

## IN SEARCH OF IBN SĪNĀ'S "ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY" IN MEDIEVAL CASTILE

RYAN SZPIECH\*

*University of Michigan, 4108 Modern Languages Building  
812 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1275, USA  
Email: szpiech@umich.edu*

**Abstract.** Scholars have long debated the possibility of a mystical or illuminationist strain of thought in Ibn Sīnā's body of writing. This debate has often focused on the meaning and contents of his partly lost work *al-Mashriqiyyūn* (*The Easterners*), also known as *al-Ḥikma al-Mashriqiyya* (*Eastern Wisdom*), mentioned by Ibn Sīnā himself as well as by numerous Western writers including Ibn Rushd and Ibn Ṭufayl. A handful of references to what is called Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" are also found in the Castilian and Hebrew works of the Castilian Jew Abner of Burgos (ca. 1270-ca. 1347), known after his conversion to Christianity as Alfonso of Valladolid. Although the content of these citations has not been identified, it has been proposed that they may preserve otherwise unknown passages from Ibn Sīnā's lost work. This study considers the references to Ibn Sīnā's so-called "Oriental Philosophy" within Abner's writings and concludes that rather than preserving lost passages from Ibn Sīnā's writing, Abner's references were drawn primarily from Ibn Ṭufayl and offer no support for the argument of a possible mystical or illuminationist strain in Ibn Sīnā's thinking.

**Résumé.** Depuis longtemps, on a discuté de la possible présence d'une orientation mystique ou "illuminative" dans l'œuvre d'Ibn Sīnā. Le sens et le contenu de son ouvrage (partiellement perdu) *al-Mashriqiyyūn* (*Les Orientaux*), également connu comme *al-Ḥikma al-Mashriqiyya* (*La Sagesse orientale*), mentionné par Ibn Sīnā lui-même et par des écrivains occidentaux comme Ibn Rushd et Ibn Ṭufayl, ont souvent été au centre de ce débat. On trouve aussi quelques références à ce qui est appelé la "philosophie orientale" d'Ibn Sīnā dans l'œuvre du juif castillan Abner de Burgos (ca. 1270-ca. 1347) connu après sa conversion au christianisme sous le nom d'Alphonse de Valladolid. Sans avoir au préalable identifié le contenu de ces citations, on a fait l'hypothèse qu'elles auraient permis de conserver des passages, inconnus par ailleurs, de l'ouvrage perdu d'Ibn Sīnā. Cette étude porte sur les références à la "philosophie orientale" d'Ibn Sīnā dans l'œuvre d'Abner de Burgos. Elle montre que les références d'Abner semblent avoir été essentiellement tirées d'Ibn Ṭufayl et ne

\* This research is part of a collaborative project entitled, "The Intellectual and Material Legacies of Late Medieval Sephardic Judaism: An Interdisciplinary Approach," directed by Dr. Esperanza Alfonso (CSIC). I wish to thank the European Research Council for its support of this project with a four-year Starting Grant and to thank Dr. Alfonso for her ongoing coordination as Principle Investigator of the project and for inviting me to present on this research at the CSIC in October, 2009. I also wish to thank Edward Casey and Nathan Torrealano for their editorial suggestions, Suzanne Akbari for organizing the "Semitic/Romance" panel at the 2008 MLA meeting where I read an earlier version of this essay, and the Yale Near Eastern Studies Colloquium where I first presented this material.

renvoient donc pas aux passages perdus de l'ouvrage d'Ibn Sīnā. En conséquence elles ne peuvent servir d'argument pour confirmer la présence d'une orientation mystique ou "illuminative" dans l'œuvre d'Ibn Sīnā.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Ibn Sīnā finished his magnum opus, *al-Shifā'*, sometime around 1027 while living in Iṣfahān. Luckily for posterity, the text was quickly copied and disseminated because, as we are told by two medieval Arabic chronicles, his works, which were held among the possessions of his patron 'Alā' al-Dawla, were pillaged and taken among the booty carried off only eight years later from Iṣfahān to Ghazna during the ongoing conquests by the Ghaznavid Empire. Those books were then burned in the mid-twelfth century by the marauding Ghūrīds who came to control part of Greater Khurāsān, and the works written between 1027 and 1035 were partly lost.<sup>1</sup> Among those lost works was one of uncertain title but which came to be called *al-Hikma al-Mashriqiyya*, "Eastern Wisdom," by some, or *al-Mashriqiyyūn*, *The Easterners*, by others, among various other designations. A few partial copies of the work have survived, including an introduction and parts either not subject to pillage or copied by Ibn Sīnā's students before they were stolen. All told, around twelve manuscripts have been found today that contain sections of the work.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the mention of the work by Ibn Sīnā himself in the prologue to the *Shifā'* and a few other places, the work is mentioned, either in virtue of familiarity with the surviving prologue to the work or of Ibn Sīnā's comments in the *Shifā'*, by a few later writers including Ibn Rushd and Roger Bacon.<sup>3</sup>

Although Ibn Sīnā's own description of the work is spare and the surviving fragments of it suggest that its content did not differ significantly from other writings of his in which he outlined the categories of knowledge according to a strictly logical, Aristotelian

<sup>1</sup> The two sources recounting this history are Bayhaqī's *Tatimma* and Ibn-al-Athīr's *al-Kāmil*, and are cited together with full bibliographical information by Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition. Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works* (Leiden, 1988), p. 117. This summary is drawn from the information given by Gutas on pp. 115–30.

<sup>2</sup> For a list of the manuscripts, see Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, pp. 120–1, and *id.*, "Avicenna's eastern ("oriental") philosophy. Nature, contents, transmission," *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 10 (2000): 159–80 (pp. 169–72).

<sup>3</sup> Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, p. 49. Gutas provides a full list of *testimonia* mentioning the work by Ibn Sīnā and others on pp. 115–19. Roger Bacon, as Gutas points out, was familiar with the title through the Latin translation of Ibn Sīnā's prologue to the *Shifā'*, which has been edited by Aleksander Birkenmajer, "Avicennas Vorrede zum 'Liber Sufficientiae' und Roger Bacon," *Revue néoscholastique de philosophie*, 36 (1934): 308–20, reprinted in Birkenmajer, *Études d'histoire des sciences et de la philosophie du Moyen Âge (= Studia Copernicana I)* (Wrocław, 1970), pp. 89–101. It can also be pointed out that Ibn Rushd's mention of the text in the *Tahāfut* and in his *Quaestiones in Physica* were both available in Hebrew. See Moritz Steinschneider, *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher* (Berlin, 1893), pp. 181 and 332.

framework, a number of later medieval authors refer to Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" as a possible source of mystical ideas within his body of thought. Although the most egregious of those later mystical interpretations is Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*, scattered references have also been found in most of the surviving Hebrew and Castilian works of the fourteenth century Castilian Jewish convert to Christianity Abner of Burgos (ca. 1270-ca.1347), known after his conversion as Alfonso of Valladolid. Astonishingly, Abner's citations appear at first blush to preserve otherwise unknown portions of Ibn Sīnā's lost work and seem to reveal a decidedly mystical perspective.

Although scholars have mentioned these references in earlier studies of Ibn Sīnā, as we will consider below, no exhaustive consideration of Abner's references to the "Oriental Philosophy" in his Hebrew or Castilian works has yet been undertaken. It is the purpose of this article to consider all such known references in Abner's work, to identify and trace Abner's sources of this material, and to explain the significance of these references for the study of Ibn Sīnā's thought in general and for the scholarly debate over his alleged mystical or illuminationist tendencies in particular. In addition to evaluating Abner of Burgos as a possible source of Ibn Sīnā's lost writing, tracing Abner's sources will also shed some light on the spread of the ideas of Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Ṭufayl among Iberian Jewish intellectuals in the fourteenth century.

## II. THE DEBATE OVER IBN SĪNĀ'S "ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY"

In order to understand what is at stake in identifying the source or sources of Abner's citations, we need to consider first the various scholarly positions concerning the meaning of the *Easterners* and of mysticism in general within Ibn Sīnā's overall corpus of writing. The debate over the content of the *Easterners* has gone on for over a century within modern Western scholarship. Ever since A. F. Mehren, following Ibn Ṭufayl's mention of "al-ḥikma al-mashriqiyya" (Eastern Wisdom) in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*, associated Ibn Sīnā's work with a mystical tradition in his writing in the 1880s,<sup>4</sup> Western scholars have continued to debate the association of Ibn Sīnā's lost text with a possible mystical tendency in his philosophy, producing two divergent critical perspectives. Despite the evidence from the rest of Ibn Sīnā's writing as well as from surviving portions of the *Easterners*, all of which seems to militate against the existence of any mystical strain of thinking in Ibn Sīnā's writing, the fragmentary state of that and other

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, "L'Allégorie mystique d'Avicenne," *Le Muséon* (Louvain), 5 (1885): 411–26; and *id.*, "Vues théosophiques d'Avicenne," *Le Muséon* (Louvain), 4 (1885): 594–9, and 5 (1886): 52–67.

texts has provided a pretext for those arguing that such a strain once existed and has simply been lost. Seeking to identify within Ibn Sīnā's ideas the concept of *ishrāq*, or illumination, which is characteristic of the mystical thought of Suhrawardī, one group of scholars, most notably Henri Corbin and his students and, more recently, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, have argued in favor of the existence of a mystical or illuminationist tendency in some of Ibn Sīnā's work.<sup>5</sup>

The attempts of such scholars to – in Lenn E. Goodman's words – “father upon Ibn Sīnā a later tradition of mystical theosophy”<sup>6</sup> have met with impatience and trenchant criticism from numerous Western scholars taking the opposite view, arguing that the defense of a mystical tradition in Ibn Sīnā's writing cannot be substantiated by solid proof from his own writing and instead represents the personal beliefs and opinions of individual critics.<sup>7</sup> Dimitri Gutas, for example, who has been among the most persistent and systematic in arguing

<sup>5</sup> Some earlier examples of the mystical interpretation of Ibn Sīnā include Louis Massignon, “Avicenne et les influences orientales,” *Revue du Caire*, 27 (1951): 1–12; *id.*, “La Philosophie orientale d'Ibn Sīnā et son alphabet philosophique,” *Mémorial Avicenne*, 4 (1952): 1–18; Louis Gardet, “Avicenne et le problème de sa ‘Philosophie (ou sagesse) orientale,’” *Revue du Caire*, 27 (1951): 13–22; rpt. in expanded form in *La Pensée religieuse d'Avicenne* (Paris, 1951), pp. 23–9; *id.*, “La connaissance mystique chez Ibn Sīnā et ses présupposés philosophiques,” *Mémorial Avicenne*, 2 (1952); rpt. in expanded form in *La Pensée religieuse*, pp. 143–96; and Henri Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, trans. Willard Trask (New York, 1960) especially the “Postscript” (pp. 271–80). His student Christian Jambet, in his *La logique des Orientaux. Henry Corbin et la science des formes* (Paris, 1983), pp. 7 and 95–7, n. 26, concedes that the term used by Ibn Sīnā, “*mantīq al-mashriqiyyīn*,” does not refer to a mystical tradition, which he and Corbin have claimed is expressed instead in the cycles of Ibn Sīnā on the theme of Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān. Also relevant is the treatment of Muḥammad 'Abid al-Jābirī, *Naḥnu wa-al-turāth: Qirā'at mu'āshira fī turāthinā al-falsafī* (Beirut, 1980), pp. 115–230, especially 151–66. The current defender of the thesis is Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines* ([Cambridge, 1964; revised ed. 1978] second revised ed. Albany, 1993), pp. 181–96; *id.*, “Ibn Sīnā's ‘oriental philosophy,’” in Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London and New York, 1996), pp. 247–51. Also relevant is Bernd Radtke, “How can man reach mystical union? Ibn Ṭufayl and the divine spark,” in Lawrence I. Conrad (ed.), *The World of Ibn Ṭufayl. Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 165–94 (pp. 175–8); and his general discussion of *ishrāq* in “Theosophie (Hikma) und Philosophie (Falsafa). Ein Beitrag zur Frage der *Hikmat al-mašriq/al-išrāq*,” *Asiatische Studien*, 42 (1988): 156–74.

<sup>6</sup> See Lenn E. Goodman, *Avicenna* (London, 1992), p. 39.

<sup>7</sup> For traditional criticism, see C. A. Nallino, “Filosofia ‘orientale’ od ‘illuminativa’ d'Avicenna?,” *Revista degli Studi Orientali*, 10 (1923-5): 433–67, who explicitly disproves any inherent connection between the terms *ishrāq* and *mashriq*; S. Pines, “La ‘Philosophie orientale’ d'Avicenne et sa polémique contre les Baghdadiens,” *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 27 (1952): 5–37; and Amélie Marie Goichon, *The Philosophy of Avicenna and Its Influence on Medieval Europe*, trans. M. S. Khan (Delhi, 1969), pp. 7–10. For a full bibliography of the sources related to the question, see Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, pp. 115–30; *id.*, “Avicenna: mysticism,” in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. III, p. 82a-b; *id.* “Avicenna's eastern (“oriental”) philosophy,” pp. 160–6; and R. Macuch, “Greek and oriental sources of Avicenna's and Suhrawardī's theosophies,” *Greco-Arabica*, [Athens] 2 (1983): 9–22 (p. 11), who allegedly drew his material from the dissertation of Estiphan Panoussi, “La notion de participation dans la philosophie d'Avicenne” (Louvain, 1967), pp. 23–38. I have not yet seen Panoussi's account.

against the existence of an "oriental" tradition in Ibn Sīnā, points to the total lack of any mystical or illuminationist ideas in any surviving fragment of *The Easterners* or any text by Ibn Sīnā. Lambasting the scholarship on the issue as "a comedy of errors,"<sup>8</sup> Gutas maintains, moreover, that the term "mashriqiyya" seems to have been simply Ibn Sīnā's provisional terminology for the Khurāsānī school of Aristotelian philosophy as opposed to that of Baghdad.<sup>9</sup> Most importantly for our discussion, he also establishes that Ibn Ṭufayl's representation of Ibn Sīnā's views in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*, which he characterizes as a "deliberate misinterpretation and misrepresentation of Ibn Sīnā's prologue to the *Šifā'*," was a primary force in the dissemination of a mystical or illuminationist interpretation of Ibn Sīnā in the West.<sup>10</sup>

Although numerous scholars, most recently Aaron Hughes, have attempted to steer a middle course between these two positions, the debate over a mystical tradition of "oriental wisdom" in Ibn Sīnā continues to unfold within scholarship of medieval Islamic thought.<sup>11</sup> Although it is not the purpose of this study to enter into that discussion directly, information concerning Abner's sources and his understanding of what he refers to as Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" among medieval Jewish philosophers can be brought to bear directly on some of the evidence proffered in that debate, particularly as it concerns the possible survival of Ibn Sīnā's *Easterners* in the Maghrib or the Iberian Peninsula. The survival of two partial manuscript copies of the *Easterners*, one in Judeo-Arabic (albeit in an eastern hand) and the other in Arabic in a Maghribī hand, suggests a possible transmission route of the text – possibly in a more complete

<sup>8</sup> See Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, p. 130.

<sup>9</sup> See Gutas, "Avicenna's eastern ("oriental") philosophy," p. 159, n. 1, and the bibliography mentioned there.

<sup>10</sup> Gutas, "Avicenna's eastern ("oriental") philosophy," p. 160. See also his extended discussion in "Ibn Ṭufayl on Ibn Sīnā's eastern philosophy," *Oriens*, 34 (1994): 222–41.

<sup>11</sup> For a partly critical review of Gutas's work, see Michael E. Marmura, "Plotting the course of Avicenna's thought," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 111 (1991): 333–42; and Abdelali Elamrani-Jamal, "Expérience de la vision contemplative et forme du récit chez Ibn Ṭufayl," in Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi (ed.), *Le voyage initiatique en terre d'Islam: Ascensions célestes et itinéraires spirituels* (Louvain-Paris, 1996), pp. 159–72 (p. 165, n. 25). See Gutas's responses in "Avicenna's eastern ("oriental") philosophy," pp. 160–1, n. 7 and 161–2, n. 10. The issue has been treated by Miguel Cruz Hernández, "El problema de la auténtica filosofía de Avicena y su idea del 'destino' del hombre," *Revista de filosofía* (Madrid), 3rd series, 5.8 (1992): 235–56; and again by Julio César Cárdenas Arenas, "Revisión de la filosofía oriental de Avicena," *Transoxiana*, 10 (July 2005), URL= <http://www.transoxiana.com.ar/>, which provides ample bibliographical information on the question. For attempts to strike a middle path between a mystical and philosophical view, see Ian Richard Netton, *Allāh Transcendent: Studies in the Structure and Semiotics of Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Cosmology* (London, 1989), pp. 174–89; Peter Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā): With a Translation of the Book of the Prophet Muhammad's Ascent to Heaven* (Philadelphia, 1992), pp. 153–65; and Aaron Hughes, *The Texture of the Divine. Imagination in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Thought* (Bloomington, IN, 2004), pp. 30–5.

form – in the West and among Jewish readers.<sup>12</sup> The question raised by these manuscripts regarding the survival of Ibn Sīnā's text and ideas in al-Andalus and/or among Jewish philosophers has been complicated by the survival of Abner's references to Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy," leading Mauro Zonta to state that Abner "seems to have transmitted some passages of Avicenna's lost metaphysical section of *The Oriental Wisdom* [*al-Ḥikma al-mashriqiyya*]." On this basis, he concludes that, "a complete identification of his sources might lead us to discover that the Islamic sources available and employed by Spanish Jewish scholars in the 14th century were much wider than we are used to think."<sup>13</sup> Even Gutas is led to concede that, "although the passages mentioned by Rabbi Abner as coming from Avicenna's Eastern Philosophy look suspect and cannot be readily identified in any of the extant portions of the work, the question remains." If Abner's references could be shown to be authentic citations of otherwise lost passages from Ibn Sīnā's writing, they could possibly offer support of the argument in favor of a mystical or illuminationist strain in his thought. If, on the other hand, they can be shown to be references to something other than Ibn Sīnā's own writing, they could offer further proof of the argument that a mystical interpretation of Ibn Sīnā's writing reflects a distortion of his writing that stems ultimately from the claims made by Ibn Ṭufayl about Ibn Sīnā's alleged "Oriental Wisdom." Given that Abner's writing, especially his philosophical ideas on determinism, had a direct impact on later Jewish philosophers in Spain such as Ḥasdai Crescas, his references to the "Oriental Philosophy" raise a serious question about Ibn Sīnā's dissemination and reception among Jewish intellectuals in the West.<sup>14</sup> The resolution of this issue can contribute, albeit indirectly, to the ongoing debate over the nature of Ibn Sīnā's ideas about philosophy and its limits.

<sup>12</sup> The Maghribī manuscript is Leipzig 796 Vollers, and the Judeo-Arabic manuscript is Bodleian Pococke 181, both mentioned by Gutas, "Avicenna's eastern ("oriental") philosophy," p. 171.

<sup>13</sup> See Mauro Zonta, "Influence of Arabic and Islamic philosophy on Judaic thought", in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter, 2009 ed. and previous editions), URL= <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2009/entries/arabic-islamic-judaic/>; *id.*, "The role of Avicenna and of Islamic 'Avicennism' in the 14th-century Jewish debate around philosophy and religion," *Oriente Moderno*, 80 (2000): 647–60 (p. 653). See also Gutas, "Avicenna's eastern ("oriental") philosophy," pp. 171–2. Elsewhere, Zonta affirms that Abner's work was "full of Avicennian elements" ("pregnato di elementi avicennani") and that Abner seems "to have employed the philosophy of Avicenna for an anti-averroistic function" ("aver impiegato la filosofia di Avicenna in funzione antiaverroistica"). See *La filosofia ebraica medievale: storia e testi* (Rome, 2002), p. 174; and "Linee del pensiero islamico nella storia della filosofia ebraica medievale," *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli*, 57 (1997): 101–44, 450–83 (p. 461).

<sup>14</sup> On Abner's impact on Crescas, see Yitzhak Baer, "*Sefer Minh'at Qena'ot* of Abner of Burgos (and its influence on Ḥasdai Crescas)" [Hebrew], *Tarbiz*, 11 (1940): 198–204; and Shalom Zadik, "Rabbi Ḥasdai Crescas' critique of Aristotelian science and the lost book of Abner of Burgos" [Hebrew], *Tarbiz*, 77 (2008): 133–56.

### III. THE WRITING OF ABNER OF BURGOS / ALFONSO OF VALLADOLID (CA. 1270-CA. 1347)

Abner's works, most or all of which were written in Hebrew and then translated in the fourteenth century into Castilian, in all likelihood either by him or someone close to him, include his magnum opus known as the *Moreh Zedek* ("Teacher of Righteousness"), which is a lengthy polemical dialogue between a Christian and a Jew, and his philosophical treatise on determinism and free will, *Minḥat Qena'ot* ("An Offering of Zeal"). Both texts now survive only in fourteenth-century Castilian versions known as *Mostrador de justicia* and *Ofrenda de zelos* (or, *Libro del zelo de Dios*), respectively. Another short work based on the *Mostrador* called the *Libro de la ley* survives only in Castilian and may have been written in that language on the basis of the *Mostrador*. His corpus also includes a few works that survive in both an original Hebrew and translated Castilian version, such as his *Teshuvot la-Meharef* ("Responses to the Blasphemer"), called *Respuestas al blasfemo* in Castilian, and three untitled philosophical letters. A few other works survive only in Hebrew, and at least ten more Hebrew works are known for certain to have been written by Abner but are now lost.<sup>15</sup>

Most of Abner's writings share the same goals: the polemical refutation of Judaism on the basis of Biblical and post-Biblical sources, the proof, based on such sources, that the Messiah has already come, and the response to Jewish counter-arguments that attack or reject Christianity. Although Abner cites widely in his writing, including more than two thousand different verses from the Hebrew Bible, hundreds of citations from Talmud and Midrash, and many dozens more from Muslim and Jewish philosophers, his use of non-Jewish Arabic philosophical material, when considered alongside his other sources, comprises only a tiny fraction of his writing. References to

<sup>15</sup> The *Mostrador de justicia* survives in a single manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale de France MS Espagnol 43, fols. 12r–342v, and has been edited by Walter Mettmann, 2 vols. (Opladen, 1994; 1996). The *Libro de la ley* is also found in the same manuscript, fols. 1r–10v, and has been edited by Walter Mettmann, *Ofrenda de Zelos (Minḥat qēna'ot) und Libro de la Ley* (Opladen, 1990), pp. 87–118. This same edition, pp. 13–86, also includes the *Ofrenda de zelos*, a text preserved in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana MS Lat. 6423, fols. 1r–41r. This BAV manuscript also contains the Castilian translation of the *Respuestas al blasfemo*, fols. 41r–89r, as well as that of the three polemical letters, fols. 90r–98r, all of which is found in Hebrew in Biblioteca Palatina de Parma MS 2440 ("De Rossi 533"). The Hebrew *Teshuvot* has been edited in a doctoral dissertation by Jonathan Hecht, "The polemical exchange between Isaac Pollegar and Abner of Burgos/Alfonso of Valladolid according to Parma MS 2440 'Iggeret Teshuvat Apikoros' and 'Teshuvot la-Meharef,'" (Diss. NYU, 1993). The Castilian version was edited by Mettmann as *Tēšuvot la-Mēharef. Spanische Fassung* (Opladen, 1998). For full bibliographical information about Abner's surviving writing, see Dwayne Carpenter, "Alfonso de Valladolid," in Carlos Álvar and José Manuel Lucía Megías (eds.), *Diccionario filológico de literatura medieval española. Textos y transmisión*, (Madrid, 2002), pp. 140–52. For a full consideration of Abner's lost works, see Ryan Szpiech, "From *testimonia* to testimony: Thirteenth-century anti-Jewish polemic and the *Mostrador de justicia* of Abner of Burgos/Alfonso of Valladolid" (Diss. Yale University, 2006), pp. 585–92.

non-Jewish Arabic authors appear in all of Abner's major works (*Mostrador de justicia*, *Ofrenda de zelos*, *Teshuvot la-Meharef*, and *Libro de la ley*) although his citations of Jewish authors in Arabic (including Sa'adyah and above all Maimonides) and in Hebrew (including Rashi, Nahmanides, David and Joseph Qimhi, Abraham bar Hiyya', Abraham ibn 'Ezra', Abraham ibn Daud, and numerous others) are much more abundant. Within the substantial body of his surviving writing, his explicit references to "ha-filosofi'a ha-mizrahit," as it is called (and spelled) in his Hebrew texts, or "filosofia oriental" as it is called in the Castilian versions, appear on ten separate folios (see below for specific references). We can compare this to the overall number of references to Ibn Sīnā by name in his major works, which appear on thirty different folios within the surviving manuscripts (eighteen in the *Mostrador*, five in the *Teshuvot*, five in the *Ofrenda de zelos*, two in the *Libro de la ley*).<sup>16</sup> These citations of Ibn Sīnā account for approximately one-third of his total citations from Arabic sources written by non-Jewish authors. In addition to Ibn Sīnā, Abner cites al-Fārābī, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Bājja, Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn Rushd, and mentions the names of at least four other figures as well as a single reference to a story in *Kalīla wa-Dimna*.<sup>17</sup> Because they are, relatively speaking, so few and far between, Abner's citations of what he calls Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" seem at first striking and anomalous, although a careful consideration of Abner's sources provides a logical explanation of their provenance and their role in Abner's arguments.

The first element to consider in tracing Abner's sources is his language. Not only did he write exclusively or almost exclusively in Hebrew. He also cited predominantly from Hebrew works, and most of his citations from Muslim philosophers are from works that were available in Hebrew translation. Were passages of Ibn Sīnā's *Easterners* or some other, unknown text somehow available in Hebrew but lost in Arabic? A well-known case of such a transmission is the *Epistle on the Possibility of Conjunction with the Active Intellect* of Ibn Rushd, now preserved only in Hebrew along with the Hebrew commentary by

<sup>16</sup> This does not count in either case multiple references on the same folio or references in the Castilian manuscripts if those passages are already represented in an extant Hebrew version. There is also one reference to Ibn Sīnā in the Hebrew mathematical work attributed to Abner, *Meyasher 'Akov*, British Museum MS Add. 26984, folio 94a. See the edition of G.M. Gluskina (Moscow, 1983), p. 139. For a partial index of Abner's citations in all of his principle works, see Szpiech, "From *testimonia* to testimony," pp. 593–667.

<sup>17</sup> He mentions once in passing the names of "Iohannitius" (i.e. Hunayn ibn Ishāq al-'Ibādī), "Abulcasis" (i.e. Abū al-Qāsim al-Zahrāwī), "Ben Zohar" (i.e. Abū Marwān ibn Zuhr) – all in the *Ofrenda de Zelos* – and twice mentions "Algafiqui," whom Mettmann identifies as Abū al-Qāsim Ahmad al-Ghāfiqī (d. 1035), better known as Ibn al-Ṣaffār, although I have been unable to find any passages in his writing that match Abner's references. For a brief consideration of the question, see Szpiech, "From *testimonia* to testimony," p. 597. For a specific discussion of his reference to *Kalīla wa-Dimna*, see Carlos Sainz de la Maza, "Una fuente no doctrinal de Alfonso de Valladolid," *Medievalia*, 38 (2006): 11–21.

Moses Narboni.<sup>18</sup> Abner, in fact, cites this very text in Hebrew (and may have collaborated in its translation into Latin).<sup>19</sup> The survival of sections of the *Easterners* in Maghribī and Jewish manuscripts could further support the possibility that Abner accessed an otherwise unknown copy of a text by Ibn Sīnā such as the *Easterners*.

This question, however, at least with respect to Abner's writing, is answered by his citations of other philosophers. His references to classical philosophers besides Aristotle are superficial, and his knowledge of Aristotle seems limited to only a few books such as *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, and most frequently, the *De Anima*. Along these same lines, his familiarity with Arabic sources is patchy and idiosyncratic, suggesting that Abner got his philosophical knowledge from Hebrew philosophical compendia and commentaries such as the *De'ot ha-Filosofim* and the commentary on Maimonides, *Moreh ha-Moreh*, of Shem Tov ibn Falaquera, texts which do contain references to Ibn Sīnā, but do not mention the *Easterners* or "Oriental Philosophy."<sup>20</sup> His knowledge of the issues discussed in the sources he cites seems superficial at best, with the possible exception of his philosophical

<sup>18</sup> The text has been edited and translated by Kalman Bland, *The Epistle on the Possibility of Conjunction with the Active Intellect by Ibn Rushd with Commentary of Moses Narboni* (New York, 1982/5742).

<sup>19</sup> In the explicit to the Latin translation of another, otherwise unknown text attributed to Ibn Rushd, the *De separatione primi principii*, it states that the text was translated by "master Alfonso Dinis of Lisbon in Valladolid, with the help of master Alfonso the convert, sacristan of Toledo" ("magistro Alfonso Dionisii de Ulixbona Hispano apud Vallem Toleti, interprete magistro Alfonso, converso sacrista Toletano"). Given that there was no sacristan of Toledo with this name at that time, Steel and Guldentops propose that "Toletano" is an error for "Vallis(t)oletano," "of Valladolid." This is supported by the fact that Abner, frequently called "Magister Alfonsus," was sacristan of Valladolid and that this text does mention Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" in what seems to be a reference to Ibn Ṭufayl. See C. Steel and G. Guldentops, "An unknown treatise of Averroes against the Avicennians On the First Cause," *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales*, 64 (1997): 86–135 (pp. 88–9 and 129–30). This text, preserved only in Oxford Bodleian MS Digby 236, is found with three other texts of Ibn Rushd's, including the *De animae beatitudine*, one of the two Latin translations of "Epistle on the Possibility of Conjunction with Active Intellect." Although the later text, also found in the sixteenth-century Venetian edition of Latin translations of Ibn Rushd's writing, was translated in the sixteenth century by "Calo Calonymos" (Kalonymos ben David the younger, not to be confused with the two fourteenth-century Hebrew translators of Ibn Rushd with similar names), the editors of the *De animae beatitudine* speculate that this text was prepared by Abner and Alfonso Dinis of Lisbon. For their arguments, see *La béatitude de l'âme*, ed. Marc Geoffroy and Carlos Steel (Paris, 2001), pp. 87–91. For Abner's citations from the *Epistle on the Possibility of Conjunction with the Active Intellect* (called "Libro del ayuntamiento divinal"), see *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 148 (folio 79v), which corresponds to Bland, *The Epistle*, pp. 138–9; and *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 225 (folio 118v), which also appears in a similar passage in the *Teshuvot* in both Hebrew and Castilian. For the Hebrew, see Hecht, "The polemical exchange," p. 372 (folio 24b) and the translation on p. 183. For the Castilian, see *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, p. 39 (folio 52ra), and the corresponding passage in Bland, *The Epistle*, p. 65.

<sup>20</sup> For references to Ibn Sīnā in the *Moreh ha-Moreh*, see Shem Tov ben Joseph ibn Falaquera, *Moreh ha-Moreh*, ed. Ya'ir Shifman (Jerusalem, 2001), p. 381 and throughout. On the *De'ot*, see the introductory remarks by Mauro Zonta in *Un dizionario filosofico ebraico del XIII secolo. L'introduzione al Sefer De'ot ha-Filosofim di Shem Tob ibn Falaquera*, ed. and trans. Mauro Zonta (Torino, 1992).

ideas on determinism in the *Ofrenda de zelos*. Abner's own evidently limited understanding of the ideas he does attribute to Ibn Sīnā, given the fact that his overall exposure to Arabic philosophy seems limited to a handful of works in Hebrew translation, makes his mystical citations from Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" seem wholly factitious.

The solution to the problem of Abner's sources, however, is not to be found in evidence about the survival or transmission among Western Jews of Ibn Sīnā's writing, but rather of Ibn Ṭufayl's representation of it in his *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*. Although Abner specifically cites the source of his statements as Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy," these citations are all actually direct quotes from Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*, and in some cases his references to passages from works by other writers (such as al-Ghazālī and Ibn Bājja) can also be seen to be derived from Ibn Ṭufayl's text, which also cites them. Before considering the significance of this conclusion, let us look at the evidence supporting it in more detail.

#### IV. ABNER'S CITATIONS OF IBN ṬUFAYL ATTRIBUTED TO IBN SĪNĀ

The citations that Abner attributes to Ibn Sīnā, like most of his philosophical citations, are not easy to trace. This is due to a number of factors. Because Abner's works survive in a patchwork of Hebrew and Castilian versions, the citations themselves are often distorted through translation and are often nearly incomprehensible on their own. In addition, the philosophical caliber of his thought, when his ideas can be understood, is generally poor because Abner's goals in citing Ibn Sīnā are not purely philosophical.<sup>21</sup> On the contrary, in most cases his use of citations attributed to Ibn Sīnā supports his

<sup>21</sup> Only Abner's *Minḥat Qena'ot / Ofrenda de zelos* seems to be primarily focused on philosophical discussions of determinism and free will and only secondarily on polemical issues, and even this work was the subject of acerbic responses by various writers. Charles Manekin has maintained that Abner's determinism was dependant on Ibn Sīnā's ideas about God's knowledge of particulars, arguing that Abner's determinism was "drawn mostly from the Stoics, Avicenna, and the astrologers" and Abner became "committed to Avicennan determinism as a young man." See, respectively, Charles Manekin and Oliver Leaman (eds.), *The Jewish Philosophy Reader* (London, 2000), p. 246; and Charles Manekin (ed.), *Medieval Jewish Philosophical Writings* (Cambridge, 2007), p. xxi. For a summary of the arguments concerning determinism in the *Minḥat* and the responses by Isaac Polgar and Moses Narboni, see Yitzhak Baer, "Sefer *Minḥat Qena'ot* of Abner of Burgos," pp. 198–204; Colette Sirat, *A History of Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Paris, 1990), pp. 308–22; Charles H. Manekin, "Hebrew philosophy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: an overview," in Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman (eds.), *History of Jewish Philosophy* (London, 1997), pp. 350–78 (366–9); and Seymour Feldman, "Divine omnipotence, omniscience, and human freedom," in *The Cambridge History of Jewish Philosophy: From Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 659–704 (pp. 685–91). Narboni's *Ma'amar ha-Behirah (Treatise on Free Will)*, which contains his response to Abner's determinism, has been edited and translated by Maurice-Ruben Hayoun, "L'Épître du libre arbitre de Moïse de Narbone (ca. 1300-1362)," *Revue des Études Juives*, 141, n° 1–2 (1982): 139–67.

anti-Jewish polemical arguments concerning the identity of the Messiah and the nature of the Trinity, and his discussions of these issues, moreover, are not systematic or exhaustive. Finally, he frequently mixes parts of one citation with parts of another, blending different texts together in a single passage without indicating that he has done so.

In spite of these impediments, however, certain citations are clear enough to allow us to discern his source without question. The most effective way to demonstrate these sources is to present full citations from Abner's texts alongside parallel passages from *Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān*. Abner's first mention of Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" in the *Mostrador*, in fact, provides the clearest parallel with Ibn Ṭufayl's text:

Ibn Sīnā showed this secretly in the "Oriental Philosophy," in which he said that the substance of the active intellect has seventy thousand faces and that each face has seventy thousand mouths and in each mouth are seventy thousand tongues with which to praise the creator always. [And he says that] that multiplicity that seems [to be multiple] is not truly a multiplicity.<sup>22</sup>

This excerpt matches very closely a passage from Ibn Ṭufayl's text describing part of Ḥayy's mystical vision:

[He saw] an essence free of matter, not one with those he had seen – but none other. Only this being had seventy thousand faces. In every face were seventy thousand mouths; in every mouth, seventy thousand tongues, with which it ceaselessly praised, glorified, and sanctified the being of the One who is Truth. In this being, which he took to be many although it is not, Ḥayy saw joy and perfection as before.<sup>23</sup>

The obvious parallel between these two passages provides us with the key to unlocking his other citations, which are sometimes less clear but which can still be traced ultimately to the same source.

Another clear parallel between what Abner cites as Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" and Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy* appears in their identical use of the same citations from Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*. In the *Ofrenda de zelos*, Abner explains:

<sup>22</sup> "E esto mostró el Auiçena encubiertamiente en la "Filosofia Oriental," en que dixo que la sustancia del entendimiento obrador a setenta mill caras, e que en cada cara a setenta mill bocas, e en cada boca setenta mill lenguas, con que alaban sienpre al Criador, e que aquella muchedunbre que pareçe non es muchedunbre segund uerdad." Abner de Burgos, *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 160 (folio 85v). All translations from Abner's Castilian works are mine unless noted otherwise. All Castilian texts follow Mettmann's editions.

<sup>23</sup> See Abū Bakr ibn al-Ṭufayl, *Ḥayy ben Yaḡdhān. Roman philosophique d'Ibn Thofail*, ed. and trans. Léon Gauthier (Beirut, 1936), p. 129; and the translation in *Ibn Tufayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaḡzān*, trans. Lenn Evan Goodman (New York, 1972), p. 153. Cf. the Hebrew text in Maurice-Ruben Hayoun, "Moïse de Narbonne sur les *sefirot*, les sphères, et les intellects séparés. Edition critique d'un passage de son commentaire sur le Ḥayy Ibn Yaḡzān d'Ibn Tufayl, avec introduction, traduction, et notes," *Jewish Quarterly Review*, N.S. 76.2 (1985): 97–147 (p. 120).

Ibn Sīnā wrote in the “Oriental Philosophy” that the acts which come from formed things, which is to say [things] that have forms with which they act, truly do not exist on account of [those things] nor are they [identical with] them. Rather, they derive from the doer who does with them the works that are attributed to them. [This is] like the saying that says, “I was the hearing of him who heard me, and the sight of him who saw me.” And [another saying] that says, “I did not shoot when I shot, but God is the one who shot.”<sup>24</sup>

The two citations with which this excerpt ends, which also appear in the *Teshuvot*,<sup>25</sup> are slightly distorted versions of statements that can be traced to a well-known *ḥadīth* and to Qur’ān 8:17, respectively.<sup>26</sup> The same statements can be found together in the same order in Ibn Ṭufayl’s text:

The acts emerging from forms did not really arise in them, but all the actions attributed to them were brought about through them by another Being. This idea to which he had now awakened is the meaning of the Prophet’s words: “I am the ears He hears by and the sight He sees by.” As it is written in the unshakable Revelation: “It was not you but God who killed them; when you shot, it was not you who shot, but God.”<sup>27</sup>

In addition to this repetition of Qur’ān and *ḥadīth* references – sources which Abner never cites anywhere else in any of his writing – Abner’s allusion to “the acts which come from formed things” also clearly parallels Ibn Ṭufayl’s explanation of “the acts emerging from forms.”

Such obvious parallels help us interpret other, more cryptic references to Ibn Sīnā in Abner’s writing that would not in themselves point clearly to Ibn Ṭufayl but which can, nevertheless, be traced to the same source. In his discussion of the Trinity in chapter five of the *Mostrador*, Abner asserts that although (in his understanding) the three persons of the Trinity “are one single substance,” this does not mean that the world beyond the Holy Land was left without divinity when Jesus was incarnate because the appearance of the body does not reflect the unity of the spirit. One of the proofs he offers of this idea

<sup>24</sup> “[...] Escribió el Abicepna [sic] en la ‘Filosofia Oriental’ [sic], que las obras que vienen de las cosas fformadas, quiere dezir que an fformas con que obren, non son por ellas ssegund verdat, nin sson dellas, mas sson de obrador que obra con ellas las obras que son anonbradas a ellas, e como el dezir del que dixo: ‘Ffuy oyr del que oyó conmigo, e veer del que vio conmigo.’ E dixo: ‘Non eché quando eché, mas Dios es el qui echó.’” See *Ofrenda*, p. 51 (folio 23ra).

<sup>25</sup> See Hecht, “The polemical exchange,” p. 371 (folio 24a) and the translation on pp. 182–3. For the Castilian, see *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, p. 39 (folio 52ra). In these citations, the text is attributed to Ibn Sīnā but the “Oriental Philosophy” is not named.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn Ṭufayl’s words are taken from the well-known *ḥadīth al-nawāfil* (“ḥadīth of supererogatory works”) from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Riqāq 38, on which see W. A. Graham, *Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam: A Reconsideration of the Sources, with Special Reference to the Divine Saying or Ḥadīth Qudsī* (The Hague, 1977), p. 173. Shoshanna Gershenson, “A study of *Teshuvot la-meḥaref* by Abner of Burgos,” (Diss. Jewish Theological Seminary of New York, 1984), p. 266, n. 41, mistakenly associates these citations in the *Teshuvot* with the mystic al-Ḥallāj.

<sup>27</sup> See *Ḥayy*, ed. Gauthier, p. 74 and *Ibn Ṭufayl’s Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 127.

is from the Midrash commentary on Genesis *Bereshit Rabbah* 4.4, in which Rabbi Me'ir answered doubts of a "Samaritan" concerning the moments when God spoke to Moses. R. Me'ir shows the Samaritan his reflection first in a concave and then a convex mirror and concludes, "If you, who are but flesh and blood [...] can change yourself at will, how much more so He at whose word the world came into existence!"<sup>28</sup> Abner cites this example and then adds tersely, "The argument concerning those mirrors and those images that the sages of the Talmud gave is the same argument concerning mirrors and images that Ibn Sīnā gave in the 'Oriental Philosophy.'"<sup>29</sup> Although this reference is vague, we can understand that the argument ("razon") of the Midrash is a distinction between body and soul in which the multiplicity of physical appearance does not imply a multiplicity or division in spiritual essence. Ibn Ṭufayl in fact uses a mirror to express this very argument: As Ḥayy ascends in his mystical vision, he observes the spheres of the cosmos. "For each sphere he witnessed a transcendent immaterial subject, neither identical with nor distinct from those above, like the form of the sun reflected from mirror to mirror with the descending order of spheres [...]"<sup>30</sup> In both examples, a single image is multiplied many times in appearance without losing its original unity. This passage in Ibn Ṭufayl's text, moreover, immediately precedes the first example given above concerning the "seventy thousand faces" of the active intellect.

Ibn Ṭufayl's text not only provides the source for Abner's references to Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy," but it also seems to be his source for a number of other citations from other philosophers that are often mixed with references to Ibn Sīnā. In one passage that appears in both the *Mostrador* and the *Teshuvot* (although in more detail in the latter), Abner cites the "Oriental Philosophy" along with another text from al-Ghazālī referring to the lights of the heavens:

The sage, Ibn Sīnā, compared [the second person of the Trinity] to the sun when speaking about those same "divine lights" in the "Oriental Philosophy" [...] since he has some multiplicity, according to the words of Abū Ḥamīd [al-Ghazālī], there will be at least two [...] Thus Abū Ḥamid (al-Ghazālī) said,

<sup>28</sup> See *Midrash Rabah ha-Mevo'ar*, 7 vols. in 13 (Jerusalem, 1983), vol. I, pp. 544–56; and the translation in *Midrash Rabbah*, ed. and trans. H. Freedman, Maurice Simon, *et al.*, 13 vols. (London, 1939), vol. I, p. 29.

<sup>29</sup> "E la razon daquellos espejos e de aquellas fazes que nonbraron los sabios del Talmud, essa es misma la razon de los espejos e de las fazes que nonbró el Auicena en la 'Filosofia oriental.'" See *Mostrador*, vol. I, pp. 234–5 (folio 123r). On the use of the parable of the mirror, see Hayoun, "Moïse de Narbonne sur les *sefirot*, les sphères, et les intellects séparés," pp. 105–6 and the Hebrew text in Narboni's commentary on pp. 117–18. See also A. Altmann, *Studies in Religious Philosophy and Mysticism* (London and Ithaca N.Y., 1969), p. 86, n. 45; and Georges Vajda, *Recherches sur la philosophie et la kabbale dans la pensée juive du moyen âge* (Paris and The Hague, 1962), pp. 396–403 (pp. 397–9).

<sup>30</sup> See Ḥayy, ed. Gauthier, pp. 128–9, and *Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 152. Cf. Hayoun, "Moïse de Narbonne sur les *sefirot*, les sphères, et les intellects séparés," pp. 116–17.

“That which was, (came into being) from what I will not mention. Consider this well but do not ask me to speak about it.”<sup>31</sup>

Although this citation is from al-Ghazālī’s *Munqidh min al-ḍalāl* (*Deliverance from Error*), Ibn Ṭufayl cites it in his text – properly attributing it to al-Ghazālī – in the very same passage as one of his own references to Ibn Sīnā’s “al-ḥikma al-mashriqiyya.”<sup>32</sup> The fact that Abner mixes this citation from al-Ghazālī with a reference to Ibn Sīnā’s “Oriental Philosophy” strongly suggests that Abner took this citation from Ibn Ṭufayl, not directly from al-Ghazālī. The fact that Abner never refers anywhere else to al-Ghazālī’s *Munqidh* in any of his writing supports this hypothesis even more.

Despite the fact that Abner seems to have taken some of his references to al-Ghazālī from Ibn Ṭufayl, this is not the case for all of his citations. Immediately before the above citation from the *Munqidh*, Abner cites directly from al-Ghazālī’s *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, and this passage appears in almost identical form in the *Mostrador* on the same folio as the first citation above concerning the “seventy thousand faces.” The version in the *Mostrador* reads:

About these three persons [in the Trinity] Al-Ghazālī wrote in the “Book of Lights” that it seemed [to him] in his profound study that unity is derived from the Obeyed Substance [or Obeyed Existent]. Because, that which is obeyed, which is comparable to all divine lights following [his] comparison of the sun to all perceptible lights, is none other than God [...].<sup>33</sup>

This is a direct citation of al-Ghazālī’s *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, chapter 3, in which the author discusses three categories of those creatures that are “veiled by sheer lights” (*al-mahjūbūn bi-mahḍ al-anwār*), a reference to a *ḥadīth* describing God’s “seventy veils.”<sup>34</sup> To these

<sup>31</sup> “U-kemo she-ha-ḥakham ben sin’a himshilo ‘el ha-shemesh ke-she-hayah medaber be-’otan ha-me’erot ha-’elohiyot ba-filosofi’a ha-mizraḥit [...] u-ke-she-yihey lo shum ribui ke-divrei ‘abu ḥa’amid ve-lo’ yihey paḥot min shnaim [...] ve-le-kakh ‘amar ‘abu ḥamid hayah mah she-hayah mimah she-lo’ ‘azkireinu. Ve-ḥashov ṭov ve-lo’ tish’al she-’agideinu.” See Hecht, “The polemical exchange,” p. 365 (folio 20b) and the translation on pp. 169-70, which I have altered slightly. All Hebrew citations follow Hecht’s edition. The Castilian reads: “Et como el ssabio Auicena le asemejó al sol quando fablaua en aquellas luminarias diuinales en la ‘Philosophia Oriental’ [...] Et auiendo en él alguna muchedu[n]bre, como dixo el Algazel, e la muchedunbre no es menos de dos [...] Et por esso dixo el Algazel: ‘Es lo que es de lo que non nonbraré. E pienssa bien, e non preguntes que te lo diga.’” See *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, pp. 33–4 (folio 50a). Cf. *Mostrador*, vol. II, p. 55 (folio 164r).

<sup>32</sup> See *Hayy*, ed. Gauthier, p. 4, and *Ibn Tufayl’s Hayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 96.

<sup>33</sup> “E por parte destas tres perssonas escriuió el Algazel en el ‘Libro de las lluminarias’ que apareció en su estudio profundado que la sustança seruida [...] es tollida della la unidad [...] Ca aquel que es seruido, el qual su conparaçion a todas las lunbrarias diuinales ssegunt conparaçion del sol a todas las lunbrarias sentibles, non es otro ssinon Dios [...]” See *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 160 (folio 85v).

<sup>34</sup> Al-Ghazālī, *The Niche of Lights*, ed. and trans. David Buchman (Provo, Utah, 1998), pp. 44 and 50.

al-Ghazālī then adds a fourth type, "those who are arriving" (*al-wāṣilūn*), and in this section we can see the source of Abner's words.<sup>35</sup> Abner's comparison of "that which is obeyed" to divine luminaries clearly reproduces al-Ghazālī's identical comparison. Given that these details are not found in Ibn Ṭufayl, we may conclude that Abner got his source elsewhere, very possibly from a copy of the available Hebrew translation of al-Ghazālī.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, we can still connect this citation to Ibn Ṭufayl's text, which paraphrases this very same passage.<sup>37</sup> Given his citation of al-Ghazālī through Ibn Ṭufayl's text in other passages such as the first example considered above, we might surmise that Abner found his way to this section of al-Ghazālī's text from the reference to it in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*.

Even though we cannot prove this hypothesis, it is certain that Abner follows his references to al-Ghazālī's *Mishkāṭ al-Anwār* with more references to Ibn Ṭufayl's text under the title of Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy." After describing al-Ghazālī's image of the prime mover ("the one who is obeyed") as the "sun among the other luminaries," Abner adds that "that one that is obeyed [...] is none other than God [...] Plato called it 'Divine Logos,' just like Ibn Sīnā compared it to the sun in the 'Oriental Philosophy.'"<sup>38</sup> In the *Teshuvot*, he repeats this phrase exactly, again in the context of al-Ghazālī's discussion of the "obeyed existent."<sup>39</sup> Although we might be tempted to see this as a confusion of Ibn Sīnā's name with al-Ghazālī, the key phrase, "He compared it to the sun" ("le asemejó al sol"), leads us to another revealing passage in Abner's writing in which he explicitly mentions Ibn Sīnā without specifically naming the "Oriental Philosophy." Approximately thirty folios after the first use of this phrase "Oriental Philosophy" in the *Mostrador*, Abner states:

Ibn Sīnā wrote that the separate intelligences are not God himself, nor are they something else, and [he wrote] that they are not the souls of the spheres, nor are they something else. He likened them to the light of the sun, which shines on bodies, because that is nothing other than the light of the sun

<sup>35</sup> "To them it has been disclosed that the one who is obeyed is described by an attribute that contradicts sheer oneness and utmost perfection [...] [It is also disclosed] that the relationship of this one who is obeyed is that of the sun among the lights." See al-Ghazālī, *The Niche of Lights*, p. 51.

<sup>36</sup> See Steinschneider, *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen*, pp. 345–8. The text was available in the translation of one Isaac ben Joseph al Fāsī from the 13th century, under the title "Maskit ha-'Orot be-Pardes ha-Nizanim."

<sup>37</sup> Ibn Ṭufayl states, "After discussing those 'veiled by light,' [Al-Ghazālī] goes on to speak of those who achieve communion with the divine. He says they know this Being as characterized by an attribute which would tend to negate His utter unity." See *Ḥayy*, ed. Gauthier, pp. 17–18, and *Ibn Ṭufayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 102.

<sup>38</sup> "Aquel que es seruido [...] non es otro sinon Dios [...] Platon le llamó 'Uierbo de Dios,' assi como el Auiçena le asemejó al sol en la 'Filosofia oriental.'" *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 160 (folio 85v).

<sup>39</sup> See Hecht, "The polemical exchange," p. 365 (folio 20b) and the translation on p. 169. For the Castilian, see *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, pp. 33–4 (folio 50ra).

falling on a body. If the body is taken away, the light would be taken away, without the light being taken away.<sup>40</sup>

This passage closely matches Ibn Ṭufayl's text in the latter's description of the culmination of Ḥayy's mystical vision:

[...] His identity was none other than that of the Truth. His true self was the Truth. What he had once supposed to be himself, as distinct from the Truth, was really nothing in itself, but was in reality in no way discrete from the Truth. When sunlight falls on opaque bodies and becomes visible, it may bear some relation to the object it lights up, but is never really anything other than sunlight. When the body is gone, so is its light, but the sun's light remains the same, not increased by the object's absence or diminished by its presence.<sup>41</sup>

The conjunction of the paradoxical language of affirmation and denial ("they are not [...] nor are they something else" / "that is really nothing other [...] but was in reality in no way discrete [...]") together with the imagery of the sun ("which shines on bodies" / "falls on opaque bodies") again evinces Ibn Ṭufayl's text as Abner's source. Further parallels with this passage in Abner's other writing also confirm this, and show that Abner's claim that Ibn Sīnā "compared [the prime mover] to the sun" is, in this case, a reference to Ibn Ṭufayl's text, not al-Ghazālī's.<sup>42</sup>

Beyond simply offering another example of the parallels between Abner's references to Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* that are, by now, clearly evident, the passage cited above also leads us to another, important aspect of Abner's source base. The statement by Ibn Ṭufayl that Ḥayy believed that "His identity was none other than the truth. His true self was the Truth," can likewise be connected with another phrase repeated throughout Abner's work, such as in the *Teshuvot* when Abner affirms, "Ibn Sīnā wrote in the 'Oriental Philosophy' that the true essence of the perfect man is the true essence of God, without any change and variation."<sup>43</sup> This phrase is found once

<sup>40</sup> "E escriuí el Avicena que las inteligencias separadas non son Dios mismo, nin otra cosa, e que non son ellas almas de las esperas, nin otra cosa. E aseméjalas a la luz del sol, que esclarece sobre los cuerpos, que ello non es otra cosa sinon la luz del sol proporcionada al cuerpo. Que ssi se tolliese el cuerpo, tollerese-ya su luz, de sin tollerese la luz." See *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 222 (folio 117r).

<sup>41</sup> See *Hayy*, ed. Gauthier, p. 123, and *Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 150. Cf. Hayoun, "Moïse de Narbonne sur les *sefirot*, les sphères, et les intellects séparés," p. 120.

<sup>42</sup> In a parallel passage in *Libro de la ley*, Abner states: "And as the sage Ibn Sīnā wrote, when the body on which the sun was shining was taken away, [the sun's] light was removed without removing its light. And also when it shines on it, its light will return without its light being returned." ("E como lo escriuí el savio Aviçena que quando se tollió el cuerpo sobre que esclareció el sol, tolliosse la su luz de ssin que sse tollió la luz; e assi quando esclareçiere sobré, renovarse-a la su luz de ssin que sse renueve la luz.") See *Ofrenda*, 99 (Ley folio 5v). This directly matches the rest of the passage from Ibn Ṭufayl cited above, although Abner seems to have misunderstood the text. Ibn Ṭufayl's explanation continues: "If an object comes along capable of taking on this type of light, then it receives it; if no such object is present there is no reflecting and no occasion for it." See *Hayy*, ed. Gauthier, p. 123, and *Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 150.

<sup>43</sup> "Ve-khen katav ben sin'a be-filosofi'a ha-mizrahit she-'amitut 'ezem ha-'adam ha-shalem hi' 'amitut 'ezam ha-'eloha bli shum shinui ve-hiluf." See Hecht, "The polemical exchange,"

in the *Libro de la ley*<sup>44</sup> and repeatedly in the *Mostrador*, and in this latter example he specifies that this "is proved in the 'Oriental Philosophy.'"<sup>45</sup>

Curiously, however, Abner cites this very same phrase in a different section in the *Mostrador* and attributes it to something other than the "Oriental Philosophy." Twenty folios earlier in the text, after explicitly referring the reader to the passage containing the very first mention of Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" (cited above), Abner notes that "Ibn Sīnā said about Hiel ben Huriel [...] that the perfect man should without a doubt be called 'God.'"<sup>46</sup> We might be tempted to see this as a reference to Ibn Sīnā's own text *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, which was translated into Hebrew in the twelfth century by Abraham Ibn 'Ezra'. Nevertheless, the title given by Abner is revealing: Ibn 'Ezra' translated Ibn Sīnā's work under the title "Ḥay ben Meqiz," and the name given by Abner "Hiel ben Huriel" is none other than "Yeḥi'el ben 'Uri'el," the title given to Ibn Ṭufayl's text in the 1349 Hebrew commentary by Provençal philosopher Moses Narboni.<sup>47</sup> Although it is difficult to spot exact matches between Abner's references and Narboni's citations of Ibn Ṭufayl because of the distortions of Abner's text through translation and his own eclectic interpretations, Abner's use of this title throughout the *Mostrador* rather than Ibn 'Ezra's points clearly to their use of the same Hebrew translation. It also supports a dating of the Hebrew translation of Ibn Ṭufayl's text used by Narboni to before 1320 and suggests that Narboni was not the first to use this title for the work in Hebrew, although he specifically states that "I called it (*kara'to*) Yeḥi'el ben 'Uri'el," in distinction from both

---

p. 371 (folio 23v) and the translation on pp. 180–1. The Castilian reads, "E assi escriuió el Auicena en la 'Philosophia Oriental' que la uerdaderia de la substancia del omne conplido, aquella es la uerdaderia de Dios, sin ningun mudamiento nin contrariedadat." See *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, p. 38 (folio 51vb).

<sup>44</sup> See *Ofrenda de zelos*, p. 111 (folio 10r), where he again mentions "filosofia oriental" explicitly.

<sup>45</sup> "[...] la uerdaderia de la sustancia del omne conplido es la verdadera de dios, ssin ningun demudamiento, como es prouado en la 'Filosofia oriental.'" See *Mostrador*, vol. II, p. 55 (folio 164r).

<sup>46</sup> "Dixo el Auicena por Hiel ben Huriel [...] que el omne conplido es mester sin dubda que sea llamado 'dios.'" *Mostrador*, vol. II, pp. 10–11 (folio 144r).

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Sīnā's text is available in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, ed. Ahmad Amīn (Cairo, 1952), and has been translated by Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, pp. 137–50. On Ibn 'Ezra's translation, see Steinschneider, *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen*, pp. 285–6; and Aaron W. Hughes, *The Texture of the Divine*, pp. 21–3 and 119–25, as well as his English translation of the text on pp. 189–207. The Hebrew text, available in multiple manuscripts, has been published as *Iggeret Hay ben Mekitz*, ed. Israel Levin (Tel Aviv, 1983). For an example of Narboni's use of this title in his commentary on Ibn Ṭufayl's text, see the edition of Maurice-Ruben Hayoun, "Moses Narbonis (1300–1362) Kommentar zum Hayy ibn Yaqzan des ibn Tufayl (ob. 1185)," *Trumah*, 12 (2002): German Section, pp. 199–204 and Hebrew section, pp. 1–25 (Hebrew p. 2). The German introduction was printed in expanded form under the same title in Werner Arnold and Hartmut Bobzin (eds.), "Sprich doch mit deinen Knechten aramäisch, wir verstehen es!" 60 Beiträge zur Semitistik. Festschrift für Otto Jastrow zum 60. Geburtstag (Weisbaden, 2002), pp. 217–35.

*Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* and Ḥay ben Meqiz.<sup>48</sup> Given that it is known that Narboni responded directly to Abner's ideas on determinism, the fact that both writers seem to have used the same Hebrew translation of Ibn Ṭufayl further raises the question of Abner's possible impact on Narboni's ideas in his commentary. In any case, when Abner mentions what "Ibn Sīnā said about Yehi'el ben 'Uri'el," he is again referring to what he elsewhere calls Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy," by which he consistently means Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*.

Finally, we can note that numerous other references to Ibn Sīnā that do not mention the "Oriental Philosophy" likewise derive from Ibn Ṭufayl. To take just one example from the *Mostrador*:

Ibn Sīnā said that the perfect man has a separate intellect, because if it were possible that the active intellect be divided, we would say that it was part of him. Were it not that [the separate intellect] was [created] anew after not having been, we would say that it was the same [as the active intellect], and if it did not take on a body when it was made anew, we would say that it was not made anew. In this way they [separate intellects] are substances that were [in existence] and then ceased to be. They are, without a doubt, with it [the active intellect] in being, and that their number is infinite in quantity, if

<sup>48</sup> Hayoun, "Moses Narbonis (1300–1362)," Hebrew p. 2. Because the date of the Castilian translation of the *Mostrador* from the original Hebrew is uncertain, and because Narboni is known to have completed his commentary in 1349, Abner's use of this title, "Yehi'el ben 'Uri'el" in the *Mostrador* could potentially be misunderstood as a change added into the Castilian translation in light of Narboni's text, thus dating the Castilian version of the *Mostrador* to after 1348. However, Abner uses this same name in the original Hebrew *Teshuvot* (See Hecht, "The polemical exchange," p. 382 (folio 29b) and the translation on p. 210, and the Castilian *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, p. 59 (folio 58ra)), in a section of the text found near another passage that closely repeats a passage from the *Mostrador*. These details indicate that Abner almost certainly used this title, "Yehi'el ben 'Uri'el," in the original Hebrew of the *Mostrador*, the *Moreh Zedek*, thus suggesting that the use of this name for Ibn Ṭufayl's text predated Narboni's commentary by almost thirty years at least. Although we cannot say if this title was first used by Abner or in the Hebrew translator of Ibn Ṭufayl's text, we can conclude that Moses Narboni certainly took the title from an earlier source. See also the comments of Moshe Idel, *Golem. Jewish Magical and Mystical Traditions on the Artificial Anthropoid* (Albany, 1990), p. 190, n. 49. We can also note that despite the suggestion a century and a half ago by Steinschneider (*Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen*, p. 365) that the Hebrew translation of Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy* was anonymous and could be dated to the early fourteenth century, the error still persists that Narboni himself undertook this translation as part of his commentary in 1348–9. However, as Maurice-Ruben Hayoun notes, Narboni did not translate any of the works he commented upon, and the evidence provided by Abner's texts, above all the noteworthy mention of this Hebrew title by Narboni three decades later, further supports this chronology. See Maurice-Ruben Hayoun, "Le commentaire de Moïse de Narbonne (1300-1362) sur le *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* d'Ibn Ṭufayl (mort en 1185)," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 62 (Paris, 1988): 23–98 (p. 26, n. 1); and *id.*, *La philosophie et la théologie de Moïse de Narbonne (1300–1362)* (Tübingen, 1989), p. 39. Elsewhere in the *Mostrador* (vol. I, p. 22, folio 17r), Abner shows familiarity with the Arabic title as well, which he calls "Ḥay ben Yacsami." Finally, we can emphasize that the question of the influence of Abner's ideas about Ibn Ṭufayl and Arabic philosophy in general on Narboni have yet to be investigated, but given Narboni's well-known direct response to Abner's determinisitc philosophy, such an influence is by no means unlikely. On Narboni's response to Abner's philosophy, see above, n. 21.

there could be said to be quantity in them, and they are all one, if one could say there was one in them.<sup>49</sup>

Although the "Oriental Philosophy" is not named, nevertheless this confusing passage again comes directly from Ibn Ṭufayl. Speaking again about the "seventy thousand faces" of the active intellect seen by Ḥayy, Ibn Ṭufayl explains:

If it were permissible to single out individuals from the identity of the seventy thousand faces [of the active intellect], I would say that he was one of them. Were it not that his being was created originally, I would say that they were he. And, had this self of his not been individuated by a body on its creation, I would have said that it had not come to be. From this height he saw other selves like his own, that had belonged to bodies that had come to be and perished, or to bodies with which they still coexisted. There were so many (if one may speak of them as many) that they reached infinity. Or, if one may call them one, then all were one [...].<sup>50</sup>

Here, Abner's mention of the possibility that the active intellect "be divided" ("recibir partimiento") corresponds to the Ibn Ṭufayl's mention of "singling out individuals" from the faces of the active intellect, just as his mention of the separate intellect being created "anew after not having been" ("nueuamient despues que non fue") corresponds to Ibn Ṭufayl's statement that Ḥayy's being "was created originally" ("ḥadathat ba'da an lam takun," "it was new after not being"). In various other passages in the *Mostrador*, Abner similarly attributes passages from Ibn Ṭufayl to Ibn Sīnā without mentioning the "Oriental Philosophy" or any other specific title.<sup>51</sup> In fact, almost all substantive references to Ibn Sīnā in Abner's writing can be traced to Ibn Ṭufayl.

## V. CONCLUSION

Establishing that Ibn Ṭufayl was the primary source of Abner's references to Ibn Sīnā solves part of the mystery, but it does not explain how such a misattribution came about. Looking at Moses Narboni's commentary on Ibn Ṭufayl's text, it is clear that Abner was

<sup>49</sup> "E assi dixo el Auiçena que el omne conplido ha intelligeñcia separada, que si pudiesse ser que rrescibiesse partimiento la intelligencia postrimera [...] que es dicha en nonbre proprio entendimiento obrador, diriamos que era parte della. E ssinon porque fue nueuamient despues que non fue, diriamos que ella es misma, e sinon porque sse apropió en su cuerpo quando fue fecha de nueuo, diriamos que non fue fecha de nueuo, e que en esta manera son sustançias que fueron e despues sse arremataron, e que son con él en el ser ssin dubda, e que son sin fin en cuento, si pudiese sser dicho cuento en ellas, e que son todas vna, si pudiese ser dicho vna en ellas." See *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 223 (folio 117v).

<sup>50</sup> See *Ḥayy*, ed. Gauthier, p. 130, and *Ibn Ṭufayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 153.

<sup>51</sup> Another example of citations of Ibn Ṭufayl attributed to Ibn Sīnā without mention of the "Oriental philosophy" is *Mostrador*, vol. II, p. 16 (folio 146v), which seems to correspond to *Ḥayy*, ed. Gauthier, pp. 127–8, and *Ibn Ṭufayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 152. See above, n. 25, for another example from the *Teshuvot*.

not the only Jewish philosopher of his generation to accept Ibn Ṭufayl's assertions about Ibn Sīnā at face value. In the introduction to his commentary, Narboni specifically mentions the "secrets of Eastern Wisdom" (*sodot ha-hokhmah ha-mizrahit*) and Ibn Sīnā's "Eastern Philosophy" (*ha-filosofi'a ha-mizrahit*), explaining that these "secrets" refer to the conjunction of the first intellect with other intellects. As Hayoun notes, although Narboni generally criticizes Ibn Sīnā in his text, he follows Ibn Ṭufayl in praising his alleged mystical ideas.<sup>52</sup> Narboni's ideas about Ibn Sīnā's "Eastern Wisdom" were, like Abner's, derived from Ibn Ṭufayl.

This does not, however, explain Abner's misascription of Ibn Ṭufayl's words to Ibn Sīnā. Such an error cannot be attributed to the manuscript tradition of the Hebrew translation of Ibn Ṭufayl, insofar as it is represented in the copies of Narboni's commentary.<sup>53</sup> Narboni identifies the text upon which he is commenting as Ibn Ṭufayl's and makes no mention in his commentary of any confusion concerning authorship of the text. I am unaware of any other manuscript examples in which Ibn Ṭufayl's text is actually confused with Ibn Sīnā's, the clear impact of Ibn Ṭufayl's ideas notwithstanding.

There is, however, a curious passage in the *Mostrador* that helps us explain Abner's use of Ibn Ṭufayl. After mentioning Ibn Rushd's *Epistle on the Possibility of Conjunction with the Active Intellect*, he claims that Ibn Sīnā also praises union with the divine in the "Oriental Philosophy." A few lines after, he adds:

And Ibn Ṭufayl also [praised union with the divine] when he told the story of Hylel ben Huriel. In the beginning of the book, [it was] as if he criticized the one who said "I am praised and exalted. How high is my state!" and the one who said, "I am God." He then greatly praised [the knowledge] that Yeḥi'el

<sup>52</sup> For Narboni's mention of Ibn Sīnā and the "Oriental philosophy," see Hayoun, "Moses Narbonis (1300–1362) Kommentar zum Hayy ibn Yaqzan," Hebrew p. 3. See also Hayoun's comments on German p. 202.

<sup>53</sup> There are well over a dozen manuscript copies of the Hebrew translation with Narboni's commentary. For a more complete listing, see Aaron Freimann, *Union Catalog of Hebrew Manuscripts and Their Location*, 2 vols. (New York, 1964 and 1973), vol. II, p. 39 (#943), p. 91 (#2395), and p. 119 (#3104-5); Maurice-Ruben Hayoun, "Le commentaire de Moïse de Narbonne," pp. 28–9; and *id.*, "Moses Narbonis (1300–1362) Kommentar zum Hayy ibn Yaqzan," German pp. 201–2. On the text of Narboni's commentary, see also G. Vajda, "Comment le philosophe juif Moïse de Narbonne, commentateur d'Ibn Tufayl, comprenait-il les paroles extatiques (Satahāt) des Soufis?" *Actas del Primer Congreso de Estudios Árabes e Islámicos* (Madrid, 1964), pp. 129–35; rpt. *Mélanges Georges Vajda* (Hildesheim, 1982), pp. 275–81; and Steinschneider, *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen*, pp. 363–66. The fullest consideration of the content of Narboni's commentary on Ibn Ṭufayl is Hayoun, "Le commentaire de Moïse de Narbonne"; and *id.*, *La philosophie et la théologie de Moïse de Narbonne (1300–1362)*, pp. 39–41, 137–9, 168–71, 179–85, 207–13, 242–45. The text itself was partly edited by Hayoun, "Moses Narbonis (1300–1362) Kommentar zum Hayy ibn Yaqzan," Hebrew pp. 1–25.

achieved at the end of his great, holy study, [namely] that the truth of his substance was the truth of God without any alteration.<sup>54</sup>

These mystical exclamations were made by Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī (d. ca. 875) and al-Ḥallāj (d. 922), and are cited by Ibn Ṭufayl in the very beginning of *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, just as Abner states. The fact that Abner *names* Ibn Ṭufayl and the Hebrew rendering of Ḥayy is in itself striking, given that he consistently cites the same text throughout the *Mostrador* and his other works as Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy." It is also striking that the phrase he uses to describe what Ḥayy understood in his mystical vision, viz. "that the truth of his substance was the truth of God without any alteration," is the very same phrase he elsewhere attributes to Ibn Sīnā's text. What is most striking of all is that he makes this explicit attribution to Ibn Ṭufayl only a few lines after mentioning Ibn Sīnā and the "Oriental Philosophy" by name!

After having already demonstrated Abner's attribution of Ibn Ṭufayl's text to Ibn Sīnā, what sense can we make of this citation? The mention here of the Hebrew title of Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy* shows that, even though he already associated Ibn Sīnā with this title, as we saw above, he was aware that this text was written by Ibn Ṭufayl.<sup>55</sup> The only possible explanation is that Abner knew he was taking his sources from Ibn Ṭufayl's text, but made a distinction between the philosophical introduction to *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* and the story itself that follows. In the introduction, Ibn Ṭufayl speaks *about* Ibn Sīnā along with numerous other philosophers, and when Abner cites from this section, he generally recognizes his sources (such as al-Ghazālī and Ibn Bājja) by name, not confusing them with Ibn Sīnā.<sup>56</sup> When he cites from the

<sup>54</sup> "E assi como ffizo el ssabio Ben Tuffayl, quando contó ffazienda de Hylel ben Huriel, que en comienço del libro como que despreciaua al que dixo: 'Alabado sso e enxalçado. ¡Quánto grande es el mi grado!' e al que dixo: 'Yo sso Dios.' E despues alabaua mucho a lo que alcançó Yehiel en la ffin del ssu grant estudio santo que la uerdaderia de su sustancia era la uerdaderia de Dios ssin demudamiento ninguno." See *Mostrador*, vol. II, p. 54 (folios 163v–164r). This passage closely resembles an earlier passage in the *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 178 (folio 94r). Abner also repeats these citations again and names Ibn Ṭufayl directly on the following folio, *Mostrador*, vol. II, p. 57 (folio 164v), following the general allusion to this passage in vol. I, p. 196 (folio 104r). He elsewhere cites this without naming a source, for which see Hecht, "The polemical exchange," p. 372 (folio 24r-v) and the translation on p. 183. For the Castilian, see *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, p. 39 (folio 52ra).

<sup>55</sup> For Abner's association of Ibn Sīnā with the title *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, see *Mostrador*, vol. II, pp. 10–11 (folio 144r). On Ibn Sīnā's text, see above, n. 47.

<sup>56</sup> A further example of this could possibly be provided by Abner's citations of Ibn Bājja, in which he seems to summarize, in confused fashion, Ibn Ṭufayl's references to him. Compare *Mostrador*, vol. I, p. 200 (folio 106r) and vol. I, p. 218 (folio 115); *Libro de la ley*, folio 10r, printed in *Ofrenda*, p. 111; *Ofrenda*, pp. 59–60, (folios 28vb–29ra); and *Ḥayy*, ed. Gauthier, p. 5 and *Ibn Tufayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, trans. Goodman, p. 96. This possibility is supported by the fact that Abner clearly took his other citations from Ibn Bājja from Maimonides's *Guide of the Perplexed*, 1:74, suggesting that his direct exposure to Ibn Bājja's ideas may have been limited to what he found in other sources. Compare *Mostrador*, I, 212 (folio 112r) and *Teshuvot* in Hecht, pp. 351–2 (folio 14r) and the translation on p. 140, along with the Castilian in *Teshuvot*, ed. Mettmann, p. 23 (folio 46rb), and Maimonides, *Dalālat al-hā'irīn*, text established by S. Munk, ed. Issachar Joel (Jerusalem, 5691/1930-1), p. 155; and *Guide*

story itself, however, he consistently refers to the text as Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy." This follows the impression created by Ibn Ṭufayl in the introduction, in which he begins by stating that he is setting out to reveal "the secrets of oriental Philosophy mentioned by the prince of philosophers, Ibn Sīnā" and mentions Ibn Sīnā again in the very last paragraph of the introduction before beginning the tale. Thus, Abner knowingly drew many of his philosophical sources from Ibn Ṭufayl's introduction – which he recognized as such, despite a few careless errors – and what he cites as Ibn Sīnā's "Oriental Philosophy" is, following Ibn Ṭufayl's lead, the *tale* of Ḥayy ibn Yaḳẓān told within his text. This distinction seems to be due to Abner's own peculiar reading of the text rather than a confusion within the Hebrew translation of the text, because Moses Narboni in his commentary neither confuses Ibn Sīnā's name with the story portion of Ibn Ṭufayl's text in the same way nor comments on such a confusion in the translation he is using. It is noteworthy, however, that Narboni does mention the "Oriental Philosophy" of Ibn Sīnā elsewhere.<sup>57</sup>

This conclusion not only lays to rest the belief that Abner somehow cites passages of Ibn Sīnā's text not extant in any other source, but it also forestalls any possible use of evidence from Abner's text to establish a connection between it and any surviving Judeo-Arabic and Maghribī manuscripts of the *Easterners* or to support a possible mystical reading of Ibn Sīnā. It also adds additional evidence to Gutas's argument that imputes the mystical interpretation of Ibn Sīnā in the West to Ibn Ṭufayl's characterization of the "ḥikma al-mashriqiyya" in *Ḥayy ibn Yaḳẓān*.<sup>58</sup> Finally, beyond pointing to the fruitful and often neglected role that Romance sources can play in the study of Hebrew and Arabic texts in the Iberian Peninsula, it suggests that Abner's knowledge of Ibn Sīnā was not as deep or as detailed as has been previously proposed, and invalidates, or at least calls into doubt, the argument that Abner's deterministic philosophy was heavily dependant on Ibn Sīnā.<sup>59</sup> As this evidence makes clear, the baffling case of Abner of Burgos's citations of the "Oriental Philosophy" pertains not to the history of the dissemination of Ibn Sīnā's texts in the West, but instead to that of the impact of Ibn Ṭufayl's ideas among late-medieval Sephardic Jewry, and provides an interesting point of comparison in the history of Ibn Ṭufayl's influence on later Jewish thinkers such as Moses Narboni, Abraham Bibago, and Yoḥanan Alemanno.

---

*of the Perplexed*, trans. S. Pines, (Chicago, 1963), See also Hecht's note, "The polemical exchange," p. 140, n. 224.

<sup>57</sup> Steinschneider notes that he cites it in his commentary on the *Kawanot ha-filosofim*, a Hebrew translation of al-Ghazālī's *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa*, surviving in a multitude of manuscripts. See Steinschneider, *Die hebraeischen Uebersetzungen*, pp. 181 and 311–16.

<sup>58</sup> Gutas explores this characterization in "Ibn Ṭufayl on Ibn Sīnā's eastern philosophy."

<sup>59</sup> On Abner's determinism and its alleged connection to Ibn Sīnā, see above n. 21.