



Some Guiding Principles in Determining Spinoza's Mediaeval Sources

Harry Austryn Wolfson

The Jewish Quarterly Review, New Ser., Vol. 27, No. 4. (Apr., 1937), pp. 333-348.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0021-6682%28193704%292%3A27%3A4%3C333%3ASGPIDS%3E2.0.CO%3B2-S>

The Jewish Quarterly Review is currently published by University of Pennsylvania Press.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/upenn.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN
DETERMINING SPINOZA'S MEDIAEVAL
SOURCES

BY HARRY AUSTRYN WOLFSON
Harvard University

THE hunt for mediaeval Hebrew and Latin sources of Spinoza is an old and venerable game. I myself have done some hunting in this field, and the chase for me has by no means come to an end with the publication of my book on *The Philosophy of Spinoza*, for by its mere publication a book does not become to its maker a closed masoretic text in which the right of emendation is to be exercised only by higher and lower criticism. Since the appearance of that book I have gathered some three hundred additional passages of miscellaneous origin. Some of these call for revision of certain statements in the book or for the improvement of certain infelicities of expression or for the expansion of certain views too briefly expressed. For the greater part, however, they are merely duplicates of passages I have used and serve only to confirm my statement that the passages quoted or referred to in the book are not "irreplaceable by similar passages from other works, though I have always tried to select passages which are most suitable for our purpose" and furthermore that "it would be quite possible to rewrite considerable portions of this work by substituting other quotations for those used by me, without necessarily changing my present analysis and interpretation of the *Ethics*, for the passages quoted are only representative of common views which are current in the philosophic literature of the past" (Vol. I, p. 18).

But for any game not to degenerate into a mere scramble it must be played according to certain fixed rules. Such rules I have worked out for myself in the pursuit of my own studies of Spinoza and have described them in a general way in the opening chapter of the book. In order to show how these rules have been applied in actual practice I shall analyze here a few concrete cases in greater detail than I have done in the book and with the use of new additional material. These cases will illustrate certain characteristic phases of the problem which one is confronted with in trying to determine the fitness and relevancy of passages that are to be brought into play in the interpretation of Spinoza.

The most elementary and the most obvious method of determining a relationship between two texts is similarity of expression. But as every student of such matters knows, external similarities, like appearances in general, are very deceitful. Quite often where our indiscriminating eye may at first see only similarities, closer observation subsequently discovers far-reaching differences. A case in point is Spinoza's reproduction, in the name of philosophers, of two arguments against the conception of God as a corporeal substance, which I discuss briefly in Vol. I, pp. 260-261. As the source of his second argument can be determined with absolute definiteness, I shall take up this argument first. In his own language the passage reads as follows: "A second argument is assumed from the absolute perfection of God. For God, they say, since He is a being absolutely perfect, cannot be passive (*pati*); but corporeal substance, since it is divisible, can be passive." The immediate source of this argument, I have shown, is Descartes in his *Principia*, I, 23. And so, as far as Spinoza is concerned, it is quite futile to look for any other source. But in my discussion of the subject I added for mere historical background that this argu-

ment "is implied in Maimonides' fourth proof for the existence, unity and incorporeality of God from the concept of actuality and potentiality" (Vol. I, p. 261). My reference here to this particular proof of Maimonides and my use of the word "implied" were deliberately and cautiously chosen, for Maimonides has three arguments against the corporeality of God, in addition to those he reproduces in the name of the Kalam in *Moreh*, I, 76. First, an argument from the fact that every corporeal object is composed and hence must be the effect of a cause. Second, an argument from the fact that every corporeal object is divisible and has dimensions and hence must be subject to accidents. These two arguments are formally and fully stated in *Moreh*, II, 1, end; they are also referred to in *Moreh*, I, 35, quoted by me in Vol. I, p. 260. The argument from composition is also used by him in his third proof for the existence, unity and incorporeality of God in *Moreh*, II, 1, and is referred to by him in his preliminary remarks to the arguments of the Kalam in *Moreh*, I, 76. But in addition to the argument from *composition* and *causedness* and the argument from *divisibility* and *accidents*, Maimonides has an argument from the fact that corporeal substance is *potential* and hence *passive* and hence *imperfect*. The primary place of this argument is in his fourth formal proof for the existence, unity and incorporeality of God in *Moreh*, II, 1. There, however, only the term *potential* (בכח) is used but not the terms *passive* and *imperfect*. But in *Moreh*, I, 35, Maimonides refers to this argument and adds the other two terms. He says: "There is a perfect being, not a body nor a potency (כח) in a body, namely, God, who is not subject to any kind of imperfection and hence is also in no way subject to passivity (החפעלות)."

Now unguardedly and without careful consideration of all the facts in the case one could erroneously conclude, on

the mere ground that Descartes derives his passivity of corporeal substance from its divisibility, that the Cartesian argument from *passivity* and *imperfection* is the same as Maimonides' argument from *divisibility* and *accidents*; or, by transforming the term *causedness* into the term *imperfection*, one could conclude, still more erroneously, that it is the same as Maimonides' argument from *composition* and *causedness*. We need, however, only study the wording and phrasing and structure of all these passages to come to the conclusion that if any analogy to the Cartesian argument reproduced by Spinoza is to be found in Maimonides, it is not in his argument from *divisibility* and *accidents* nor in his argument from *composition* and *causedness* but in his argument from *potentiality*, which he himself explains elsewhere as an argument from *passivity* and *imperfection*. Incidentally it may be added that Thomas Aquinas has an argument from *potentiality* (*Cent. Gent.*, III, 20), which may be considered as one of the sources of Descartes' argument from *passivity* and *imperfection*.

The source of Spinoza's first argument, however, is more difficult to determine. In his own language it reads as follows: "First, that corporeal substance, in so far as it is substance, consists, as they suppose of parts, and therefore deny that it can be infinite, and consequently that it can pertain to God." Now superficially this argument would seem to be the same as the common mediaeval argument from composition which we find, as I have mentioned, in Maimonides and which we also find in Thomas Aquinas (*loc. cit.*). But upon closer observation it will be noticed that they are not the same, for the common argument from composition arrives at its conclusion from the *causedness* of composite objects, whereas this argument of Spinoza arrives at its conclusion from the *finitude* of composite objects. It happens, however, that the finitude of bodies has been used

by mediaeval philosophers as an additional and distinct argument against the corporeality of God. It is reproduced as such by Maimonides in the name of the Kalam (*Moreh*, I, 76, 3rd Argument) and it is also treated as an independent argument by Thomas Aquinas (loc. cit.). Spinoza himself reproduces it with approval in the name of philosophers as an argument against the conception of God as a "body" (*corpus*), as distinguished from the two arguments, of which he disapproves, against the conception of God as a corporeal substance (*substantia corporea*) (see Vol. I, p. 259). The conclusion one is forced to arrive at is that the first argument reproduced by Spinoza is synthetic in its structure, made up of two distinct arguments; and once one arrives at this conclusion one can find an allusion to it, as I have pointed out, in the words with which Spinoza introduces this argument (Vol. I, p. 260).

Furthermore, the expression "consists . . . of parts" (*constat . . . partibus*) used by Spinoza in this first argument can be shown to have been used by him not in the strict sense of the argument from *composition* or of the argument from *divisibility* or of the argument from *imperfection* but in the general sense of the *simplicity* of God which combines under it all these three arguments. Thus in *Short Treatise*, I, 2, §18, 11.12–15, he says: "Since extension is *divisible*, the *perfect* being would have to consist of parts (*van deelen bestaan*) and this is altogether inapplicable to God, because he is a *simple* being."¹ Consequently, if this expression "consists . . . of parts" is taken to refer in general to the *simplicity* of God, its conflation with the argument from finitude has its precedent in Heereboord's argument for the

¹ The cross-reference "Cf. below, p. 269," in n. 3, p. 260 of Vol. I, of my book, should be omitted, as the reference to "11.13–15" before the quotation from *Short Treatise*, I, 2, §18, in n. 1, on p. 269, is a misprint for "11.15–18."

simplicity of God which, he says, is to be deduced "from His infinity" and which reads as follows: "Nothing infinite is composed of other things . . . But God is an infinite Being" (*Meletemata*, ed. 1665, p. 79, Col. 2, §III). Incidentally it may be remarked that arguments against the corporeality of God are sometimes included under the general topic of the simplicity of God, as, for instance, in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, I, 3, 1.

As a result of this discussion we find that Spinoza has three arguments in connection with the general problem of the corporeality of God, one, of which he approves, against the crude conception that God is a "body," and two, of which he disapproves, against the philosophic conception that God is "corporeal substance." Of these three arguments, only one, the argument from *passivity* and *imperfection*, has been traced to a direct immediate source. In the case of the others, only analogies and a general historical background have been provided.

When, unlike the preceding case, the question is not one of the establishment of general analogies or of a direct source of a simple statement in Spinoza, but one of the establishment of a direct source of a complicated discussion, still greater care must be taken in the selection of material. I discuss such cases in the opening chapter of the book. "In determining these direct sources," I say, "it is not the similarity of single terms or even of single phrases that guide us, for in the history of philosophy terms and phrases, no less than the ideas which they express, have a certain persistency about them and they survive intact throughout their winding transmigrations. It is always a term or a phrase as imbedded in a certain context, and that context by its internal structure and by a combination of enveloping circumstances, that help us to determine direct literary relationships" (Vol. I, p. 15).

A good example of this is to be found in the three "distinctions" which Spinoza makes in connection with the problem of the infinity of corporeal substance in one of his letters to Meyer. Of these three distinctions the first two are self-explanatory. They deal respectively with the distinction between an essential infinite and what may be called an accidental infinite and with the distinction between the infinite and the indefinite. In my discussion of the subject I have shown how each of these two distinctions reflect old discussions both in Hebrew and in non-Hebrew sources (Vol. I, pp. 271-286 and pp. 288-291). His third distinction, however, is not clear in its original statement. All that Spinoza says on this point is that those who deny the infinity of corporeal substance "did not distinguish between that which we can only understand by reason but cannot imagine, and that which we can also imagine." He does not, however, explicitly state here how this distinction would apply as an answer to the various difficulties which have been raised against the existence of an infinite corporeal substance. From his subsequent use of the distinction between imagination and understanding in the same letter to Meyer it is evident that he has meant to use it as an auxiliary and subordinate part of his first distinction, and that both of them taken together were meant to obviate the difficulty arising from the fact that corporeal substance was supposed to be divisible into parts and to be composed of parts. But if this were the only meaning of that third distinction, the question naturally arises, why did Spinoza count it as a third distinction? and why also did he place this distinction between imagination and intellect after the distinction between the infinite and the indefinite and not after the distinction between the essential and the accidental infinite to which, according to his subsequent use of it, it belongs?

An answer to this can be found if we consider the three "distinctions" given by Spinoza in his letter to Meyer in their relation to the three "examples" which he reproduces in *Ethics*, I, Prop. 15, Schol., as the arguments of those who deny the infinity of corporeal substance, and if we further consider both these "examples" and "distinctions" in their relation to three arguments reproduced by Crescas against the existence of an infinite magnitude and his respective three refutations of these three arguments. Now the three "examples" of Spinoza correspond respectively to the three arguments of Crescas. Furthermore, the first two distinctions of Spinoza correspond also respectively to the first two refutations of Crescas. Spinoza's third "distinction," however, does not correspond to Crescas' third refutation in its entirety. But toward the end of his third refutation Crescas adds the following statement: "This, to be sure, is remote from the imagination, but reason compels us to understand it so," which in its turn reflects a similar distinction by Maimonides in connection with his general argument against the Kalam proposition that "everything that can be imagined is to be also admitted by reason" (*Moreh*, I, 73, Prop. 10).² Consequently when Spinoza in his third "dis-

² It must not be assumed, however, that whenever the qualifying phrase "in imagination" occurs in the *Moreh* or in any other philosophic work it is to be understood to imply a contrast with the term "reason" and hence it is to be taken as the source of Spinoza's third distinction. Sometimes the phrase "in imagination" may have the general meaning of "in thought" as contrasted with the phrase "in fact" or "in actuality" (cf. the contrast between *במחשבה* and *בפועל* and *באלוהים* and *באלפעל* in *Hobot ha-Lebobot*, I, 8, Arabic: pp. 60, l. 23 — 61, l. 1). Thus, for instance, when Abraham ibn Daud says in his description of a continuous quantity (כמה מחרבן), such as body, surface, line and time, that "in a body it is possible to assume a surface which would divide it by an *imaginary division* (חלוקה מרומה)" and that similarly "a surface may be *imagined* (ירומה) to be divided by a line and a line by a point, and time may be *imagined* (ירומה) to be divided by an instant" (*Emunah Ramah*, I, 1, pp. 5-6), the meaning of his statement is that the division of these continuous quantities is only "in imagination" but not "in actuality."

inction" states rather vaguely and without specific application to any particular kind of difficulty raised against the infinite that "they did not distinguish between that which we can only understand by reason but cannot imagine, and that which we can also imagine," we have reason to believe that it is a reminiscence of the concluding statement of Crescas' third refutation of that third argument of his which corresponds to the third example of Spinoza (Vol. I, p. 294). Referring therefore to my treatment of this subject as one of the outstanding examples of the method by which a direct source of Spinoza is to be determined, I say: "When, again, we are in a position to affirm with reasonable certainty that it is Crescas from whom Spinoza has taken over in Scholium to Proposition XV of *Ethics* I the three 'examples' by which his 'opponents' prove the impossibility of an infinite extension and in refutation of them the three 'distinctions' which he mentions in Epistola XII to Meyer, it is not because these 'examples' and 'distinctions' are to be found in Crescas, for as individual 'examples' and 'distinctions' they are to be found also in other authors; it is only because these three 'distinctions' are used by Crescas as refutations of three arguments which correspond respectively to the three 'examples' of Spinoza" (ibid., p. 16).

A combination of context, historical background and the careful wording of Spinoza's own statements will sometimes

Averroes, in his description of continuous quantity, supplies the right contrast of the phrase "in imagination" when he says: "Discrete quantity is that which has parts *in actuality* (*in actu*, בפועל)... Continuous quantity is that which has not parts *in actuality* (*quae non habet partes in actu*, בפועל, אין לו חלקים בפועל), such as one line and one surface" (*Epitome of the Organon: Categories*, Latin: *Aristotelis Opera*, Venice, 1574, Vol. I, Part III, p. 39 f.; Hebrew: Riva di Trento, 1559, p. 6b). In this sense also is to be understood Maimonides' statement in *Moreh*, I, 76, 1st Argument, that "he is one continuous body (נשם אחד מדויק) not susceptible of division except *in imagination* (המא, במחשבה)." Spinoza's distinction, as I have shown, is not one between continuous and discrete.

guide us in the right direction toward a successful identification of the sources of some of his references or allusions. A case in point is my discussion of Spinoza's reference to the term "glory" (Vol. II, pp. 311-316). This reference to "glory" occurs in connection with his discussion of the state of immortality which to him as to many others before him consists in the union of the human mind with God through love. He describes the state of immortality by four terms, namely: "salvation" (*salus*), "blessedness" (*beatitudo*), "liberty" (*libertas*) and "regeneration" (*Wedergeboorte*). These four terms, as I have shown, are all taken from the Christian theology, and are to be found in the New Testament. But then, after mentioning three of these four terms, Spinoza adds that "this love or blessedness is called glory in the Sacred Writings." From the context of the passage it is quite clear that what Spinoza means to say is that the state of immortality which is love and is called "salvation," "blessedness," "liberty" and "regeneration" is also called "glory," and it is called "glory" in the "Sacred Writings."

Now the use of the term "glory" as a designation of the state of immortality is characteristically Christian, though occasionally it occurs also in Jewish sources. In Christian theology, the term "glory" is in common use as a designation of the heavenly splendor and the ultimate blessedness of the righteous. A collection of Latin passages illustrating the Christian use of the term *gloria* is to be found in *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, p. 2077, ll. 22 sqq. and p. 2083, ll. 51 sqq. So common is this use of the term "glory" in mediaeval Christian literature that it has been retained as one of its common meanings in modern languages, including English. In Jewish theology, however, the term "glory" as a designation for the state of immortality is not common. With the exception of the interpretation of the term *kabod* in certain passages of the Bible by certain Bible commen-

tators and with the exception also of the term *ziw* in the well-known talmudic description of the world to come as a place where "the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads and enjoy the glory of the Shekinah" (Berakot 17a), one cannot think offhand of the use of the term *kabod*, or of similar other terms which can be translated by "glory," as a designation of the state of immortality. It is certainly not used in ordinary writing. The question, therefore, that I have raised in my book was as to where in the "Sacred Writings" is the term "glory" used, or was understood to be used, in connection with immortality, and for this I suggested Psalm 16.8-11 and Psalm 73.24, with Ibn Ezra's commentaries thereon.

Since the publication of the book I have collected new material from Christian commentaries on the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, with reference to their interpretation of the term "gloria" in various places. Three of these I shall mention here. First, not only Ibn Ezra, whom I have quoted in my book, interprets the term "glory" in Psalm 73.24, as referring "to the union of the soul of the righteous with the supernal incorporeal and immortal beings" (Vol. II, p. 316) but also Albertus Magnus in his commentary on Psalms interprets the term as referring to the union with the person of Christ. "*Cum gloria suscepisti me, in gloriosa scilicet unione cum persona Filii*" (*Opera Omnia*, ed. Vivès, Vol. 16, p. 256). Second, in his *Enarratio in Psalmum XXXVI, 8*, drawing upon the statement "non sunt condignae passiones hujus temporis ad futaram gloriam quae revelabitur in nobis" in Romans 8.18, St. Augustine asks and answers: "What will be our future glory, if not to be equal to angels and to see God?" (Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, Vol. 36, Col. 368). Third, and this settles the matter definitely, Spinoza's statement under consideration, namely, "hic Amor, seu beatitudo in Sacris codicibus Gloria appellatur"

is directly based upon Thomas Aquinas' statement "illa beatitudo in Sacra Scriptura frequentissime gloria moniatur" (*Cont. Gent.*, III, 63). However, of the many frequent occurrences of this use of the term "glory" in the Sacred Writings to which Thomas Aquinas refers, he mentions only one scriptural verse, namely, "Let the saints exult in glory" (Psalm 149.5). It is interesting to note that also Ibn Ezra interprets the verse as referring to immortality and the hereafter. He says: "[*Let the saints exult in glory*, that is], let them exult in the glory that they shall exist eternally, [the term 'glory'] thus referring to their soul or to the hereafter."³

But not only must one be on guard to observe differences between apparently similar phrases and passages and arguments but one must also study the various shades of differences in the use of single terms. The history of philosophic terminology is full of all kinds of tricks, and no sooner do we find a term meticulously and scrupulously defined than we discover somewhere either explicitly or by some subtle implication that it also has some other meaning. In my study of Spinoza I constantly had to search for these uncommon distinctions in the use of terms, and I was always careful to substantiate my findings by appropriate quotations from the various philosophic literatures. Thus when I happened to say that Spinoza's substance or God was both immanent and transcendent, I disarmed criticism of my use of these terms on the part of those who are accustomed to think of them as antithetical terms by giving a history of their meanings and also by showing how "genus" is both immanent and transcendent (Vol. I, pp. 319-323). When Spinoza himself described this immanent-transcendent substance or God by the term "whole" and tried to explain the particular

³ יעלוזו בכבוד הזה שיעמדו לנצח והטעם על נשמותם או לעתיד לבוא.

sense in which he used that term, I similarly justified his special use of the term by appropriate texts (Vol. I, pp. 323–328). When I myself rendered Spinoza's immanent-transcendent whole by the term "universal," I was quite mindful of the fact that universals to Spinoza were only names and I justified the use of the term "universal" by the statement: "Or, to make use of a modern distinction, God or substance or the whole is according to Spinoza a concrete or real universal, whereas attributes are according to him only abstract universals" (Vol. I, p. 328). But it was inevitable that occasionally, either through neglectfulness or through reliance upon the resourcefulness of the reader, I should forget to mention the special sense in which I used certain terms in explaining some statement by Spinoza. Thus, for instance, when, in my attempt to explain why Spinoza's immanent-transcendent whole or substance or concrete universal is "conceived through itself," I said "inasmuch as it is a *summum genus*" (Vol. I, p. 76), I should have added that I used the term *summum genus* in a sense analogous to that in which Philo refers to God as "the supremely generic" (τὸ γενικώτατον), i. e., the highest genus, in his *Legum Allegoriarum Liber*, II, 21, §86. Perhaps, also, I should have pointed out that *summum genus* is a term which is of common use in philosophy as a description of "substance" as well as of all the other categories, though with regard to "being" it is generally maintained that it is not the *summum genus* of the categories into which it is divided.

But phrases and terms, even when properly treated in all their similarities as well as differences, are important for the study of Spinoza only in so far as they help to throw light upon the meaning of his statements as well as upon the genesis of his views and the processes of his reasoning. In the study of Spinoza it is quite useless to follow his own

advice with regard to the study of Bible, that is, to try to extract the meaning of his doctrine out of the contents of his own writings. For to try to explain some of Spinoza's vague and enigmatic utterances on one topic by his similarly vague and enigmatic utterances on another topic is like trying to find the value of an unknown X by equating it to an unknown Y . The known quantities by which the values of the unknown quantities of Spinoza are to be determined are those clear philosophical texts and problems of the past, out of which Spinoza's own statements and problems have been hewn. If, for instance, his definition of attribute is vague and lends itself to different interpretations each of which is subject to certain inherent difficulties, the problem cannot be solved by the aid of statements of Spinoza on other topics, which are equally as vague, equally liable to being misunderstood and equally in need of interpretation. If an analysis of the mediaeval problem of divine attributes is suggested as a key to the interpretation of Spinoza's definition of attribute, it is not merely to furnish certain analogies of expression for the curious, but to draw attention to the fact that every conceivable difficulty that has been raised against either of the two alternative interpretations of Spinoza's attributes have also been raised against either of the two analogous alternative mediaeval theories of divine attributes, and that all these difficulties in the case of the mediaeval problem have been answered by their respective proponents to their own satisfaction. Methodologically, then, the task of the student of Spinoza is first to discover out of Spinoza's own utterances with which side of the problem he has consciously aligned himself and then to try to find, on the basis of analytical analogies in the mediaeval problem of divine attributes, how Spinoza would answer to his own satisfaction, even if not to the satisfaction of others, the inevitable difficulties that could be raised against

whatever position he has decided to take. For ultimately there is an element of arbitrariness in the position taken by any philosopher on any speculative problem; beyond that arbitrary limit discussion is likely to become purely verbal.

Of the new passages referred to at the beginning of the paper the greater part are from scholastic writings. In some future new edition of the book, it is hoped, these passages will be distributed throughout the text so that every Hebrew reference on any essential point will be matched by a parallel non-Hebrew reference. At present the number of Hebrew references in the book is about two-thirds of all the references — somewhat less than 600 out of a total of over 900. The preponderance of Hebrew references occurs especially in Chapters IV, V, VII, XI, XII, XIII and XX, in connection with the discussion of the unity and simplicity of God, of divine attributes, of creation, of freedom of the will, of divine knowledge and of immortality — topics which by mere coincidence happen to correspond to those problems in which Maimonides' influence upon scholastic writings is most in evidence. As against this, however, the discussion of the cognitive faculties, of imagination and memory, of truth, of the stages of knowledge, of will, of emotions and of virtues, in Chapters XIV, XV, XVII, XVIII and XIX, contains comparatively few Hebrew references. While in a number of instances these new Latin passages are more appropriate to certain texts of Spinoza or more closely connected with them than the Hebrew passages used, and will therefore have to be substituted for the latter, for the most part they have proved to be only parallels of the Hebrew, and their contemplated addition to the text is to be only for the purpose of showing that the sources used in the analysis and interpretation of Spinoza's *Ethics* are well-known and reputable mediaeval staples and not some outlandish

rabbinic concoctions. On the whole the rule still holds that in seeking to determine the sources of Spinoza "we [must] go first to Hebrew philosophic literature for our documents" but "in order not to create the erroneous impression that the material drawn upon is unique in Hebrew philosophic literature, we [must] quote, or refer to, similar passages in the works of Arabic and scholastic authors" and that "when the occasion demands, scholastic sources are [to be] resorted to in preference to the Hebrew" (Vol. I, p. 14).