material forms with which it conjoins to create particular beings. Prime matter, however, cannot be identified with the Material Intellect; while the former only receives individuated forms, the Material Intellect is postulated to receive intelligibles of a universal nature.

Given that the Material Intellect cannot be identified with prime matter, it is unclear what type of being it could be: “how the material intellect is a being and [yet] is not one of the material forms nor even prime matter?” Averroes asks in the *LCDA*, echoed by Del Medigo.¹³² The problem posed by Theophrastus thus undermines the notion of a being that exists in a state of pure potency.

In answering the difficulty raised by Theophrastus, both Averroes and Del Medigo postulate the existence of what they refer to as a fourth kind of being (*quartum genus esse*, מציאות רביעי), a category to which the Material Intellect belongs.¹³³ While Averroes does not make explicit what the four types of being are, Del Medigo supplements Averroes’s discussion by listing them. The first two types of being according to Del Medigo correspond to prime matter and material form, the two main metaphysical constituents in the sublunary realm. The third type of being is the intellect that exists in pure act, namely God.¹³⁴ The fourth kind of being, to which the Material Intellect belongs, shares some of the features of the other types. Like God it is an intellect separate from matter, yet similarly to prime matter it contains within it a certain degree of potentiality. As will be illustrated in the third chapter, all separate intellects, with the exception of God, fall under this type of being:

If it were not for this genus of beings [referring to the “fourth kind of being”] which we have come to know in the science of the soul, we could not understand multiplicity in separate things, to the extent that, unless we know here the nature of the intellect, we could not know that the separate moving powers ought to be intellects.¹³⁵

Following Averroes, Del Medigo differentiates between the potentiality found in the Material Intellect and in prime matter. Del Medigo cites passage III.14 of the *LCDA*, where Averroes asserts that “prime matter . . . is the cause of the changeable reception which involves the reception belonging to a singular thing,” whereas the potentiality found in the Material Intellect is not bound up with change.¹³⁶ Following Averroes, Del Medigo asserts that the terms “potency” (*potentia*, כוח), “reception” (*receptio*, קבלה), and “perfection” (*perfectio*, שלמות) are attributed to the Material Intellect and to sublunary hylomorphic beings only equivocally.¹³⁷ The potentiality of the Material Intellect for the reception of intelligibles is different from the potentiality of prime matter to receive material forms, the main difference being that the potentiality found in the Material Intellect is not bound up with change, whereas in prime matter it is. For instance, whereas in the sublunary world an acorn changes its nature upon receiving the form of a tree, no such change occurs in the Material Intellect upon receiving

the intelligible “Tree.” Whereas an acorn has the potency to become a tree, and a baby to become a grown human being, their being nonetheless lies in their *actual* being as an acorn and a baby. However, in the case of the Material Intellect, its being is nothing but a continuous state of coming-to-be. One difficulty that one may raise is that in our everyday experience we do not encounter beings of such sort, subsisting in absolute potency. Yet as often is the case with metaphysical discussions, Averroes and Del Medigo postulate the existence of a being—the Material Intellect—whose existence we can only apprehend by means of conceptual analysis or analogy rather than by direct encounter.

Whereas Theophrastus challenged the notion a being in a state of absolute potency, the next difficulty Del Medigo tackles concerns the unicity of Averroes’s Material Intellect. Averroes himself refers to this difficulty as “the most formidable one,”¹³⁸ and in the *LCDA* it is formulated as follows:

The second [question] is the most formidable of them, namely, that the final actuality of a human being is numbered the way individual human beings are, and the first actuality is one in number for all [human beings].¹³⁹

Let us first examine Averroes’s formulation of the problem and the solution he offers. By “first actuality” Averroes refers to the human intellect, which actualizes the human body as its form.¹⁴⁰ By “final actuality” Averroes refers to thoughts or “intelligibles,” which in turn inform and actualize the human intellect. Averroes needs to reconcile the observable fact that each human possesses his own set of thoughts with the postulation of the Material Intellect as a single being. In other words, if the vehicle through which thoughts are generated is a single substance, how can we possess our own set of thoughts? Averroes must explain how it is that different men know different things although they share a single intellect, and he does so by pointing to the empirical aspect of Aristotle’s noetics.¹⁴¹ Averroes introduces a model that would reoccur often in discussions throughout the *LCDA* and which Del Medigo will also employ in his *Two Investigations*—the “two-subject theory,” to which we shall now turn.

Within the Aristotelian framework, the intelligibles originate in imaginary forms that reside in the human imaginary faculty. These forms are subject to the operation of the Agent Intellect, which abstracts from them universal intelligibles, such as “Dog” and “Horse,” and places those in the Material Intellect. The total sum of intelligibles each human possesses is designated by Averroes as the Theoretical Intellect (השכל העיוני, *intellectus speculativus*). Averroes holds that the Theoretical Intellect has two subjects: one is the Material Intellect

that receives the intelligible; the other is the imaginary form, from which the intelligible was initially abstracted. The Theoretical Intellect thus possesses a dual ontological status. When considered by virtue of its inherence in the single Material Intellect, it is regarded as a single being, as there is but a single human intellect, shared by all humans. Yet with respect to its origin in the imaginary forms, the Theoretical Intellect is said to belong to a particular human being.¹⁴² The two-subject theory thus allows Averroes to maintain that the Material Intellect is immaterial and unique in its species and, simultaneously, to account for the individuation of human thoughts.

In the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo follows Averroes both in his presentation of the problem and in the solution that he offers. Del Medigo promotes the unicity of the Material Intellect while allowing for the individuation of knowledge, relying on the two-subject theory as his explanatory model. Del Medigo explicitly states that the intelligibles are individuated by virtue of the imaginary forms and that they “are not differentiated by virtue of their subject, namely the Material Intellect, since it is a single substance.”¹⁴³ With regard to the problem of individuated knowledge, Del Medigo again appears to be a faithful disciple of Averroes.

Nonetheless, in several passages of the *Two Investigations* Del Medigo seems to suggest that it is the Material Intellect itself that is individuated. He remarks that “[Averroes] argued that the Material Intellect, through which we conceptualize in a universal manner, is itself a single entity in all men, although in a certain sense it is multiplied with regard to individual humans.”¹⁴⁴ Elsewhere, Del Medigo asserts that the Material Intellect “is not one in every respect.”¹⁴⁵ Yet this concession ought not to be taken too literally. Del Medigo’s point here is that although the Material Intellect is a single being ontologically, its operation is multiplied with regard to individual humans, which is the point Averroes is making as well. Del Medigo attributes individuation to the Material Intellect itself in these passages in order to emphasize that from a certain perspective, the intellect is one and many—one in its being yet many in its operation. Del Medigo does so in order to face the Thomist accusation that the unicity of the intellect makes it impossible to account for the diversity of human thoughts. It is notable that whereas the context of the discussion is polemical, Del Medigo argues that he is merely applying Averroes’s methodology from the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, according to which false propositions also contain in them the truth to a certain extent. This follows Del Medigo’s usual tendency to discuss various problems through the methodology and textual framework he borrows from Averroes, as will be illustrated in the following chapters.¹⁴⁶

Aristotle and the Unicity of the Material Intellect

Having established the unicity of the Material Intellect, Del Medigo moves to illustrate how the view of Averroes is “undoubtedly the view of the philosopher [Aristotle] and in agreement with his principles.”¹⁴⁷ Del Medigo does so by citing passages from Aristotle’s own *De anima* in an attempt to illustrate how these contain—in an embryonic form—Averroes’s mature position concerning the nature of the Material Intellect in his long and final commentary on Aristotle’s work.

Del Medigo cites Aristotle’s assertion in *De anima* 407a34–b5, incorporated in the lemma of LCDA I.49, according to which it is “very difficult” (*valde difficile*,¹⁴⁸ קשה מאוד), to believe that the Material Intellect is united with the body through an inseparable conjunction.¹⁴⁹ Here, Del Medigo maintains, Aristotle hints at the conjunction of the Material Intellect with the human body through imaginary forms, while promoting the independent subsistence of the Material Intellect. Del Medigo’s formulation of the passage from *De anima* runs as follows:

It is very difficult [to believe] that the intellect is mixed with the body through an inseparable mixture, i.e., the sort of mixture found between material form and matter, rather than the mixture which he [Aristotle] promotes, i.e., [mixture] in a qualified manner, by virtue of its [the intellect’s] relation to imaginary forms.¹⁵⁰

It is interesting to note that whereas Del Medigo explicitly reads the two-subject theory into the passage, Averroes himself does not, and in his own comment on the Aristotelian passage merely remarks that

it is highly unacceptable and very difficult to understand, as people were accustomed to say, that the intellect is a body or commingled with the body in such a way that it can never escape from it at all. . . . For the nature of the intellect seems to be completely opposite to the nature of the body.¹⁵¹

While Averroes refers to the passage as compatible with the notion of an intellect separate in its existence from the body, Del Medigo reads it as an explicit manifestation of the Averroist two-subject theory.

In addition to the passage cited here, Del Medigo cites other passages from Aristotle’s *De anima*, which, to his mind, evidently rule out Alexander’s and Avempace’s materialistic interpretations of Aristotle’s theory of intellect. Del Medigo notes how in one passage Aristotle argues that the Material Intellect is a substance (*substantia*, עצם) rather than a mere disposition in the human soul: “It would seem that the intellect is a substance of a certain sort, which

comes to be in a thing, and is not subject to corruption.”¹⁵² This passage readily lends itself to the Averroist reading according to which the Material Intellect is a separate substance rather than a mere disposition. However, Aristotle’s assertion that the Material Intellect “comes to be in a thing” might still indicate that the intellect, even if it is a substance, is not eternal. Del Medigo solves the difficulty by referring to Averroes’s two-subject theory mentioned already. On the one hand, the Material Intellect is eternal (hence “not subject to corruption”). Yet individual thoughts come to be and pass away in the mind of the individual by virtue of his imaginary forms, and it is this aspect of human conceptualization that the words “comes to be in a thing” refer to. Since generation and corruption in the intellectual realm occur only with regard to a particular individual, Aristotle asserts that the intellect is generated “in a thing” (יעשה בדבר, *fit in re*), rather than generated *simpliciter* (יעשה לבד), which reflects Alexander’s and Avempace’s position.¹⁵³

Another direct reference to the *De anima* in the *Two Investigations* is the following:

In the sixth passage of the third book, while discussing the nature of the Material Intellect, [Aristotle] said that it must be unmixed with the body, and he brought as evidence that if it were mixed with the body it would necessarily be [accompanied] by either coldness or heat or some other quality, or it would have an organ, as it is the case with the senses. Yet, that is not the case.¹⁵⁴

In the oft-cited passage to which Del Medigo alludes, Aristotle argues that the intellect in its potential stage cannot be mixed with the body, let alone be a disposition in the body. “I wonder,” Del Medigo remarks dryly, “how did Alexander understand these words of Aristotle?”¹⁵⁵ Aristotle’s explicit assertion that the intellect is unmixed with the body clearly excludes a materialistic interpretation of the sort offered by Alexander and Avempace. Lastly, Del Medigo points to the analogy that Aristotle draws between the Material and Agent Intellects in the *De anima* 430a17–20. There, Aristotle holds that “this intellect [i.e., the Agent Intellect] is also separate, unmixed, and impassible.”¹⁵⁶ This assertion clearly indicates that the Material Intellect, like the Agent Intellect, is a separate, unmixed, and impassible substance.

In conclusion, being well aware of the controversial nature of the unicity thesis, Del Medigo searches for passages in Aristotle’s *De anima* that would support Averroes’s reading. Del Medigo achieves this by citing passages which, to his mind, affirm not only the separation and subsistent existence of the human intellect but the two-subject theory as well. The attempt to establish Averroes’s

authority as a commentator shows that it was not taken for granted by Del Medigo and that he constantly kept the former's adversaries in mind.

Conclusion

Del Medigo's discussion on the unicity of the human intellect clearly follows similar discussions that were held in Padua at that time. Like many other Paduan Aristotelians who followed Averroes's reading in the *LCDA*, Del Medigo argues in his *Two Investigations* that the human intellect is a single, separate substance, shared by all humans. Yet although his investigation reflects the interests of a contemporary school, the discussion concerning the unicity of the intellect in the *Two Investigations* nonetheless carries with it idiosyncratic features. What most characterizes Del Medigo's discussion is a strong reliance on the works of Averroes, a tendency that manifests itself in the numerous direct citations from the *LCDA* and other works by the latter. The other author whose arguments deeply influenced the course of Del Medigo's discussion on the unicity of the Material Intellect is Thomas Aquinas. Yet whereas Averroes is cited abundantly and explicitly, Aquinas's name is never mentioned in the *Two Investigations*, and his arguments are taken from their original context without referring to their source, in a manner that serves well Del Medigo's polemical purpose. In addition, Del Medigo refrains from referring explicitly to the Paduan Thomists, using instead the generic attributes "theologians" and "Latin commentators." Furthermore, Del Medigo is making a verbal concession when presenting the unicity thesis, which he apparently introduced in order to appease the mind of the Thomists. Yet rather than acknowledging the polemical context that led to this concession, Del Medigo instead attributes it to methodological considerations he allegedly borrowed from Averroes's *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*.

In short, Del Medigo's discussion of the unicity thesis illustrates the dominant methodological tendency of the *Two Investigations*. Rather than referring directly to the protagonists of scholastic debates that evidently influenced Del Medigo's discussion, Del Medigo makes explicit references only to the works of Averroes and carries all his discussions through the conceptual framework of the *LCDA*.¹⁵⁷ This tendency, discussed in the Introduction chapter, is apparent in Del Medigo's discussion on the unicity thesis, and we will encounter it again in subsequent chapters.

Del Medigo on the Agent Intellect

Part I On the Agency of the Agent Intellect

Introductory Remarks

In his discussion concerning the unicity thesis, Del Medigo was participating in a 200-year-old contested debate between the Averroists and their adversaries concerning the nature of the Material Intellect. The status of the Agent Intellect among medieval philosophers, by comparison, was far less controversial. Del Medigo acknowledges this fact himself and argues that there is a general consensus among Jewish, Muslim, and most (although not all) Christian philosophers concerning the nature of the Agent Intellect. The majority of philosophers hold that the Agent Intellect is an eternal being, unique in its species and separate from matter.¹ In this respect, Del Medigo clearly follows in the footsteps of Averroes, who did not perceive the nature of the Agent Intellect as particularly controversial or problematic and who was instead constantly preoccupied with the nature of the Material Intellect.²

Nonetheless, several sections in the *Two Investigations* contain discussions concerning the nature of the Agent Intellect, which Del Medigo undertakes as part of his overall attempt to elucidate and contextualize Averroes's doctrine in the *LCDA*. In these sections, Del Medigo is not concerned with establishing the ontological status of the Agent Intellect, which again he perceived is unproblematic. Instead, Del Medigo concerned himself with two other problems concerning the nature of the Agent Intellect. The first problem Del Medigo discusses concerns the agency of the Agent Intellect. Put simply, Del Medigo investigates whether the Agent Intellect can be unequivocally referred to as an agent, or only equivocally. The second discussion considers the relation between the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect, that is, whether the two constitute a single being, or instead subsist as two independent substances.

In both discussions Del Medigo carries forward his usual method of inquiry, borrowing various sections from the works of Averroes and recontextualizing them in a manner that suits both his exegetical aim—articulating Averroes’s theory of intellect at the request of Pico—as well as his polemical needs, arguing against potential adversaries in establishing Averroes’s authority as the most reliable commentator concerning the true meaning of Aristotle’s intentions. Del Medigo’s usual manner of borrowing and recontextualizing Averroist sources is particularly innovative in the course of his discussion concerning the relation between the Material and Agent Intellects, an important debating point within the Averroist tradition itself.

Presently we will follow Del Medigo’s first discussion; the subsequent section will be dedicated to his second. Yet before turning to the discussions themselves, let us present the general background to Del Medigo’s discussions: Averroes’s theory of Agent Intellect and its Aristotelian sources.

Doctrinal roots of the notion of the Agent Intellect: Aristotle’s *De anima*

The notion of an Agent Intellect originates in Aristotle’s *De anima*, as a designation for what Aristotle refers to as an intellect “by virtue of making all things”:

Thought, as we have described it, is what it is by virtue of becoming all things, while there is another which is what it is by virtue of making all things: this is a sort of positive state like light; for in a sense light makes potential colours into actual colours.³

Here, Aristotle postulates an efficient cause that draws intelligibles from potency to act, analogous to the manner in which light draws colors from potency to act. Aristotle generally describes the intellect “by virtue of making all things” as “separate, impassible, unmixed” as well as “immortal and eternal.”⁴ These qualifications led medieval and Renaissance authors—among them Averroes—to identify the efficient cause of human thought with a transcendent and eternal being. In addition, Aristotle’s assertion that the intellect is immortal prompted these authors to ascribe to the Agent Intellect a central role in their discussions on human immortality, as Del Medigo himself does in the second treatise of the *Two Investigations*, not discussed in this book.⁵

The commentary tradition that concerned itself with the nature of the Agent Intellect began with Aristotle’s Greek commentators. Alexander of Aphrodisias

and John Philoponus described the Agent Intellect as a transcendent being, and Alexander also identified it with the first cause, or God, of the *Metaphysics* XII.⁶ Themistius's position, however, was more nuanced, as he recognized a transcendent aspect in the nature of the Agent Intellect but also argued that it operates as a principle within man.⁷ These various accounts were later picked up and reconfigured in the Muslim peripatetic tradition by Alfarabi and Avicenna. Alfarabi was the first philosopher to identify the Agent Intellect as the tenth and last intelligence within a cosmological hierarchy of translunary intelligences.⁸ Avicenna followed Alfarabi's general account, identifying the Agent Intellect as the last in a chain of celestial intelligences that emanate from the first cause, though he diverged from Alfarabi in describing the nature of their emanation.⁹

Averroes therefore inherited a commentary tradition that ascribed to the Agent Intellect an epistemological as well as a cosmological role and, accordingly, discussed the nature of the Agent Intellect in both his psychological and metaphysical works. Throughout the three commentaries on the *Metaphysics*, the Agent Intellect is described as a transcendent being, the last in a hierarchy of celestial intelligences.¹⁰ A similar account also appears in Averroes's works relating to Aristotle's psychology, and the *LCDA* contains various arguments that attempt to establish the ontological status of the Agent Intellect as a separate being.¹¹ One of these arguments rests on the fact that the Agent Intellect actualizes the intelligibles by turning material images, which exist in man's imaginary faculty, into immaterial universals. Since the role of the Agent Intellect is to transform material entities into immaterial ones, it cannot itself be material. In such case, and as the ultimate cause of abstraction, the Agent Intellect would *ex hypothesi* be required to free itself from its own material conditions, an implausible scenario. According to Averroes,

It was necessary that the agent intelligence be separate, unmixed, and impassible, insofar as it is what makes all forms intelligible. If, therefore, it were mixed, it would not make all forms, just as it was necessary that the material intellect, insofar as it is what receives all forms, also be separate and unmixed. . . . If the agent intelligence were mixed with matter, then it would be necessary either that it understand and create itself or that it not create all forms.¹²

Del Medigo follows this line of reasoning in the *Two Investigations*, where the discussion concerning the nature of the Agent Intellect is found mostly in ff. 129r–131v (34r–35v) and 103r–111r (17r–21bisv). Following Averroes, Del Medigo holds that the Agent Intellect cannot be bound by material conditions, since its role is to transform particular images into universal intelligibles.¹³ Another

argument that Del Medigo borrows from the *LCDA* rests on the analogy between the Material and the Agent Intellects. Since it has already been established that the Material Intellect—the subject within the process of conceptualization—is separate and eternal, the Agent Intellect must *a fortiori* be a separate substance as well.¹⁴ The implicit assumption is that one must attribute to an agent whatever is ascribed to the subject, and to a more eminent degree. Thus, just as it is the separation of the Material Intellect from matter that enables it to receive the full range of intelligibles, so too the Agent Intellect must be immaterial in order to produce the full range of intelligibles. Carrying this analogy further, Del Medigo argues that, as in the case of the Material Intellect, the immateriality of the Agent Intellect entails its unity. Del Medigo does not develop the analogy explicitly but rather assumes it; matter serves as the principle of individuation, and its absence from the Agent Intellect must carry the same consequences as in the case of the Material Intellect.

As mentioned in the opening remarks, Del Medigo maintains that the nature of the Agent Intellect, with regard to its unity and existence as a separate substance, was never a matter of real controversy among Greek, Muslim, and Jewish philosophers and was only contested among “some Christian philosophers,” most likely alluding to the view of Aquinas and his followers.¹⁵ Aquinas argued that there are in reality as many Agent Intellects as there are human beings, so that each human possesses his own Agent Intellect. Here, for instance, are two passages from Aquinas’s *Commentary on the De anima*:

We also see that just as possible [i.e., the Material] intellect’s operation, which is to receive (*percipere*) what is intelligible, is attributed to a human being, so too is agent intellect’s operation, which is to abstract the intelligibles. But that could be so only if the formal principle of that action were conjoined to [a human being] in its existence.¹⁶

The claims introduced earlier [i.e., that the Agent Intellect is a separate substance] also run contrary to Aristotle’s position. He [Aristotle] expressly says that “these (two) different things (agent intellect and possible intellect) are *in soul* [430a12–14], by which he expressly lets it be understood that they are parts or powers of soul, not separate substances.¹⁷

In his allusion to the view of “some Christian philosophers,” Del Medigo is most likely referring back to his earlier critique of the Thomist position, discernible in his discussion of the nature of the Material Intellect. However, the view that draws most of Del Medigo’s attention in his discussion concerning the Agent Intellect is that of Themistius, as will be discussed in what follows.

To conclude, Del Medigo does not find the general characterization of the Agent Intellect as a separate substance to be a controversial matter. In order to establish its separation from matter and its unity, Del Medigo reiterates several arguments from the *LCDA*, most of them echoing Del Medigo's argumentation when discussing the nature of the Material Intellect. In his discussion on the operation of the Agent Intellect, Del Medigo prefers to concentrate his efforts on establishing the role of the Agent Intellect as an efficient cause within the process of conceptualization, this time concentrating his polemical efforts against the view of Themistius. Let us now turn to the discussion itself.

The Agent Intellect as the Efficient Cause of the Intelligibles

As already mentioned, the Agent Intellect was introduced by Aristotle as the active component within the process of conceptualization. Having established—together with the majority of the peripatetic tradition—that this component is in fact a separate substance, Del Medigo now turns to discuss its mode of operation. This Del Medigo does by turning to the metaphor of light, introduced by Aristotle in the *De anima* III.5.¹⁸ In Averroes, the metaphor reads:

The philosopher mentioned in the third book on the soul in the eighteenth commentary [here Del Medigo refers to Averroes' commentary on the passage from *De anima*] that the Agent Intellect is a certain habitude which is like light, since light in a certain way actualizes the potential colours to be colours in act. And the commentator said there that the reasoning which compels us to posit an Agent Intellect . . . is similar to reasoning by virtue of which the sense of sight requires light.¹⁹

As Del Medigo notes correctly, Averroes develops the light analogy in the *LCDA* III.18 (and elsewhere in the *LCDA*):

The way that forced us to suppose the Agent Intellect is the same as the way on account of which sight needs light.²⁰

It is in this way that we should understand his account that colours move the sense of sight which is in potency in darkness, for light is that which makes them able to move in act. Hence, he likens light to the agent intelligence and colours to universals.²¹

Del Medigo follows Averroes in asserting that the Agent Intellect does not operate as an artist who shapes his material any way he pleases, "for if that were the case, we

would neither need sense for the attainment of the intelligibles, nor imagination, nor thought.”²² Instead, both Averroes and Del Medigo highlight the empirical aspect of conceptualization, by virtue of which the Agent Intellect may be considered an efficient cause. According to this account, the intelligibles are not created *ex nihilo* by the Agent Intellect and placed in the Material Intellect but rather are abstracted from preexisting imaginary forms that have their origin in human sense experience. The presence of images in the process of conceptualization, it will be remembered, enabled both Averroes and Del Medigo to explain the individuation of the Theoretical Intellect against the unicity of the Material Intellect. In the present context, the presence of imaginary forms in the process of conceptualization enables Del Medigo to account for the agency of the Agent Intellect.²³

Lastly, it should be noted that the agency of the Agent Intellect, according to both Averroes and Del Medigo, is not restricted to the actualization of intelligibles alone. According to both philosophers, the Agent Intellect actualizes the capacity of the Material Intellect to receive intelligibles inasmuch as it actualizes the intelligibles themselves.²⁴ Again, this point is illustrated by Averroes in his comment on Aristotle’s light analogy in the *De anima*. In addition to the actualization of perceptible objects, light also illuminates the transparent medium (ספירית) through which perceptible objects are perceived in the eye. Drawing on this analogy, Averroes determines that the Agent Intellect actualizes both the intelligibles as well as the Material Intellect, analogous to the transparent medium.²⁵ Del Medigo follows Averroes in drawing the analogy between the Material Intellect and the transparent medium and, consequently, in stressing that the Agent Intellect also actualizes the capacity of the Material Intellect to apprehend the intelligibles. One should note, however, that the analogy that Averroes elaborates and Del Medigo cites may well be challenged within Averroes’s own theoretical framework. Conceptualization is defined by Averroes as the reception of intelligibles *in* the Material Intellect. Accordingly, it would seem more appropriate to draw an analogy between the Material Intellect and the human eye rather than the transparent medium through which the eye sees. The depiction of the Material Intellect as a medium rather than the perceiving subject seems to serve a different theoretical purpose; it allows Averroes and Del Medigo to posit the human rather than the Material Intellect as the ultimate subject in the process of conceptualization.²⁶ Be that as it may, Del Medigo refers to the Agent Intellect as the efficient cause within the process of conceptualization, responsible for the actualization of the intelligibles themselves as well as the Material Intellect’s capacity for receiving them. Let us now turn to his discussion on the nature of the agency of the Agent Intellect.

On the Productive Nature of the Agent Intellect: Del Medigo and Themistius

Whereas in his discussion of the Material Intellect it was Aquinas who supplied Del Medigo with his major antithetical position, in his discussion on the operation of the Agent Intellect it is the view of Themistius that Del Medigo attempts to refute and against the background of which he crystallizes his own position.

Themistius's interpretation of the notion of Agent Intellect, to which Del Medigo refers, is found in the former's paraphrase of the *De anima*. The work was available in two Latin translations at the time Del Medigo was composing the *Two Investigations*. The first rendition, made by William of Moerbeke, is the one that was employed by Aquinas in his *De unitate intellectus*. The second translation was prepared sometime around 1481 by Ermolao Barbaro.²⁷ Del Medigo's acquaintance with Themistius's paraphrase, however, as with Alexander's interpretation of Aristotle, was mediated through the works of Averroes and in particular through the *LCDA* and the *Epitome of the De anima*.²⁸

Themistius—as portrayed in the *LCDA*—held that the Material and Agent Intellects are separate substances in whose operation all humans share. This view was endorsed by Averroes, and Del Medigo followed it as well. However, Averroes also ascribes to Themistius the following view:

Since the recipient [i.e., the Material Intellect] was eternal and the agent intellect eternal, then the product must necessarily be eternal.²⁹

In the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo recapitulates Averroes's account:

[According to Themistius] these intelligibles, which the Agent Intellect generates or reduces into act so that they become intelligibles in act in the receiving material [intellect]—[the intelligibles] which we designate as “theoretical intellect”—are eternal as well, and his view was corroborated by the fact that, when the receiving subject is eternal and the agent is eternal, the product [הפועול] is necessarily eternal as well.³⁰

Averroes and Del Medigo agree with Themistius concerning the eternal nature of the Material and Agent Intellects. What Averroes, followed by Del Medigo, finds less convincing is Themistius's insistence that the intelligibles are also eternal, a view that both associate with Plato's doctrine of eternal forms.³¹ For Themistius, the coming-to-be and passing away of intelligibles in the mind of a particular human does not indicate that the intelligibles are essentially generable

and corruptible. Instead, the appearance and disappearance of intelligibles in a particular mind is due to the fact that the Agent Intellect, which contains within itself the intelligibles *in act*, at times is conjoined with the Material Intellect and at times is not. This conjunction, Averroes holds, occurs by virtue of the imaginary forms, which are found in the imaginary form of an individual. Del Medigo ascribes to the explanatory model as well, though he does not go on to explain it at any great length.³² At any rate, what both Averroes and Del Medigo emphasize in Themistius's theory is that the intelligibles reside in the eternal Agent Intellect, and as such enjoy the eternal existence that the Agent Intellect possesses. The emergence of an intelligible in a particular mind is explained in terms of new awareness of a preexisting concept rather than the essential generation of a new object of thought.

Themistius's theory has brought both Averroes and Del Medigo to develop a critical stance regarding it. At the heart of their critique lies the claim that by determining the preexistence of the intelligibles, Themistius's entails an empty notion of "production." In the *LCDA*, Averroes's critique of Themistius reads as follows:

Since [for Themistius] the recipient was eternal and the agent eternal, then the product must necessarily be eternal. While³³ they [Themistius and other philosophers who held a similar view] held this position, it happens in reality that it is neither the agent intellect nor the product, since agent and product are understood only with reference to generation in time.³⁴

In the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo adopts this line of criticism. He defines "production," *יצירה*, as the actualization of a being that existed before only potentially. Accordingly, one cannot attribute efficient causality to the Agent Intellect while promoting the eternal existence of the intelligibles. It makes no sense, Del Medigo holds, to speak of a "production" of an entity that already exists, and *a priori* of a being that possesses eternal existence. Del Medigo would therefore illustrate that the production of intelligibles involves their abstraction from existing images, rooted in the ever-changing flux of human experience. This feature of human conceptualization goes against Themistius's account, according to which the "generation" of intelligibles is reducible to the new apprehension of an eternal being. In the readings of both Averroes and Del Medigo, Themistius holds that what is generated with each act of conceptualization is a new cognitive experience, not the object of conceptualization itself. Themistius, both hold, went astray in his attempt to reconcile the views of Plato and Aristotle. Following Aristotle, Themistius promoted the existence of an Agent Intellect that is the efficient cause within the process of conceptualization. Yet following Plato,

Themistius argued that human intelligibles are eternal and are only “generated” from the perspective of the cognizer.³⁵

Del Medigo on the Transient Nature of the Intelligibles

Following his analysis of Themistius’s view, Del Medigo concludes that Averroes’s critique of Themistius can be reduced to a disagreement concerning the ontological status of the intelligibles. Consequently, Del Medigo supports Averroes’s view by proving the transient nature of the intelligibles, which in turn accounts for the Agent Intellect’s efficient causality. Interestingly enough, a similar line of thought can be found in Thomas Aquinas’s *Commentary on the De anima*. There, Aquinas associates the productive nature of the Agent Intellect with the transient nature of the intelligibles, criticizing not Themistius but Plato:

Aristotle is led to posit agent intellect in order to rule out Plato’s view. Plato claimed that the quiddities of sensible things are separated from matter and actually intelligible; that is why it was not necessary for him to posit agent intellect. But because Aristotle claims that the quiddities of sensible things are in matter and are not actually intelligible, he has to posit an intellect that would abstract them from matter and in that way make them actually intelligible.³⁶

Like Averroes, Aquinas observes that by postulating the eternity of the intelligibles the role of the Agent Intellect becomes redundant, as eternal beings lack an agent cause. Averroes, Aquinas, and Del Medigo therefore all perceive the transient nature of the intelligibles as a crucial feature of Aristotle’s theory of intellect, and in particular with regard to Aristotle’s notion of an agent cause within the process of conceptualization.

Moved by the aforementioned considerations, Del Medigo starts an independent investigation into the nature of the intelligibles:

[And since] the root of their disagreement [Averroes and Themistius] concerns the nature of the intelligibles, whether they are generable and corruptible, I will present the evidence which will refute the view of the commentators [i.e., Themistius and the ancient commentators] on this matter and contradict their own evidence. The refutation of their other views will then naturally follow, since these [other views] follow from it [i.e., their analysis concerning the ontological status of the intelligibles], as we mentioned earlier.³⁷

Del Medigo’s inspiration is again Averroes’s *LCDA*, where the latter argues that “nothing moves him [Aristotle] to impose the agent intellect except that

the theoretical intelligibles are generated in the way we said.”³⁸ As Del Medigo himself would do, Averroes also supplies an argument aimed at proving the transient nature of the intelligibles:

Therefore, if the intentions which the intellect apprehends from the imagined forms were eternal, then the intentions in the imaginative powers would be eternal. And if those were eternal, then the sensations would be eternal, for the sensations are related to this power just as the intentions which can be imagined are related to the rational power. And if the sensations were eternal, then the things sensed would be eternal or the sensations would be intentions other than the intentions of things existing outside the soul in matter.³⁹

Averroes performs a *reductio ad absurdum* of Themistius’s view. If the intelligibles were eternal, their corresponding realities must be eternal as well: images, sensations, and ultimately the beings themselves outside the mind. Since the conclusion is evidently false, the assumption according to which intelligibles possess eternal existence must be rejected. While in the *LCDA* Averroes finds the argument sufficient for proving the transient nature of the intelligibles, Del Medigo only mentions it in passing in the *Two Investigations* and instead develops a lengthy and complex discussion, drawing on various works by Averroes in order to establish the transient nature of the intelligibles.⁴⁰ In addition, Del Medigo follows Averroes’s view concerning the root of Themistius’s erroneous interpretation of Aristotle. Following Averroes, Del Medigo argues that Themistius mistakenly attributed eternity to the intelligibles in light of the eternal nature of the substances involved in their production, namely the Material and Agent Intellects.⁴¹ Consequently, Del Medigo seeks to reconcile the ontological status of the intelligibles with that of the separate intellects. More specifically, Del Medigo seeks to explain how transient beings—the human intelligibles—can be the product of an eternal substance, the Agent Intellect. Before examining Del Medigo’s attempts at doing so, let us first examine the proofs he provides for the transient nature of the intelligibles—proofs that are not drawn directly from the *LCDA*.

Proofs for the Transient Nature of the Intelligibles in the *Two Investigations*

Del Medigo elaborates three main proofs in order to establish the transient nature of the intelligibles, drawn from three main sources: Averroes’s *Epitome of*

the *De anima* in the first proof, the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* in the second, and the *Epitome of the Metaphysics* (along with other sources) in the third.⁴² All three commentaries were available in Hebrew at the time Del Medigo wrote the *Two Investigations* and were translated into Latin only in the sixteenth century.⁴³ This fact manifests Del Medigo's general methodological tendency discussed earlier, whereby he addresses problems pertinent to the Latin scholastic tradition by drawing upon the Hebrew translations of Averroes's commentaries. By so doing, Del Medigo was bridging between the Hebrew and Latin Averroist traditions, as he did also with his Hebrew-into-Latin translations of Averroes's commentaries.

I. The first proof for the transient nature of the intelligibles is drawn from the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*. Del Medigo cites Averroes's claim that in the process of conceptualization the intellect distinguishes the essential features of a being from its accidental features.⁴⁴ Through this process the intellect attains universal concepts that serve both for the sciences (התחלות עיוניים, לעניינים עיוניים, *scientiae principium*) as well as for the practical arts (התחלות המעשיים, לעניינים המעשיים, *artis principium*).⁴⁵ Generally, this type of knowledge acquisition is designated by Del Medigo, using the terminology of the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, as "knowledge from experience" (הידיעה המגעת מן הנסיון), *cognitio quae evenit experimento*.⁴⁶ Apart from the distinction between practical and theoretical knowledge, Del Medigo further distinguishes between two types of intelligibles, both consequent upon abstraction from sense data. The first type consists of intelligibles whose manner of acquisition we can account for, such as "Dog" or "Man," which are rooted in our conscious experience of extramental beings. The second group consists of "first intelligibles," מושכלות ראשונות. This second group consists of propositions that manifest general rules of thought and enable one to construct syllogisms. Examples of propositions of this kind are that the whole is greater than its part; that every proposition is either true or false; that the same proposition cannot be true and false simultaneously.⁴⁷ Although such propositions ground all other types of knowledge, Del Medigo, following Averroes, argues that they also derive from sense experience and, as such, ought to be defined as acquired knowledge. Let us attempt to illustrate their claim with the following syllogism:

1. Provence is a part of France,
2. A whole is bigger than its part,
Therefore,
3. France is bigger than Provence.

Averroes and Del Medigo would argue that both (1) and (2) are formulated through our experience with the extramental world, although one cannot account for when and how the knowledge of (2) comes about.⁴⁸ As we shall see, the fact that both types of intelligibles originate in sense experience would prove essential for Del Medigo in his proof of their transient nature, to which we shall now return.

As mentioned, Del Medigo points to the fact that within the process of conceptualization the soul comes to discern the essence of a given species. This process starts with the reception of sense data, mediated through what came to be known in the peripatetic tradition as “internal senses.” The nature of the internal senses, their number and inner relations, was a highly controversial theme in the medieval peripatetic tradition, as it is still today among historians of medieval philosophy.⁴⁹ Here the theme will only be discussed to the extent that it sheds light on the process of generation of human intelligibles.

In works such as the *Epitome of the Parva naturalia* and the *LCDA*, Averroes distinguishes four powers in the cogitative soul: the common sense, the imaginative power, the cogitative power, and memory.⁵⁰ In the *Epitome of the Parva naturalia*, the operation of these powers is described by Averroes as follows:

This occurs by the sense first perceiving the thing outside the soul, then the formative faculty [i.e., the imagination] forming [an image] of it, then the discriminative faculty [i.e., the cogitative faculty] distinguishing the intention of this form from its description. And then the retentive faculty receives [*yaqbalu/ recipit*] what the discriminative faculty had distinguished.⁵¹

The role of the internal senses is to crystallize from the diffused sense data a single image, which corresponds to an external object, such as a particular dog or a particular man.⁵² At this stage, according to Averroes, one finds “the cogitative power,” which is “an individual discerning power, namely, because it discerns something only in an individual way, not in a universal way.”⁵³ The cogitative power described here is the penultimate in the hierarchy of internal senses, responsible for producing a particular image, which corresponds to a particular being. The image stored in the cogitative faculty then undergoes a subsequent stage of refinement by the Agent Intellect, which transforms the image into a universal intelligible.

The epistemological process just described is recapitulated by Del Medigo in the *Two Investigations*. Conceptualization starts with the operation of the five external senses, followed by the mediation of the four internal senses (common sense, imagination, cogitation, and memory), and culminates in the operation of

the Agent Intellect, which transforms the image into an intelligible and deposits it in the Material Intellect.⁵⁴

To illustrate the nature of this process, Del Medigo borrows an example from the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*. One begins by perceiving that the consumption of a particular herb—in this case, scamony (אסקמוניאה, *scamonia*)—coincides with the purgation of bile. The repeated observation of this phenomenon might lead to the inference that scamony has an inherent purgative effect.⁵⁵ It should be noted that the example describes the attainment of a proposition rather than that of a concept. Other passages in the *Two Investigations* also suggest that Del Medigo took the intelligible to primarily denote a proposition:

[The propositions] “every human being is a rational animal” and “every horse is an animal” . . . are composed when the intellect abstracts the human form and the horse from their accidents.⁵⁶

However, other passages in the *Two Investigations* indicate that Del Medigo identifies the intelligible primarily as a concept rather than a proposition, and the ambiguity prevails throughout the work.⁵⁷ Yet in light of Del Medigo’s general aim, to illustrate the transient nature of acquired notions, it would appear that Del Medigo thinks of intelligibles primarily as universal concepts rather than propositions. A clear indication of that is that Del Medigo devotes an entire section in the *Two Investigations* to discuss the nature of universals, to which we shall later turn.⁵⁸

Returning to the main line of Del Medigo’s argument, the latter points to the process through which intelligibles are generated as an indication of their transient nature. An intelligible is abstracted by the Agent Intellect from an image stored in a lower cognitive faculty, and the entire process takes place over time.⁵⁹ It is therefore possible to locate the particular moment in which the intelligible is generated and, consequently, to deny it eternal existence. As a generated being, the intelligibles are in need of an efficient cause, and so the necessity of an Agent Intellect within the process of conceptualization has been secured.

II. The first proof has established that the intelligibles come to be at a particular moment in time and that, as such, they do not possess eternal existence *a parte ante*. The second proof, to which we shall now turn, supplements the first by denying the intelligibles eternal existence *a parte post*. Del Medigo turns to prove that the intelligibles pass away at a certain moment in time, a fact that testifies to their transient nature and, consequently, to the role of the Agent Intellect as the agent of human thoughts.

Again, the presence of images within the process of conceptualization serves as the cornerstone of Del Medigo's proof. According to the latter,

Due to the essential conjunction (דבקות עצמותי) of these intelligibles with imaginary forms, they [the intelligibles] will be forgotten once the imaginary forms are gone.⁶⁰

Since the corresponding subjects on which the intelligibles rely possess a transient nature, the intelligibles possess a transient nature as well.⁶¹ And as the intelligibles are of a transient nature, generable and corruptible, there is need for an efficient cause—the Agent Intellect—to bring them from potency to act.

The question that naturally follows concerns the identity of the transient subjects upon which the intelligibles rely. Del Medigo argues that these are the corresponding images in man's imaginary faculty, not the extramental beings themselves, and he employs several arguments in favor of this view. First, if the existence of the intelligible "Dog" in the mind of a particular man would depend on the actual existence of Fido, Bailey, or Max, the passing away of the actual dogs would entail the passing away of the corresponding intelligible, yet this is clearly not the case. Second, the essential reliance of the intelligible *Dog* on dogs in the extramental realm would entail that if two individuals acquired their intelligible by encountering the same group of dogs, they would accordingly possess the same intelligible. The differentiation of intelligibles among different humans, however, was an important tenet for Del Medigo, as it was for Averroes.⁶²

As mentioned, rather than associating the existence of intelligibles with that of extramental beings, Del Medigo argues that the existence of intelligibles depends upon the existence of images in man's imaginary faculty. The intelligible "Dog" that Zaid possesses depends not on the existence of Fido, Bailey, or Max but on their respective imaginary forms, *F*, *B*, *M*. Amr's intelligible, however, corresponds to *J*, *T*, *D* if it derives from his encounter with Jake, Toby, and Duke, or to *F'*, *B'*, and *M'* if he and Zaid derive their notion of "Dog" from the same group of dogs. What differentiates the two notions is that each intelligible has its origin in a different set of imaginary forms.⁶³

In conclusion, Del Medigo's reasoning in the second argument runs as follows. Every intelligible possessed by a human being originates in sensory experience, the images he abstracts from entities in the extramental realm. These images are required for the enduring existence of the intelligibles in a particular mind. In order to possess the intelligible "Dog," one has to possess

concrete representations of dogs as images. Once these images disappear from the particular imaginary faculty of a particular human (due to forgetfulness, old age, or other conditions), the intelligibles that rely on these images disappear as well. This reasoning is in line with the Aristotelian dictum, “To the thinking soul images serve as if they were contents of perception. . . . That is why the soul never thinks without an image.”⁶⁴ The reliance of intelligibles on transient images thus explains the transient nature of the intelligibles, and in turn explains the need of an Agent Intellect as the active component within the process of conceptualization.

This model, however, appears incompatible with some other crucial features of Averroes’s theory of intellect, as presented in the *LCDA*. The argument suggests that the existence of the intelligibles is dependent upon the simultaneous existence of imaginary forms in the human imaginary faculty. However, Averroes had taught that imaginary forms are transformed into intelligibles by the operation of the Agent Intellect. In other words, the disappearance of imaginary forms from a particular mind seems to signify, for Averroes, the generation of intelligibles rather than their passing away. As we shall see, this was also one of the criticisms made by Aquinas in criticizing Averroes’s theory of intellect.⁶⁵ Yet Del Medigo does not see a difficulty here, and he insists on the continual presence of images throughout the process of conceptualization.

Del Medigo does, however, refer to other difficulties entailed by his second proof. As mentioned, Del Medigo has pointed to the reliance of the intelligibles on transient subjects in order to establish their transient nature. Next, Del Medigo determined that the subjects on which the intelligibles rely are the images derived from extramental entities, not the extramental entities themselves. The difficulty Del Medigo now faces is the following: even granting that the intelligibles rely on images rather than on extramental beings, one would still associate the existence of the images themselves with corresponding extramental realities. The same problem therefore reoccurs at a different cognitive stage, as mental constructions—imaginary forms—are said to rely on extramental entities, with all the aforementioned absurdities the assumption entails.

Del Medigo guards himself against this undesirable consequence by qualifying the sense in which images rely on extramental entities. The relation between the image and the being it represents, Del Medigo holds, differs from the relation between the intelligible and its corresponding image. Whereas the existence of the intelligible is essentially reliant on the existence of an image, the

image has only an accidental relation to a particular being in the world. When considered without its accidental features, the imaginary form corresponds to any particular whatsoever, *אי זה פרטי הזדמן*.⁶⁶ Thus, the image of Fido in Zaid's mind does not essentially rely on the existence of Fido, and the passing away of the actual dog does not entail the disappearance of the image from Zaid's imaginary soul. Considered without its accidental features, the image of Fido corresponds indifferently to any given dog. By so qualifying his argument, Del Medigo guarantees that the image represents an extramental being, without committing himself to any unwarranted existential bonds.⁶⁷ It is important to note that Del Medigo is careful to maintain the distinction between the different representational functions of an image and of a universal intelligible. An image does not represent the universal essence abstracted from particular instances but represents the object in its particularity. Nonetheless, this particular object is not a certain determinate individual. On the one hand, the image of Fido represents Fido but could equally represent all other particular dogs *qua* particulars. The intelligible "Dog," on the other hand, does not correspond to any particular dog but signifies the general essence that is embodied in particular dogs. As this general essence depends in its existence on particular images in a human mind, the passing away of those images necessarily entails the passing away of the intelligible. In contrast, while a particular image is generated from encountering a particular being in the extramental realm, it bears a representational value that corresponds to any being of that kind. This reliance is designated by Del Medigo as accidental reliance, which guarantees that the image does not pass away with the passing away of the extramental being from which it was originated.

This rather complex model underlies Del Medigo's second proof for the transient nature of the intelligibles. Concrete images emerge in the mind through man's encounter with the outside world and are transformed by the Agent Intellect into a universal intelligible. As the image disappears from man's mind by reason of its transient nature, the parallel intelligible consequently disappears as well. Hence the intelligible's transient nature and, consequently, the need to posit a cause that would bring it from potentiality to act, that is, the Agent Intellect.

As support for his argument Del Medigo presents a counterargument, which he then goes on to refute. While one may acknowledge the empirical nature of conceptualization and the involvement of imaginary forms within the process, one may also hold that the attainment of the imaginary form merely facilitates the apprehension of an eternal intelligible, not that the intelligibles are essentially

generated. Following this line of reasoning, the transient nature of the images can still be reconciled with the eternal existence of the intelligibles. While Del Medigo only presents this model as a hypothetical defense of Themistius's view, one that he would ultimately reject, it can also be found in the works of various authors, including Avicenna and Gersonides. In his *Wars of the Lords*, for example, Gersonides holds that

corporeal cognitions [i.e., imaginary forms], however, are only accidental causes of the existence of the acquired intellect, not essential causes. The essential cause of the existence of the acquired intellect is the intelligible order in the Agent Intellect. . . . Moreover, even if we were to admit that the corporeal cognitions are the causes of the existence of these objects of knowledge, they are the causes of knowledge [only], not of the existence of the intelligible order [in the Agent Intellect] pertaining to them.⁶⁸

Like Themistius, Gersonides holds that the intelligibles reside eternally in the Agent Intellect, subject to neither generation nor corruption. The likeness between a concrete image of a horse and the eternal intelligible “Horse” enables humans to contemplate the latter while possessing the former. Gersonides thus argues that corporeal cognitions are the cause of *knowledge*, ידיעה, rather than the cause of the *intelligible order*, הסדור המושכל. Del Medigo's counterargument, reminiscent of Gersonides' position, denies that one can infer the transient nature of the intelligibles simply from the presence of transient images within the process of conceptualization.

In response to the counterargument he himself has elaborated, Del Medigo argues that it promotes an occasionalist worldview that drains the notion of efficient causality of any content. If the generation of intelligibles can be reduced to the apprehension of eternal truths, then the notions of agency and of efficient causality are rendered empty. Following the same line of reasoning, one may argue that a torch merely prepares the log for the appearance of fire in it, rather than causing fire in the log. Such reasoning is attributed to Ghazali by Averroes in the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, and Del Medigo turns to Averroes's criticism in order to validate his own criticism of Themistius. According to Ghazali,

[Our] opponent [Avicenna] claims that the agent of the burning is the fire exclusively. . . . This we deny, saying: The agent of the burning is God, through His creating the black in the cotton and the disconnexion of its parts, and it is God who made the cotton burn and made it ashes either through the intermediation of angels or without intermediation.⁶⁹

Averroes answers Ghazali in the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* that his denial of efficient causality amounts to nothing but “sophistry,” and that

those philosophers [i.e., Ghazali] who say that these perceptible existents do not act on each other . . . cannot affirm that their apparent action on each other is totally illusory, but would say that this action is limited to preparing the disposition to accept the forms from the external principle. However, I do not know any philosopher who affirms this absolutely.⁷⁰

Averroes suggests that Ghazali’s position lacks philosophical integrity and coherence, since “all agree that warmth causes warmth.”⁷¹ Del Medigo, similarly, holds that the view according to which images merely facilitate humans for the apprehension of preexisting intelligibles contradicts the observable fact that objects in the world operate on one another.

Del Medigo thus employs Averroes’s polemic response to Ghazali in order to support his own critical move against Themistius. Yet one may note that while Ghazali—as portrayed by Averroes—was an occasionalist, Themistius does not make an occasionalist argument as explicitly. Themistius might answer to Del Medigo that he did not wish to promote an occasionalist worldview but merely wished to suggest that, in the particular case of human conceptualization, no real process of generation is involved. In that case, Del Medigo would be making an illegitimate move of *reductio ad absurdum*, a generalization from the particular case of human conceptualization to the general course of nature. Though it may well serve Del Medigo’s general argument to read Ghazali into Themistius, this might do injustice to the latter’s own position.

It is worthwhile to pause here and reflect on Del Medigo’s general line of argument thus far. The context of the discussion is the exposition of Themistius’ view, as was portrayed by Averroes in the *LCDA*. According to Themistius, the intelligibles reside eternally in the Agent Intellect. Del Medigo’s aim is to refute this view and to establish the role of the Agent Intellect as the producer of the intelligibles. Del Medigo adds a hypothetical argument that he then rejects, according to which imaginary forms are indeed involved in the process of conceptualization but only as auxiliary means for the apprehension of eternal intelligibles. Del Medigo offers two objections to this model. The first, illustrated already, is to claim that such position manifests an occasionalist worldview. Drawing on Averroes’s arguments against Ghazali, Del Medigo holds that as it stands, Themistius’s view cannot be taken seriously. The second critique, to which we shall now turn, is that Themistius’s view renders the process of learning redundant:

For we would only require imaginary forms if we assume that they take an active role in the generation of the intelligible, since if that were not the case, why would we need them? And what will prevent us from knowing them [the intelligibles] without learning? Learning would then become redundant.⁷²

If one ascribes eternal existence to the intelligibles, conceptualization would then consist of nothing but one turning his “mental gaze” toward eternal truths. Within such a conceptual framework there is no place for learning, that is, there is no place for the transformation of images into intelligibles, brought about by man’s conscious act. Del Medigo’s assumption here is that the process of learning involves the production of the object of learning, that is, the intelligibles. Here again, Themistius could reject the criticism by arguing for the Platonic position according to which learning involves the apprehension of preexisting entities rather than their production.

The second proof thus attempts to establish the transient nature of the intelligibles by pointing to their reliance on imaginary forms. As was illustrated already, the first proof was that intelligibles are generated *from* images and, as such, are the culmination of a physio-psychological process that takes place over time and involves the coming-to-be and passing away of transient beings. The second proof supplements the first by pointing to the fact that the intelligibles, once created, continue to manifest essential reliance on the transient images from which they were generated. Again, the issue at stake is the agency of the Agent Intellect, which can only be maintained if one establishes the transient nature of its product, that is, of human intelligibles.

III. Del Medigo develops a third proof in order to establish the transient nature of the intelligibles. While the first two concentrated on the process through which intelligibles come to be, and on their essential reliance on imaginary forms once generated, the third argument examines the nature of the intelligibles *qua* universals and draws on Averroes’s discussion in the *Epitome of the Metaphysics*. Del Medigo’s aim is to illustrate that since universals do not possess extramental reality, they come to be in the mind of the individual. Since every intelligible is a universal, Del Medigo concludes that the being of intelligibles is transient, and he identifies the emergence of universals in the human mind with the creation of intelligibles by the Agent Intellect. In the *LCDA*, Averroes himself associates the potential existence of the universals outside the mind with the need to posit an Agent Intellect as their efficient cause:

All the things said by Aristotle in regard to this are so that the universals have no being outside the soul, [for that sort of separate being] is what Plato intended. For if it were so, then there would be no need to assert the agent intellect.⁷³

According to Del Medigo, the nature of the universals is a theme concerning which “great men have erred since the time of Plato until our present times,” and he aims to determine the issue conclusively through his own investigation.⁷⁴ As throughout the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo presents his analysis as the correct interpretation of Averroes, although contrary to his usual course, he does not supply verbatim citations or supply the reader with exact references to the works of Averroes.⁷⁵

Del Medigo begins his discussion by arguing that since true knowledge is knowledge of universals, one must ascribe to the universals existence of some sort. However, ascribing to the universals actual existence in the extramental realm would lead to various absurdities. Though Del Medigo does not list these absurdities, they are mentioned in the *Epitome of the Metaphysics* where Averroes develops his own theory of universals. That Del Medigo was familiar with that work we gather from the fact that it is explicitly mentioned in his *De Primo Motore*.⁷⁶ Del Medigo also translated sections from Averroes’s *Epitome* and *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics* that concern the nature of universals, and he discusses the theme in his letter to Grimani.⁷⁷

According to Averroes in the *Epitome*, universals can exist outside the mind in one of two ways. They could exist (1) as separate substances whose existence is entirely independent of the existence of transient hylomorphic beings. Such a gulf between the universal and the particular, Averroes argues, would go against the very function of a universal, which is to be predicated of a multitude of transient beings.⁷⁸ Alternatively, universals could be said to exist (2) outside the mind *in* the individuals of which they are predicated. This view could again be interpreted in one of two ways. Either (2.1), the universal is essentially divided among individuals, so that Zaid and Amr each contain a portion of the universal “Man”; or (2.2), the universal inheres fully in each individual which it predicates. Averroes rejects (2.1), as both Zaid and Amr fall under the full definition of Man, sharing all its essential attributes.⁷⁹ Averroes also rejects (2.2), raising several objections. One way of interpreting the position (2.2.1) is that the universal Man in Zaid is different from the universal Man in Amr. Yet this would lead to the “third man” argument, since both particular manifestations—the universal Man found in Zaid and the universal Man found in Amr—require that we posit a third universal, over and above the two particular instantiations. Nonetheless, this third universal would be manifested individually *ex hypothesi* in each individual man, requiring an additional universal, and so on, ad infinitum.⁸⁰ One could instead argue that (2.2.2), one and the same universal exists as an undivided

whole in both Zaid and Amr. Averroes rejects this possibility as well, as it entails that the same object is simultaneously one and many.⁸¹ By rejecting (2.1) and (2.2) one eliminates (2), according to which universals exist in extramental beings. Since proposition (1) has already been rejected, the position according to which universals exist outside the mind is shown to be groundless.⁸²

This line of reasoning is not fully articulated in the *Two Investigations*, yet Del Medigo embraces its conclusion and declares that in the extramental realm universals possess potential existence only.⁸³ The ontological concession enables Del Medigo to ascribe to the universals infinite extension and to include all individual instances of a given species—past, present, and future—under a single definition. If a universal existed in the world as a being *in act*, it would be a “particular this,” *aliquid hoc*, פרטי ורמז, and consequently could not function as universal.⁸⁴ Extramental existence is only ascribed to universals *accidentally*, by virtue of their potential existence in hylomorphic beings, which become actual in the mind of the cognizer. Del Medigo thus employs the discussion and its conclusion as further evidence for the transient nature of the intelligibles and, consequently, for the agency of the Agent Intellect. Since universals exist outside the mind only potentially, they receive their actual existence in the human mind by virtue of the Agent Intellect’s agency.

To conclude, Del Medigo elaborates three arguments for the transient nature of the intelligibles, in order to establish the efficient nature of the Agent Intellect and to refute Themistius’s position. It is interesting to note that Averroes makes a similar move in the *Epitome of the De anima*, though with a different theoretical aim in mind. Rather than establishing the agency of the Agent Intellect, Averroes points to the transient nature of the intelligibles in the *Epitome of the De anima* to illustrate the corporeal nature of the Material Intellect:

We say that it is now obvious that these intelligibles are generated, [and therefore] there must necessarily exist a disposition which precedes them. And since a disposition is not separable, it must exist in a substratum.⁸⁵

From the transient nature of the intelligibles, Averroes deduces in the *Epitome* that the Material Intellect is a corporeal disposition, in contrast to his conclusion in the *LCDA*, where it is argued that the Material Intellect is a separate, immaterial substance. Del Medigo, however, does not hesitate to borrow discussions from the *Epitome* while rejecting—or better yet, disregarding—the conclusion to which they brought Averroes in that early phase of his work. As elsewhere in the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo selectively chooses those passages from works

by Averroes that suit his theoretical needs, regardless of the role they play in their original context. This is all the more evident in the present case, where the original argument had brought Averroes to endorse the corporeality of the Material Intellect, a position radically different from the one he ultimately endorsed in the *LCDA* and to which Del Medigo himself subscribes in the *Two Investigations*.

On the Eternity of the Agent Intellect versus the Transient Nature of the Intelligibles

Del Medigo establishes the agency of the Agent Intellect by highlighting its role as the efficient cause in the process of conceptualization, bringing the intelligibles from potency to act. This Del Medigo does by elaborating three proofs that go to demonstrate the transient nature of the intelligibles. Yet the doctrine Del Medigo attempts to establish, according to which the Agent Intellect creates the intelligibles from preexisting imaginary forms, seems incompatible with certain principles that underlined Del Medigo's critique against the Thomists, discussed in the previous chapter. There Del Medigo held that God—*qua* separate substance—cannot have direct access to particular beings, as God's knowledge of them is indirect and mediated through His knowledge of Himself.⁸⁶ The Aristotelian principle that underlies Del Medigo's reasoning is that

Nothing new arrives from the first eternal separate [mover], if not by virtue of [its] eternal celestial movement.⁸⁷

If one accepts this dictum with regard to God, and denies Him access to transient beings, the question that naturally follows is how can the Agent Intellect *a fortiori* have access to particular beings, the imaginary forms.

Del Medigo acknowledges this difficulty himself and attempts to solve it by referring to two explanatory models.⁸⁸ The first is the two-subject theory, mentioned in the previous chapter and employed by both Averroes and Del Medigo in order to resolve a number of difficulties that emerge from Averroes's theory of intellect.⁸⁹ Here, Del Medigo employs the theory in order to explain how the eternal Agent Intellect can have access to transient imaginary forms. Del Medigo argues that while the intelligibles are transient with regard to the mind of a particular person, they are eternal by virtue of their inherence in a single Material Intellect. However, rather than supplying a real solution to the

problem, Del Medigo's reliance on the two-subject theory at this stage only seems to beg the question. The difficulty Del Medigo faces is not to explain how the intelligibles are placed in the Material Intellect once abstracted from their particular conditions but to explain how the Agent Intellect can have access to particular, transient beings in the first place. To this difficulty the two-subject theory does not seem to offer a solution.

Del Medigo, having perhaps realized the shortcomings of the two-subject theory in the present case, suggests an alternative explanatory model for the eternity of the human species. As human beings are in a constant process of coming-to-be and passing away, and as that process is eternal, by having access to imaginary forms that reside in particular human souls the Agent Intellect has access to an eternal being, that is, the eternal human species.⁹⁰ Such a notion of eternal existence is found in Aristotle's *De anima* and brings to mind Averroes's notion of immortality as presented by Richard Taylor, according to which human immortality can only be guaranteed through the eternal succession of human beings.⁹¹ This model enables Del Medigo to refer to imaginary forms as eternal *qua* their process of eternal generation and to link between the Agent Intellect's ontological status, on the one hand, and its function within the process of conceptualization, on the other.

Yet such a notion of eternity seems to have only limited applicability, bearing in mind the difficulty that Del Medigo is currently addressing. The type of eternity that Del Medigo portrays may be described as "horizontal," comprised of the eternal succession of transient beings. Yet, the crux of Del Medigo's argument against the Thomists was that a separate substance cannot have access to transient beings, regardless of their succession, be it finite or infinite.

Conclusion

Having established the separation from matter and unicity of the Material Intellect, Del Medigo turns to discuss the nature of the Agent Intellect and attributes to it unicity as well as separation. The challenge that faces Del Medigo is to establish the efficient nature of the Agent Intellect in face of Themistius's reading of *De anima* III.5, which (according to Averroes and Del Medigo) attributes eternal existence to the intelligibles. Del Medigo's main strategy in rejecting Themistius's account is by demonstrating the transient nature of the intelligibles through three main arguments. This strategy is borrowed from the

LCDA, yet Del Medigo expands the discussion by developing his proofs while relying on materials drawn from across the corpus of Averroes's works.

The difficulty Del Medigo then faces is to explain the operation of a separate substance on transient beings, that is, the operation of the Agent Intellect on imaginary forms. The problem is all the more pressing as Del Medigo himself emphasized the ontological gap between the separate and material realms in his criticism of the Thomist position. Del Medigo offers several solutions to the problem—solutions that under scrutiny appear unsatisfactory. Yet apart from the doctrinal aspects of Del Medigo's discussion and the difficulties it may entail, what is of particular interest in the current context is Del Medigo's methodology. Del Medigo's contribution to the wave of translations from Hebrew into Latin has been discussed throughout this study, as well as the manner in which these translations helped to establish the full corpus of Averroes's works, which became available during the Renaissance through several printed editions. In his discussion of the agency of the Agent Intellect, one finds an ideal example of how this synthesis was carried forward through Del Medigo's philosophical activity as well. Though present throughout the *Two Investigations*, this tendency is nowhere more evident than in the current discussion, where the proofs for the transient nature of the intelligibles are based mainly on Hebrew sources. These proofs are then contextualized within a discussion inspired mainly by the *LCDA*; a work that had very little influence on medieval Jewish philosophy but that had a deep impact on the development of Latin scholasticism.

Part II The Relation Between the Material Intellect and the Agent Intellect

Introductory Remarks

Medieval and Renaissance followers of Averroes, as well as modern scholars, had been disputing whether the Material and Agent Intellects constitute two independent substances or whether they form two aspects of a single substance. The disagreement follows from the fact that the text of the *LCDA* seems to accommodate both interpretations. Whereas modern scholars tend to focus on those passages that seem to propose the existence of two independent substances, the two most influential figures of medieval Latin Averroism, Siger of Brabant and John of Jandun, both held that the human intellect is a single

substance composed of both passive and active aspects, to which one refers to as the Material and Agent “Intellects.”⁹² This interpretation was promoted in the fifteenth century by Nicoletto Vernia in his *Quaestio de unitate intellectus*, as well as by Elijah Del Medigo in the *Two Investigations*, whose discussion of the theme carries considerable philosophical sophistication.⁹³

Averroist Background

Averroes’s general line of argument in the *LCDA* seems to suggest the existence of the Material and Agent Intellects as two separate, independent substances. Yet several passages suggest otherwise, and it is to these passages that Del Medigo turns his attention as he attempts to prove the existence of a single human intellect, composed of active and receptive aspects.⁹⁴ One key paragraph in that regard is found in the *LCDA* III.20:

Generally, when someone will consider the material intellect with the agent intellect they will appear to be two in a way and one in another way. For they are two in virtue of the diversity of their activity, for the activity of the agent intellect is to generate while that of the former is to be informed. *They are one, however, because the material intellect is actualized through the agent [intellect] and understands it.*⁹⁵

Taylor, who promotes the two-substance model, nonetheless acknowledges that “Averroes’ description of these two intellects [the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect] in book 3, comment 20, has led some to consider that these are in themselves just one intellectual substance.”⁹⁶ From the passage it would seem that the two intellects form a unity, since the Material Intellect is actualized through the Agent Intellect. Although Taylor does not have Del Medigo in mind, the latter indeed drew from the *LCDA* III.20 in his discussion of the relation between the Material and Agent Intellects.

Del Medigo finds further textual support for his single-substance interpretation in the light analogy that was mentioned frequently in the previous chapter:

How well does Alexander liken that [i.e., human intellect] to fire! For fire is naturally constituted to transform every body through a power existing in it, but nevertheless in the course of this it is affected in a certain way by what it transforms and is assimilated to that in some way, that is, it acquires from it a form less fiery than the fiery form which causes the transforming. For this

disposition is precisely similar to the disposition of the agent intellect with the passible [intellect] [i.e., the Material Intellect] and with the intelligibles which it generates; for it makes them in one way and receives them in another way.⁹⁷

Del Medigo cites the passage as further evidence that for Averroes the two “intellects” are but two aspects of a single substance.⁹⁸ Fire is the agent within the burning process, but it is also affected during the process as its power gradually diminishes. Although the power of the Agent Intellect does not diminish over time, the crux of the analogy is that fire has both active and passive aspects, just as the intellect has. The latter generates intelligibles through its active nature, while it receives them by virtue of its receptive nature.⁹⁹

Another passage that Del Medigo cites from the *LCDA* as further evidence for his single-substance interpretation is III.19:

It should be held according to Aristotle that the last of the separate intellects in the hierarchy is the material intellect . . . since its activity seems more to be affection rather than activity, not because there is something else in virtue of which that intellect differs from the agent intellect other than this intention alone.¹⁰⁰

In the context of the *LCDA*, the passage attempts to illustrate that the Material Intellect is the last in the chain of celestial intellects. Del Medigo, however, sees evidence in the passage that the two intellects, the Material and the Agent, are two aspects or operational modes of a single substance. Del Medigo notes that according to the passage the Material Intellect is differentiated from the Agent Intellect by virtue of its activity alone and that the two are not said to be ontologically distinct. If Averroes wanted to posit the Material and Agent Intellects as two independent substances, Del Medigo concludes, he would have done so explicitly.¹⁰¹ In short, in order to establish the existence of a single human intellect that possesses two distinct aspects, Del Medigo first employs his hermeneutical skills, turning to various passages in the *LCDA* that appear to exclude the existence of the Material and Agent Intellects as two independent substances.

Del Medigo's Investigation into the Relation between the Material and Agent Intellects

As shown, Del Medigo had established the substantial unity of the Material and Agent Intellect by referring the reader to Averroes's explicit comments in the *LCDA*. Yet Del Medigo has also done so by developing an independent

investigation concerning the relation between the two intellects. Del Medigo introduced ten propositions that regard general metaphysical principles and that, when viewed collectively, prove the existence of a single human intellect, composed of passive and active aspects.¹⁰² The ten propositions are as follows:

- (i) The Material Intellect and the Agent [Intellect] constitute one [substance]¹⁰³ (Del Medigo's conclusion).
- (ii) The passive nature is different from the active nature within the human intellect, yet these do not constitute distinct substances (explaining proposition i, Del Medigo will not make use of this proposition in his discussion).¹⁰⁴
- (iii) The union of the Material Intellect with the Agent Intellect is stronger than the union between matter and form in the sublunary world (again, referring to and clarifying proposition i).¹⁰⁵
- (iv) The Agent Intellect does not grant the Material Intellect its existence, the way sublunary matter is actualized by a form.¹⁰⁶
- (v) The Material and Agent Intellects are nothing but the Material [Intellect] and what it cognizes of God or the other separate [movers].¹⁰⁷ (This is the crux of Del Medigo's theory of substantial unity between the Material and Agent Intellects).
- (vi) In every separate mover, with the exception of God, one finds both a receiver and a received aspect [דבר]. [In the human intellect] the receiver is, by way of illustration [על דרך משל] a soul or something similar to a soul, while the received [aspect] is what that intellect cognizes of God.¹⁰⁸
- (vii) The union of the Material and Agent Intellect does not entail that they are truly generated or that they constitute a compound.¹⁰⁹
- (viii) The receiving nature of a certain separate [intellect] is different from the receiving nature in another separate intellect.¹¹⁰
- (ix) The unity (התאחדות) of the receiver and the received thing in all other separate intellects is stronger than the unity between the Material and Agent Intellects.¹¹¹
- (x) The receiving nature in all separate intellects with the exception of God (Who does not possess a receiving nature) is not to be identified as mere potency, but it is a certain existing thing, though it does not exist in act *simpliciter*.¹¹²

Having laid down these seemingly fragmented propositions, Del Medigo weaves them together into a single discussion. He begins by asserting that all separate intellects cognize God, and that this act of cognition constitutes their being as

intellects (proposition vi).¹¹³ This assertion rests on another, more fundamental principle, according to which causality in the separate realm is manifested through intellection. According to Del Medigo,

There is no way for the separate [intellect] . . . to be caused by the First, if not by its [the separate intellect's] cognition of the First. . . . This is almost self-evident, since they [the separate intellects] are created neither *ex nihilo* nor from the potency of matter, they are eternal by nature and do not require the First as the sphere does for its movement . . . it was therefore made clear that if not by cognizing the First . . . [the separate intellect] would not be caused at all. Yet, this [that the separate intellect is not a caused being] is impossible, since the world is a unified entity, consisting of causes and caused beings, which can be traced back to a First cause.¹¹⁴

Seeking to retain the notion of causality in the translunary realm, Del Medigo acknowledges that the translunary realm is devoid of prime matter as the principle of coming-to-be and passing away. Del Medigo, therefore, is in need to formulate a model of causality that does not entail essential generation, associated with coming-to-be and passing away. He does so by arguing that causality in the translunary realm is manifested through the eternal contemplation of the separate intellects with God as their object. By contemplating God the separate intellects are actualized and, consequently, can be said to be caused by God. It is important to note that Del Medigo is not articulating a theory of substantial emanation: what God causes in the separate intellects is their capacity to cognize, not their existence (propositions iv, vii, x). The importance of this qualification will become apparent as our discussion unfolds.

Having clarified the principle of causality in the translunary realm and identified it with the conceptualization of God, Del Medigo explains that the capacity to cognize God is not identical in all separate intellects but rather is manifested in various degrees. The diversity in their capacity to cognize God is what serves as the principle of individuation among the separate intellects (proposition viii, ix): “if there were not a receiving nature [in the separate intellects] there would be no plurality in them . . . therefore, we can find in these separate [intellects], with the exception of God, a receiving nature.”¹¹⁵ This principle Del Medigo borrows directly from the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*:

For it seems that the cause of the plurality of the separate intellects is the difference in their natures, by which they receive the knowledge they gain of the First Principle and which acquire from the First Principle a unity which by itself is one single act, but which becomes many through the plurality of the

recipients, just as there are many deputies under the power of a king and many arts under one art.¹¹⁶

The difference among the separate intellects is reduced to the difference among their receiving natures, since the object of intellection, God, is one for all.

Let us summarize Del Medigo's discussion thus far. Del Medigo constitutes a metaphysical scheme that consists of God and a multitude of separate intellects, all having God as their object of cognition. This act of cognition has two interrelated ontological implications. First, it is through their cognition of God that the separate intellects are said to be eternally caused by God. Second, as the separate intellects are constituted through their act of cognition, the difference in their manner of cognition accounts for their individuation.

Developing his discussion further, Del Medigo relies on a principle that he is not mentioning explicitly but is implicitly assumed. The principle in question is that in the translunary realm there exists an identity between knower, known, and the act of knowing. This identity was famously suggested by Aristotle in the *De anima* and in the *Metaphysics*: "As, then, thought and the object of thought are not different in the case of things that have not matter, they will be the same, i.e. the thinking will be one with the object of its thought."¹¹⁷ Del Medigo's immediate source, however, is the *LCDA* III.15: "conceptualizing and that which is conceptualized are the same in immaterial things."¹¹⁸ The identity between knower and known, or subject and object, characterizes human thought as well, and as we shall see shortly, it is this identity that ultimately accounts for the union of the Material and Agent Intellects within a single separate substance.¹¹⁹

Let us then turn to the last stage of Del Medigo's proof, in which he explains the existence of two aspects, an active and a passive, within a single intellect, rather than two distinct substances:

What the Material Intellect cognizes of the First—which is an intellect in act, and by virtue of which the intellect in potency is, to a certain extent, an intellect in act—is called the Agent Intellect. For, it is by virtue of its power [of the Agent Intellect] that the potential intelligibles become intelligibles in act . . . as it is the case with sunlight with respect to the colours and the transparent medium.¹²⁰

Here in the passage, Del Medigo argues that the Agent Intellect is what the Material Intellect receives when it cognizes God (proposition v). As sunlight is the source of the transparency that enables humans to perceive colors, so God is the source of the efficient causality of the Agent Intellect, which enables humans to abstract intelligibles. As is the case with the other separate intellects,

by cognizing God the human intellect receives its active nature. As an intellect that subsists in pure act, God is the source of His own efficiency but also the source of the efficiency of the human intellect. It is this mode of activity within the separate human intellect that Del Medigo identifies as the Agent “Intellect.”

Having established that the Agent Intellect is what the Material Intellect grasps upon cognizing God, and since in the separate realm the cognizing subject and the cognized content form a unity, Del Medigo concludes that the Material and Agent Intellects form a substantial unity as well. The general structure of Del Medigo’s argument thus runs as follows:

1. In the separate realm one finds a unity between the cognizing subject and the cognized content;
2. The Agent Intellect is what the Material Intellect cognizes of God;
Therefore,
3. The Material Intellect and the Agent Intellect form a unity.

One may note that Del Medigo, in fact, conflates two related notions, that of *act* (actus) and agent (agens). Being-in-act or היות בפעל is a trait shared by all existing beings. It characterizes the human intellect as it also characterizes trees, tables, and chairs. Whatever exists, as any Aristotelian could tell, exists *in act*. Agency, on the other hand, is the specific trait that Aristotle attributes to the intellect in the *De anima* III.5, the intellect “by virtue of making all things.” What Del Medigo, in fact, has proven is that the human intellect is actualized by cognizing God. Del Medigo then identifies this notion of actualization with the active nature of the Agent Intellect, which is the immediate efficient cause of human intelligibles. Yet this identification, so it seems, remains unaccounted for within the explanatory model suggested by Del Medigo.

Del Medigo further distinguishes the unity of the human intellect from two other types of unity, first the unity and simplicity of God’s essence. Unlike the rest of the separate intellects, God’s essence is unqualifiedly simple, as He subsists as pure act and does not receive His active nature from without:

For, in what cognizes itself and is one from every possible respect, as is the case with God, one cannot distinguish between the nature of an intellect and of an intelligible or between the receiving [subject] and a received [object].¹²¹

Second, the unity between the Material and Agent Intellects is distinguished from the unity found within sublunary hylomorphic compounds. Unlike sublunary substances, the being of the Material Intellect and of the other separate

intellects is not actualized through the reception of intelligible form. Del Medigo emphasizes that

[the Agent Intellect] is not the thing through which [the Material Intellect] receives its actual existence *simpliciter* [במיוחדות], as matter receives its existence from form. For, the subject that cognizes does not become [through its act of cognition] a real compound.¹²²

Although the Material Intellect receives the Agent Intellect as an actualizing form, this does not entail the formation of a new object, as when a transient being in the sublunary world receives its form:

This nature, which is said to be in potency [i.e., the nature of the separate intellects] is an [actual] existent being (נמצא).¹²³

As was illustrated in the first chapter, the separate intellects, among them the human intellect, are of a “fourth kind of being.”¹²⁴ Through their cognition of God they are eternally actualized as cognizant beings. However, there is one feature that distinguishes the human intellect from the rest of the separate intellects. Unlike the other separate intellects, the human intellect possesses two types of cognition:

The Material Intellect is, to a certain extent, in potency with regard to its cognition of God . . . and also in potency with regard to sublunary intelligibles. Therefore, the potency in the other separate [intellects] and the potency of the Material Intellect with regard to sublunary intelligibles is expressed almost equivocally.¹²⁵

Through its first mode of cognition, that is, its cognition of God, the Material Intellect is actualized and acquires its active nature, which Del Medigo identifies as the Agent Intellect. Once it has acquired its active nature, the Material Intellect comes to apprehend sublunary intelligibles through its second mode of cognition. The first type of cognition is prior conceptually rather than temporarily, as the Material Intellect eternally conceptualizes sublunary intelligibles. By contrast, other separate intellects can only apprehend God, and they are not engaged in conceptualization of entities in the sublunary realm.

Del Medigo thus elaborates various metaphysical arguments in order to establish the unity of the Material and Agent Intellects within a single, human intellect, as two aspects of that intellect. He goes to explain the nature of that unity—a particular case of the identity between knower and known—and also differentiates it from other types of unity in the sublunary and translunary realms. By way of conclusion, we will compare the model suggested by Del Medigo to

that elaborated by John of Jandun, who similarly held that the Material and Agent Intellects form a unity within a single substance.¹²⁶

When discussing the relation between the Material and Agent Intellect, Jandun formulates his view against that of his Parisian contemporary Thomas Wylton, himself a convinced Averroist, who held that the Agent and Material Intellects constitute two independent substances. According to Wylton,

It was the conception of the Commentator . . . that the agent intellect is a substance subsisting by itself. And I believe that this is the conception of Aristotle, who thus supports this truth.¹²⁷

Jandun disagrees with Wylton. Since the human intellect, *qua* material, is but a potential substance, it requires an active component in order to gain actual existence:

Since the possible intellect is a substance existing in pure potency, it is necessary that its first perfection is a substance, and this is undoubtedly the Agent Intellect. We thus come to know that the intellectual soul is essentially composed of two parts: of the possible intellect as the subject, and of the agent intellect as the formative form [*forma informante*].¹²⁸

Del Medigo would agree with Jandun that the Material Intellect and the Agent Intellect form a single unity and that the Material Intellect is actualized through the Agent Intellect. Del Medigo would nonetheless reject Jandun's assertion that *intellectus agens est forma informans intellectum possibilem, et dans esse ei simpliciter actu*.¹²⁹ For Del Medigo, the Agent Intellect does not supply the human intellect with its existence but with its being *qua* intellectual being alone.

Conclusion

Unlike other discussions in the *Two Investigations* that were aimed to promote Averroes's doctrine in the face of alternative readings of Aristotle, such as those of Thomas Aquinas and Themistius, the discussion concerning the relation between the Material and Agent Intellect is an inner Averroist debate, whose roots go back to thirteenth-century scholasticism. Like other Averroists, Del Medigo assumes the separation from matter, unicity, and eternity of the human intellect, both in its active and passive modes, and seeks to determine the exact type of relation between these two aspects. Whereas modern scholars tend to attribute to Averroes a theory of two separate substances, Del Medigo promotes

the substantial unity of the Material and Agent Intellects as two aspects of a single substance (*duae virtutes eiusdem substantiae*), as did Siger of Brabant and John of Jandun before him.

While citing passages from the *LCDA* in order to support his reading, Del Medigo also undertakes an independent investigation based on a set of metaphysical principles that he draws from the works of Averroes and weaves into a single metaphysical doctrine. Here, Del Medigo does not merely seek to support Averroes's conclusions but attempts to promote his own reading of Averroes. Del Medigo's most original contribution in this context is his claim that the Agent Intellect is identical with what the Material Intellect conceives of God. This allows Del Medigo to argue for the substantial unity of the Material and Agent Intellects as different aspects of a single substance, while being somewhat ambiguous about the notions of *act* and *agency*, an ambiguity that the unvocalized Hebrew script accommodates better than the Latin. Yet again, while one may challenge Del Medigo's reasoning on various points, his discussion concerning the relation between the Material and Agent Intellects appears to be a significant contribution within the *Two Investigations* in the context of the development of the Latin Averroist tradition.

Del Medigo on Conceptualization

Introductory Remarks¹

In the *LCDA*, Averroes describes conceptualization as composed of several subsequent stages, from the formation of a concrete image in the imaginary soul to the generation of a universal intelligible in the Material Intellect. In his analysis of these various stages, Del Medigo identifies conceptualization with the reception of an intelligible in the Material Intellect. Del Medigo manifests this view in a particular context and as a response to the view of John of Jandun, for whom the reception of an intelligible in the Material Intellect is not identical with conceptualization but serves as a preparatory stage within the cognitive process. Conceptualization, Jandun holds, occurs as the Agent Intellect acts on the intelligible, subsequent to the reception of the latter in the Material Intellect. The controversy between Del Medigo and Jandun is based on a more fundamental disagreement that concerns the existence and function of intelligible species (*species intelligibiles*) within the process of conceptualization. In the following pages, we will examine the impact that the notion of intelligible species had on Del Medigo's discussion in the *Two Investigations*, and consequently some conclusions will be drawn concerning Del Medigo's general methodology.

In the *Two Investigations*, Del Medigo holds that conceptualization occurs when the Material Intellect receives an actualized intelligible. As he does throughout the treatise, Del Medigo presents this view not as his own but as the correct reading of Averroes:

And so [Averroes] argued in the fifth comment [in the *LCDA*] that the Agent Intellect . . . strips the forms from matters . . . and afterwards [the Material Intellect] conceptualizes them. The abstraction [i.e., of the forms] is nothing but making them intelligible in act after being intelligible in potency (that is, making them universal and denuded from their material conditions), whereas their conceptualization is nothing but their reception [by the Material Intellect].²

The passage to which Del Medigo alludes is the *LCDA* III.5 390.98 – 104, where Averroes argues that conceptualization is identical with the reception of an intelligible in the Material Intellect:

Aristotle insisted that the agent intellect exists for us in the soul, since we seem to strip forms from matter first and then to understand them. To strip them is nothing but to render them intelligibles in act after they were [intelligibles] in potency, to the extent that apprehending them is nothing but receiving them.³

Here, it seems that Averroes restricts the role of the Agent Intellect to the production of the intelligibles that the Material Intellect receives, and so the function of the Agent Intellect constitutes a preparatory stage that leads to the act of conceptualization itself.⁴ Del Medigo thus identifies the reception of the intelligibles in the Material Intellect with their conceptualization by the Material Intellect. Such identification naturally follows from the more fundamental principle, according to which the intelligibles serve as the direct objects of conceptualization. This point will prove crucial when evaluating Del Medigo's criticism of John of Jandun.

Del Medigo formulates his view concerning the nature of conceptualization as a response to Jandun's view. The latter held that the reception of the intelligible in the Material Intellect is not identical with the act of conceptualization itself. In Del Medigo's formulation,

John of Jandun held that the existence of the universal imaginary forms⁵ in the intellective soul and their reception is not identical with conceptualization. . . . We already mentioned that Averroes held that conceptualization is equivalent to the actual existence of these universal forms in it [i.e., the Material Intellect].⁶

Whereas Del Medigo restricts the role of the Agent Intellect to the generation of intelligibles, claiming that the act of conceptualization is, in fact, nothing but the reception of the intelligible in the Material Intellect itself, Jandun holds that conceptualization occurs as the Agent Intellect actualizes the intelligible form received in the Material Intellect. Del Medigo strongly opposes this view and holds that once the objects of conceptualization are received in the intellect there is no need for their actualization. That is how Del Medigo reads Averroes in the *LCDA*, and he supports his reading with a passage from the sixth discussion in the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*:

The philosophers hold, namely, that the incorporeal existent is in its essence nothing but knowledge, for they believe that the forms have no knowledge for the sole reason that they are in matter; but if a thing does not exist in matter,

Table 8.

	Jandun	Del Medigo
Intelligible	Its reception in the Material Intellect is a preliminary stage in the process of conceptualization	Its reception in the Material Intellect consists the act of conceptualization
Agent Intellect	Activates the act of conceptualization once the intelligible is received in the Material Intellect	Actualizes the intelligible prior to its reception in the Material Intellect

it is known to be knowing, and this is known because they found that when forms which are in matter are abstracted in the soul from matter they become knowledge and intellect, for the intellect is nothing but the forms abstracted from matter, and if this is true for things which by the principle of their nature are not abstracted, then it is still more appropriate for things which by the principle of their nature are abstracted to be knowledge and intellect.⁷

In this passage, quoted verbatim by Del Medigo, Averroes identifies intelligible existence with abstraction from matter. Del Medigo takes this passage to mean that once an object is stripped from its material conditions, it immediately becomes an object of conceptualization. As conceptualization occurs concurrently with the abstraction of the cognized object (the imaginary form) from its material conditions, it leaves no room for a second act of actualization performed by the Agent Intellect as suggested by Jandun.⁸

The roles ascribed by Del Medigo to the different components in the process of conceptualization are outlined in Table 8.

Del Medigo's own view concerning the nature of conceptualization, as his reading of Jandun suggests, is founded on a certain presupposition concerning the character of the object of conceptualization. This presupposition, however, is not shared by Jandun and results in a certain misrepresentation of Jandun's position, as we shall now move to illustrate.

Jandun, Del Medigo, and the Notion of Intelligible Species

As illustrated in the previous section, Del Medigo disagrees with Jandun whether conceptualization is identical with the reception of the intelligible in the intellect, or whether this encounter is merely a preparatory stage within the

process of conceptualization. Yet underlying Del Medigo's criticism is a more profound disagreement that concerns the nature of the cognized object itself. Put simply, Del Medigo's critique rests on the assumption that the intelligibles are the direct objects of cognition, which naturally leads him to identify the reception of the intelligible in the Material Intellect with conceptualization itself. Jandun, in contrast, promotes instead the notion of intelligible species. Following a brief introduction to the development of the notion of intelligible species in the Middle Ages, we will consider Jandun's version of that theory and the way it influenced Del Medigo's account in the *Two Investigations*.

Although the theory of intelligible species received many and diverse formulations over the centuries, intelligible species are commonly defined by medieval and Renaissance authors as mental representations in the human intellect, the being through which (*quo*) the intellect understands things in the world. Even though they are received in the human intellect, intelligible species are not the direct objects of conceptualization. Instead, they represent for the human mind the objects of conceptualization, that is, extramental entities such as chairs and dogs. In the words of Leen Spruit, the theory received its "canonical" status in the thought of Thomas Aquinas, as his formulation of it became the "touchstone for all subsequent discussions."⁹ Here is Aquinas's definition of intelligible species in his *Commentary on the De anima*:

It is apparent, furthermore, that the intelligible *species*, by which possible intellect becomes actualized, are not intellect's object; for they are related to intellect not as what is intellectually cognized but as that by which intellect cognizes.¹⁰

For Aquinas, the intelligible species are not the direct object within the process of conceptualization but rather are the mental device through which conceptualization occurs, and by receiving the intelligible species the Material Intellect (Possible Intellect in Aquinas's terminology) comes to know the beings that are represented by them.¹¹ Aquinas nonetheless has to account for the alleged identity between the knower and known, which Aristotle promotes in several works and which the notion of intelligible species seems to defy. Aquinas relieves the tension by referring to a *likeness* or *similitude* between the intellect and the object of thought; the intellect becomes similar to the known object by receiving an intelligible species, yet not identical with it.¹² Lastly, as the intelligible species supply the *quo* rather than the *quod* in the process of conceptualization, they can become known only by means of reflection and analysis rather than by direct cognition.¹³

Aquinas and the other medieval thinkers who embraced the notion of intelligible species did so in order to avoid one of two pitfalls. One was that of blind idealism, where the intelligible form is the direct object of cognition and, as such, obstructs the intellect from having knowledge of extramental reality. The other danger was that of naïve realism, in which the intellect is said to have direct access to extramental reality, primitively and inexplicably. Spruit stresses that certain medieval scholars were uneasy with the “cryptic identity” between the mind and its objects in Aristotle’s noetics. Hence, these scholars came up with the notion of intelligible species, through which the mind can gain knowledge of the essences of material beings, though without direct access to them.¹⁴

The question whether Averroes promoted such a theory was first raised during the Middle Ages and continued to be discussed in the Renaissance. Aquinas, for instance, maintained that Averroes did not promote a theory of intelligible species in the *LCDA*, yet many of Aquinas’s contemporaries did not share this view.¹⁵ Today, the question is still under dispute, though most scholars refrain from ascribing to Averroes a theory of intelligible species.¹⁶ Jandun, for his part, introduces the theory into his reading of the *LCDA*.¹⁷ Following the familiar formula, Jandun construes intelligible species as the medium through which the intellect gains knowledge of the world, not as the direct objects of cognition.¹⁸ For Jandun, the Material Intellect receives intelligible species “which represent the essence [of beings outside the mind].”¹⁹ Adding a qualification he apparently borrowed from Duns Scotus, Jandun distinguishes between two subsequent stages within the act of conceptualization.²⁰ The first consists of the reception of the intelligible species in the Material Intellect, a stage that precedes the act of conceptualization or intellection itself (*actus intelligendi*).²¹ Jandun locates the actual act of conceptualization at a subsequent stage, when the intelligible species are actualized by the Agent Intellect. Jandun thus refrains from referring to intelligible species as the immediate efficient cause of conceptualization and reserves that role for the Agent Intellect. Consequently, and as Jandun restricts the role of the Agent Intellect to actualizing the act of conceptualization, the imaginary form becomes the single efficient cause of the intelligible itself. This, perhaps, explains Del Medigo’s choice of terminology when criticizing Jandun, referring to cognized forms in the thought of the latter as “universal imaginary forms,” צורות דמיוניות כוללות.²²

The different roles played by the various components within the systems of Jandun and of Del Medigo can be now given in full in Table 9.

Table 9.

	Jandun	Del Medigo
Imaginary form	The single efficient cause of the intelligible species	Transformed by the efficient power of the Agent Intellect into an intelligible
Intelligible	-	Serves as the direct object of conceptualization
Intelligible species ²³	Serves as the indirect object of conceptualization, by virtue of which the Material Intellect has access to extramental reality	-
Agent Intellect	Actualizes the act of conceptualization by acting on the intelligible species, after it has been received in the Material Intellect	Abstracts the intelligible from its material conditions
Material Intellect	Actualized in two stages; first by the reception of the intelligible species, second by the act of the Agent Intellect. Knows the external world by virtue of the intelligible species	Actualized by the intelligibles. Has the intelligibles as its direct objects of knowledge

Del Medigo's Critique of Jandun in Light of Their Different Conceptual Frameworks

With Jandun's theory of intelligible species before us, we are in a better position to evaluate Del Medigo's criticism of Jandun. Underlying Jandun's and Del Medigo's views on the nature of conceptualization are two different theories concerning the object of conceptualization and its representational value. While Del Medigo holds that the intelligibles are the direct objects of conceptualization, Jandun maintains that the intelligible species are the vehicle by virtue of which the mind gains knowledge of things in the extramental world. When viewed against the background of his own metaphysical assumptions, Jandun's claim that the reception of the intelligible species in the Material Intellect is not identical with the act of conceptualization seems less scandalous than its depiction by Del Medigo. In fact, it would seem that the representational function of the intelligible species necessitates the distinction between the reception of the intelligible species and the act of conceptualization. If the two were not distinct,

conceptually if not temporally, then knowledge would not concern things in the world but rather would concern the intelligible species, and the human mind would be entirely self-enclosed.²⁴

Del Medigo's reading of Jandun here seems analogous to Aquinas's reading of Averroes with regard to the object of conceptualization. Aquinas, according to Bernardo Bazàn, "introduced important distinctions and semantic changes into the doctrine [i.e., of Averroes' doctrine concerning the identity of the object of conceptualization], which rendered it more vulnerable to criticism."²⁵ Bazàn refers to the manner in which Aquinas "identifies the Averroistic notion of the *intellectum speculativum* with his own notion of the *species intelligibiles*." Del Medigo similarly introduces semantic modifications into his discussion of Jandun's doctrine in order to render Jandun's position less plausible and his own more accessible. Just as Aquinas "knew the basis of [Averroes'] doctrine very well and . . . seems to have reflected upon it from the start of his career," so too Del Medigo appears to have been well aware of the various formulations of the doctrine of intelligible species.²⁶ In both cases, the semantic modifications stem not from misperception or false transmission of the text but from an attempt to approach a theoretical difficulty on familiar ground.

In conclusion, Del Medigo does not refer explicitly to the notion of intelligible species in the *Two Investigations*, which indeed seems to be absent from Averroes's account in the *LCDA*. This does not imply that Del Medigo was unfamiliar with the notion, as it was discussed openly and frequently in Del Medigo's intellectual circles. For instance, Nicoletto Vernia, who held the chair in philosophy at the time Del Medigo wrote the *Two Investigations*, and Pico della Mirandola, Del Medigo's illustrious student, both discussed and rejected the notion of intelligible species.²⁷ In addition, Jandun's own account of that theory was the object of numerous criticisms in Padua during the Renaissance. The absence of an explicit reference to the notion of intelligible species in the *Two Investigations*, therefore, seems intentional, as Del Medigo chooses to remain faithful to the terminology and conceptual framework of the *LCDA*. By so doing, Del Medigo supplies the reader with a rather biased presentation of scholastic debates that were the fruit of later developments in the medieval and Renaissance philosophical traditions.

Hic Homo Intelligit?

Introductory Remarks

Previous chapters examined the nature of the human intellect as portrayed by Del Medigo in the *Two Investigations*, as he was attempting to clarify Averroes's position on the *LCDA*. Among the main features that Del Medigo attributes to the human intellect, we have discussed its unicity, its separation from sublunary matter, and the substantial unity of its active and passive natures. The discussion that unfolds in this chapter presupposes the unicity and separation of the human intellect. It asks how it is possible to identify human beings as the agents of conceptualization, while their intellect subsists independently of them. This discussion as found in the *Two Investigations* has deep apologetic roots and has emerged from Aquinas's famous attack on Averroes's theory of intellect in the former's *De unitate intellectus*, a work designated by Aquinas to refute Averroes's unicity thesis. One central criticism Aquinas makes is that within Averroes's system it is unclear how individuals possess their rational faculty while their intellect subsists independently of them. Aquinas's criticism evoked various responses by Averroist thinkers between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, all attempting to face his criticism while retaining Averroes's fundamental doctrine of a single intellect shared by all human beings. Del Medigo's discussion of the relation between man and intellect is to be read against this background; an attempt to answer Aquinas while maintaining that the human intellect subsists independently of particular individuals. In order to appreciate fully Del Medigo's discussion, it is therefore necessary to introduce the reader to Averroes's own discussion alongside the criticism it received from Aquinas.

As illustrated in previous chapters, the *LCDA* puts forward a notion of a single intellect, separate from matter, which—according to Del Medigo's reading—contains in its essence both the principles of agency and potency. Yet although

the intellect is a separate substance, Averroes frequently assures the reader that it is nonetheless the human intellect that he is discussing: “we say that two powers appear in the intellect conjoined with us, of which one is active and the other of the genus of passive powers.”¹ This assertion finds additional support in the oft-cited light analogy, which suggests that the Material Intellect is the medium, the thing through which man thinks, rather than the thinking subject itself.² The desired implication of this analogy is that it retains man’s role as the ultimate subject of conceptualization rather than the separate intellect. Averroes does not, in fact, dedicate any particular effort to prove that each human possesses an intellect; the fact seems natural enough, and something no Aristotelian in his right mind should doubt. Instead, Averroes attempts to account for human conceptualization in light of his general noetic scheme, in which the intellect subsists separately from man. In other words, Averroes seeks not to prove that humans conceptualize but to explain *how* humans conceptualize while their intellect subsists independently of them. This theme is closely related to another, discussed in the *LCDA* as well: the individuation of thought among human beings within a system that promotes the existence of a single, separate intellect.³ Yet while the two questions are closely related, the relation between man and intellect is the more pressing concern within Averroes’s system. In order to explain how thought is attributed to humans individually, one needs to explain how it can be related to humans in the first place.

Let us then retrace Averroes’s reasoning. His main strategy in attributing conceptualization to humans is to claim that the intellect, though separate in its existence, nonetheless functions as man’s form. As all hylomorphic compounds, humans carry their specific operation by virtue of their form:

We act in virtue of these two powers of intellect when we wish, and nothing acts except through its form; [so] for this reason it was necessary to ascribe to us these two powers of the intellect.⁴

Averroes still faces the task of contextualizing this model within his general theoretical framework and explaining how a separate substance can serve as the form of a sublunary hylomorphic composite such as man. Averroes, it will be remembered, holds that the Material Intellect is not a material form.

As was established in Chapter 2, if the intellect were a bodily form or disposition, it could not receive universal intelligibles. Averroes therefore needs to supplement his account with a model that would reconcile the intellect’s ontological status with its function as a form, and he finds it—the reader by now may have already guessed—in the two-subject theory.

The two-subject theory, as mentioned in previous chapters, is induced throughout the *LCDA* to solve various difficulties and to account for various phenomena. Currently, the model enables Averroes to account for the observable fact that human beings can entertain their rational faculty at will, and he does so in the following manner. As mentioned in previous chapters, Averroes designates two subjects for each intelligible: the Material Intellect and an imaginary form. Imaginary forms serve as “subjects” in the sense that each intelligible takes its origin from an imaginary form through the abstracting power of the Agent Intellect. As the imaginary form is transformed into an intelligible, which is then received in the Material Intellect, “The material intellect is . . . united with us only in virtue of its uniting with the forms of the imagination.”⁵ This process is presented, though in a somewhat obscure manner, in the following passage from the *LCDA*:

Since it was explained . . . that it is impossible for the intelligible to be united with each human being and be numbered in virtue of the numbering of these [i.e., the human beings] by way of the part which belongs to it [i.e., to the intelligible] as matter, namely, the material intellect, then it remains that the conjoining of intelligibles with us human beings is through the conjoining of the intelligible intention with us (these are the imagined intentions).⁶

Averroes refers to the intelligible as the object that informs the Material Intellect with a specific intelligible content (e.g., the intelligible “Horse,” which informs the Material Intellect with the notion of the species horse). This informed or actualized intellect, a conjunction of the intellect and the received intelligible, cannot be attributed to man by virtue of the Material Intellect, since the Material Intellect is not a bodily form. Instead, the intellect-intelligible compound is conjoined with man through the imaginary form from which the intelligible originally emerged.⁷

Aquinas’s Critique of the Two-Subject Theory

In *De unitate intellectus*, Aquinas famously criticizes Averroes’s theory of intellect, as he also did—though less systematically—in earlier works such as the *Summa contra gentiles* and the *Commentary on the De anima*.⁸ The *De unitate intellectus* is unique in that it is devoted entirely to a refutation of Averroes’s psychology and, in particular, his doctrine of a single intellect, shared by all humans—a position that Aquinas locates in the works of some of his contemporaries in Paris. One of Aquinas’s central claims in *De unitate intellectus* is that within

Averroes's system one cannot account for the fact that "this human understands" (*hic homo intelligit*).⁹ Aquinas raises this objection in earlier works as well, for example, in his *Commentary on the De anima*:

There are many other things that can be said against [Averroes'] position, things we have looked into more carefully elsewhere. On this occasion, however, suffice it to say that from this it follows that no individual human being has intellectual cognition.¹⁰

Later in the commentary, Aquinas would reject Averroes's solution discussed earlier, according to which the imaginary form acts as the mediating factor between the intellect and men.¹¹ In *De unitate intellectus*, Aquinas develops this criticism further through the introduction of three arguments, which we will now discuss in some detail.

According to the first argument, the two-subject theory offered by Averroes entails a narrow and restricted notion of "form" (*forma*) when applied to the human intellect:

According to what Averroes says, intellect is not united with man from his generation but through the operation of sense insofar as he is actually sensing.¹²

In other words, if the presence of the imaginary forms in the separate intellect is what constitutes the intellect as the form of man, then that particular hylomorphic constitution is rendered merely *operational*, as it only occurs intermittently when the images of a particular human are presented to the separate intellect. Yet according to Aquinas, a form ought to be present in the hylomorphic compound from the moment of its generation, as the component that provides the substance with its existence.¹³ As we shall see next, this argument made little impression on John of Jandun and Elijah Del Medigo, as both accepted operational unity as sufficient for establishing the type of hylomorphic conjunction found between man and intellect.

Aquinas's second argument addresses the fact that within Averroes's own system the Agent Intellect abstracts the intelligibles *from* imaginary forms rather than employing them *qua* imaginary forms. Aquinas holds that following Averroes's reasoning, the Material Intellect "is not united with phantasms through the intelligible species [i.e., intelligibles¹⁴] but rather is separate from them."¹⁵ For Aquinas, Averroes's theory of intellect entails that the imaginary forms are left behind rather than involved in the process of conceptualization. Thus, Averroes's turn to imaginary forms is unaccounted for in light of his own noetic principles.¹⁶

Aquinas' third argument reads as follows:

Even granted that numerically one and the same species [i.e., "intelligibles"] were the form of the possible intellect and at the same time in phantasms, such a conjunction would not suffice to explain that this man understands. For it is obvious that just as something is sensed (*sentitur*) through a sensible species, but one senses (*sentit*) something through the sensitive power, so something is understood (*intelligitur*) through the intelligible species [i.e., "intelligibles"], but one understands (*intelligit*) something through the intellectual power.¹⁷

Averroes's error, Aquinas suggests, lies in confusing the notions of object and subject within the process of conceptualization. Even assuming—notwithstanding Aquinas's second criticism—that images are found simultaneously in man's imaginary faculty and in the separate intellect, the images would then serve as the objects of conceptualization. Consequently, one could refer to humans not as subjects of conceptualization, engaged in the process as active participants, but rather as the *substrata* in which the objects of conceptualization inhere. Aquinas illustrates this by elaborating an analogy between the process of conceptualization and that of sight, in one of the most oft-cited passages in the *De unitate intellectus*:

The aforesaid union of the possible intellect with man—in whom exist the phantasms whose species are in the possible intellect—is like the union of the wall, in which the colour is, with sight, in which the species of the colour is. The wall does not see, but its colour is seen; thus, it would follow that man does not understand, but his phantasms are understood by the possible intellect. It is impossible, therefore, on the basis of Averroes' position, to show that this man understands (*quod hic homo intelligat*).¹⁸

Aquinas argues that the role Averroes ascribes to human beings in the process of conceptualization resembles that of a wall in the process of sight. As the wall is the seat of colors that are the objects of sight, so is the imaginary faculty the seat of the imaginary forms, which serve as objects within the process of conceptualization. Under these circumstances, it would be equally as preposterous to claim that the individual person thinks as it would be to suggest that the colored wall sees. Again, Aquinas reduces Averroes's assumptions *ad absurdum* to illustrate that it is impossible to account for the fact that *hic homo intelligit* following Averroes's interpretation of Aristotle's psychology.

Having died eighty-two years prior to the completion of the *De unitate intellectus*, Averroes could not have responded to the criticism made by

Thomas Aquinas. However, Aquinas's arguments caught the attention of those who followed Averroes as well as those who rejected his theory in the centuries that followed.¹⁹ Aquinas's criticism had a significant impact on Siger of Brabant, the thirteenth-century master of arts whose writings most likely provided a good deal of the motivation for *De unitate intellectus*. Aquinas's critique also influenced the thought of John of Jandun, whose work Del Medigo knew well.²⁰ Thus, before turning to analyze Del Medigo's response to Aquinas, John of Jandun's own response will be examined as a useful point of reference. By comparing the two accounts it will be shown that whereas Jandun elaborates an innovative explanation to the phenomenon of human conceptualization, Del Medigo employs a different strategy, suggesting a more conservative approach that follows closely the text of the *LCDA* in his polemic against Aquinas's criticism.

John of Jandun on the Conjunction of Man with the Human Intellect

In discussing the relation between the separate intellect and man, Jandun follows Averroes's fundamental strategy by referring to the intellect as the form of man yet at the same time qualifying the sense in which the intellect is said to serve as man's form. Jandun repeats Averroes's assertion in the *LCDA* according to which the intellect cannot serve as a substantial-material form of man, as that would prevent man from receiving universal intelligibles.²¹ Consequently, Jandun construes the human intellect as a form that is united with the body only through an operation intrinsically appropriated to that body (*operans intrinsecum appropriatum corpori*).²² Humans are first placed in their species by virtue of their substantial form, the cogitative soul or "passive intellect" (*intellectus passivus*). The intellectual soul only serves as man's second, "operative" form.²³ The operational mode of conjunction was criticized by Aquinas as insufficient for constituting a real hylomorphic union, yet Jandun finds it sufficient in the case of human conceptualization.²⁴ For Jandun, the intellect serves as the form of man the same way a sailor serves as the form of a ship, or a celestial soul the form of a celestial sphere.²⁵ While it is by virtue of their substantial form that humans exist as particular instantiation of the human species, it is by virtue of the intellect that they are able to conceptualize. This qualified sense of form with regard to the human intellect was also suggested by Del Medigo's contemporary,

Nicoletto Vernia, who argued in his *Quaestio de unitate intellectus* that the union of man and intellect should be understood in a looser sense than the union found between a material form and sublunary matter.²⁶

Returning to Jandun, while the latter qualifies the sense in which the human intellect serves as man's form, still he needs to explain the mechanism of this operational unity. Averroes, we may recall, did so by pointing to the role of images within the process of conceptualization; this was, at any rate, Aquinas's reading of Averroes, which seems to rely on solid textual grounds.²⁷ Jandun, however, rejects this reading of the *LCDA* altogether and claims that Averroes had never promoted the two-subject theory as a means for explaining the attribution of conceptualization to man. In developing his reading of Averroes, Jandun turns to none other than Aquinas and cites the third criticism from *De unitate intellectus* mentioned previously:

From the mere fact that an intelligible species is caused by our phantasm, it does not follow that we could be described as conceptualising subjects (*intelligentes*). It would rather follow that either the phantasm [itself] is conceptualised (*quod phantasma esset intellectum*), or the thing imaginatively-represented (*vel res ipsa phantasiata*) [is being conceptualized], just as from the fact that a [sensible] species, which is present in sight, is a likeness of a colour, it does not follow that colour itself is seeing (*non sequitur ipsum colorem esse videntem*). Wherefore I say that this was never the intention of the commentator, and whoever attributes this view to him err gravely.²⁸

Whereas Aquinas rejects the two-subject theory model while identifying it as the view of Averroes (and the Averroists), Jandun rejects it as false interpretation of the *LCDA* that goes against Averroes's original meaning and offers his own correct interpretation instead. Ironically, in arguing against the two-subject theory, Jandun employs the arguments employed by none other than Thomas Aquinas.²⁹ Like Aquinas, Jandun ascribes to the imaginary forms the role of objects within the process of conceptualization and argues that, as such, they cannot sufficiently establish the role of man as a subject within that process. Rather than turning to the imaginary forms as mediators, Jandun's solution relies on a distinction he draws between two types of compounds or conjunctions:

I say that anything which is composite can be considered as a single being (*unum secundum esse*) in one of two ways. One way is that the being of the one is essentially identical with the being of the other. . . . In another way, a composite being can be considered as a single being in that the being of one part is not distinct in place and subject (*loco et subiecto*) from the being of the other part.³⁰

According to Jandun, the type of conjunction between man and intellect belongs to the second of the two types described in the previous quote, which can be characterized as “negative conjunction.” Here one does not look for a certain element that positively conjoins X and Y. Instead, the model refers to X and Y as constituting a single compound as long as there is no feature to distinguish them. In the case of the intellect and man, the two cannot be distinguished spatially (*non est distinctum loco et subiecto ab esse alterius*) as the intellect does not occupy a location in space. Hence, man and intellect are said to constitute a hylomorphic unity.

The shortcomings of Jandun’s reasoning seem clear enough. First, postulating nondistinction as a criterion seems to entail identity rather than conjunction. However, in the *LCDA*, Averroes suggests that the two are conjoined yet retain their distinct identity. Second, if the intellect is conjoined with the body only owing to the fact that it lacks spatial location, it is unclear how the intellect is related to the body any more than it is to a chair, a tree, or any other being that occupies space. In order to avoid a sense of conjunction that is merely trivial, Jandun ought to have distinguished the relation between intellect and man from other relations that the intellect may hold with any other being.³¹ Yet whatever difficulties Jandun’s solution may entail, of interest is the manner in which he approaches the challenge posed by Aquinas. Rather than denouncing Aquinas’s criticism, Jandun partially accepts it, making a concession concerning certain aspects of Averroes’s unicity thesis in order to reinforce other aspects. As we shall see, this tactic is drastically different from the one employed by Del Medigo as he came to face Aquinas’s criticism in the *Two Investigations*.

Del Medigo on the Conjunction of Man with the Human Intellect

Of the eight arguments against Averroes’s view that Del Medigo presents at the start of the *Two Investigations* (and later goes on to refute), three are iterations of the claim that within the conceptual framework of the *LCDA*, conceptualization cannot be attributed to man.³² Apart from addressing and refuting these criticisms, Del Medigo also dedicates an entire section to explain how the relation between man and intellect is made possible.³³ Del Medigo was therefore certainly aware of Aquinas’s critique, of its impact, and of the controversies that followed it in the Latin scholastic tradition. He consequently attempts to defend Averroes’s position in view of these controversies.

Del Medigo, as we have seen, follows Averroes in asserting that the human intellect is a separate substance:

And the great commentator was compelled to argue that the intellective soul is not material, and that it is indeed a separate substance (עצם נפרד).³⁴

Further, Del Medigo asserts that the intellect serves as the form of man in a derivative sense only and that it constitutes with man a strictly operational unity:

We attribute conceptualization to humans . . . by virtue of what, in a certain manner, serves him as form, as was explained earlier. And he [man] has an essential conjunction with it [the intellect] (והוא מתאחד בעצם עמו) in producing that act [conceptualization].³⁵

The Material Intellect somehow serves as our form, as will be made clear, since it is by virtue of it that we conceptualize. Yet we possess another, substantial form, by virtue of which we exist *in act*. This is our form *qua* humans, by virtue of which human is generated and passes away *qua* human, that is by virtue of his specific form (צורה מינית).³⁶

And as was said, our ultimate form by virtue of which we are human is not the Material Intellect.³⁷

John of Jandun and Nicoletto Vernia both compared this type of unity to that found between a sailor and ship, a Platonic metaphor that Del Medigo does not readily endorse. Yet similarly to Vernia and Jandun, Del Medigo recognizes that the intellect is not a form in the strict sense—a form that grants the compound its existence (as a material form does)—and that the conjunction between man and intellect, accordingly, is not a “real composition” (לא שהוא מורכב באמת).³⁸

Having affirmed, in accordance with the mainstream trend of the Averroist tradition, that the Human Intellect is a separate substance, it is now for Del Medigo to account for the way in which a separate being serves man as form. The restricted, operational sense in which the intellect is understood to be a form does not in itself offer a solution, although it leaves room for creative interpretations of the kind endorsed by Jandun. Yet unlike Jandun, in his attempt to explain how the intellect is conjoined with man as a form, Del Medigo returns to Averroes’s solution, based on the two-subject theory:

And [the Material Intellect] is our form in a certain sense, as will be explained, as it has the capacity to receive from us [its content of cognition] through the imaginary forms. We are consequently designated as subjects of conceptualization by virtue of this relation (מצד הקשר הזה).³⁹

Del Medigo explicitly refers to the mediation of the imaginary forms as the constitution that enables one to attribute conceptualization to man. Whereas Aquinas argues that such mediation is insufficient for establishing the type of relation between man and intellect, Del Medigo sees no reason why the presence of imaginary forms cannot be sufficient for the constitution of an *operational* conjunction, not a hylomorphic conjunction of the kind one finds between material form and prime matter. Let us illustrate this with an example. One of the counterarguments mentioned by Del Medigo at the start of the *Two Investigations*, in which he hypothetically assumes Aquinas's view, is the following:

If there were a single Material Intellect for all human beings, it would be a separate form.⁴⁰ And if [the Material Intellect] were a separate form, one could not attribute conceptualization to us by virtue of it. Therefore, if the Material Intellect were one in all human beings, one could not attribute conceptualization to us, which is false. The Material Intellect, therefore, is not a single being.⁴¹

Replying to the argument, Del Medigo makes the familiar Averroist recourse to the presence of imaginary forms in the process of conceptualization:

To this I reply that the proposition (תנאיית), according to which one cannot ascribe conceptualization to us by virtue of a separate form, is partly true and partly false. It is true if, by "separate," we mean separate *simpliciter* (נפרד במוחלט), that is, as not having any relation to us and as not being disposed to receive [content of cognition] from the powers of our soul. . . . I reply that one can indeed attribute conceptualization to us, since the powers of our soul [i.e., the imaginary soul] assist in bringing forth conceptualization (פועלות להשכיל).⁴²

By "powers of our soul," Del Medigo refers to the imaginary soul that carries the imaginary forms, clearly alluding to the two-subject theory. Del Medigo thus returns to the same methodological approach when addressing various themes relating to Averroes's theory of intellect, relying heavily on the text of the *LCDA* and, in particular, the two-subject theory. In previous chapters we have shown Del Medigo's reliance on the text of the *LCDA* while arguing for the unicity of the Material Intellect and in denying the presence of intelligible species in Averroes's system. This tendency is in contrast to that which we find in thinkers like John of Jandun, who attempted to supplement Averroes's account with creative means that do not necessarily correspond to the text of the *LCDA*, and it seems no coincidence that Jandun is repeatedly criticized throughout the *Two Investigations*. Presently, Del Medigo relies on the *LCDA* when arguing

against Aquinas and his claim that within Averroes's system, conceptualization cannot be attributed to man. Del Medigo's fidelity to Averroes here is particularly striking, as Aquinas's criticism was traditionally perceived as effective and drove both Jandun and Siger to look for solutions outside the theoretical model drawn in the *LCDA*. Del Medigo's reluctance to do so demonstrates what is the most dominant feature of the *Two Investigations* in general: the strong reliance on the works of Averroes himself rather than those of the Averroists.

Conclusion

What was Elijah Del Medigo's contribution to the Aristotelian tradition? As this book has tried to show, Del Medigo was contributing to the making of a single Averroist school, merging the two existing Averroist trends that have developed independently during the Middle Ages—the Hebrew and Latin. While commonly acknowledged for his work as a translator, the book has tried to show how this contribution also manifested itself in Del Medigo's independent works, focusing on the *Two Investigations*.

Although written as an independent treatise rather than a running commentary, Del Medigo's *Two Investigations* follows Averroes's *LCDA* closely, clarifying terminological difficulties and elucidating Averroes's arguments concerning his theory of intellect, and in particular Averroes's unicity thesis. The primary goal of this book, therefore, was to establish the relation between Del Medigo's *Two Investigations* and Averroes's *LCDA*, supplementing Del Medigo's numerous allusions to the *LCDA* with exact references to the modern Latin edition and English translation of Averroes's work. Del Medigo's contribution to contested themes was illustrated as well, such as the presence of intelligible species in the *LCDA* or the relation between the Material and Agent Intellects.

Although focused mainly on the structure and content of the *Two Investigations* against the background of Averroes's *LCDA*, the book also established several important facts concerning Del Medigo's relations with his contemporaries. Most significantly, it has been shown how the *Two Investigations* reflects the intellectual ambiance of Padua in the fifteenth century, and more specifically the Paduan Averroist school. This fact manifests itself in Del Medigo's frequent references to John of Jandun, a popular protagonist of fifteenth-century Aristotelian discussions in Padua; in his focus on the unicity thesis, which caught the attention of other Paduan Averroists as well; and in textual evidence from the *Two Investigations*, which reflects Del Medigo's activity as a translator. Yet other features of the *Two Investigations* indicate that Del Medigo deliberately kept his distance from the Latin Aristotelian schools of his time. This is reflected in him not mentioning explicitly any of his contemporaries by name and, at the same time, reducing contemporary Averroist debates to the conceptual frame-

work that he drew from the works of Averroes himself. These two contrasting tendencies could be traced throughout the *Two Investigations*, and it has been suggested that Del Medigo's ambivalent stand had to do with his unique position as a Jew working within a predominantly Christian environment. This hypothesis, however, ought to be examined further through future research.

Further research is also needed to explore Del Medigo's other philosophical works. While the present study has focused on Del Medigo's contribution in the field of Averroist psychology, many of his works on physics and metaphysics still await the scholarly attention they deserve, which would elucidate their content and contextualize them against their Averroist background. As in the case of the *Two Investigations*, such endeavor would promote our understanding of certain developments within the Renaissance Averroist tradition yet would also allow one to employ Del Medigo's commentarial skills toward a better understanding of the works of Averroes himself.

Appendix I: The Works of Elijah Del Medigo

Appendix I supplies a comprehensive list of Del Medigo's works and translations. It is based on a critical assessment of previous bibliographical accounts, most of which have not appeared in English, together with an examination of primary sources.

Original Compositions

Quaestio de primo motore and Quaestio de mundi efficientia

These works were composed by Del Medigo in Venice in 1480, as he testifies himself—“*Finis huius opusculi factum est Venetiis in 1480 secundum numerum latinorum*”¹—and were written around the same time: “*sic etiam faciam in quaestione sequente quae multum est connexa cum ista, et est haec.*”² These works were first printed as an appendix in John of Jandun, *Questiones in libros physicorum Aristotelis*, Venice 1488, and in several editions since.³ Various scholars offer various listings of these editions, some more comprehensive than others. By comparing these accounts we may refer to no less than twelve editions, published in 1488, 1501, 1506, 1519, 1520, 1544, 1551, 1552, 1560, 1575, 1586, and 1596. We should mention two additional dates that scholars label as uncertain: 1593 (Steinschneider) and 1598 (Cassuto).⁴

Quaestio de esse et essentia et uno

The treatise appears in ms. BnF lat. 6508 in two versions, ff. 86r–87v and 92r–95r, under the title “*De ente essentia et uno.*”⁵ The treatise was printed in the editions that contain the *Quaestio de primo motore* and *Quaestio de mundi efficientia* mentioned in the previous paragraph.

This treatise was composed following conversations Del Medigo held with Pico della Mirandola sometime between May and November 1486 in Perugia⁶ and was followed by Pico's own *De ente et uno.*⁷ In the introduction to the

Quaestio, Del Medigo describes the circumstances that led to the composition of the treatise: “*Cum essem Perusii cum doctissimo comite magnifico domino Ioanne mirandulano philosopho clarissimo, multa de esse et essentia et uno diximus.*”⁸

According to Kieszkowski, Del Medigo’s work is in fact a commentary on book X.1 of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, yet Mahoney identifies references by Del Medigo to passages he translated for Pico from book IX of Averroes’s *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics*.⁹ Giovanni Licata holds that Del Medigo’s work treats Averroes’s *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, and he also supplies a brief comparative analysis of Del Medigo’s and Pico’s works.¹⁰

In dictis Averrois super libros physicorum clarissimae annotationes

The work was composed by Del Medigo in Florence in late July 1485, as he himself remarks in his concluding paragraph: “*Hoc opusculum annotationum etc. finitum fuit anno latinorum 1485 in fine Iulii Florentiae.*”¹¹ Steinschneider has suggested that the date might refer to an early unknown printed edition, yet this view was rejected by Cassuto.¹² The work also appears in ms. BnF lat. 6508 ff. 1–70, and in printed editions together with the other compositions by Del Medigo mentioned already, appended to John of Jandun’s *Questiones in libros physicorum Aristotelis*.¹³ Del Medigo produced the work at the request of Pico, who wanted to have a better understanding of Averroes’s commentaries on the *Physics*, and was identified by Cassuto as concerning Averroes’s *Middle Commentary on the Physics*.¹⁴ Cassuto also mentions a note in the 1501 Venetian edition, where it appears that Del Medigo himself was revising the text in this edition.¹⁵

Commentary on the *De substantia orbis*

The Latin version of this work, an autograph according to Mercati, was completed in Bassano, 5 October, 1485. In the Latin manuscript (ms. Vat. lat. 4553), the work is found in ff. 1r–51r. Corresponding sections are found in ms. BnF lat. 6508, ff. 95v–98r.¹⁶ According to Cassuto, the commentary is based on a Hebrew rendition of *De substantia orbis* by an unknown translator.¹⁷ The Hebrew version, completed in fifth Marcheshvan 246, 14 October, 1485, appears on ms. BnF heb 968, 1v–74v, the same manuscript that contains the *Two Investigations*.¹⁸

The literal nature of the translation appears from comparing, in Table 10, the first and last passages of the treatise¹⁹:

Table 10.

Vat. lat. 4553	BnF héb 968
<p><i>Iam sepe hunc nobilem libellum quod dicitur De substantia orbis Averois principis philosophorum post Aristotelem exponere cogitavi. Hoc tamen dimisi quia uidebatur apud me esse quasi per se clarum apud quemlibet philosophum qui se profundavit aliqualiter in opinionibus philosophorum</i> (f. 1r)</p>	<p>כבר עלה בלבי פעמים רבות לבאר המאמר הנכבד הזה המכונה עצם הגלגל אשר לראש חכמי הפילוסופים אחר ארסטו אבן רשד, אלא שנמנעתי להיותו נראה בעיני היותו קרוב למבואר בעצמו אצל כל פילוסוף אשר העמיק קצת בדיעות הפילוסופים ורשיהם (f. 1v)</p>
<p><i>quod ego non uerifico totum quod est scriptum, sed dico quod illud quod scripsi est conueniens opinionibus philosophorum et fundamentis eorum. Illud autem quod est contra fidem ueram nullo modo credo neque affirmo, sed locutus sum secundum viam eorum sicut est consuetudine exponentium, et adeo quero ueniam et iuuamen in uita humana et in felicitate, et compleui hanc Expositionem in terra Bassanj quinta die octobris MCCCCLXXXVJ secundum numerum latinorum, et incepti ipsam postquam recussi {sic} a nobili domino dicto moranti tunc in Florentie magna civitate die iiij septembris anno predicto, nam ibidem promixi ei hoc componere</i> (f. 51r)</p>	<p>כי אני לא אאמת הכתוב אבל אומר כי אשר כתבתי מסכים לדעות הפילוסופים ושורשיהם ומה שהוא נגד דת האמת לא אאמתיהו ולא אאמינהו כלל ואמנם דרכתי כפי דרכם כחוק המבארים. ומהאל אשאל המחילה והעזר בחיים האנושיים ובהצלחה. והשלמתי הביאור הזה בעיר בשאן בה' למרחשון הרמו למניינינו והתחלתי אותו אחרי לכתו מהשר האדון הנכבד מפירינצה העיר הגדולה בד' לתשרי הרמה כי שם ייעדתי לו להברו (f. 74v)</p>

Be□inat Ha-Dat (The Examination of Religion)

For a detailed bibliographical account, see Ross's and Licata's critical editions.

The Two Investigations

For a description of the three extant manuscripts, see Chapter 1.

Translations

Epitome of the Meteorologica

This translation was made sometime during the period between late 1480 and January 1482.²⁰ It appears in the inventory of Pico's library from 1498 under the

title “*Summa auerois in librum methaurarum et aliqua alia*.”²¹ The translation is found in ms. Vat. lat. 4550, ff. 1v–52r, bearing the title *Summa Averrois in libro Meteororum*.²² This translation was printed in several editions with fragments from the *Middle Commentary on the Meteorologica*. As Steinschneider notes, the early printed editions of 1488 and 1489 are supplemented by a letter Del Medigo addressed to Grimani. Later editions do not include the letter, and they also fail to attribute the translation to Del Medigo.²³

Middle Commentary on the Meteorologica (Sections)

This translation appears in ms. Vat. lat. 4550, ff. 53r–61v, bearing the title: “*Sermo de cometis ex sua media expositione circa primum librum Methaurarum*.”²⁴ The translation was made sometime during the early period of Del Medigo’s acquaintance with Pico.²⁵ A fragment from the *Middle Commentary on the Meteorologica* appears together with the translation of the *Epitome of the Meteorologica* in the editions mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Averroes’s Preface to the Long Commentary on Metaphysics XII

As Del Medigo reports, he translated the work twice, the first translation dedicated to Pico, the second to Grimani. In a letter attached to the translation, Del Medigo addresses Grimani as follows:

*uolui transducere {tibi} prohemiium Commentatoris, quod fecit in XII^o Metaphysice, in quo ponit ordinem librorum et multa bona. Et quamuis alias transdixi dignissimo Domino Johanni comiti Mirandolano, tamen illam transductionem non habeo, et forte in nulla sententia uariatur.*²⁶

The translation and the letter are found in ms. BnF lat. 6508, ff. 78r–81r.²⁷ Kieszkowski appends to Del Medigo’s translation the Hebrew rendition of Moses of Salon (ms. BnF héb. 888, 291r–3v), which Kieszkowski determines is the source Del Medigo used for his Latin translation.²⁸ Apart from the manuscript, Cranz and Licata have also identified the translation dedicated to Grimani in the 1488 edition of *In meteora Aristotelis*.²⁹

Steinschneider has raised the possibility that materials of the first translation that Del Medigo prepared for Pico found their way into the printed translation of the prooemium attributed to Paulo Israelita, but he concludes that the printed version is too smooth (*glatt*) to be prepared by a Renaissance Jew.³⁰ As things stand, and as we do not possess a manuscript of Del Medigo’s earlier translation, the question of whether the translation attributed to Paulo Israelita reflects Del Medigo’s own translation remains open.³¹

Quaestiones in Analitica priora/reference to the Middle Commentary on the Posterior Analytics

From the *Averroes Database*, we learn that six out of the eleven *quaestiones* composed by Averroes were translated by Del Medigo. The translation was made from the Hebrew version of Shemuel ben Jehuda of Marseille and completed on July 15, 1485 in Florence. Steinschneider notes that Del Medigo accompanied these translations with some notes of his own.³² The translation appears in ms. Vat. lat. 4552, which Mercati identifies as an autograph. The edition mentioned in the *Averroes Database* is “*Quaestio in librum Priorum, traducta per Helias Hebraeum*,” 1497, and in “*Egidius . . . super libris priorum cum gemino indice nuouissime recognita*,” Giunta 1522, as “*Quaestio Averrois in librum priorum traducta per Heliam hebreum*,” ff. 82r–89v.

Del Medigo had commented on these *Quaestiones* as a sort of supercommentary, and these comments appear in his letter to Pico (ms. BnF lat. 6508). Del Medigo introduces his additional comments to Pico as follows: “*quam questionem iam habetis, et bene eam intellexistis, quando³³ fui Florentie. Nunc uolo, quod dominatio uestra³⁴ addat in fine illius questionis hec uerba: Inquit Helias.*”³⁵ Del Medigo concludes his comments as follows:

*Notaui autem totum hoc, quia multi quesierunt a me hoc anno legere eis librum Priorum, et maxime quia uidebant similes difficultates³⁶ non posse intelligere; et uere, ut credo, maior pars illius³⁷ libri ignota est cuilibet, quem uidi, et uere difficilis est iste liber, immo etiam mihi, qui multotiens uidi hunc librum, aparet difficilis aliquando, cum uolui uidere aliquid sine consideratione.*³⁸

Kieszkowski has determined that Del Medigo was working on a translation of the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*.³⁹ As illustrated in this book, the Hebrew version of the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* does indeed serve as a major source for Del Medigo in the *Two Investigations*, a fact that may corroborate Kieszkowski’s hypothesis.

Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics, books I–VII (and a fragment of book VIII)

According to Cassuto and Geffen, this work was translated by Del Medigo sometime between the end of 1480 and January 1482, while Bartòla dates it to the period following Del Medigo’s return to Padua in 1487.⁴⁰ Puig Montada holds that the translation must have been made in Crete around Del Medigo’s time of death, late 1492 to early 1493. This Puig Montada gathers from a remark made

by the editor concerning Del Medigo's death.⁴¹ Be that as it may, the work did not survive in manuscript form, and it appears in a 1560 printed edition.⁴² From comparing the Latin version of the 1560 edition to Kalonymus ben Kalonymus's Hebrew translation of the *Middle Commentary*, Steinschneider came to suspect that Del Medigo's "translation" of the *Middle Commentary* is, in fact, an edition of the Latin translation of the *Long Commentary*.⁴³ Puig Montada, who also recognizes the reliance of Del Medigo's translation on the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, argues instead that the work is a translation from the Hebrew version of the *Long Commentary*.⁴⁴ In his comprehensive study of the Hebrew version of the *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Zonta offers two explanations for the apparent discrepancy between the Latin "translation" and the Hebrew text. The first suggestion is that Del Medigo may have translated into Latin a Hebrew version of the *Middle Commentary* with which we are not familiar. The second is that Del Medigo in fact composed an original commentary on the *Metaphysics*, based on the texts of the *Middle* and *Long* commentaries on the *Metaphysics*.⁴⁵

A fragment from book VIII of the *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics* that concerns the problems of universals appears in BnF lat. 6508, apparently in ff. 81v–83r. Here, Del Medigo also expresses his wish to translate the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*.⁴⁶ Kieszkowski mentions another fragmented translation of book V from the *Middle Commentary* found in the manuscript, without referring to an exact folio number.⁴⁷

Fragment of the *Epitome of the Metaphysics*

This fragment appears in ms. BnF lat. 6508.⁴⁸ Like the fragment from the eighth book of the *Metaphysics*, this passage also concerns the problem of universals. Cassuto refers neither to this work nor to the passage from book VIII of the *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics* mentioned previously, but only mentions "*una piccola dissertazione manoscritta toccante varie questioncelle filosofiche di diversa natura*."⁴⁹

De spermata

According to Steinschneider, this is not a translation but a work inspired by a treatise by Averroes that carries the Hebrew title בורעים and carries no title in the Arabic original.⁵⁰ This composition originally belonged to a collection of treatises that in the Hebrew tradition appeared under the heading הטבעיים

הדרושים, accompanied by a commentary of Moses Narboni.⁵¹ The version was mistakenly referred to as a translation from the Arabic, “*de semine ex arabico* [!] *in latinum translata ab Excel. Philosophiae professore D. Helia Cretense.*”⁵² The *Averroes Database* does not mention Del Medigo’s translation and suggests that the work was never translated into Latin.

Sections from the *Middle Commentary on the De partibus animalium*

These sections are found in ms. Vat. lat. 4549, ff. 21r–57v.⁵³

Epitome of Plato’s *Republic*

Del Medigo prepared this translation at Pico’s request from the Hebrew version made by Shemuel of Marseille.⁵⁴ A manuscript of the translation was discovered by Kristeller in 1964, and a critical edition appeared in 1992.⁵⁵

A section from Averroes’s *Epitome of the De anima*

The section appears in ms. Vat. lat. 4549, ff. 11r–18r.⁵⁶ This translation was identified by Josep Puig Montada as a chapter from Averroes’s *Epitome of the De anima* that discusses the nature of the Speculative Intellect, which appears in the inventory of Pico’s library.⁵⁷ Montada also published a Spanish translation of this section.⁵⁸

Liber de proprietatibus elementorum

This work was identified by Mercati in ms. Vat. lat. 4549, ff. 1–6r. Bartòla mentions that the work was printed in the Giunta edition of Aristotle’s works accompanied by Averroes’s commentaries, Venice 1496, ff. 110v–114r.⁵⁹

Letters

Letter to Pico della Mirandola

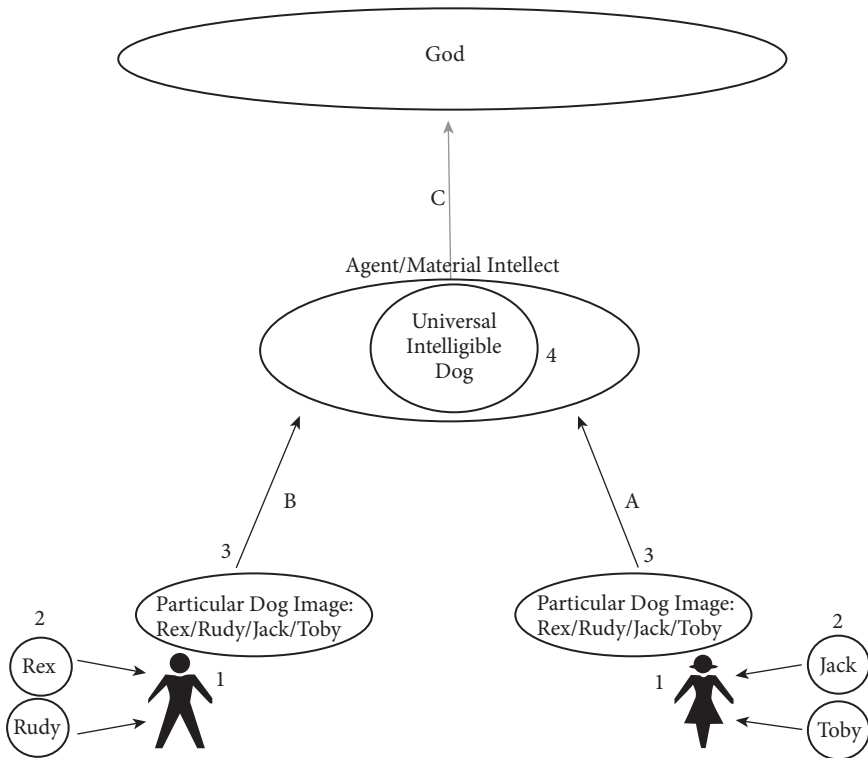
Found in ms. BnF lat. 6508, ff. 71r–6v. Dukas dates the composition of the letter between November 10 and the beginning of December, 1486.⁶⁰ The letter contains sections written in a hybrid of Italian and Latin and sections written purely in

Latin.⁶¹ The letter is printed both in Dukas's "*Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*" and Kieszkowski's "*Les rapports*."

Letter to Domenico Grimani

The letter is found in ms. BnF lat. 6508 f. 77r, and was printed in the *In meteora Aristotelis* edition mentioned previously. Dukas dates the letter between 1483 and 1486 and argues it was not written in Del Medigo's hand.⁶²

Appendix II: Del Medigo's Theory of Intellect



1. Individual human beings
2. Objects in the world
3. Particular imaginary forms
4. Universal intelligible
- A. Images are created through the work of the external and internal senses
- B. Intelligibles are created by the Intellect *qua* Agent and received in the Intellect *qua* Material
- C. The Material Intellect cognizes God and, as a result, receives its active nature, which Del Medigo identifies with the Agent Intellect

Notes

Introduction

- 1 Cf. Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 12: “If I were asked to name a pre-modern who is thoroughly familiar with the texts, reliable, and close to make Averroes comprehensible, I could do no better than recommend Del Medigo’s treatises.”

Chapter 1

- 1 This survey summarizes the achievements of Dukas, Steinschneider, Cassuto, Geffen, Kieszkowski, Ross, and Bartòla, while evaluating their findings against the evidence of primary sources as well as against Licata’s recent book (2013). As will become clear in this chapter, we are in urgent need of further scholarly work that would establish crucial facts concerning Del Medigo’s biography.
- 2 See A. Paudice, *Between Several Worlds: The Life and Writings of Elia Capsali: The Historical Works of a 16th-Century Cretan Rabbi* (München: M-press, 2010), 24.
- 3 The date was established by Cassuto and has become standard. Cassuto quotes a historical document according to which Del Medigo died *nella metà degli anni dell’uomo*. Relying on Psalms 90:10, Cassuto determines that Del Medigo must have been thirty-five years old when he died. Consequently, and relying on Del Medigo’s approximated date of death, Cassuto establishes his date of birth as 1460 but admits that the evidence is not conclusive (See U. Cassuto, *Gli ebrei a Firenze nell’età del Rinascimento* (Firenze: Tipografia Galletti e Cocci, 1918), 282–3 n. 1. Cf. D. Geffen, “Insights into the Life and Thought of Elijah Medigo based on his Published and Unpublished Works,” *Proceedings American Academy for Jewish Research* 41–42 (1973–74), 69 n. 2). Dukas, however, sets Del Medigo’s year of birth as 1450, without presenting supporting evidence. Antonino Poppi cites the date suggested by Dukas (A. Poppi, *Causalità e infinità nella scuola padovana dal 1480 al 1513* (Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1966), 134). Hames mentions the year 1440, again without presenting any supporting evidence (H. Hames, “Elijah Delmedigo: An Archetype of the Halakhic Man?” in *Cultural Intermediaries*, ed. D. B. Ruderman and G. Veltri (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 39). See also Licata, *La via della ragione*, 76, n. 81.

- 4 For an account of the history of the Jews in Crete, see Joshua Starr, *Jewish life*. For a detailed discussion of Del Medigo's Cretan background, see Licata, *La via della ragione*, 23–45.
- 5 *Commentary on the De Substantia Orbis* (Hebrew) f. 74r: קצת קונדרייסים וכבר חברתי בדנינים התוריים ("I have composed some treatises concerning matters of Jewish law"). Cf. Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 71. Geffen mentions the testimony of Rabbi Joseph Colon, a leading figure in Italy in the last half of the fifteenth century, who mentioned Del Medigo's activity in Crete as a student of Jewish law. Cf. D. Geffen, *Faith and Reason in Elijah Del Medigo's Behinat Hadat*, unpublished doctoral dissertation (Columbia University, 1970), 8. On Rabbi Colon, see H. Tirosh-Rothschild, *Between Worlds: the Life and Thought of Rabbi David ben Judah Messer Leon* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991), 23.
- 6 See Paudice, *Between Several Worlds*, 35–7.
- 7 See Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 71. Geffen is citing U. Cassuto, *Codices Vaticani Hebraici* (Rome: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1956), 67, n. 49, 157–63, n. 105.
- 8 See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 7.
- 9 See Paudice, *Between Several Worlds*, 23.
- 10 Lorenzo Canozio published in Padua, in the years 1472–5, an edition of Aristotle's *De anima* accompanied by Averroes's LCDAs, together with other Aristotelian works, Averroes's commentaries, and Averroes's original compositions. The full edition of Aristotle's works that accompanied Averroes's commentaries (with the exception of the commentary on the *Rhetorica*) was printed in 1483, edited by Nicoletto Vernia, Del Medigo's Paduan contemporary. Del Medigo could have had access to both editions, and it is possible that he employed Canozio's edition while composing the *Two Investigations*. On these editions, see [Schmitt, Venetian Editions =] Charles B. Schmitt, Renaissance Averroism Studied through the Venetian Editions of Aristotle-Averroes (with particular Reference to the Giunta Editions of 1550-2), in *L'averroismo in Italia* (Roma: Academia nazionale dei Lincei, 1979), 121–42; R. Crazz, "Editions of the Latin Aristotle Accompanied by the Commentaries of Averroes," in *Philosophy and Humanism: Renaissance Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, ed. E. P. Mahoney (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 117–18.
- 11 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 283. On various aspects of Jewish life in Renaissance Italy, see Roth, *The Jews in the Renaissance* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965); P. O. Kristeller, "Jewish Contributions to Italian Renaissance Culture," in *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters*, Volume IV (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1956), 215–26. In general, it was around the alleged time when Del Medigo first arrived at Venice and Padua that the Venetian Senate was encouraging the participation of non-Paduans in the university life in that city. See P. F. Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 28.

- 12 Letter to Pico, Vat. lat. 4549, f. 46r. Cf. Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 184, 283, and *ibid.*, n. 3. Ross follows Cassuto's claim that it is absolutely certain that Del Medigo was a qualified physician. See Jacob Joshua Ross (ed.), *Behinat Hadat of Elijah Del-Medigo*, Critical Edition with Introduction, Notes and Commentary (Tel Aviv: Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies, 1984), 64, n. 34. Cf. Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 190; B. Kieszkowski, "Les rapports Entre Elie del Medigo et Pic de la Mirandole," *Rinascimento* 4 (1964), 45. Geffen, however, argues that there is "no proof that Elijah actually had medical credentials." Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 10, n. 14. See also A. Bartòla, "Eliyahu del Medigo e Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; la testimonianza dei codici Vaticani," *Rinascimento* 33 (1993), 265, n. 46; Carpi, *La Partecipazione*, 220–1. Hasse, following Bartòla and Carpi, argues that Del Medigo was unique among the Renaissance translators in that he was not a physician but a professional philosopher. See D. N. Hasse, "The Social Conditions of the Arabic-(Hebrew-)Latin Translation Movements in Medieval Spain and in the Renaissance," in *Wissen über Grenzen, Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, ed. A. Speer and L. Wegener (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 77.
- 13 See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 43; Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 194.
- 14 See *HÜb*, 974, section 582; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 284, 287, 289–90; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 10, 16–17, 23, 26, 29.
- 15 See Schmitt, *Venetian Editions*, 127–8; Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 43; A. Poppi, *Introduzione all'aristotelismo padovano* (Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1991), 15.
- 16 *Two Investigations*, f. 150r (48v).
- 17 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 284, n. 1; Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 256, n. 14.
- 18 *Ibid.*; Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 191–2; Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 256, n. 14; Sirat, *Elie Del Medigo*, 8. Puig Montada, however, points to a passage in *De primo motore* as evidence that Del Medigo actively participated in public debates at the University of Padua, possibly as a university professor. See Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 165. Cf. Del Medigo, *De primo motore*, f. 130ra: *in hoc Studio Patauino quaestionem hanc publice optime disseruit*. To date, I have not found any evidence to support Puig Montada's suggestion.
- 19 See *De primo motore*, 130ra; cf. Mahoney, *Pico della Mirandola and Elijah Del Medigo*, 128.
- 20 From the fact that Del Medigo mentions *hoc studio Patauino*, it does not necessarily follow that he served in an official role at the University of Padua. Cf. Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 292, n. 2. See also the previous discussion.
- 21 This claim has been put forward by Ragnisco and criticized by Cassuto. See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 292, n. 2.
- 22 In official documents from Padua from that time, one finds frequent references to the *doctores in litera hebraica, magistri, magistri scholarum*, and those who judge *secundum ius Ebraicum*, which tells of the autonomous and secured status of the

- Jewish community in that city. Paduan Jews continued to enjoy constitutional and economic rights as well under the rule of Venice. See Carpi, *Di alcuni personaggi*, 159, 163.
- 23 See Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 77. Geffen's suggestion should be considered carefully, as he mentions Heinrich Graetz as one of his sources. Concerning Graetz's biased view against the *Kabbalists*—and his perception of Del Medigo's philosophical activity in that context—see discussion below.
- 24 *De substantia orbis* (Hebrew), f. 74r: הנה תמצא ילכו כלם אנשים ונשים וטף אחרי אכול ושתה: בראש השנה אל הנחלים ואל האגמים לנער בגדיהם מן העוונות. ואשר לא יעשה כמעשיהם יצקו עליו במקהילות (“You will find that the entire congregation, man women and children, after having dined on *Rosh HaShana*, goes to the rivers and lakes to shake their garments of their sins. And whoever refuses to do so [Del Medigo probably referring to himself] get shouted at by the entire folk.” Cf. Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 24–5.
- 25 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 284, n. 1.
- 26 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 287; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 16–17.
- 27 See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 20–1.
- 28 Ficino, *Opera Omnia*, vol. I, 878. Cf. Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 288, n. 4; Ross, introduction to *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, 20, *ibid.*, n. 50. “Abraam hebrei,” mentioned in the letter, is identified by Cassuto as “Abramo di Moise da Prato,” a Jewish scholar who lived in Florence between the years 1477 and 1489. See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 317, 325. Flavius Mithridates would later become Pico's instructor in the study of Kabbalah. Cf. *ibid.*, 299–300; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 21.
- 29 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 288 and *ibid.*, n. 2, 3.
- 30 See Appendix I.
- 31 See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 30. Geffen is here relying on Roth, *The Jews in the Renaissance*, 74.
- 32 Bland, *Averroist Response*, 24.
- 33 See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 33–4. According to Ross, the main target of the *Be□inat Ha-Dat* was the new trend of Christian *Kabbalah*, which developed around the time of Del Medigo's stay in Italy. See Ross, *Introduction to Be□inat Ha-Dat*, 36.
- 34 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 293.
- 35 See Ross, introduction to *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, 25; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 35–7; Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 77–8; Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 195; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 292–3.
- 36 See *Two Investigations*, f. 79r (1r). Although Italy was, by and large, hospitable toward the Jews during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, certain anti-Jewish sentiments started to be felt from around 1475 as several attempts were made to provoke blood libels in different cities in Italy following the blood libel in Trento. See Roth, *The Jews in the Renaissance*, 22–7.

- 37 See Ross, Introduction to *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, 23–5. The reason for Del Medigo’s return to Candia put forward by Kieszkowski seems less convincing. According to Kieszkowski, Del Medigo was forced to leave Italy following the ban on the public teaching of the unicity of the intellect, published in 1489 by Bishop Pietro Barozzi of Padua, who forbade the teaching of the unicity thesis outside the university setting by sanction of excommunication. See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 44. Yet as Geffen notes, Nicoletto Vernia, who composed a treatise of a similar nature and at about the same time, was neither exiled nor excommunicated because of his unorthodox views. One may also assume that Barozzi’s decree and its threat of excommunication was aimed at those Christians authors who were involved with the teachings of the unicity thesis, and concerned less those who were outside the church’s reach. Furthermore, the study of Averroes’s philosophy continued to flourish in Padua after Barozzi’s ban. Cf. Poppi, *Causalità e infinità*, 135; Poppi, *Introduzione all’aristotelismo padovano*, 28; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 293; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 32, n. 80.
- 38 For the view according to which Del Medigo died in Candia around 1493, see Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 79; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 22–3; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 282 and *ibid.*, n. 1; Bartòla, *Eliyahu del Medigo*, 255 n. 13. Cf. Licata, *La via della ragione*, 47. If we accept the date of birth and death suggested by most scholars, it appears that Del Medigo died in his early thirties. However, evidence that might suggest that Del Medigo died at an older age is a fresco by Benozzo Gozzoli, found at the chapel of the Palazzo Riccardi in Florence. According to Cecile Roth, the fresco bears the portrait of Elijah Del Medigo (See Roth, *The Jews in the Renaissance*, 114–15). The fresco, however, clearly shows the figure of an old man. The second piece of evidence, a passage from the Latin translation of the *Middle Commentary on the Metaphysics*, calls into question the location of Del Medigo’s death. Addressing the reader, the editor mourns the death of *Helia Cretense* during the preparation of the edition (See Zonta, *Il commento medio* (vol. I), 15–16). If *Helia Cretense* may be identified with Del Medigo, as Zonta suggests, this would testify that Del Medigo died in Italy, since it is highly unlikely that he was actively contributing to Italian editions while in Crete. Puig Montada, conversely, sees this remark as evidence that Del Medigo died in Crete. See Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 160. While these pieces of evidence should not to be taken as conclusive, they nonetheless indicate the need for further investigation into some of the most basic facts concerning Del Medigo’s life.
- 39 Recent studies are Carlos Fraenkel’s *Elijah Del Medigo’s Averroism* and Giovanni Licata’s introduction to *La via della ragione*, both published in 2013.
- 40 Dukas is inconsistent in translating the title of *De substantia orbis*, mistranslates “virtute spiritali” as *l’intellect spirituel* (Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 345), and mistakes the *Posterior Analytics* for the *Prior Analytics* (see Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 347).

- 41 *HÜb*, 135, section 62; 200, section 104; 973 section 582.
- 42 Ibid. In addition to *HÜb*, see Steinschneider's study of Del Medigo in *Hebraeische Bibliographie*.
- 43 Other studies in this field include Julius Guttman's, "Elia del Medigos Verhältnis zu Averroes in seinem Bechinat Ha-Dat," in *Jewish Studies in Memory of Israel Abrahams* (New York: Press of the Jewish Institute of Religion, 1927), 192–208; David Geffen's *Faith and Reason*; Ross's introduction and notes in his critical edition of *Be□inat Ha-Dat* (1984); Aryeh L. Motzkin's, "Elia Del Medigo, Averroes, and Averroism," *Italia* 6 (1987), 7–20; Hames's, *Elijah Delmedigo: An Archetype of the Halakhic Man?*; and Giovanni Licata's introduction to *La via della ragione* (2013).
- 44 Hames, *Halakhic Man*, 214. The *Be□inat Ha-Dat* has received more editorial attention than any other work by Del Medigo. Whereas most of Del Medigo's philosophical treatises are still found in manuscripts, incunabula, or facsimile editions, the *Be□inat Ha-Dat* can be found in four editions, two of them modern critical editions.
- 45 Poppi, *Causalità e infinità*, 135–50.
- 46 See Ross, introduction to *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, 59; cf. C. Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 77–83.
- 47 Ross identifies and criticizes this trend in his introduction to *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, 59–61.
- 48 H. Graetz, *History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1894), vol. IV, 292. Cassuto and, in particular, Bland have argued that Del Medigo's attitude toward *Kabbalah* and Kabbalistic works is far more complex than portrayed by Graetz. See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 297; Bland, *Averroist Response*; Ross, introduction to *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, esp. 59–61. This theme is still under dispute among scholars.
- 49 The second investigation presents textual difficulties that stem from the two existing manuscripts of the *Two Investigations* as well as from the corresponding discussion in the *LCDA*. I could not address these difficulties here and intend to do so in a future study.
- 50 See *Two Investigations*, f. 150r (48v).
- 51 Cf. Licata, *La via della ragione*, 90. Giovanni Licata and the author are planning a bilingual critical edition of the Hebrew and Latin versions of Del Medigo's commentary on the *De substantia orbis*.
- 52 (f. 150r):

ואמנם אשר אמרתי תמיד אומ' עוד כי לא <אל> יחשוב שום בעל דת מעמנו כי דעתי אשר
אאמינהו הוא זה כי אמונתי באמת אמונת <+בני> ישראל . . . ואמנם כוונתי בכתיבת זה
המאמר שני עניינים א' להודיע שונאינו המתפארים עלינו בחכמות כי יש אלהים בישראל
ושאין באמת מדרגת העמים האלה בחכמה כפי מה שיחשבו כאשר באמת הבינו רבים מהם

בראותם מאמרי זה ומאמרי במניע הראשון ובשאלה הבאה כי כלם כתבתים בלשונם ובישיב
ותיהם <בישיבותיהם> ובמקום קבץ חכמיהם . . . והב' כי יש בם דברים רבים מסכימים עם
תורתנו הקדושה ודברים אין להם עסק כלל בענין דתי והם מועילים מאד בחכמה ואולי יועילו
לבאים אחרי מבני עמנו

- 53 In his *Unicity of Intellect*, one of the very few works wholly dedicated to the *Two Investigations*, Kalman Bland nonetheless offers a discussion on Del Medigo's approach to the relation between reason and revelation as reflected in the *Two Investigations*. Bland thus follows the legacy of the *Wissenschaft* scholars and their preconceptions, although he is analyzing a work so clearly embedded in the Latin Averroist tradition. See Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 16–22. Cf. Steinschneider, *Elia del Medigo*, 60–71.
- 54 I elaborate upon these arguments in a forthcoming paper, prepared for the proceeding of a recent conference in Macerata, Italy, dedicated to the thought of Uriel Da Costa.
- 55 Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 4.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 3–4. Though Del Medigo indeed mentions Maimonides and Ibn Ezra in the *Two Investigations*, he does so only in passing, without elaborating on their theories or arguments. On Del Medigo's dismissive approach toward Gersonides, see below.
- 57 Geffen's analysis of the *Two Investigations* is found in *Faith and Reason*, 95–105.
- 58 See *ibid.*, esp. 106–59.
- 59 For instance, Geffen constructs one of the arguments raised by Del Medigo as follows: "If the material intellect is one then it is separable (*nifrad*). However, man is also separable in the sense that he perishes. Since each thing in the universe must have a unique characteristic, man and the material intellect cannot both be separable. Therefore, the material intellect cannot be separable and one for all mankind." Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 96, n. 111. For Del Medigo's original argument, see *Two Investigations*, f. (80r) 1v. The assertion according to which "man is separable in the sense that he perishes" is not found in the *Two Investigations*, nor can it be traced in any of Averroes's metaphysical works. Geffen misunderstands the term "separate" (נפרד, *separatus*), which in the context of the *Two Investigations* designates separation from sublunary matter. Since separation from matter entails incorruptibility for both Averroes and Del Medigo, the proposition "man is separable in the sense that it perishes" is false, if indeed it is even coherent.
- 60 One should note that Sirat employs only one of the two manuscripts, BnF héb 968, "pour des raisons pratiques." See Sirat, *Elie Del Medigo*, 7, n. 8.
- 61 Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 185.
- 62 Del Medigo's strong affinity to Averroes is apparent in his Latin works as well, using expressions such as *Commentator fidelissimus* (*De primo motore*, f. 130ra), *princeps posteriorum* (*De primo motore*, f. 130rb), *dominus Commentator* (*De*

primo motore, f. 131vb), and he goes as far as referring to Averroes as *diuinus Averroes* (*De primo motore*, f. 136vb). Cited in Mahoney, *Pico della Mirandola and Elijah Del Medigo*, 129; cf. Mahoney, *Pico della Mirandola*, n. 5.

- 63 Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 99.
- 64 M. Zonta, *Hebrew Scholasticism in the Fifteenth Century: A History and Source Book* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 29. Zonta mentions Judah Messer Leon and Abraham Farissol as the two other prominent Jewish philosophers who, similarly to Del Medigo, were engaged in scholastic philosophy during the fifteenth century. See *ibid.* In the same work, Zonta coins the term “Hebrew Latin Averroism,” which seems relevant in the context of Del Medigo’s thought. For Zonta, Hebrew Latin Averroism manifested itself in the translation of key texts of the Latin Averroist tradition into Hebrew, namely the *LCD*A and John of Jandun’s *Quaestiones* on *De anima*. See Zonta, *Hebrew Scholasticism*, 27. In his “European Jewish Philosophy,” Zonta’s depiction of Del Medigo’s thought appears less convincing. There, he distinguishes between “Hebrew-Arabic” and “Hebrew-Latin” philosophies and refers to Del Medigo as a “Hebrew Averroist,” a subcategory of the first group: Jewish philosophers who employed Averroes as a gateway to Aristotle’s thought. Zonta here mentions Del Medigo along with Isaac Albalag and Moses Narboni. (Zonta, *Relationship*, 131–2). Though Del Medigo was certainly preoccupied with the thought of Averroes, it would be wrong to associate him with the “Hebrew-Arabic” philosophical tradition, as his natural inclination was toward the other tradition Zonta mentions, the tradition of “Hebrew-Latin” thought. Del Medigo’s “Hebrew Latin Averroism” manifests itself in his translations of Hebrew commentaries of Averroes into Latin and in his employment of sections from the Hebrew translations of Averroes into works that he originally composed in Latin, such as the *Two Investigations*. See more in the following discussion.
- 65 See [Schmitt, *The Problem of Continuity* =] Charles B. Schmitt, “Aristotelianism in the Veneto and the origins of modern science: some considerations on the problem of continuity,” in *Aristotelismo veneto e scienza moderna*, ed. Luigi Olivieri (Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1983), 104–23; Schmitt, *Venetian Editions*; Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*.
- 66 See Randall, *The Place of Pomponazzi*, 72.
- 67 See Poppi, *Introduzione all’aristotelismo padovano*, 15.
- 68 Randall, *The Place of Pomponazzi*, 72.
- 69 Scholars have indicated similar tendencies in Bologna and Pavia. Cf. Poppi, *Introduzione all’aristotelismo padovano*, 15–16; P. O. Kristeller, “Renaissance Aristotelianism,” *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies* 6 (1965), 162.
- 70 See my historiographical analysis on the notions of Paduan Averroism and Paduan Aristotelianism in Engel, *Intelligible Species*, 496, n. 3.

- 71 Hasse himself seems ambivalent with regard to the usage of “Paduan Averroism” as a valid historiographical category. In his *Averroica Secta*, he writes that “it is argued that Averroism became a movement in the fullest sense in the decades around 1,500, when, in addition to all internal and external evidences, there is testimony of a doctrinal debate about the correct interpretation of Averroes.” D. N. Hasse, “Averroica secta: Notes on the Formation of Averroist Movements in Fourteenth-Century Bologna and Renaissance Italy,” in *Averroes et les averroïsmes juif et latin*, ed. J.-B. Brenet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007b), 308. Yet, in *The Social Conditions*, Hasse claims that “the historiographical term ‘Paduan Averroism’ is only of limited value when used as a label for a philosophical current.” Hasse, *The Social Conditions*, 78. It seems that Hasse also sees the value in employing Paduan Averroism as a general historical category, yet at the same time sees the danger in clinging to it too blindly.
- 72 See Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 114–15; Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*, 26. This was the third of three big waves of translations of Aristotle’s works into Latin. The first consisted of translations made between the fourth and sixth centuries, most notably in the translations of Boethius. The second period was during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, translations that served the medieval scholars throughout the Middle Ages. See Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 114–15; [Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*=] Charles B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 65, 68–9; Poppi, *Introduzione all’aristotelismo padovano*, 25–6.
- 73 See Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*, 22–3; Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 115; Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 72.
- 74 See Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*, 119.
- 75 For a full list of Del Medigo’s translations from Latin into Hebrew, see Appendix I.
- 76 Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*, 117: “In the period from 1470 through 1542, there appeared ten complete, or nearly complete, editions of the Latin Aristotle accompanied by the commentaries of Averroes.” Cf. Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 114; Schmitt, *Venetian Editions*.
- 77 See Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 114.
- 78 See Appendix I.
- 79 Giovanni Licata, however, holds that the translations were made after 1482; that is, later than the completion date of the *Two Investigations*. Cf. Licata, *La via della ragione*, 97.
- 80 As Wirmer notes, Averroes develops his theory of intellect not only in his psychological treatises and commentaries but also in works such as the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* and the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*. See Wirmer, *Über den Intellekt*, 325.
- 81 Gaspare Contarini, *Opera*, 179. Cited in Poppi, *Introduzione all’aristotelismo padovano*, 25.

- 82 Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 115. Cf. Hasse, *The Attraction of Averroism*, 14.
- 83 See *ibid.*, 115, 117. The engagement of Renaissance authors with the unicity thesis was not at the expense of other aspects of Averroes's thought. Schmitt refers to thirty-four sixteenth-century editions of Aristotle's *Physics* containing Averroes's commentaries. Craig Martin also mentions the influence of Averroes's commentaries on *De generatione et corruptione*, the *Parva naturalia*, and the *Meteorologica* (a commentary that Del Medigo translated into Latin from the Hebrew). See Schmitt, *Venetian Editions*, 123, n. 9; Martin, *Rethinking Renaissance Averroism*, 3.
- 84 See Hankins, *Humanism, Scholasticism, and Renaissance Philosophy*, 36; Mahoney, *Pico della Mirandola and Elijah Del Medigo*, 140; Mahoney, *Nicoletto Vernia's Annotations on John of Jandun's De anima*, 579; Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 324–5; Spruit, *Species Intelligibiles*, vol. II, 4; South, *John of Jandun*, 372. Hasse nonetheless did suggest that for the Paduan Averroists, Paul of Venice served as a common source of inspiration more than Jandun. See Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 322.
- 85 See Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 16.
- 86 See Appendix I.
- 87 See *Two Investigations*, f. 132v (36r–v).
- 88 See Mahoney, *Pico della Mirandola and Elijah Del Medigo*, 149–50. Zonta discovered that a Hebrew manuscript, which contains the Hebrew version of Averroes's *LCDA*, also contains a Hebrew translation of Jandun's *Quaestiones*. Zonta dates the codex to not earlier than 1450 and holds that it is impossible to determine the extent of its reception and influence. (Zonta, *Un'ignota versione ebraica*, 8, 23). While it would be worthwhile examining whether Del Medigo was aware of a Hebrew rendition of Jandun's works, it seems that his references to Jandun in the *Two Investigations* are based on his acquaintance with the Latin source.
- 89 Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 322.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 324.
- 91 We should therefore reject the view suggested by Ross, according to which Del Medigo did not distinguish between the view of Averroes and that of the Averroists. See Ross, *Introduction to Beḳinat Ha-Dat*, 54.
- 92 See Mahoney, *Saint Thomas and the School of Padua*, 278. Vernia, who held the chair of philosophy at the University of Padua while Del Medigo was living in that city, was a dominant figure among the Italian Renaissance philosophical circles, whose influence went well beyond the confines of Padua and Venice.
- 93 Hasse supplies several examples for such open discussions. Nifo criticized Pomponazzi with regard to the unicity thesis, and Zimara and Prassicio both

- criticized Nifo, the former concerning the doctrine of *intelligible species*, the latter for Nifo's view on the relation between the intellective soul and the human body. See Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 324–9. Cf. Prassicio, *Questio de immortalitate anime intellective*, B2vb: *mirandum est de Augustino [referring to Nifo] acceptante animam intellectivam esse . . . infimam et ponente aliam compositionem in illa, quod non est aliud nisi apostetare in doctrina Averrois*. Cited in Hasse, *The Attraction of Averroism*, 13, n. 70. Translation in *ibid.*, *Averroica Secta*, 328: “It is astonishing that Agostino [Nifo] holds that the intellective soul is the lowest of the intelligences and that he maintains that there is an additional union in [the intellective soul]; this means nothing else but breaking heretically with the doctrine of Averroes.” See also Mahoney, *Trombetta and Nifo*.
- 94 Cf. Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 321; Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 117. Hasse mentions Paul of Venice, Gaetano da Thiene, Nicollò Tignosi, Nicoletto Vernia, Agostino Nifo, Pietro Pomponazzi, Francesco Vimercato, and Antonio Bernardi as five generations of Averroist professors at the University of Padua between the years 1400 and 1550.
- 95 See Harvey, *On the Nature and Extent of Jewish Averroism*, 108–9.
- 96 Harvey, *Arabic into Hebrew*, 269; cf. Glasner, *The Study of Ibn Rushd in the Fourteenth Century*.
- 97 See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 12–13; *HÜb*, 201, section 104; Kieszkowski reverses the order of translation, referring to the *l'original hébreu* and *version latine*. Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 44.
- 98 The first list appears in Vat. lat. 3436 (ff. 263r–96v); the second list was compiled by Antonio Pizzamano in 1498 and published by Calori Cesis in 1897. Both lists are found in P. Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), 178, section 437.
- 99 See Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola*, 20. Bland has argued that fragments from the Latin original have survived, yet does not give any indication of their whereabouts. Bland, *Averroist Response*, 23, n. 2.
- 100 See Pico, conclusion VI.2: *Una est anima intellectiva in omnibus hominibus* (“The intellective soul is one in all men”), cited in Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, 253. Cf. P. O. Kristeller, “Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola and His Sources,” in *L'Opera e il pensiero di Giovanni Pico della Mirandola nella storia dell'umanesimo: convegno internazionale* (Firenze: Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento, 1965), 58. Pico could obviously have cited this conclusion from numerous other sources.
- 101 On Del Medigo's motivation for translating the work into Hebrew, see Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 160–2; Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 20; Geffen, *Faith*, 95–6.
- 102 See *Two Investigations*, f. 138r (40r).
- 103 *Ibid.*; 150r–v (48v–9r).

- 104 For an account of the philosophical sources of Del Medigo's other philosophical works, see Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*.
- 105 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 295–8. Cf. Poppi, *Causalità e infinità*, 136. Poppi's account here relies on that of Cassuto.
- 106 See Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. IV, 293; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 38.
- 107 Ibid.
- 108 BnF lat. 6508, f. 43v. Cited in Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 190.
- 109 See detailed discussion following.
- 110 See *Two Investigations*, ff. 141v (42v); 132r (36r). Cf. Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 12. Another Jewish philosopher who demonstrates similar textual awareness to the text of Averroes is Gersonides. See Klein-Braslavi, *Gersonides on Method*, 208.
- 111 Hasse, *The Attraction of Averroism*, 5.
- 112 According to Zonta, the new Latin Renaissance translation by Jacob Mantino, found in the Giunta edition, is in fact a translation of the Latin-into-Hebrew version of the fifteenth century. Thus it could be treated as a rendition of the medieval Latin translation. See Zonta, *Osservazioni sulla traduzione*. See also Wirmer, *Über den Intellekt*, 357, n. 287.
- 113 See *Two Investigations*, f. 135v (38v): ונראה שהעתקה האחרת היא יותר ישרה (“it would seem that the other translation is more correct”); f. 141v (42v): ובהעתקה האחרת אמר במקום ההשכל המשכיל (“in the other translation, instead than ‘intellection’ he translated ‘intellective’”).
- 114 Cf. Mahoney, *The Greek Commentators*, 170.
- 115 On the various forms of Aristotelian commentaries employed by Averroes, see Druart, *The Commentator and the Commentators*. See also Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 108, n. 4.
- 116 See *Two Investigations*, f. 175r (67r).
- 117 *Two Investigations* f. 175r–v (67r). Cf. Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 10–1. Del Medigo was not the first Hebrew writer to employ the different types of commentaries by Averroes in his works. Gersonides, for instance, commented on Averroes's short commentaries while making recourse to the middle commentaries as well. See in Klein-Braslavi, *Gersonides on Method*, 207. A different approach we find in Moses Almosnino who, like Del Medigo, was familiar with the full range of Averroes's commentaries. Yet Almosnino writes “Do not squander your time with the epitomes and middle commentaries of Averroes, but [read] only the long commentaries, for if you read the long commentaries carefully, you will have no need to read any other book in order to understand anything of natural science.” Cited in Harvey, *The Hebrew Translation of Averroes' Prooemium*, 61, n. 28. A modern reader of Averroes who expresses a similar approach to Del Medigo is David Wirmer. In his *Über den Intellekt*, Wirmer laments the predominant tendency in modern scholarship to focus solely on Averroes's view in the LCDA.

- This tendency, according to Wirmer, has brought scholars to view all previous psychological works of Averroes through the lens of the *LCDA*. In addition, it has brought scholars to view the development found in the works as toward a “better” kind of analysis. (Wirmer, *Über den Intellekt*, 366). Yet although Del Medigo, similarly to Wirmer, suggests that one ought to consult the entire Averroan corpus, he is referring to the *LCDA* as his authoritative text, employing other works only to reinforce views or arguments that he borrows from the *LCDA*. This tendency is illustrated throughout this book. Moreover, Del Medigo does not make use of the Middle Commentary on the *De anima* in the *Two Investigations*.
- 118 Geffen notes that Del Medigo “cites the Hebrew versions of the Short, Middle, and Long Commentaries of Averroes on *De anima*, Averroes’s Commentary (Paraphrase) on Plato’s *Republic* and the *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* in his two treatises on the intellect.” Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 108, n. 4. While Geffen is correct in his general observation, he declares that Del Medigo also used the Hebrew version of the *LCDA*, yet, as will be established this is far from being certain. As mentioned previously, Del Medigo makes no use of the Middle Commentary on the *De anima* in the *Two Investigations*.
- 119 Zonta, *The Autumn of Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, 476. Zonta’s claim that “Del Medigo’s usual language, while acting as Schoolman and translator, was not Hebrew, but Latin” ought to be qualified accordingly. Zonta, *Hebrew Scholasticism*, 29.
- 120 See Del Medigo’s *Commentary on the De substantia orbis* (Hebrew version), f. 28r. Cf. Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 165–9; Mahoney, *Albert the Great*, 561, 561, n. 80.
- 121 See *Two Investigations*, f. 138r (40r). Del Medigo is expressing an anachronist view, as Maimonides did not make use of Averroes’s commentaries in his own psychological discussions. On Maimonides’ theory of intellect, see Stern, *Maimonides’ Epistemology*, 107–15.
- 122 See Wolfson, *Revised Plan*; Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 263; Zonta, *Osservazioni sulla traduzione ebraica*.
- 123 See *Two Investigations*, 150v (48v). Puig Montada mistakenly interprets Del Medigo’s dismissive remark toward the philosophizers—that is, those who occupy themselves with philosophical discussions without the sufficient philosophical training—as referring to Maimonides and Ibn Ezra. See Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 161, n. 24.
- 124 See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 97.
- 125 See Sermoneta, *Thomisme Juif*, 133.
- 126 Currently I am preparing a study that examines the different impact of the *De unitate* on Hillel and Del Medigo.
- 127 On the Averroist background of Albalag’s thought, see Guttman, *Isaac Albalag*, 75–92. On Narboni’s Averroist background, see Bland’s introduction in Narboni, *Possibility of Conjunction*, 1–12.

- 128 See Guttman, *Isaac Albalag*, 83. According to Narboni: “We say that it has already been shown in the *De Anima* that the hylic intellect is an absolute disposition, unperfected by any form.” Narboni follows Averroes’s earlier view, according to which the Material Intellect is a corporeal disposition. Cited in *Possibility of Conjunction*, 23.
- 129 See Klein-Braslavi, *Gersonides on Method*, 186–7.
- 130 See *ibid.*, 90–1.
- 131 See *Two Investigations*, f. 138v (40v). On Gersonides’s critical approach, see *ibid.*, 204.
- 132 *Wars of the Lords*, 1.1, 110; Cf. *Comm. med. de An.*, 283.12–14: “This disposition found in man is attached to this separate substance by virtue of the latter’s conjunction with man.”

Chapter 2

- 1 *Two Investigations*, f. 79v (1r): אם השכל האנושי ההיולאני הוא אחד במספר בכל האנשים או: אם יתרבה מספרו במספר האנשים עד שלכל אחד מאתנו שכל אחד מיוחד לו.
- 2 See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 406.575–76; (2009), 322: “*quia opinati sumus ex hoc sermone quod intellectus materialis est unicus omnibus hominibus*,” “On the basis of this account we held the opinion that the material intellect is one for all human beings.”
- 3 See *Two Investigations*, f. 83v (3v–4r).
- 4 Del Medigo uses the phrase המפורסמות הסותרות, literally “propositions that are commonly held (מפורסמות), uncertain (מסופקות) and mutually exclusive (סותרות).” In the *Treatise to Logic* attributed to Maimonides, מפורסמות denotes moral teachings, and the example given is the condemnation of incest (*Maimonides’ Treatise on Logic* VIII, 39.21–40.2 (47); Ibn Tibbon’s version: והמפורסמות כידיעתנו שגילוי הערוה מגונה וכי חסדי המטיב ביותר נכבד נאה ומקובל: “Conventions, as when we know that uncovering the privy parts is ugly, that compensating a benefactor generously is beautiful [note Efron’s literal translation of נאה as ‘beautiful’].” Klatzkin mentions that the term מפורסמות usually denotes commonly held views associated with moral themes. See, Klatzkin, *Thesaurus Philosophicus*, s.v. מפורסמות, vol. II, 248.
- 5 See *Two Investigations*, f. 79v (1r): כאשר אמר בן רשד בבאורו לשני מספר המופת ביאור: ל”ו, שיביא הטענות המפורסמות המסופקות הסותרות ואחר יביא המאמר המופתי אשר יתיר אותם. המאמרים הנצוחיים הסותרים <האלה>, ויבאר הענין בעצמו כפי האמת. Cf. *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*: “And he [Aristotle] employed demonstrative proof which resolved these contradictory propositions. [He did this] through his usual habit of introducing demonstrative proofs after a dialectical investigation, through which [proofs] these propositions are resolved, and he will clarify the truth of the matter itself;” “*Et adducet rationem demonstratiuam quae resoluet sermones*

illos contradictorios secundum consuetudinem suam in eo, quod adducit post inquisitionem dialecticam rationes demonstratiuas per quas resoluuntur sermones illi, et monstrabit rem per se secundum veritatem.” *Comm. mag. An. Post.*, II.36, f. 455r (Lat. trans. Burana, English trans. mine).

- 6 See *Two Investigations*, f. 79v (1r).
- 7 Cf. Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 5; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 96 and *ibid.*, n. 111. Geffen rightly notes that these arguments were borrowed from Aquinas, yet his overall analysis here is highly misleading (see Introduction).
- 8 Cf. Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 5.
- 9 In both manuscripts, Alexander’s name is corrupted. In M, Alexander is referred to as *Al-sakander* (אל סכנדר), whereas P mentions *Al-askander* (אל אסכנדר). Since none of the manuscripts is an autograph, one cannot determine whether this corruption originates in Del Medigo.
- 10 Cf. Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 13. Although Del Medigo holds that Themistius promoted the unicity of the Material Intellect as well, he does not support this claim with textual evidence, and the *Two Investigations* discusses the view of “Themistius and the ancient commentators” (תמיסטיוס והמפרשים הקודמים) with regard to the nature of the intelligibles. See *Two Investigations* f. 103r (17r); *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 389.57–8; (2009), 305. Also see the following discussion.
- 11 See *Two Investigations*, f. 81v (2v).
- 12 On the circulation of Aquinas’s works in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, see Kristeller, *Thomism and the Italian Thought*, 29–95. On the works of John of Jandun as a source from which Del Medigo could have drawn his knowledge about Aquinas’s ideas, see Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 299–371; Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 6. On the unlikelihood that Del Medigo encountered Aquinas’s ideas through Hillel of Verona, see previous discussion.
- 13 See *Two Investigations*, f. 80r (1v).
- 14 *De unitate intellectus*, III.66, 84.97–100: “*dato quod una et eadem species numero esset forma intellectus possibilis et esset simul in fantasmatis: nec adhuc talis copulatio sufficeret ad hoc quod hic homo intelligeret.*”
- 15 See *Two Investigations* f. 81r (2v).
- 16 *De unitate intellectus*, III.90, 110.96–102: “*Adhunc, si omnes homines intelligunt uno intellectu, qualitercumque eis uniatur, siue ut forma siue ut motor, de necessitate sequitur quod omnium hominum sit unum numero ipsum intelligere quod est simul et respectu unius intelligibilis.*” Averroes introduces the argument as a hypothetical objection against the unicity thesis, an argument that he then refutes. See *Comm. mag. de An.* CDA III.5 (1953) 402.449–54; (2009), 318.
- 17 *Two Investigations*, f. 79v (1v): שאם היה אחד בכל האנשים לא היה הנה לא גמול ולא עונש ונפשי ואם היה זה כן היו הפעולות הטובות והידיעות הבל וריק והיו התורות כן האלהיות והטבעיות ונפלות.

- 18 *De unitate intellectus*, I.2, 18.23–102: “*Subtracta enim ab hominibus diuersitate intellectus, qui solus inter anime partes incorruptibilis et immortalis apparet, sequitur post mortem nichil De animabus hominum remanere nisi unicam intellectus substantiam; et sic tollitur retributio premiorum et penarum et diuersitas eorundem.*”
- 19 *De unitate intellectus*, III.81, 96.336–41: “*secundum istorum positionem destruntur moralis philosophie principia: subtrahitur enim quod est in nobis. Non enim est aliquid in nobis nisi per uoluntatem; unde et hoc ipsum uoluntarium dicitur, quod in nobis est.*”
- 20 *Two Investigations*, f. 82v (3r–v):
 דעת רוב מדברי הדתות הוא שכאשר יוכן חמר מה באיכויות נאותות לצורה האנושית אשר היא הנפש המשכלת יברא האל מלא דבר במוחלט הנפש הזאת בגשם הזה, לא באמצעות החמר ובכחו כיתר הצורות החמריות, אבל יבראנה ואחר ישימנה בגוף. . . והנפשות האלה רבות כמספר האנשים, ויאמרו שהנפש הזאת היא הנותנת המהות לאדם ובה האדם אדם, אבל לא תהיה בחמר האנושי באמצעות המרחקים או השלוחים השלושה אשר הם האורך והרוחב והעומק, ולזה היא בלתי מתחלקת ונצחית בסוף. ואמנם לנפש הזאת כחות מה לא יפעלו פעולתם כי אם בכלי גשמי, וכחות לא יפעלו פעולתם בכלי גשמי כאלו תאמר ההשכל, ויקראו אלה הכחות עוכרות החמר והם למעלה מהחמר, וירצו בזה שלא יפעלו פעולתם בכלי גשמי ולא יצטרכו בו בזה
- 21 Aquinas, *Quaest. disput. De anima*, q. 1, 10.337–41: “*Sic igitur anima humana in quantum unitur corpori ut forma etiam habet esse elevatum supra corpus, non dependens ab eo, manifestum est quod ipsa est in confinio corporalium et separatarum substantiarum constituta.*”
- 22 Aquinas, *Sum. contr. Gent.*, II.87, 537–8: “*Relinquitur ergo quod [Deus] ex nihilo fiat, et sic creatur. Cum igitur creatio sit opus proprium Dei, ut supra ostensum est, sequitur quod a solo Deo immediate creatur.*”
- 23 *Two Investigations*, f. 82v (3r): אבל האדם אדם ובה האדם אדם, לא תהיה בחמר האנושי
- 24 See Wolfson, *The Twice-Revealed Averroes*, 381. On the origins of the term in Aristotle and his reference to the Greek myth-makers, see *ibid.*
- 25 *Comm. mag. Metaph.* (1562–74), XII.18, f. 304rb: “*Dicentes autem creationem dicunt quod agens creat totum ens de nouo ex nihilo, quod non habet necesse ad hoc vt fit materia in quam agat, sed creat totum. Et haec est opinio Loquentium in nostra lege et lege Christianorum*” (trans. Taneli Kukkonen, in *Creation and Causation*, 235). Cf. Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 339, n. 3. See also Gilson’s account of Aquinas’s notion of creation. Gilson, *Efficient Causality*, 169–70.
- 26 *Two Investigations*, f. 83r (3v): ולא ימצאו מענה באמת כי אם כך רצה האל יתברך. Cf. Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 16: “The Christian theologians are repeatedly excoriated for three sins: misreading Aristotle and Averroes, embracing irrational beliefs, and abusing religion whenever they confused prophetically sanctioned truths with philosophically reasoned demonstrative proofs.”

- 27 Equivalent to *loquentes* is the term *philosophantes*, “philosophizers,” or מתפלספים. The term is found in the Latin version of Del Medigo’s commentary on the *De substantia orbis*, coined in opposition to the *philosophi* who are involved in a genuine philosophical practice. Like *loquentes*, the *philosophantes* do not denounce philosophy altogether but rely on religious reasoning, which they present as philosophical. See *Commentary on the De substantia orbis* (Latin), f. 36r. Cf. Mahoney, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Elia del Medigo*, 133–4. Note, however, that according to Sermoneta (*Thomisme juif*), the Jewish followers of Maimonides in southern Italy in the thirteenth century readily embraced the title “theologians” (הַחֲכָמִי הַדָּת), as they attempted to prove by rational means the tenets of faith. In light of Sermoneta’s observation, one ought to consider that the term does not necessarily carry a negative connotation within the Jewish tradition. In the case of Del Medigo, it would therefore seem that the term should be contextualized against his Latin Averroist background. See Sermoneta, *Thomisme juif*, 131.
- 28 See König-Pralong, *Dietrich de Freiberg*, 57–78.
- 29 See Engel, *Paduan Thomists*, 299. Nicoletto Vernia, Del Medigo’s contemporary, refers to Aquinas in several of his works as *Sanctus Thomas*, *Doctor sanctus* as well as the *melior Expositor inter Latinos*, an expression he apparently borrowed from John of Jandun. See Mahoney, *Saint Thomas and the School of Padua*, 278. For a useful historical survey, see *ibid.*, 277–83; Kristeller, *Thomism and the Italian Thought*, 46, 62. See also the printed notice for the academic year 1594–5 in Grendler, *Universities of the Italian Renaissance*, 35.
- 30 “*doctissimus tempestate nostra Grimanus Dominicus scriptis compluribus et solvit et Thomae rationes in hos baubantes insolutas ostendit.*” Cited in Ragnisco, *Documenti inediti*, 299. One should nonetheless note a dedication by Baptista de Avolio, who portrays Grimani as a faithful follower of Averroes. See Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*, 121. Cf. Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola*, 5. Cf. Engel, *Paduan Thomists*, 300.
- 31 Cf. Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 77. Cf. Engel, *Paduan Thomists*, 300.
- 32 *Commentary on the De substantia orbis* (Hebrew), 28r. Aquinas is also mentioned in *Be□inat Ha-Dat*, though here he is not being criticized for his opinions. See *ibid.*, 98.27.
- 33 *Two Investigations*, f. 102v (16v). For Del Medigo’s usage of the term “philosophizers,” see previous, 63, n. 155.
- 34 See Del Medigo, *Letter to Pico*, 74v, cited in Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 70. Cf. *ibid.*, 44; Randall, *On Immortality*, 265.
- 35 See *Two Investigations*, f. 150r (48r). Cf. Engel, *Paduan Thomists*, 300–1.
- 36 Arist. *de An.* III.4, 429a15–20.
- 37 *Ibid.*, III.5, 429a15–20.
- 38 See Arist. *de An.* III.4-5, 429a10–430a18.

- 39 On the development of Averroes's thought concerning the nature of the human intellect, see Taylor in introduction to *Comm. mag. de An.*, xix–li; Davidson *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 258–95.
- 40 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.36, (1953) 495.463–68; (2009), 395: “*intellectus existens in nobis habet duas actiones secundum quod attribuitur nobis, quarum una est de genere passionis (et est intelligere), et alia de genere actionis (et est extrahere formas et denudare eas a materiis, quod nichil est aliud nisi facere eas intellectas in actu postquam erant in potentia)*”
- 41 See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.3 (1953), 382.16–17; (2009), 299: “*recipit formam quam comprehendit*.”
- 42 In *De unitate intellectus*, Aquinas criticizes Averroes for employing the term ‘Material Intellect’ and instead uses the term “possible intellect”: “what Aristotle calls the possible, [*quem Aristotiles possibilem vocat*] but he infelicitously calls the material intellect [*ipse autem inconuenienti nomine materialem (vocat)*].” *De unitate intellectus* I.1, 18.9–11. For reasons of consistency the book follows Averroes's terminology, referring to a “Material” and to an “Agent” Intellect. Averroes, it will be remembered, does not mean to suggest that the Material Intellect is literally material, only that it subsists in a state of perpetual potency. See following discussion concerning Theophrastus's doubt.
- 43 For the inner Averroist discussion on whether these are indeed two distinct substances, a discourse in which Del Medigo took an active part, see discussion below.
- 44 For a partial presentation of Del Medigo's criticism of the theologians's position, see Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 6–7.
- 45 Kessler, *The Intellective Soul*, 493. Cf. Mahoney, *Nicoletto Vernia's Annotations*, 576 n. 9; Hasse, *The Attraction of Averroism*, 3–7; Kogan, *The Problem of Creation*, 159–73.
- 46 See *Two Investigations*, f. 85r (5r); שלא יתהווה דבר מלא דבר במוחלט (“nothing can be generated from absolute nothing”); *Physics* I.4, 187a28–9. Cf. Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique*, 572, n. 7.
- 47 See *Two Investigations*, f. 82v (3r). Cf. *On Generation and Corruption*, I.3, 317b15–18; Puig Montada, *Coming-to-be*, 5. Similarly Gersonides (in his *Wars of the Lord*) relies on Aristotle in rejecting the notion of creation *ex nihilo*: “If, on the other hand, it is claimed that this form [Material Intellect] is generated essentially *ex nihilo* . . . this contradicts what Aristotle has demonstrated in Book one of the *Physics*, that every generation, essential or accidental, requires a subject.” *Wars of the Lord*, I.4, 141. Like Del Medigo, Gersonides rejects the Thomist position, although the two hold different views concerning the nature of the Material Intellect. (See Introduction).
- 48 *Comm. med. de Gen.*, III.3, 16. Cf. Puig Montada, *Coming-to-be*, 26.
- 49 *Two Investigations*, ff. 85r–v (5r): פעל הפועל לא יתלה בהעדר הגמור, כי כאשר היה העדר, גמור אין שם פעל ולא בדבר השלם אשר כבר נשלם ונגמר, כי הדבר אשר נשלם במה שהוא נשלם,

203–5, and Del Medigo follows his discussion there as well (Cf. *Two Investigations*, f. 93r (10r)). Following his denial of God’s knowledge of particulars, Del Medigo subsequently denies God’s knowledge of universals. Each universal, by its very nature, possesses an infinite extension, as the universal Dog designates all past, present, and future dogs. Since the extension of universals is infinite, and since in the Aristotelian framework an infinite series cannot exist *in act*, knowledge of universals is accordingly knowledge *in potency*. As knowledge *in potency* is less perfect than knowledge *in act*, one concludes that universal knowledge cannot be attributed to God. See *Two Investigations* f. 93r (10r). Cf. *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, 345.1–10, 206. See also *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, 345.1–10, 206, n. 3; Belo, *Knowledge of Particulars*, 190–1. Although God’s knowledge is neither particular nor universal, Del Medigo argues that it is closer to particular than to universal knowledge, since as in the case of particular cognition, it is knowledge *in act*. See *Two Investigations*, ff. 93r–v (10v). Here again, Del Medigo follows Averroes: “And since knowledge of the individual is for us knowledge in act, we know that God’s knowledge is more like knowledge of the individual than knowledge of the universal, although it is neither the one nor the other” *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, 345.18–22, 207.

- 68 *Two Investigations*, f. 93v (10v): .שלא יעלם דבר מהאל יתברך לא בשמים ולא בארץ.
- 69 *Ibid.*, ff. 92v (9v–10r): אם היה המושכל אשר לו נאמר בשתוף גמור עם אלה המושכלות והסדר: ההוא גם כן אשר ישכיל נאמר בשתוף גמור עם הסדור אשר <לנמצאות> * איך יהיה הסדר ההוא והשכל ההוא סבה לזה הסדור
om. P. [לא מצאון]
- 70 The view that God is ignorant of particulars in the sublunary world was one of three views on account of which Ghazali accused the Muslim philosophers with disbelief (the other two being the eternity of the world and bodily resurrection). Averroes’s response was in attempting to illustrate how the Aristotelian view can be reconciled with the traditional Muslim position. See Belo, *Knowledge of Particulars*, 177.
- 71 *Comm. mag. Metaph.* (1984), XII.51, 1707–8, 197–8 (italics mine). See *Two Investigations*, f. 94r (11r). Cf. *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, 468.2–5, 285; “But it is impossible, according to the philosophers, that God’s knowledge should be analogous to ours, for our knowledge is the effect of the existents, whereas God’s knowledge is their cause, and it is not true that eternal knowledge is of the same form as temporal.” Similarly, in the eleventh discussion of that work, Averroes holds that “this existent [i.e., the first intellect] which is pure intellect is that which bestows on the existents the order and arrangement in their acts.” *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, 435.16–18, 262. See also *Epitome of the Metaphysics*: “For in this way one may say that these [principles, i.e. the separate intellects] know what emerges from them because that which emerges from a knower *qua* knower must be an object of knowledge, as said [before]. Otherwise its emergence

would take place in the way natural things emerge from one another. The former doctrine is adhered to by those who teach that God knows the things, the latter is adhered to by those who teach that He does not know what is below Him. [They hold this opinion] because they are not aware of the equivocality of the term ‘knowledge’ and take it as denoting a single meaning.” *Comp. Metaph.*, 391r-v.

- 72 See Kogan, *Metaphysics of Causation*, 233. Cf. *ibid.*, 229–48.
- 73 Aquinas, *In De divinis nominibus* III, v, section 240–3, 76: “*opinio quorundam Platonicorum dicentium quod divina Providentia immutabilis est, sed sub ea res aliquae mutabiliter et contingenter continentur.*” Cited in Hankey, *Providence and Hierarchy*, 7 (trans. Hankey).
- 74 Aquinas, *De substantiis separatis*, XIV.4, 65.31–39: “*oportet igitur Deo nullius cognoscibilis cognitionem deesse. Cognitio autem cuiuslibet cognoscentis est secundum modum substantiae eius, sicut et quaelibet operatio est secundum modum operantis; multo igitur magis divina cognitio quae est eius substantia est secundum modum esse ipsius: esse autem eius est unum simplex fixum et aeternum, sequitur ergo quod Dues uno simplici intuitu aeternam et fixam de omnibus notitiam habeat.*” Hankey, *Providence and Hierarchy*, 7 (trans. Hankey).
- 75 *Two Investigations*, f. 90r (8r): והיא כמבוארת בעצמה
- 76 For a detailed discussion of the notion of substantial form in late scholastic thought, see Pasnau, *Metaphysical Themes*, 549–73. Cf. my discussion in Engel, *Paduan Thomists*, 301–4.
- 77 *Comp. de An.*, 71.5–7, 72.1–2.
- 78 The term מניית, “specific form,” is found in Del Medigo’s commentary on the *De substantia orbis* but is missing from the *Two Investigations*. See Del Medigo, *Commentary on the De substantia orbis* (Hebrew), f. 6v. The term appears in Klatzkin’s *Thesaurus* with the Latin equivalent *Forma Specifica*. See Klatzkin, *Thesaurus Philosophicus*, s.v. מניית, vol. II, 237.
- 79 In his “Aristotle and Averroes on *Coming-to-be and Passing-away*,” Puig Montada describes absolute generation as “the coming-to-be of a new individual substance,” whereas relative generation is the generation of an accident, such as quality, quantity, or location. The acquisition of substantial form could be thus described as absolute generation, whereas the acquisition of an accidental form as relative generation. See Puig Montada, *Coming-to-be*, 5. Cf. *On Generation and Corruption* I.3, 319a13–16: “In all changing things alike, we speak of coming-to-be when the thing comes-to-be something in *one* of the two columns—e.g. in substance, if it comes-to-be fire but not if it comes-to-be earth; and in quality, if it comes-to-be learned but not when it comes-to-be ignorant.”
- 80 *Comm. mag. Metaph.* (1562–74), VII.28, f. 178ra: “*omnis enim generatio manifestum est quod sit per transmutationem materiae*” (trans. mine). Del Medigo

- discusses the notion of prime matter in his *Commentary on the De substantia orbis*, ff. 9r–11v. For a broader discussion on the function of Aristotelian prime matter within the process of natural generation, see Puig Montada, *Coming-to-be*, 10–11.
- 81 See *Two Investigations*, f. 98v (14r).
- 82 *De substantia orbis*, 22.156–159:
 ולמה שהתבאר לו מהגרמים השמימיים שצורתם חלות בנושאייהם השכנה לא יתחלקו
 בהתחלק נושאייהם, ושהסבה בזה שהם לא יחולו בנושאייהם מצד מה שהם מתחלקות, התבאר
 שהצורות האלו אין להם עמידה בנושא, אבל הם נבדלות במציאות.
- 83 Ms. BnF lat. 6508, 77v. Cited in Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 77: “*Principium etiam est, et intelligentibus bene dispositis per se notum, quod forma, que non inheret materie mediantibus dimensionibus, scilicet, que non est extensa, sicut albedo, uerbi gratia, in pariete, est indiuisibilis, impassibilis saltem passione corruptiua, ingenerabilis et incorruptibilis, separata a materia, ut bene declarauit Commentator in libello de Substantia Orbis, ut illic notauit, negans enim hoc, negat fundamentum totius scientie diuine*” (trans. mine).
- 84 *Two Investigations*, f. 124v (31r): כי אשר יניח הנפש המשכלת צורה עצמית לנו יחוייב לו שיהיה חמרית בהכרח.
- 85 *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, 577.2–4, 357.
- 86 See *Two Investigations*, f. 97r (13r): ואולם ההקדמה האומרת שהצורות החמריות מציאותם נתלה במציאות החמר מבוארת מאד בפלוסופית ארסטו ובן רשד ובפרט במה שאחר והיא כמעט מבוררת מהחוש (“The proposition according to which the existence of material forms depends on the existence of matter is evident in the philosophies of Aristotle and Averroes, particularly in the *Metaphysics*, almost to the extent it can be perceived by sense”).
- 87 *Two Investigations*, f. 149r (48r). אם לא ירצה האדם שירמה עצמו.
- 88 *Two Investigations*, f. 83v (4r): זה הדעת אין ראוי להשתדל בסתירתו ולהאריך בו כי אינו דעת טבעי . . . סותר כמעט שרשי החכמות כלם ואם אולי ראוי שיאמן מצד התורה ולהסכים בו לא מצד העיון, אמנם אחרי אשר רבים מהמתפלספים חשבו לאמתו לכן ראוי לחלוק אתם בשורשים לא בענפים כי אם מעט, ולזה לא אאריך בסתירת זה הדעת.
- 89 Marsilio Ficino, *Opera Omnia*, vol. I, 872; vol. II, 1537. Trans. Martin in *ibid.*, *Rethinking Renaissance Averroism*, 14. In his *De rebus naturalibus*, Zabarella rejects the accounts of both Aquinas and Alexander regarding the nature of the human intellect. See Randall, *The School of Padua*, 83, n. 25. Cf. *ibid.*, 75; Kessler, *The Intellectual Soul*, 519.
- 90 It is worth noting that both Pico della Mirandola and Nicoletto Vernia expressed the view that according to Alexander the human soul is immortal. See Mahoney, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Elia del Medigo*, 71, 142.
- 91 I follow here Taylor’s translation of *mixtione et complexione*, Del Medigo’s *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 394.201; (2009), 310; *Two Investigations*, f. 111r (21bisv).

- 92 *Two Investigations*, f. 111r (21bisv): ואולם אל אסכנדר יחשוב שהשכל ההיולאני הוא כח: הווה ונפסד וחשב שזה הכח עם שאר כחות הנפש נתהוו בעצם בגוף באמצעות ההרכבה וההתמזגות והם הכנות מה ושהצורה או הנפש אשר ימצאו * <בה> אלה ההכנות <היא> צורה עצמית לאדם בה האדם הווה נפסד, והיא חמרית כיתר הצורות החמריות אלא שתתחלף ליתר הצורות במעלה הווה ובשלמות om. P [ברן]. Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 393.198–394.201; (2009), 309–10. Averroes here cites from Alexander’s *De intellectu* 112.9–16 (55–6).
- 93 See *Two Investigations*, f. 120r (27v).
- 94 *Two Investigations*, f. 111v (21bisv): “And this view [Alexander’s view] is natural and does not conflict with [natural laws governing] generation and corruption” וזה הדעת טבעי מאוד לא ינגד כלל להויה ולפסד. Cf. *Two Investigations*, ff. 137v–8r (40r).
- 95 See *Two Investigations*, ff. 137v–8r (40r). While Del Medigo informs the reader that he will present ten arguments against the view of Alexander, both Hebrew manuscripts (P and M) only contain nine arguments. See *Two Investigations*, f. 119r (27r), where Del Medigo moves from the eighth to what he presents as the tenth argument.
- 96 See Mahoney, *The Greek Commentators*, 170.
- 97 See *Two Investigations* f. 113v (23v): מהות אותו המין מבלתי שיחלק: “Indivisible essence of that species.” For a discussion concerning the intelligibles’s process of generation, see Chapter 3.
- 98 *Two Investigations*, f. 113v (23v): נשפוט על רבוי שאין לו תכלית ועל העוברים וההויים: והעתידים בענין בו ישתתפו והוא מהות אותו המין.
- 99 See *Two Investigations*, ff. 113v–14r (23r–3v). Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 388.37–42; (2009), 304: “This nature [the Material Intellect] is not a determinate particular nor a body nor a power in a body. For if it were so, then it would receive forms inasmuch as they are diverse and particular, and if it were so, then the forms existing in it would be intelligible in potency.” Taylor translates *aliquid hoc* as *determined particular*, which according to Taylor “is a particular which is a member of a species containing more than one member and which derives its particularity from the contraction of the form to matter in a composite. As such, what is received by a determinate particular or a ‘this’ is particularized by reception into it.” *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (2009), 299, n.17.
- 100 *Two Investigations*, f. 114r (23v): מטבע המקובל נדע טבע המקבל: Aquinas employs the same principle and in a similar context, discussing the immateriality of Human Intellect in the *Summa theologiae*. See Aquinas, *Summa theol.* I.14.1. Cited in Wippel, *Aquinas and “what is received,”* 283–4.
- 101 *Two Investigations*, f. 116r (25r): השכל ההיולאני ישיג פעולתו, כאלו תאמר ההשכל, וישיג: עצמותו באופן מה ואין שום כח גשמי ישיג פעולתו, אם כן השכל ההיולאני אינו כח גשמי.
- 102 In his *Commentary on the Book of Causes*, Aquinas attributes this principle to Proclus: “For it is not of the nature of any body to revert upon itself. For if

- something reverts upon anything it is joined to that upon which it reverts.” Aquinas, *Commentary on the Book of Causes* section 7, 58.
- 103 See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.8, (1953), 420.19–24; (2009), 335. Cf. *Comm. med. de An.*, section 283, 111.16–22. The argument also appears in John of Jandun, who attributes it to Albertus Magnus. See John of Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.* (1557), III.4, ff. 56va–7ra. Cited in Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 282. Cf. Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 282, n. 34.
- 104 See *Two Investigations*, ff. 117r (25v–6r): שההשגה היא דבר ימצא בין פועל ומתפעל והוא המשיג והמורשג.
- 105 See *Two Investigations*, f. 119r (27r).
- 106 Wirmer refers to the period in which Averroes composed the Short Commentary as the “Alexandro-baggian” period. See in Wirmer, *Über den Intellekt*, 328. See also Wirmer’s reference to parallel passages in the *LCDA* and the *Epitome of the De anima* with reference to Avempace, *ibid.*, 191, n. 68. Avempace’s position, as illustrated in Averroes’s *Epitome of the De anima*, is similar to the view embraced by Gersonides in his *Wars of the Lord*. See *ibid.*, I.5, 144–5.
- 107 *Two Investigations*, f. 119v (27v). Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953) 397.299–398.343; (2009), 313–15; Taylor’s introduction to *Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), xxv–xxvii; Hyman, *Averroes’ Theory of Intellect*, 194.
- 108 See *Two Investigations*, f. 119v (27v). Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 398.334–40; (2009), 314.
- 109 See *Two Investigations*, f. 119v (27v).
- 110 *ibid.*
- 111 Del Medigo could have nonetheless relied here on other works by Averroes. I will address this point in a future study.
- 112 See *ibid.*, ff. 103r–11r (17r–21bisv). While Del Medigo follows Averroes in attributing the unicity thesis to Themistius, Aquinas argues against this attribution in his *De unitate intellectus*. See *ibid.*, II.53, 72.59–65: “From the foregoing words of Themistius, it is clear that he not only holds that the possible intellect is a part of the human soul but the agent as well, and he says that Aristotle taught this” (*Patet igitur ex premissis uerbis Themistii, quod non solum intellectum possibilem, sed etiam agentem partem anime humane esse dicit, et Aristotilem sit hoc sensisse*).
- 113 See *Two Investigations*, f. 120r (27v).
- 114 See *ibid.*, ff. 121r–4v (28v–30v). The first and second arguments, though in a different formulation, are found in an earlier section of the *Two Investigations* where Del Medigo presents four arguments that support the unicity thesis. See *Two Investigations* ff. 82r–1v (2v–3r).
- 115 See *Two Investigations*, f. 121r (28v).
- 116 Del Medigo locates the principle according to which matter is the cause of individuation in Aristotle’s *De caelo*, and refers to it as “practically self-evident” (כמבוארת מעצמה). See *Two Investigations*, f. 121v (29r).

- 117 See *Two Investigations*, f. 123r (29v).
- 118 See *Two Investigations*, f. 123r–v (29v–30r).
- 119 *Two Investigations*, ff. 123v–4r (30r–v):
 אם היו הנה נפשות אנושיות רבות נבדלות מחמר היה מחוייב שימצאו הנפשות ההם בלי פעל ושיעדר הדבר ממה שהוא מוכן לו בטבע זמן בלתי תכלית וזה שקר, אם כן הקודם שקר. ההתחייבות מבואר בהניחנו מה שהוא כמבואר בעצמו מטבע זה השכל . . . והוא שהשכל ההיולאני לא ישכיל דבר מאשר הנה כי אם באמצעות הצורות הדמיוניות ושמציאות המושכלות בשכל ההיולאני נתלה במציאותם והעדרו בהעדרם. בהעדר <אם כן> איש מה נעדרו מושכלותיו, ואם כן נשארה נפשו בלי מושכל כלל זמן בלתי בעל תכלית, ואם כן מציאותה לבטלה כי אין פעל הנפש הזאת כי אם קבלת המושכלות האלה
- 120 Cf. Mahoney, *Aquinas's Critique of Averroes*, 103–4.
- 121 See *Two Investigations*, f. 83r (3v).
- 122 Ibid.
- 123 See *Two Investigations*, f. 124v (30v–1r). Del Medigo also mentions Avicenna, although it seems clear that his main adversaries here are the Thomists.
- 124 *De unitate intellectus*, V.100, 120.15–28; V.114, 134.269–81; V.117, 138.311–33.
 Note that the fourth argument, aimed against the view of Alexander, appears also in the *De unitate intellectus*. See *ibid.*, V.99, 120.1–14.
- 125 See *Two Investigations*, f. 124r (30v).
- 126 *Two Investigations*, f. 146r (46r): כיוון לבנות אשר אמרתי כדי שלא תפחת מעלתו בעיני תלמידיו:
- 127 *Two Investigations*, f. 134v (37v) ספק חזק:
- 128 *Two Investigations*, f. 134r–v (37v):
 השכל ההיולאני הוא נמצא מה בהכרח, ואם לא לא יהיה פה קבול ולא הכנה וזה שההכנה והקבול יצטרך אל נושא בהכרח כאשר התבאר במה שקדם ובראשון מ[ה]שמע. <וכאשר היה אם כן נמצא ואין לו טבע הצורה, רוצה לומר שאין טבעו טבע הצורה> הנה בהכרח טבעו טבע החמר כי אין פה מציאות שלישי. ואמנם זהו נמנע וזה שהחמר הראשון אינו משיג ולא משכיל, ועוד איך יאמר במה שזה דרכו שהוא נפרד מהחמר
- 129 In his discussion concerning Theophrastus's doubt, Del Medigo contributes to the textual reconstruction of an important passage from the *LCDA*. Averroes most probably had access to Theophrastus's doubt through the Arabic translation of Iṣḥāq ibn Ḥunayn of Themistius's paraphrase to Aristotle's *De anima*, although he could have encountered Theophrastus through other sources as well, such as the Arabic translation of Theophrastus's *On the Soul* and a treatise on the soul by Themistius which he composed independently of his paraphrase (See Gutas, *Averroes on Theophrastus*, 132). Averroes's formulation of Theophrastus's doubt reads as follows: “*Tertia autem est questio Theofrasti, et est quod ponere quod iste intellectus nullam habet formam necessarium est, et ponere etiam ipsum esse aliquod ens necessarium est; et si non, non esset receptio neque preparatio. Preparatio enim et receptio est ex hoc quod non inveniuntur in subiecto.*” (*Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 399.351–56). Taylor's translation reads: “The third is the question of Theophrastus, namely, that it is necessary to assert that this intellect

has no form and it is necessary to assert also that it is a being; and if not, there would be neither a reception nor a disposition. *For the disposition and reception result from the fact that they are not found in a subject.*" (*Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (2009), 315, italics mine). As it stands, the Crawford-Taylor rendition seems to represent an erroneous textual tradition. If the existence of the Material Intellect is postulated in order to accommodate a disposition, the principle underlying it ought to be that disposition and reception result from the fact that they *are* found in a subject, rather than that they are not. The Giunta edition contains two other versions of the paragraph, both containing the same improbable reading (See Giunta, *Comm. mag. de An.*, 145d) The Hebrew translation of the LCDA, which generally closely follows the Latin, contains the same reading: . . . לא לא היה קבול. . . . (ms. Napoli, 103r). The *Two Investigations*, however, contains a plausible rendition of the passage. According to Del Medigo, reception and disposition necessarily require a subject. (שההכנה בהכרח והקבול יצטרך אל נושא בהכרח, *Two Investigations*, 134r (37v)). The subject must be an *aliquid ens*, and thereafter the remaining of Theophrastus's text follows naturally. Del Medigo's reading also reflects the Greek text of Theophrastus as well as the Arabic translation. The Greek origin reads, "For it must not be interpreted as being itself nothing (for that would be capacious), *but as being some underlying potentiality*, just as with material [bodies]." (italics mine). The Arabic translation reads, "For we ought not to believe about it that it is nothing at all in itself—for that would be contentious—but that it is a certain underlying potentiality as is the case with things mixed with matter." (Huby, *Theophrastus* vol. IV, 307A, (120)). The Arabic passage (in Gutas's translation) is in line with the Greek, translated by Todd: "For it must not be interpreted as being itself nothing (for that would be capacious), but as being some underlying potentiality, just as with material [bodies]." (Todd, *Themistius on Aristotle on the Soul*, 133). In both the Greek and the Arabic, the existence of the Material Intellect is postulated as an underlying potentiality for the reception of intelligibles. Gutas, who examined the Arabic translation of the passage and its incorporation in the LCDA, notes correctly that "the issue of 'receptio' and 'preparatio' mentioned by Averroes in this passage refers to the 'underlying potentiality.'" (Gutas, *Averroes on Theophrastus*, 139), but he fails to notice that Averroes's presentation does not do justice to the original passage. Was Del Medigo familiar with a textual tradition that was different from the one which came down to us through the mediation of the LCDA, or was the correct reading an emendation offered by Del Medigo himself? The evidence is not conclusive, but it seems that the former might be the case, as Del Medigo usually mentions explicitly whenever he suspects a scribal error in the text of Averroes. Since Crawford's apparatus shows evidence of a manuscript which holds the reading found in the *Two Investigations*, according to which reception and

- disposition necessitate a subject [ms. Paris BnF lat. 16156], it would seem probable that Del Medigo encountered that reading in a copy he possessed of the *LCDA*. In addition, the correct formulation also appears in the *Epitome of the De anima*, a section of which Del Medigo translated into Latin, where it reads: “The essence of possibility and of a generated disposition is that it must have a substratum, as was explained in book one of the physics.” (*Comp. de An.*, 120. Mashbaum refers to the *Physics*, I. 6–9). (It should be mentioned that in his French translation to the *LCDA*, de Libera also notes the textual difficulty and offers his emendation: “*il est nécessaire de poser que l’intellect [matériel] n’a aucune forme, mais il est tout aussi nécessaire de poser qu’il est un certain étant, car sinon il n’y aurait ni réception ni préparation. Car la préparation tout comme la réception font partie des choses qui ne se trouvent que dans un sujet*” (de Libera, *L’intelligence et la pensée*, III.5, 68, italics in the original. See also *ibid.* n. 157).
- 130 See *Two Investigations*, f. 136r (38v). Cf. *Arist. Ph.*, I.2, 185a28–33.
- 131 See *Arist. de An.*, III.4, 429a18–29.
- 132 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 409.654–56; (2009), 326: “*quomodo intellectus materialis est aliquod ens, et non est aliqua formarum materialium neque etiam prima materia.*” Cf. *Two Investigations* f. 135r (38r). A modern scholar also finds the notion of prime matter problematic: “By common consensus, forms are what give a thing its nature, or more generally its properties and characteristics. Yet, also by common consensus, prime matter is that which underlies all forms and so is of itself free of those forms. So how can prime matter be real—that is, how can it exist—without having some character? Surely nothing can exist without existing in some way or another.” See Pasnau, *Metaphysical Themes*, 36.
- 133 See *Two Investigations*, f. 135r (38r); *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, (1953), 409.657; (209), 326.
- 134 Del Medigo does not explicitly refer to God, yet this seems clear enough from his account.
- 135 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, (1953), 410.667–672; (2009), 327. Cf. *Comp. Metaph.*, 388r–v; Taylor, *Principles of Metaphysics*, 516–17.
- 136 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.14 (1953), 429.32–33; (2009), 342: “*prima materia est . . . causa receptionis transmutabilis, et est receptio huius singularis.*” Cf. *Two Investigations*, f. 135v (38r). See also *ibid.*, f. 130r (34r) where Del Medigo argues, echoing Averroes in the *LCDA*, that the intellect is actualized without change or alternation. Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.28 (1953), 466.24–26; (2009), 372.
- 137 See *Two Investigations*, f. 135r (38r). Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.14, (1953), 429.25–28; (2009), 342. See also *Comm. mag. de An.* III.8, (1953), 420.15–18; (2009), 335: “For this reason he [Aristotle] said that when the intellect has been in this disposition, then it will be a potency in a way, that is, then this word potency will be said of it not truly but by analogy.” (“*Et ideo dixit quod, cum intellectus*

fuert in hac dispositione, tunc erit potentia quoquo modo; idest, tunc dicetur de eo hoc nomen potentia non vere sed modo simili").

- 138 *Fortissima earum, Comm. mag. de An. III.5, (1953), 399.348, (2009), 315.* Del Medigo himself does not use “strong” (חזק) to describe this difficulty, but he does so when referring to the previous difficulty posed by Theophrastus. See *Two Investigations* f. 134v (37v).
- 139 *Comm. mag. de An. III.5 (1953), 399.347–50; (2009), 315.* Taylor’s interpretation to this passage seems questionable, as he reads it as a logical rather than a metaphysical dispute. Cf. *Comm. mag. de An. III.5, (2009), 315, n. 62.*
- 140 For an analysis of the notions “substantial form,” “material form,” and “separate form,” see previous discussion.
- 141 See *Comm. mag. de An. III.5, (1953), 402.449–54; (2009), 318.*
- 142 Cf. Taylor, *Averroes’ Epistemology and its Critique*, 162: “These intelligibles have a dual existence based on the nature of their subject. They exist in the separate Material Intellect as intelligibles in act existing eternally, and in the generable and corruptible human rational power [referring here to the embodied power of imagination] they exist corruptibly.”
- 143 *Two Investigations*, f. 126v (32r).
- 144 *Ibid.*, f. 121r (28v): אמר שזה השכל ההיולאני אשר בו נשכיל באופן >כולל הוא בעצמו אחד במספר בכל האנשים ואמנם הוא מתרבה באופן < מה בהתיחסו לפרטים נבדלים
- 145 *Two Investigations*, f. 146v (46r): כי אינו א’ מכל הפנים.
- 146 Averroes appears to be consistent concerning the unicity of the Material Intellect all throughout the *LCDA*, though some passages seem to suggest otherwise. One such passage is the following: “*Questio autem secunda, dicens quomodo intellectus materialis est unus in numero in omnibus individuus hominum, non generabilis neque corruptibilis, et intellecta existentia in eo in actu (et est intellectus speculativus) numeratus per numerationem individuorum hominum, generabilis et corruptibilis per generationem et corruptionem individuorum, hec quidem questio valde est difficilis, et maximam habet ambiguitatem*” (*Comm. mag. de An. III.5, (1953), 401.424–402.431*). As it stands, the passage does not make much sense and is in need of supplementation, which Richard Taylor offers in his English translation. Taylor’s translation reads, “The second question, how the Material Intellect is one in number in all individual human beings, neither generable nor corruptible, and the intelligibles [are] existing in it in act (this is the theoretical intellect), yet it is also enumerated in virtue of the numbering of individual human beings, generable and corruptible through generation and corruption of individuals, this question is very difficult and has the greatest ambiguity.” (*Comm. mag. de An. (2009), 3.5, 317. italics mine*). In his translation from the Latin, Taylor adds the phrase “yet it is also,” thereby rendering the Material Intellect the subject of both unicity and multiplicity.

Yet such reading goes against Averroes's general line of argument in the *LCDA*. The Giunta edition resolves this textual difficulty by presenting two versions of the passage: the old Latin translation from Arabic (*Antiqua Translatio*) and a new rendition of the text (probably based on a Latin-Hebrew version), made by Jacob Mantino. Both versions differ considerably from the Crawford-Taylor's formulation and present a more coherent reading of Averroes on this point. Mantino's rendition reads, "*intelligibilia, quae in eo existunt actu, quod quidem sunt ipse intellectus speculativus, numerentur ad numerationem indiuiduorum hominis*," whereas the old translation reads: "*intellecta existentia in eo [i.e. in the Material Intellect] in actu, et est intellectus speculativus, sunt numerata per numerationem indiuiduorum hominum*." In both cases, the subject of multiplication is the *intellectus speculativus*, that is, the Theoretical Intellect, not the Material Intellect. (*Comm. mag. de An.* (1562–74), f. 147ra–rb). Note that the order of the columns is confused). More problematic is the paragraph that in Crawford's edition reads *Et iste modus secundum quem posuimus essentiam intellectus materialis dissolvit omnes questiones contingentes huic quod ponimus quod intellectus est unus et multa*. (*Comm. mag. de An.* (1953), III.5, 411.707–10). In Taylor's translation, the paragraph reads: "That way in which we posited the being of the Material Intellect solves all the questions resulting from our holding that the intellect is one and many." (*Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), III.5, 318). Does Averroes here refer to the *Material* Intellect as being the subject of both unicity and individuation? Mantino's translation in the Giunta seems to suggest that this is indeed the case: "*Et hac ratione, qua ex posuimus substantiam ipsius intellectus materialis, solventur omnia dubia quod insurgent contra id, quod diximus, ipsum intellectum esse unum et plures*" (*Comm. mag. de An.* (1562–74), f. 152rb). However, the structure of the sentence is vague enough to allow both interpretations, while the context suggests that Averroes attributed individuation to the Theoretical, not the Material Intellect.

- 147 *Two Investigations*, f. 135v (38v): שזה הוא דעת הפילוסוף בלי ספק ומסכים לשרשיו.
- 148 On *valde difficile* and its Greek equivalent, see Taylor's note, *Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), 64, n. 228.
- 149 *Arist. de An.* 407a34–b1. Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* I.49 (1953), 71.1–9; (2009), 64: "Commingle with the body in such a way that it cannot withdraw from [the body]," "*admixtus cum corpore admixtione qua non possit recedere ab eo*."
- 150 *Two Investigations*, f. 136v (39r): קשה מאוד שהשכל יהיה מעורב עם הגוף עירוב שאי אפשר לו שיפרד ממנו, ירצה בערוב הצורה החמרית עם החמר, לא כערוב אשר ישים הוא רוצה לומר באופן מה מצד הקשרו בצורות הדמיוניות.
- 151 *Comm. mag. de An.* I.49 (1953), 71.15–22; (2009), 64–5.
- 152 *Two Investigations*, f. 135v (38v): אמנם השכל יראה שהוא עצם מה אשר יעשה בדבר ואינו נפסד. Cf. *Arist. de An.* 408b18–19.

- 153 See *Two Investigations*, f. 135v (38v). Del Medigo shows textual acuity by suggesting that the assertion that the intellect “comes to be in a thing, and is not subject to corruption” might be a textual corruption. Del Medigo comes to this conclusion by comparing two versions of the Aristotelian text that were available to him, which in all likelihood are the two translations that appear in the Giunta edition. One of them is Aristotle’s text as it appears in Averroes’s commentary, the *Averroes Textus*, and the other is the medieval Latin translation from the Greek, the *Antiqua Translatio*. In the *Averroes Textus*, Aristotle states that the intellect *fit in re* (*Comm. mag. de An.* (1552–74), I.65, f. 33v). According to Del Medigo, if one chooses to follow the second translation, then Aristotle’s claim is that the Material Intellect only *appears* to be generated with regard to transient individuals.
- 154 *Two Investigations*, f. 136r (38v): ואמר במאמר השישי מהשלישי בדברו מהשכל ההיולאני: ולזה הוא הכרחי שלא יהיה מעורב עם גשם, ויביא הראיה על זה שאם היה בגשם היה או קור או חום ואפלא מאוד מאל אסכנדר איך הבין דברי הפילוסוף בזה. Cf. Arist. *de An.* 429a24–9.
- 155 *Two Investigations*, f. 136r (38v): ואפלא מאוד מאל אסכנדר איך הבין דברי הפילוסוף בזה.
- 156 Arist. *de An.* 430a17–20. Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.19, (1953), 440.1–5; (2009), 352; *Two Investigations* f. 136v (39r).
- 157 The only other philosopher explicitly mentioned in the *Two Investigations* is John of Jandun, whose influence on that work will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3

- 1 See *Two Investigations*, f. 131v (35v).
- 2 According to Herbert Davidson, Averroes was “haunted by the issue [of the Material Intellect], and successive works find him struggling with it and moving restlessly from one position to another.” Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 258. David Wirmer mentions seven works in which Averroes discusses the nature of the Material Intellect (including his three commentaries on the *De anima*). See Wirmer, *Über den Intellekt*, 364.
- 3 Arist. *de An.* III.5, 430a14–17.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 430a15–25.
- 5 Another role that was often ascribed to the Agent Intellect in medieval discussions was the generation of sublunary entities. In the cosmological scheme developed by Alfarabi and Avicenna, every celestial intelligence possesses efficient causal powers and through its act of contemplation produces both the sphere and the intelligence that follows it in the celestial hierarchy, as well as the soul of that celestial body. The Agent Intellect in the Farabian-Avicennian model was attributed with causal powers as well, though only in the sublunary realm. Thus, in Alfarabi’s *Epistle on the Intellect*, natural forms are not generated through the mixture of elements

but are emanated by the Agent Intellect. Avicenna held that the Agent Intellect emanates the substantial forms of plants, animals, and humans into sublunary matter, as well as sublunary matter itself. See Brentano, *Nous Poietikos*, 315; Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 29–34, 70, 76). Averroes changed his mind several times concerning the productive role of the Agent Intellect with regard to sublunary reality (see Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 254–7; Puig Montada, *Coming-to-be*, 21). In some of his early works, such as the *Epitome of the Metaphysics*, the *Epitome of De generatione et corruptione*, and the *Epitome of the Parva naturalia*, Averroes follows Alfarabi and Avicenna in arguing that the Agent Intellect is the agent cause of both human thought as well as sublunary existence, yet he presents a different view in his *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* and in later additions to the *Epitome of the Metaphysics* (See Puig Montada, *Coming-to-be*, 22). In any case, Del Medigo does not discuss the causal powers of the Agent Intellect from an ontological perspective. As a rule, only those metaphysical themes are incorporated into the *Two Investigations* that serve Del Medigo's psychological inquiries, and the role of the Agent Intellect as the cause of existence was apparently not perceived by Del Medigo as such.

- 6 See Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 14–15.
- 7 See *ibid.*, 14. On Themistius's view as interpreted by Averroes and Del Medigo, see discussion in the fourth chapter.
- 8 See *ibid.*, 47.
- 9 See *ibid.*, 74–6.
- 10 See *ibid.*, 231.
- 11 See *ibid.*, 13–18, 44–73, 74–6; Hyman, *Aristotle's Theory of the Intellect*, 173 n. 52.
- 12 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.19, (1953), 441.16–28; (2009), 353. Cf. *Two Investigations*, f. 130r (34v).
- 13 See Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 426.
- 14 It is worth noting that in the *LCDA*, Averroes infers the separation of the Material Intellect from that of the Agent Intellect, not the other way around. See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.19, (1953), 442.61–64; (2009), 354: “The agent, however, is more noble than the patient and the principle [more noble] than the matter. For this reason it should be held according to Aristotle that the last of the separate intellects in the hierarchy is that material intellect.” Cf. *Arist. de An.* III.5, 430a17–20.
- 15 *Two Investigations*, f. 131v (35v): זולתי קצת מתפלספי הנצרים. Herbert Davidson shares Del Medigo's view. See Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 13: “Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, like virtually all Islamic and Jewish philosophers in the Aristotelian tradition, accepted the transcendent interpretation [concerning the ontological status of the Agent Intellect] without question.” Besides Aquinas, the view that the Agent Intellect is a part of the individual human soul was

also the view of Albertus Magnus, whom Del Medigo mentions in *De primo motore* though not in the *Two Investigations*. See Mahoney, *Albert and the Studio Patavino*, 561, n. 80; Nardi, *Mistica Averroista*, 135.

- 16 Aquinas's *Commentary on the De anima*, 734.101–106, 367.
- 17 Aquinas's *Commentary on the De anima*, 736.122–127, 367. Yet note that in *De unitate intellectus*, Aquinas presents the notion of a single Agent Intellect as plausible. See *De unitate intellectus*: IV.86, 10.25–21: “There remains to discuss the claim that there is one possible intellect for everybody. There would perhaps be some reason for saying this of agent intellect, and many philosophers do say it, for nothing absurd seems to follow from several things being perfected by one agent. . . . But, however it be with the agent intellect, to say that the possible intellect is one for all men appears impossible in many ways,” “*considerandum restat de hoc quod dicunt intellectum possibilem esse unum in omnibus. Forte enim de agente hoc dicere aliquam rationem haberet, et multi philosophi hoc posuerunt: nichil enim uidetur inconueniens sequi, si ab uno agente multa perficiuntur. . . . Sed quicquid sit de intellectu agente, dicere Intellectum possibilem esse unum omnium hominum, multipliciter impossibile apparet.*” Cf. Mahoney, *Aquinas's Critique of Averroes*, 99.
- 18 Cf. the previous discussion.
- 19 *Two Investigations*, f. 131r (35r):
 בשלישי מהנפש באור י"ח שהשכל הפועל הוא כמו קנין מה כאשר אמר הפילוסוף זה והוא כמו האור וזה שהאור באופן מה יפעל המראים אשר הם בכח מראים בפעל, ואמר המבאר שם ולמה שזה הענין המכרח אותנו בהנחת שכל פועל [...] הוא דומה לענין אשר בעבורו חוש הראות יצטרך לאור
- 20 *Comm. mag. de An.* I.18, (1953), 439.63–65; (2009), 351.
- 21 *Ibid.*, II.67, (1953), 233.96–234.100; (2009), 183. Cf. *Two Investigations*, f. 131v (35v).
- 22 *Two Investigations*, ff. 129r–v (34r). Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.18, (1953), 438.41–43; (2009), 350. Del Medigo's הכח המחשבי corresponds to Averroes's *passible intellect*, which designates the four internal senses (common sense, imagination, cogitation, memory) when viewed collectively.
- 23 See *Two Investigations*, f. 129v (34r); *Comm. mag. de An.* III.18, (1953), 438.46–51; (2009), 350–1.
- 24 The Agent Intellect actualizes the Material Intellect's capacity to conceptualize, not its existence.
- 25 See *Two Investigations*, f. 131v (35v). Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, (1953), 411.691–93; (2009), 328.
- 26 See Chapter 5.
- 27 See Mahoney, *Aquinas's Critique of Averroes*, 93, 96. Cf. Lamascus, *Aquinas and Themistius on Intellect*, 258–61.

- 28 See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, (1953), 389.57–393.195; (2009), 305–9; *Comp. de An.* 81.10–88.7. Cf. Taylor’s introduction to *Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), lxxxiii–vi. It should be stressed that the current study does not attempt to determine whether Averroes’s presentation of Themistius’s position does justice to the Greek source, as Averroes’s presentation is taken as a point of departure for Del Medigo’s own discussion on the nature of the Agent Intellect. It should be mentioned, however, that Aquinas heavily criticized Averroes’s presentation of Themistius’s ideas. See *De unitate intellectus* V.121, 140.386–393: “It is evident, therefore, that Aristotle, Theophrastus, Themistius, and Plato himself did not hold as a principle that the possible intellect is one for all. Averroes, it is clear, distorts in reporting it the thought of Themistius and Theophrastus concerning possible and agent intellects; so we rightly said above that he is the perverter of Peripatetic philosophy.” (“*Ergo patet quod Aristoteles et Theophrastus et Themistius et ipse Plato non habuerunt pro principio, quod intellectus possibilis sit unus in omnibus. Patet etiam quod Auerrois peruerse refert sententiam Themistii et Theophrasti de intellectu possibili et agente; unde merito supra diximus eum philosophie peripatetice peruersorem*”). It is notable, however, that in works prior to *De unitate intellectus* Aquinas rejected Themistius’s view, channelled through Averroes’s presentation in the *Comm. mag. de An.*. See Lamascus, *Aquinas and Themistius on Intellect*, 255–6.
- 29 *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.5 (1953), 389.81–82; (2009), 389.
- 30 *Two Investigations*, f. 103r (17r): שאלה המושכלות אשר ישימם או יפעלם השכל הפועל עד: העיוני * <העיוני> הוא נצחי גם כן ויאמת ששבו מושכלות בפועל בהיולאני המקבל והוא הנקרא השכל * <העיוני> הוא נצחי גם כן ויאמת [ההיולאני] . om. P דעתו בזה כי כאשר היה המקבל נצחי והפועל נצחי הפועל בהכרח <יהיה> נצחי . Cf. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 293.
- 31 See *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.5, (1953) 409.644–45; (2009) 326: “Hence, Plato said that universals are neither generable nor corruptible and that they exist outside the mind.” Apart from the LCDA, Del Medigo might have come across Plato’s view either through the *Epitome of the De anima* or, more likely, through the Hebrew translation of Averroes’s paraphrase to Plato’s *Republic*, which Del Medigo himself translated into Latin. Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5 (1953), 409.644–53; (2009), 326; *Comp. de An.*, 1.8–10, 25.9–11; Averroes’s paraphrase of Plato’s *Republic*, f. 39r.
- 32 See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, (1953), 390.91–97; (2009), 306–7: “What seems to be the case, that the agent intellect sometimes understands when it is united to us and sometimes does not understand, results for it because of the mixture, namely, on account of its mixture with the material intellect. From this consideration alone Aristotle was forced to assert [the existence of] the material intellect, not because the theoretical intelligibles are generated and made [to exist].” See also *ibid.*, III.5 (2009), 307, n. 44. Cf. *Two Investigations*, ff. 103r–v (17r–v).
- 33 I read “while” for “because” (*quia*), following Taylor’s suggestion in *Comm. mag. de An.*, (2009), 306, n. 41.

- 34 *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.5, (1953), 389.81–390.87; (2009), 306. Cf. Davidson: “The position on the material intellect which Averroes adopts in the *LCDA* is Themistius’ position, as Averroes understands it, with a correction and an addition. Themistius, Averroes writes in the *LCDA*, construed the material intellect rightly but missed a critical detail; he did not realize that actual human thought, or human ‘theoretical intellect’, although in one respect eternal, is in another respect generated-destructible.” Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 293.
- 35 See *Comp. de An.*, 86.10–12; *Two Investigations*, f. 104v (18r). Del Medigo notes that Themistius’s position distorts the notion of a Material Intellect as well. See *Two Investigations*, f. 103r (17r): ועוד הנה נאמר שהשכל ההיולאני הוא עצם בכח ולא יתכן זה אם הנחנו שהמושכלות האלה נצחיות בו “For we say that the Material Intellect is a substance *in potency*, but that could not be the case if we assume that the intelligible inhere in it eternally.”
- 36 Aquinas, *Commentary on the De anima*, 731.54–63, 366.
- 37 *Two Investigations*, f. 104v (18r): והיה שרש הבדל דעתם במושכלות אם הם הוות נפסדות: ואניח הראיות אשר יבטלו דעת המפרשים בזה ואסתור ראיותיהם, ואז יתבאר סתירת דעתם בשאר [לאשר] om. P [הדברים כי הם נתלים בזה * <כאשר> אמרנו].
- 38 *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.21, (1953), 453.285–288; (2009), 362.
- 39 *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.5, (1953), 391.132–140; (2009), 308. Cf. Hyman, *Aristotle’s Theory of the Intellect*, 178–9. Hyman however only gives a partial description of Averroes’s argument.
- 40 For the mentioning of the argument in the *Two Investigations*, see *ibid.*, f. 110v (21b^{isr}).
- 41 See *Two Investigations*, f. 103r (17r); *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.5 (1953), 389.81–82; (2009), 389.
- 42 Avicenna, too, turned to the *Posterior Analytics* in his discussion of God’s knowledge. See Adamson, *Knowledge of Particulars*, 258.
- 43 See Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy*, 134–6.
- 44 See *Two Investigations*, f. 106r (19r): מהדברים בה מהדברים: כאשר קיים בה מהדברים: ר”ל הבלתי מתחלפים במין או בסוג, והם מתחלפים באיש ענין א’ מצד מה שהוא מקביל לכולל, ר”ל הבלתי מתחלפים במין או בסוג, והם מתחלפים באיש ענין א’ מצד מה שהוא מקביל לכולל. Cf. *Comm. mag. An. Post.* (1562–74), II.106, ff. 565v–6r (trans. de Balme): “*fiat universale in anima, quando in ea constituitur de rebus indifferentibus specie, aut genere, quae differunt individuo secundum unam dispositionem in quantum est oppositum universali: hoc est: in quantum est particulare, non in quantum est universal*”; *Comp. Metaph.*, 369v: “There are things outside the mind which are essentially distinct, yet, inhering in one another or mixed with one another. Then, the mind distinguishes their essences from one another, puts together what is mutually similar, and discriminates it from what is distinct, until it thinks the natures of the things separately and in accordance with their true being.”

- 45 *Two Investigations*, f. 105v (19r). Cf. *Comm. mag. An. Post.*, II.104, f. 564r (trans. de Balme).
- 46 *Two Investigations*, f. 105v (18v). Cf. *Comm. mag. An. Post.*, II.104, f. 563v (trans. de Balme).
- 47 See *Two Investigations*, ff. 107v–8r (20r). Del Medigo cites these examples from Averroes's *Long Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, while Wolfson attributes them to an earlier source, Alfarabi's *Uyun al-Masa'il*. See Wolfson, *Tasawwur and Tasdiq*, 117. However, Prof. Dag Hasse has turned my attention to the fact that the *Uyun al-Masa'il* most likely dates after Alfarabi and also after Avicenna.
- 48 See *Two Investigations*, f. 105r (18r): כִּי אֵנָחוּנוּ צְרִיכִים בְּהַגְעָתָם לְנוּ שְׁנַרְגִּישׁ תְּחִילָה וְאַחַר כֵּן נִדְמָה וְאִי יִהְיֶה אֲפֹשֶׁר לְנוּ לְקִיחַת הַכִּלְיִי. According to Hyman, Averroes divides primary propositions to natural propositions and to those which come about through experience. An example of the first kind is “the whole is greater than a part” and of the second is “scamony purges the red humor.” Hyman also refers to the *LCDA* III. 36, where Averroes argues that primary propositions reach us directly from the Agent Intellect without the involvement of sense perception, which seems to go against Del Medigo's position. Hyman, *Aristotle's Theory of the Intellect*, 189, n. 115.
- 49 See discussions in D. L. Black, “Memory, Individuals, and the Past in Averroes's Psychology,” *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5 (1996), 161–87; Taylor, *Cogitatio, Cogitativus and Cogitare*.
- 50 See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.6, (1953), 415.70–416.72; (2009), 332; *Comp. Parva Naturalia* (1949), 56.39–57.43. Cf. Taylor, *Cogitatio, Cogitativus and Cogitare*, 223.
- 51 *Comp. Parva Naturalia* (1949), 56.39–57.43: “*Et hoc erit quando sentiens senserit primo rem extra animam, deinde ymaginaverit ymaginans, deinde distinxit distinguens intentionem illius forme a suo descriptione, cuius est intentione, deinde recipit conservans illud quod distinguens distinguit.*” trans. Black, *Memory, Individuals and the Past*, 171. Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* II.63, (1953), 225.47–226.61; (2009), 176: “[The senses] apprehend the intention of this individual human being and the intention of this individual horse and generally the intention of each of the ten categories of individuals. . . . That individual intention is what the cogitative power discerns from the imagined form and refines from the things which were added with it from those common and proper sensible and it deposits it in the memory. This same [individual intention] is what the imaginative [power] apprehends, but the imaginative [power] apprehends it as joined to those sensible, although its apprehension is more spiritual, as is explained elsewhere.” Cf. Taylor, *Averroes' Epistemology and its Critique*, 155.
- 52 Averroes distinguishes between the notions of an image and of an intention. In Black's analysis, an image represents the external features of an object, such as size, color, and so on, whereas an intention, perceived by the cogitative power, represents the individual *qua* individual. See Black, *Memory, Individuals and the*

a proposition can be traced back to the *De anima* 430a26 and is referred to by Averroes in the *LCDA* and elsewhere. See *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.21, (1953), 455.14–17; (2009), 364: “Because the more well-known of the differences in virtue of which the activity of the intellect is divided are two activities, one called conceptualisation and the other assent, he [Aristotle] began here to make known the difference between these two activities.” And in the *Epitome of the De anima*, “And it is plain that the function of this faculty [i.e., the rational faculty] is not merely to apprehend a notion abstracted from matter, but also to apprehend the combination of some notions with others, and to utter a judgment, whether an assertion or denial, concerning such combination . . . the first activity of this faculty is called ‘conceptualization’ and the second activity is called ‘affirmation.’” *Comp. de An.*, 8.1–12. In the Arabic logical tradition, the distinction between a concept and proposition corresponds to the distinction between *tasawwur* and *tasdiq* or “formation” and “affirmation.” *Tasawwur* is the designation of the essence of a thing by a term, without ascribing to it any truth value. *Tasdiq*, on the other hand, is the “assertion or denial of something about something” (Wolfson, *Tasawwur and Tasdiq*, 114–15). Wolfson also suggests the terms “simple apprehension” and “judgment” to designate *tasawwur* and *tasdiq*, respectively. On the Aristotelian sources of this distinction, see Wolfson, *Tasawwur and Tasdiq*, 483–6.

- 57 See *Two Investigations*, f. 110r (21v): “When you saw an elephant, and his imaginary form is left with you, and you abstracted it from the accidents until it was actualised through the Agent Intellect.”
- 58 Leen Spruit notes that the peripatetic psychological tradition throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance perceived the mental act as the perception of essences rather than the judgment of essences. See Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, 9.
- 59 See *Two Investigations*, f. 105r (18v); *Comp. de An.*, 68.1: “And this is why these intelligibles occur to us only with time.”
- 60 *Two Investigations*, f. 109v (21v): ואנהנו נראה דבקות אלה המושכלות בצורות הדמיוניות עד שישגם השכחה לסור הצורות הדמיוניות <עצמותי> * om. P [עצמי] (*italics mine*). “Essential conjunction” is Mashbaum’s translation to Ibn Tibbon’s עצמותי דבקות. In Del Medigo one finds both המשכות עצמותי and דבקות עצמותי. See in *Two Investigations*, ff. 105r (18v); 109v (21v).
- 61 See *Two Investigations*, f. 109r (21r): כשילקחו על מדרגה אחת רוצה לומר אם האחד בכח האחר בפעל, וכאשר נפסד אחד משניהם נפסד האחר. To illustrate the notion of correlatives, Del Medigo gives the example of father and son.
- 62 See *Two Investigations*, f. 109v (21v).
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Arist. *de An.* III.7 431a15–20.

- 81 See *ibid.*, 369r, 74.
- 82 In his *Epitome of the De anima*, Averroes mentions this position and refers the reader to the *Metaphysics*. See *Comp. de An.*, 73.1–2.
- 83 See *Two Investigations*, f. 106v (19v).
- 84 See *Two Investigations*, f. 107r (19v): כי אין לצורה מציאות בפועל כי אם מצד שהיא פרטית ורמוזה.
- 85 *Comp. de An.*, 125.
- 86 See Chapter 2, 70.
- 87 *Two Investigations*, f. 90r (8r): שלא יגיע מהנצחי הנפרד הראשון דבר חדש כי אם באמצעות . התנועה הנצחית השמימית .
- 88 *Two Investigations*, f. 91v (9r).
- 89 Cf. Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 428: “This doctrine of double support, or double subject, of the *Intellectum speculativum* [i.e., the Theoretical Intellect] is the keystone of the Averroistic noetic. In grounding himself upon it, Averroes will try to resolve the antinomies of his system.” The reliance on the two-subject theory for various theoretical needs also characterizes Del Medigo’s discussion in the *Two Investigations*, as exemplified throughout this study.
- 90 See *Two Investigations*, f. 91v (9r–v).
- 91 Aristotle, *Arist. de An.* II.4, 415a25–b1: “An animal producing an animal, a plant a plant, in order that, as far as its nature allows, it may partake in the eternal and divine”; Taylor, *Cogitatio, Cogitativus and Cogitare*, 242: “For Averroes individual human beings share in immortality only via their relationship to separate intellect in this life and via their existence as members of the human species which is eternal by succession of individuals.”
- 92 Concerning the views of modern scholars, see Taylor: “These [the Material Intellect and the Agent Intellect] are two distinct intellectual substances.” See also “The argument of Averroes required two distinct substances” (introduction to *Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), lxxviii, n. 127) See also *ibid.*, lxxix: “Averroes holds for the existence of two separate intellectual substances which make human rational activity possible.” Cf. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 293: “[Averroes] identifies it [i.e., the Material Intellect] as the last of incorporeal intelligences, standing directly below the active intellect in the hierarchy of existence.”; Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 426: “It is well known that the Arab Master [Averroes] claims that both the agent intellect and the receptive intellect (which he terms the ‘material’ intellect because of its potential state) are separate and unique substances . . .” Cf. *ibid.*, 440.
- 93 On Vernia see Hasse, *The Attraction of Averroism*, 4, n. 20. See also Mahoney, *Vernia’s annotations*, 591.
- 94 See *Two Investigations*, f. 141r (42r).
- 95 *Comm. mag. de An.*, III.20, (1953), 450.213–451.219; (2009), 360, italics mine.

- 96 Introduction to *Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), lxviii. Taylor refers to Alfred Ivry, although the latter changed his mind over time. For Ivry's revised position, see *Three Commentaries*, 210–1. Del Medigo cites the passage in *Two Investigations*, ff. 141v–2r (42v).
- 97 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.20 (1953), 451.222–30; (2009), 360–1.
- 98 See *Two Investigations*, f. 142r (42v).
- 99 See *Two Investigations*, f. 142r (43r).
- 100 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.19, (1953), 442.62–68; (2009), 354: “*Et ideo opinandum est secundum Aristotelem quod ultimus intellectus abstractorum in ordine est iste intellectus materialis . . . cum actio eius magis videtur esse passio quam actio, non quia est aliud per quod differat iste intellectus ab intellectu agenti nisi per hanc intentionem tantum.*”
- 101 See *Two Investigations*, f. 142r (43r): ואם הבין בן רשד שההיולאני נבדל עומד בעצמו: זולת שיתאחד עם השכל אשר בפעל, למה לא יהיה הבדל ביניהם כי אם זה אחר היותם שני טבעים מתחלפים עומדים בעצמם, ולא אמר שאנו לא היינו מבדילים ביניהם אבל אמר לא היה ביניהם הבדל <כלל>.
- 102 Some of these principles can also be traced to Del Medigo's *De primo motore*. Bland mistakenly took the ten principles as establishing the existence of a separate Material Intellect. See Bland, *Unicity of Intellect*, 12.
- 103 *Two Investigations*, f. 141r (42r): שהשכל ההיולאני והפועל אחד.
- 104 Ibid.: שטבע המקבל בו במה הוא מקבל נבדל באופן מה מטבע הפועל במה הוא שכל בפעל לא שהם נבדלים עומדים בעצמם.
- 105 Ibid.: om. P שהתאחדות הפועל עם ההיולאני הוא יותר מאד * <מהתאחדות> הצורה עם החמר [מהתיחדות].
- 106 Ibid.: שאין ההרכבה בהיולאני עם הפועל כהרכבת החמר עם הצורה רוצה לומר שאינו נמצא בפעל: בעבור הפועל אשר בו בהמצא הדבר בפעל בעבור צורתו.
- 107 Ibid.: שהשכל ההיולאני והפועל אינו דבר זולתי ההיולאני ומה שישכיל ההיולאני מהאל או מיתר * om. P [מהיתר].
- 108 Ibid.: כל מניע נפרד זולת האל יתברך ימצא בו באופן מה דבר מקבל ומקובל, והמקבל הוא הנפש: על דרך משל או דומה לנפש והמקובל הוא מה שישכיל מהראשון.
- 109 Ibid.: לא יחויב בעבור זה שיהיו מורכבים וחדשים.
- 110 Ibid.: שהטבעים האלה המקבלים בנפרדים מתחלפים, רוצה לומר שטבע המקבל אשר באחד אינו טבע המקבל אשר באחר.
- 111 Ibid.: שהתאחדות המקבל והמקובל במניעים הנפרדים יותר מהתאחדות ההיולאני עם הפועל.
- 112 Ibid.: שזה הטבע המקבל אשר בכל הנפרדים זולתי האל יתברך אינו כח לבד בטבעו ואמנם הוא נמצא מה בפעל לא במוחלט.
- 113 I use the term cognition to designate the act of the separate intellect, which in the sublunary realm is designated as conceptualization.
- 114 *Two Investigations*, f. 139r (40v–1r): שאין שם דרך יהיה הנפרד . . . עלול מהראשון כי אם מצד השכלתו הראשון והוא מבורר גם כן כמעט בעצמו וזה שאחר שאינם ברואים מהאין ולא מכח

- 123 *Two Investigations*, ff. 144r–v (44v): הנה הטבע הזה אשר נאמר בו שהוא בכח הוא נמצא מצד. עצמו
- 124 See Chapter 2.
- 125 *Two Investigations*, f. 141r (42r–v): ואולם ההיולאני הנה הוא באופן מה בכח מצד השכילו גם: הוא הראשון או מניע אחר והוא גם כן בכח אל שיקבל המושכלות אשר בכאן, ולכן הכח אשר יאמר ביתר הנפרדים הוא נאמר כמעט בשתוף עם הכח אשר ימצא בהיולאני בערך המושכלות אשר בכאן. On the different kinds of reception one finds in the Material Intellect, see also *Two Investigations*, f. 143r (43v): “The mode of reception of these two is different, as will be made clear later on.” f. 144r (44r): “We do not find this attribute [reception of sublunary intelligibles] in the other separate intellects [i.e., besides the Material Intellect], for they only receive what the eternally cognize of God, and this due to their receptive nature being different from the nature of our Material Intellect.” Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.8, (1953), 420.22–28; (2009), 335.
- 126 The substantial unity of the Material and Agent Intellects was suggested by Siger of Brabant as well. See *Quaest. in Arist. de An.*, XV.2, 58.42–43: *Adhuc de intellectu agente et possibili intelligendum quod non sunt duae substantiae, sed sunt duae virtutes eiusdem substantiae.*
- 127 Thomas Wylton on the Intellective Soul, section 44, 26.25–28, 27: “*Dico igitur quod de intentione Commentatoris fuit . . . quod intellectus agens est quaedam substantia per se subsistens. Et credo quod ista sit intentio Aristotelis, qui ita commendat istam veritatem.*” Cf. Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 276, and see Mahoney’s notes there.
- 128 Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.* (1557), III.23, 367. Cited in Brenet, *Transferts du Sujet*, 118: “*Cum intellectus possibilis sit substantia pure potentia . . . necesse est quod eius perfectio prima sit substantia, et hoc indubitanter est intellectus agens. Per hanc itaque inuestigationem potest esse certum, quod anima intellectiua sit composita essentialiter ex eis duabus partibus, scilicet intellectu possibili, ut ex subiecto, et intellectu agente tanquam ex forma informante*” (trans. mine). Cf. Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 276.
- 129 Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.* (1557), III.23, 367. Cited in Brenet, *Transferts du Sujet*, 118–19, n. 4, italics mine.

Chapter 4

- 1 Compare the discussion in this chapter with my discussion in Engel, *Intelligible Species*.
- 2 *Two Investigations*, f. 131v (35v): . . . אמנם . . . וכן אמר בבאור החמישי שהשכל הפועל . . . אמן כי יפשיט הצורות מהחמרים ראשונה ואחר ישכילם (ירצה * ההיולאני), ואמנם הפשטתם אינו דבר כי אם ישיעשה אותם מושכלות בפעל אחר שהיו בכח (רוצה לומר שיעשם כוללות ומופשטות מתנאי

- למשל (שהשכל om. P [החמר]). Cf. *Comm. mag. de An.* III.18, (2009), 351; (1953) 439.78.
- 3 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.15, (1953), 390.98–104; (2009), 307: “*propalavit Aristoteles quod intellectus agens existit in anima nobis, cum videmur denudare formas a materiis primo, deinde intelligere eas. Et denudare eas nichil aliud est nisi facere eas intellectas in actu postquam erant in potentia, quemadmodum comprehendere eas nichil aliud est quam recipere eas.*”
- 4 Since, as was illustrated in Chapter 3, Del Medigo perceives the Material and Agent Intellects as two aspects of a single substance, the generation and reception of the intelligibles is to be taken as two stages of a single process, carried forward by a single entity.
- 5 By “universal imaginary forms” Del Medigo means intelligible; and see below.
- 6 *Two Investigations* ff. 131v–2r (35v): וחשב [ג'ון מג'נדון] שמציאות הצורות הדמיוניות ושהשכל הפועל לא יונח כי אם בעבור ההשכל ואנחנו כבר זכרנו שדעת בן רשד שהשכל אשר לשכל אינו כי אם הצורות ההן הכוללות כאשר שבו בו מושכלות בפעל.
- 7 *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut*, 338.4–10, 202. Agostino Nifo employs discussions from the *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* in a manner reminiscent of the discussion in the *Two Investigations*. On Nifo's commentary on the *Destructio destructionis* with relation to the theory of intelligible species, see Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. II, 74–6. The *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut* was translated from Hebrew to Latin by Kalo Kalonymos ben David in the sixteenth century. See Hasse, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 135. Cf. *Two Investigations*, f. 132r (36r): שהפילוסופים יניחו שהנמצא אשר אינו גשם (הנמצא אשר אינו גשם) היא הנה הוא בעצמותו ידיעה לבד, וזה שהם ראו שהצורות ירצה החמריות אמנם היו בלתי יודעות לפי שהם בחמרים. וכאשר נמצא דבר אינו בחמר נודע שהוא יודע, ונודע זה בראיה שהם מצאו הצורות (“The philosophers assume that an existent which is not a body (הנמצא אשר אינו גשם) is in its essence knowledge alone. [They came to this conclusion] as they witnessed that the material forms do not possess knowledge in as much as they exist in matters (חמרים). And when one finds something which does not exist in matter he acknowledges that it [that thing] is a knower, and this becomes known through the evidence they found, that the material forms, when they are abstracted in the soul from their mater, become knowledge (ידיעה) and intellect (שכל)”).
- 8 See *Two Investigations*, f. 132r (36r): ולמה שבעת קבלתם בשכל הנה הם מעויינות בפעל (“and as they are actually known at the time of their reception, receiving them is identical with knowing them, as held by Averroes”).
- 9 Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 156.
- 10 Aquinas, *Commentary on the De anima*, 357. Cf. Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 6.

- 11 See Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 5–6.
- 12 Dominik Perler, however, argues that in the Middle Ages the meaning of “*similitudo*” did not correspond exactly to the modern notions of “likeness” or “similitude.” See Perler, *Things in the Mind*, 232 n. 4.
- 13 See Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 9.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 21. Cf. Perler, *Things in the Mind*, 231–3.
- 15 “*Ratio Averrois deficit ex hoc quod non distinguit inter id quo intelligitur et id quod intelligitur.*” SCG, II. c. 75, ad 2. Cited in Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 435. Note, however, that according to Mahoney, Jandun attributes intelligible species to Averroes following Aquinas. See Mahoney, *Aquinas’s Critique of Averroes*, 105.
- 16 The term *species intelligibilis* does not appear in the Latin translation of the LCDA, and both Bazàn and Spruit claim that Averroes did not promote such a theory (See Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 432; Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 93). The opposite claim is made by Mahoney in his *Albert the Great and the Studio Patavino*, where the latter cites *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, 389–92 (1953) as evidence that Averroes discusses the notion of intelligible species. It seems, however, that Mahoney conflates the notions of Theoretical Intellect and intelligible species. In a later study, Mahoney acknowledged that “his [Aquinas’s] claim that Averroes maintained ‘intelligible species’ is surely doubtful.” *Aquinas’s Critique of Averroes*, 85.
- 17 On Jandun’s theory of intelligible species, see Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 94; 326–36; Mahoney, *Albert the Great and the Studio Patavino*, 558, n. 74.
- 18 See Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 278; Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 329.
- 19 “*receptio speciei intelligibilis ipsam quiditatem representatis.*” John of Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.*(1557), III.2, 223. Cited in Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 137 (trans. mine).
- 20 On Scotus’s influence on Jandun concerning this point, see *ibid.*, 282.
- 21 See Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 278; Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. II, 332.
- 22 *Two Investigations*, f. 131v (35v). See John of Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.*(1552), III. 25, f. 89vb. Cited in Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 283. Cf. Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 279; South, *John of Jandun*, 374; Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 280–5. In Jandun’s view, the imaginary form is the “*principium actiuum propinquum speciei intelligibilis.*” Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.* (1557), III.14, 297. Cited in Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 138. Mahoney argues that we can trace a development in the thought of Jandun regarding this issue and that Jandun modified his view concerning the role of the Agent Intellect in the creation the intelligible species. See Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 283. Leen Spruit holds that the emphasis on the role of imaginary forms in the creation of the objects of knowledge was typical of the Averroist tradition, apparently as an attempt to stress the relation between the eternal human intellect

- and perishable beings. By ascribing to the lower faculties of the soul a crucial role in the generation of intelligible species, the Averroists could ascribe the operation of the separate intellect to humans more convincingly. See Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 320. Spruit's account is less convincing in the case of Jandun, who rejects the presence of imaginary forms as a model for explaining human conceptualization (See following discussion).
- 23 One finds a passage in the *Two Investigations* that seemingly advocates a theory of intelligible species. Del Medigo argues that "in actual intellection we can distinguish between two things: one is the intelligible form, the other is the actual cognition (עיון) of that form" [*Two Investigations*, f. 36r, (132r)]. One may assume here a corruption in the text that served as the source for both manuscripts, and Del Medigo's portrayal of Jandun's view might have been taken for Del Medigo's own position.
- 24 See Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 283, n. 40. Jandun highlights that although they are distinct, the reception of the intelligible species and the act of intellection occur simultaneously. See Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 283, n. 40.
- 25 Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 431.
- 26 As mentioned, Aquinas did not believe that Averroes held a theory of intelligible species.
- 27 On the controversy concerning intelligible species in Padua, see Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 284, n. 40; Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. I, 94. Pico held a position similar to Del Medigo, arguing that "*Species intelligibiles non sunt necessariae, et eas ponere, non est bonis Peripateticis consentaneus.*" *Conclusiones*, in *Opera omnia*, 63–113, 63, cited in Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. II, 29. See also Mahoney, *Albert the Great and the Studio Patavino*, 550; 550 n. 49. On Vernia's rejection of the notion of intelligible species, see Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis*, vol. II, 52–6. Cf. Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 324–5. Hasse illustrates the centrality of discussions concerning intelligible species in Padua, though all the controversies he mentions were carried in the period that followed Del Medigo's return to Candia. See Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 324–9.

Chapter 5

- 1 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.20, (1953), 451.219–22, (2009), 360: "*Et ex hoc modo dicimus quod intellectus continuatus nobiscum, apparent in eo due virtutes, quarum una est activa et alia de genere virtutum passivarum.*" (italics mine). Cf. Deborah Black, *The Identity of Knower and Known*, 171: "Averroes takes great care to assert that the active capacity for abstraction as much as the passive reception of

intelligibles is equally ours. . . . If we truly are intelligent beings, the agent intellect as much as the material intellect must be our principle and operate within us.”

Like most modern scholars, Black postulates the existence of two intellects, Material and Agent, as two independent substances.

- 2 See *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, (1953), 411.691–93; (2009), 328. Cf., see previous note.
- 3 See previous note, 100.
- 4 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.18, (1953), 439.83–440.85; (2009), 352: “*Et cum invenimus nos agere per has duas virtutes intellectus cum voluerimus, et nichil agit nisi per suam formam, ideo fuit necesse attribuere nobis has duas virtutes intellectus.*” Cf. Kogan, *Metaphysics of Causation*, 43.
- 5 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.36, (1953), 486.200–2; (2009), 388: “*intellectus materialis non copulatur nobiscum per se . . . nisi per suam copulationem cum formis ymaginalibus.*”
- 6 *Comm. mag. de An.* III.5, (1953) 404.513–405.519; (2009), 320. “*Et cum declaratum est . . . quod impossibile est ut intellectum copuletur cum unoquoque hominum et numeretur per numerationem eorum per partem que est de eo quasi materia, scilicet intellectum materialem, remanet ut continuatio intellectorum cum nobis hominibus sit per continuationem intentionis intellecte cum nobis (et sunt intentiones ymagnate).*”
- 7 The Latin reads, “*remanet ut continuatio intellectorum cum nobis hominibus sit per continuationem intentionis intellecte cum nobis (et sunt intentiones ymagnate), scilicet partis que est in nobis de eis aliquo modo quasi forma*” (*Comm. mag. de An.* (1953), 405.517–520). Averroes argues that the intelligibles are not attributed to man by virtue of the Material Intellect, which serves them as their material substrate. Instead, they are attributed to man by virtue of the component, which serves them as form and which originates in men, namely the imaginary forms (“*partis que est in nobis de eis aliquo modo quasi forma*”). This meaning is preserved in de Libera’s translation: “il reste que la jonction des intelligibles avec nous autres hommes se fait par la jonction de ‘intentions’ intelligibles avec nous, [plus précisément] de cette partie des [‘intentions’ intelligibles] qui est en nous d’une certaine manière *comme [leur] forme*” (*Comm. mag. de An.* (1998), 74, italics mine). Taylor’s translation reads: “It remains that the conjoining of intelligibles with us human beings is through the conjoining of the intelligible intention with us (these are the imagined intentions), *namely, of the part which is related to it in us in some way as form.*” (*Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), 320, italics mine).
- 8 For a survey of Aquinas’s critique as manifested in works prior to *De unitate intellectus*, see Mahoney, *Aquinas’s Critique of Averroes*, 83–93; Black, *Consciousness and Self-Knowledge*, 3.

- 9 *De unitate intellectus*, III.66, 84.117–118. Cf. Black, *Consciousness and Self-Knowledge*, 4.
- 10 Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's De anima*, 350. Cf. McNerny, *Interpretive Essays in De unitate intellectus*, 205.
- 11 Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's De anima*, III, 349: "For they say that an intelligible *species* is the form of the possible intellect (since it becomes actualized by means of a *species*), but that the *phantasm*, which is in us, is a kind of subject for this *species*. In this way, therefore, they say that possible intellect is linked with us through form. But what they say shows absolutely no continuity between [that] intellect and us."
- 12 *De unitate intellectus*, III.64, 82.69–73: "*secundum autem dictum Auerrois, intellectus non continuaretur homini secundum suam generationem, sed secundum operationem sensus, in quantum est sentiens in actu.*"
- 13 In his *De principiis naturae*, Aquinas asserted that "substantial form may be said to give existence (*esse*) to matter," and that "The kind of form which produces substantial existence in act is substantial form, and that which produces accidental existence is an accidental form." Cited in Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought*, 296–7.
- 14 For a discussion on whether Averroes promoted a theory of intelligible species, see previous chapter.
- 15 *De unitate intellectus*, III.65, 82.84–86: "*sequitur quod per speciem intelligibilem non continuatur fantasmatis, sed magis ab eis est separatus.*" Cf. Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's De anima*, 349: "Therefore, the intelligible *species* is the form of possible intellect only insofar as it is actually intelligible, and it is not actually intelligible except insofar as it has been abstracted from the phantasms. It is clear, therefore, that insofar as it is united with intellect it has been removed from the phantasms. It is not, therefore, by this means that intellect is united with us."
- 16 In his *Quaestiones in tertium De anima*, Siger of Brabant refers to the argument as forceful, and it apparently caused him to modify his interpretation of the LCDA. See Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 442.
- 17 *De unitate intellectus*, III.66, 84.97–103: "*dato quod una et eadem species numero esset forma intellectus possibilis et esset simul in fantasmatis: nec adhuc talis copulatio sufficeret ad hoc quod hic homo intelligeret. Manifestum est enim quod per speciem intelligibilem aliquid intelligitur, sed per potentiam intellectuam aliquid intelligit.*" Cf. Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's De anima*, 350: "Still, even if we granted that there is some union of [that] possible intellect with us in this way [i.e., by virtue of the imaginary form], the union would render us not intellectually cognizant but rather intellectually cognized." Cf. Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 435.
- 18 *De unitate intellectus*, III.66, 84.109–18: "*Talis autem est predicta copulatio intellectus possibilis ad hominem, in quo sunt fantasmata quorum species sunt in intellectu possibili, qualis est copulatio parietis in quo est color ad uisum in quo est*

species sui coloris. Sicut igitur paries non uidet, sed uidetur eius color, ita sequeretur quod homo non intelligeret, sed quod eius fantasmata intelligerentur ab intellectu possibili. Impossibile est ergo saluari quod hic homo intelligat, secundum positionem Auerrois."

- 19 General introductions to the controversy over the unicity thesis in the Middle Ages can be found in *Comm. mag. de An.* (2009), xcvi–cvi; Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes*, 298–314; McInerney, introduction to *De unitate intellectus*, 1–15. On the controversy during the Renaissance, see Kessler, *The Intellectual Soul*, 493–4; Hasse, *Averroica Secta*, 321; *ibid.*, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 115–21.
- 20 As noted in the Introduction, Jandun is the only Latin author mentioned by name in the *Two Investigations*.
- 21 Cf. Taylor, *Averroes' Epistemology and its Critique*, 165: "The intelligible in act is itself such that it cannot be received into a particular individual, material human being. If that were to happen, it would become an intelligible in potency, thereby forfeiting its nature as an intelligible in act."
- 22 See John of Jandun, *Super libros Aristotelis De anima subtilissimae quaestiones* (Venice, 1552), III, q. 5, f. 58vb: "*Ad evidentiam quaestionis considerandum est diligenter quod in philosophia Aristotelis forma corporis accipitur dupliciter quantum spectat ad propositum. Uno modo forma corporis dicitur quaecumque perfectio dans esse corpori et unita corpori secundum esse . . . Alio modo sumitur forma corporis pro operante intrinseco appropriato corpori.*" Cited in Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 275, n. 6. Cf. *ibid.*, 274.
- 23 See Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 276.
- 24 On operational union in the thought of Siger, see Bazàn, *Intellectum Speculativum*, 441.
- 25 See John of Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.* (1552), I.10, f. 13va; III.5, ff. 59vb–60rb. Cited in Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 276, n. 8.
- 26 See Vernia, *Quaestio de unitate intellectus*, f. 156rb: "*Ad quod dicitur quod licet illud tale agregatum non sit unum tanta unitate, quanta unitate est unum compositum ex materia et forma extensa, est tamen unum tanta unitate quod illa sufficit ad operationem unam.*" Cited in Hasse, *The Attraction of Averroism*, 5, n. 26; cf. *ibid.*, *Arabic Philosophy and Averroism*, 118.
- 27 For contemporary critics of Aquinas and his reading of Averroes on that point, see Taylor, *Averroes' Epistemology and its Critique*; Black, *Consciousness and Self-Knowledge*.
- 28 John of Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.* (1557), III.5, 242: "*ex hoc enim solo quod species intelligibilis causatur a phantasmate nostro, non sequitur nos esse intelligentes. Sed forte ex hoc bene sequeretur quod phantasma esset Intellectum, vel res ipsa phantasiata, sicut per hoc quod species, quae est in visu, est similitudo*

coloris, non sequitur ipsum colorem esse videntem, sed quod videtur. Unde dico, quod ista non fuit intentio commentatoris et grauer peccant, qui hoc ei imponunt."

Cited in Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 305 (text corrected, trans. mine), and see Brenet's discussion there.

- 29 See Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 306: "Thomas d'Aquin a donc non seulement imposé le test crucial de la théorie noétique de Jean de Jandun, mais il l'oblige à reconduire certains de ses arguments."
- 30 "*Dico quod aliquod compositum esse, unum secundum esse potest intelligi dupliciter. Uno modo quod esse unius sit idem essentialiter cum esse alterius. . . . alio modo intelligitur compositum esse unum secundum esse eo quod esse unius partis non est distinctum loco et subiecto ab esse alterius.*" John of Jandun, *Quaest. super Arist. de An.* (1557), III.5, 244. Cited in Brenet, *Transferts du sujet*, 347 (trans. mine).
- 31 For a survey of authors who, similar to Jandun, held that the intellect cannot be distinguished in place and subject (*loco et subiecto*) from the human being, see Mahoney, *The Psychology of John of Jandun*, 275 n. 7.
- 32 See *Two Investigations*, ff. 79v–81v (1v–2v); 146r–50r (46r–8v). The first argument is that *qua* separate substance the intellect cannot serve as the substantial form of man, through which man conceptualizes (see *Two Investigations*, f. 97v (1v)). The second argument is that as a single substance the intellect would be separate from matter, since in Averroes's metaphysical scheme being unique in species entails separation from matter. Yet the operation of a separate form cannot be attributed to enmattered humans (See *Two Investigations*, f. 80r (1v)). The third argument is that a single operation—in this case conceptualization—can only follow from a single agent (דבר אחד). Yet a separate being and an embodied human being cannot constitute a single agent. Hence they cannot produce a single operation. (See *Two Investigations*, f. 80v (2r)).
- 33 See *Two Investigations*, ff. 125r–8v (31r–3v).
- 34 *Two Investigations*, f. 120r (28r): הוכרח המבאר הגדול בן רשד להניח שהנפש המשכלת אינה חמרית ואמנם היא עצם נפרד.
- 35 *Two Investigations*, f. 148v (47v): יתואר משכיל . . . בעבור דבר הוא צורה לו באופן מה כמו שקדם, והוא מתאחד בעצם עמו בהגעת זה הפעל.
- 36 *Two Investigations*, f. 120v (28r-v): השכל ההיולאני הוא לנו צורה מה כאשר יתבאר אחר שאנחנו נשכיל בו, ואמנם יש לנו: צורה אחרת עצמית אשר אנחנו בה נמצאים בפועל והיא הצורה אשר לנו מאשר אנחנו אדם ובה האדם הווה נפסד במה הוא אדם רוצה לומר מצד צורתו המינית וכבר נאמר גם כן שאין צורתנו האחרונה אשר אנחנו בה: [הוא] om. P * <היא> השכל ההיולאני
- 37 *Two Investigations*, f. 148v (47v).
- 38 *Two Investigations*, f. 126r (32r): והוא צורה לנו גם כן בצד מה כמו שיבא ומוכן לקבל מאתנו באמצעות הצורות הדמיוניות הנה אם כן נתואר משכילים מצד הקשר הזה

- 40 The implicit assumption at work here is that a separate form cannot be individuated through matter.
- 41 *Two Investigations*, f. 80r (1v): אם היה השכל ההיולאני אחד בכל האנשים היה צורה נפרדת: אם היה השכל ההיולאני א' לא נתואר משכילים וזה שקר, אם כן אין השכל ההיולאני אחד.
- 42 *Two Investigations*, ff. 147r–v (46v): אשיב כי התנאית האומרת אם היתה צורה נפרדת לא: נתואר אנו בה משכילים היא כזובת באופן מה וצודקת באופן מה. אולם הנה היא צודקת אם הבננו מהנפרד נפרד במוחלט, רוצה לומר שאינו מתייחס לנו כלל ואינו מוכן. לקבל מכחות הנפש . . . אשיב שהנה נתואר בהשכל מפני שכחות נפשנו פועלות להשכיל באופן מה.

Appendix I

- 1 See *De mundi efficientia*, f. 142rb.
- 2 *De primo motore*, f. 139vb.
- 3 Geffen argues that the entire edition, including the work by Jandun, was edited by Del Medigo himself, relying on a catalogue in the British Museum. See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 30; Catalogue of Books printed in the fifteenth century now in the British Museum, vol. V, 597.
- 4 See HÜb, 122 section 52b; Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 322; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 283, n. 2; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 9, 14, n. 25, 464; Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 44, n.1; Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 256, n. 15; Puig Montada, *Continuidad medieval*, 52–3. Licata, *La via della ragione*, 89. Bartòla and Puig Montada also supply bibliographical details concerning these editions.
- 5 See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 47, n. 1, 50; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 26–7; Licata, *La via della ragione*, 92–3.
- 6 See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 47.
- 7 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 290, n. 5.
- 8 *De esse et essentia*, f. 142a. Cf. Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 47, n.1; Licata, *La via della ragione*, 92, n. 27.
- 9 See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 47, n. 1; Mahoney *Pico della Mirandola and Elijah Del Medigo*, 134, n. 39.
- 10 See Licata, *La via della ragione*, 92–3.
- 11 *In dictis Averrois super libros physicorum*, f. 161vb. Cf. Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 45; Licata, *La via della ragione*, 92, n. 27.
- 12 See HÜb 122, section 91; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 287, n. 6.
- 13 See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 45, n. 2; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 18, n. 36; HÜb, 122, section 52b; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 287, n. 6; Licata *via della ragione*, 90–1.
- 14 Cf. Mahoney, *Pico della Mirandola and Elijah Del Medigo*, 131; Licata *via della ragione*, 90. See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 287: “In Firenze Elia . . . compose a sua richiesta

[referring to Pico] *una serie di annotazioni alla Fisica, che costituisce una specie di supercommentario al commento medio di Averroè.*”

- 15 Cassuto, *Gli Ebrei*, 282, n. 1. Cf. also *ibid.*, 289, n.1.
- 16 See HÜb, 183 section 92; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 289; Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 272; Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 50; Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 85; Mercati, *Codici Latini*, 36; Licata, *La via della ragione*, 91–2. Concerning the sections in ms. BnF, Geffen simply states that it contains “selections” from the Vatican manuscript. Kieszkowski, who appears to have examined these sections more closely, declares that they contain “*plusieurs additions, corrections et notices critiques concernant le traité de Substantia Orbis, et la Physique et la Métaphysique d’Aristotle.*” Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 50.
- 17 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 289, n. 1.
- 18 See Hüb, 183, section 92; Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 50; Sirat, *Elie Del Medigo*, 9. Note that Steinschneider mistakenly refers to ms. 168, while Geffen supplies wrong folio numbers.
- 19 The Latin excerpts are cited in Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 272. Cf. Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 45.
- 20 Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 13; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 286; Mercati, *Codici Latini*, 34.
- 21 See Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola*, 243, section 920.
- 22 See Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 260–1. Bartòla describes the titles of the sections of the *Epitome* and supplies a detailed account of the manuscript that contains them [= Vat. lat. 4550]. Geffen mistakenly locates the translation in ff. 53r–61v, which in reality contains a section from the *Middle Commentary on the Meteorologica*.
- 23 See Hüb, 135, section 62; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 292, n. 1.
- 24 Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 261; Mercati, *Codici Latini*, 34.
- 25 Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 286. Note that Geffen wrongly cites the *Middle Commentary* in ff. 1–51.
- 26 Del Medigo’s letter to Grimani, BnF lat. 6508, f. 77a, cited in Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 76. Cf. HÜb, 173, section 87; 974, section 582, where Steinschneider mentions the two translations.
- 27 Cited in Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 78–91. Cf. Bartòla, *Eliyahu Del Medigo*, 275, n. 79; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 286.
- 28 The *Averroes Database* suggests that the translation Kieszkowski attributes to Moses of Salon is, in fact, a mixed rendition, relying on two translations. Ms. 886, which Kieszkowski consults as well, appears to be the version translated by Moses of Salon.
- 29 See Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*, 119; Licata, *La via della ragione*, 96. Kieszkowski, 78 n. 2; *Averroes Database*, *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, section 43.

- 30 See *HÜb*, 173, section 87, n. 496. Cf. Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 12 n. 21. Dukas mentions the 1560 *Cominum de tridino* edition and cites from the dedication of the editor Zacarias Zenari to the archbishop of Candia, where he attributes the translation of all three commentaries on the *Metaphysics*—short, middle, and long—to “Elias Cretensis” made from the original Arabic. As Dukas himself had realized, this attribution is erroneous. See Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 196, n. 1.
- 31 Referring to the translations of Del Medigo and Israelita, Licata argues that “*da un confronto tra le due versioni, appaiono notevoli differenze.*” Yet Licata refers here to the translation Del Medigo dedicated to Grimani, whereas the hypothesis raised by Steinschneider concerns the translation dedicated to Pico. See Licata, *La via della ragione*, 97.
- 32 See *HÜb*, 98, section 43. Cf. Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 287, n. 5; Kieszowski, *Les rapports*, 45, n. 3; Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo e Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, 267, n. 51, 268; Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*, 121; Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo e Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, 267, n. 51; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 17 n. 35; Licata, *La via della ragione*, 95–6; Mercati, *Codici Latini*, 35; Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 186–8. Geffen identifies the edition that includes the *Questiones* as the 1497 edition of Laurentius Maioli’s *Epiphyllides in Dialecticis*, ff. 127r–58r. Steinschneider only mentions the 1497 edition, whereas Dukas mentions only three out of the six *Quaestiones* Del Medigo translated.
- 33 Dukas reads “*quum*” for “*quando*.”
- 34 Dukas reads “*donatio mea*” for “*dominatio uestra*.”
- 35 Letter to Pico, f. 71v, in Kieszowski, *Les rapports*, 64. Cited also in Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 335. Cf. Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo e Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, 266; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 287, *ibid.*, n. 5; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 27. Geffen’s account is misleading, as he informs the reader that in the letter to Pico, ms. BnF lat. 6508, one finds “Averroes’ Commentary on the Prior Analytics.” What, in fact, the reader finds are Del Medigo’s comments on his translation of Averroes’s *Quaestiones* on the Prior Analytics.
- 36 “*difficultates*” missing in Dukas.
- 37 Dukas reads “*huius*” for “*illius*.”
- 38 Letter to Pico, f. 72r, cited in Kieszowski, *Les rapports*, 66–7. It appears also in Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 335.
- 39 See Kieszowski, *Les rapports*, 55.
- 40 See Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 12; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 286; Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo*, 275.
- 41 Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 160. Cf. Introduction, 20.
- 42 Cf. Cranz, *Editions of the Latin Aristotle*, 127; Zonta, *Il commento medio*, vol. I, 15 n. 71; Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo*, 275 n. 81.
- 43 *Hüb*, 161, section 80.

- 44 Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 159–60.
- 45 Zonta, *Il commento medio*, vol. I, 15–18.
- 46 See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 50; Geffen, *Life and Thought*, 86. A reference to this fragment is missing in Steinschneider.
- 47 See Kieszkowski, *Les rapports*, 50.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 291. Cassuto is following Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 42–3.
- 50 Dukas has suggested—without sufficient proof, according to Cassuto—that this work was translated by Del Medigo in his youth. See Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 36; Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 291.
- 51 See *HÜb*, 178–80, section 91; *Averroes Database, Questions in Physics*, section 28.5.
- 52 Cited in *HÜb*, 180–1, section 91, n. 545.
- 53 See Mercati, *Codici Latini*, 37; Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo*, 277; Licata, *La via della ragione*, 97.
- 54 See Cassuto, *Gli ebrei*, 287; Geffen, *Faith and Reason*, 17.
- 55 Kristeller, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and his sources*, 57–8, 118–19.
- 56 See Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo e Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, 263.
- 57 See Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 183. Cf. Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola*, 255, section 1015.
- 58 See Puig Montada, *The Last Averroist*, 183; *ibid.*, *Elihu del Medigo, traductor del epitome*. Cf. Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo e Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*, 263; Mercati, *Codici Latini*, 34.
- 59 See Bartòla, *Eliyhau Del Medigo*, 262, n. 34.
- 60 Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 331. Dukas refers to Del Medigo’s “bizzare” Latin and “archaic” Italian.
- 61 Dukas, *Notes Bio-Bibliographiques*, 332.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 326–7.

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