Yod

Revue des études hébraïques et juives

22 | 2019

**Medieval and Early Modern Translations of
Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed***

Erudizione de' confusi by
Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati, a Late Renaissance
Italian Translation of Maimonides' *Guide of the
Perplexed*

Erudizione de' confusi de Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati, une traduction italienne
du *Guide des égarés* de Maïmonide à la Renaissance

תרגום איטלקי למורה נבוכים בתקופת הרנסנס מאת ידידיה בן משה
רקנאטי

Alessandro Guetta

Electronic version

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/yod/3713>

DOI: 10.4000/yod.3713

ISSN: 2261-0200

Publisher

INALCO

Printed version

Date of publication: 25 September 2019

Number of pages: 107-132

ISBN: 978-2-85831-317-4

ISSN: 0338-9316

Electronic reference

Alessandro Guetta, "*Erudizione de' confusi* by Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati, a Late Renaissance Italian Translation of Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*", *Yod* [Online], 22 | 2019, Online since 04 May 2021, connection on 08 July 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/yod/3713> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/yod.3713>

Yod est mis à disposition selon les termes de la Licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale 4.0 International.

Erudizione de' confusi by
Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati, a Late
Renaissance Italian Translation of
Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*

*Erudizione de' confusi de Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati,
une traduction italienne du Guide des égarés
de Maïmonide à la Renaissance*

תרגום איטלקי למורה נבוכים בתקופת הרנסנס
מאת ידידיה בן משה רקנאטי

Alessandro GUETTA
Inalco

Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati, his family and his Jewish context

The author of the 16th century Italian translation of the *Guide of the Perplexed*, Yedidya ben Moshe («Amadeo di Musetto» in Italian) Recanati,¹ was born in a geographic area that may be considered peripheral with respect to the mainstream of Jewish culture: the tiny Republic of San Marino, between the territories of Romagna and Marche (North-eastern Italy). Leaving his birthplace, Yedidya Recanati lived and taught in his adulthood in the important town

1. The surname "Recanati" was later changed into "Rimini," probably when the family lived in this latter city, a frequent practice at that time.

of Pesaro (ruled by the Dukes of Urbino until 1631), where a thriving Jewish community, both of Italian and Iberian origin, could be found.²

Thanks to the archival research of Michaël Gasperoni,³ the Italian translator of the *Guide of the Perplexed* appears to us in the lively context of the social life of the time: in the 16th century, in San Marino, the relatively prosperous Recanati family lived on money-lending, which was soon supplemented by trade and crafts, as well as, most probably, by agricultural activities.

The size of the Jewish community (if it can be called that way) where Yedidya grew up and studied deserves our attention: in fact, this community included only sixteen to twenty-one persons. One can therefore say that this “community” basically was identical to Yedidya’s family.

Yedidya Recanati thus belonged to a well-off, respected family. The anti-Jewish measures implemented by the Popes in the second half of the 16th century had scarce effect on San Marino, which, despite being close to the Papal State, was an independent Republic—though under the influence of the Duchy of Urbino. Yedidya’s family certainly possessed a high Jewish cultural level. We know for instance that his father, Moshe, hosted in his house in Rimini (also in the Duchy of Urbino) the scribe Yitshaq Zarfati, where the latter copied (in the year 1556) the important cabbalistic work *Sefer minḥat Yehudah* by Ya’aqov Hayyat.⁴

Their family house also hosted the local synagogue; when some family members died, notaries took note of a significant number of volumes preserved in their house, mainly written in Hebrew, but also in Italian and Latin.⁵

As shown by numerous archival documents, the members of the Recanati family perfectly mastered the Italian language, and some of their Jewish acquaintances

2. In those years, in Pesaro, important rabbinic authorities lived, such as Yitshaq Finzi. Finzi’s juridic and exegetic opinions are sometimes quoted immediately after Recanati’s (see Jerusalem, The National Library of Israel, Ms. Heb. 28°4001, f. 53v). Yitshaq Finzi is well-known for having participated in the ban against ‘Azarya de Rossi’s *Me’or ‘enayim*, cf. ‘AZARYA ME-HA-ADUMYM, 1866, *Haqdamat ha-meḥabber*; *id.*, 1991, p. 133.

3. Cf. GASPERONI, 2011. I would like to thank M. Gasperoni for sharing with me his precise knowledge of Jewish life in San Marino and Pesaro in the Early Modern period.

4. See the colophon (f. 83r) of the ms. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Cod. Parm. 3021; and BIANCHI, 2012, p. 647. See also YAARI, 1953, p. 26.

5. The research group Geo-J [*Un atlas géomatique et multimedia de la présence juive en Europe du Sud (XVe-XIXe)*] will soon publish the results of a broad enquiry concerning the inventories of the libraries of the Jews in Early Modern Italy, and other important data.

were even hired to teach Latin to children of wealthy families in San Marino,⁶ a fact which is worth stressing, in that it shows the level of social and intellectual integration reached by our translator's family. At a certain point, Yedidya moved—as other members of his family did—to the bigger (and very close) city of Pesaro, where an important Jewish community was established. There he worked as a teacher, almost certainly as a preceptor.⁷ He was held in high respect by his students: in the transcription of one of his exegetical opinions, he was referred to as “Most excellent and Magnificent Rabbi Yedidya, my teacher”;⁸ elsewhere, one of his students notes that “His Excellence, Rabbi Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati, came to the house of Rabbi Yitshaq to teach us knowledge and the fear of God.”⁹

Besides an obvious expertise in the traditional Jewish disciplines, mainly *Halakha* and biblical exegesis, he possessed a good knowledge of philosophy, was able to write in a highly elegant and sophisticated Hebrew and was fluent in Italian; he possibly knew also Latin.¹⁰

His works, mostly of didactic nature, have been studied so far by three eminent scholars in the 19th century, Gustavo Sacerdote, David Kaufmann and Moritz Steinschneider.

The cultural level reached by Yedidya was very advanced; amazingly, we could add, especially when considering the tiny size of the social group he belonged to. He must have received a one-to-one education and, most probably, he was the preceptor of only one disciple: such limitations, however, apparently did not have a negative impact on the quality of the education process. This was one of the main features of Italian Jewish culture: numerically limited communities were capable of reaching high intellectual standards.

6. See n. 5.

7. According to David Kaufmann, Yedidya was hired in 1579 by Yitshaq ben Yehuda of Urbino as a teacher for his son Moshe, see KAUFMANN, 1898a, p. 663.

8. Jerusalem, The National Library of Israel, Ms. Heb. 28°4001, f. 53v.

9. *Ibid.*, f. 2v: “היום יום א' ח' נובמ' שם פרשת ויהיו חיי שרה בא בבית כמר' יצחק א'א יצ'” “הנעלה כמ'ר ידידיה בכמר משה יצ'ו מריק' ללמדנו דעת ויראת ה'”. The date is Sunday, 9th of November 1580, Parashat Wa yihyu hayye Sara. The Rabbi Yitshaq referred to is probably Yitshaq Finzi. In the manuscript, Finzi's opinions are sometimes quoted immediately after Recanati's (*ibid.* 53v) (see *supra*, n. 2).

10. A complete list of Recanati's works can be found in the catalogue of the Institute for Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscript, entry *ידדיה בן משה*, רקנטי. See STEINSCHNEIDER, 1878, pp. 33-34; SACERDOTE, 1892 and KAUFMANN, 1898a. See also Kaufmann's review in KAUFMANN, 1897-98, pp. 365-368, reprinted in WILHELM (hrsg. v.), 1967, pp. 425-426.

Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati wrote in Hebrew script, from 1580 to 1581, a complete translation into Italian of the Hebrew version of the *Guide of the Perplexed* made by Samuel Ibn Tibbon, of which two complete *codices* are extant.¹¹ However, before explaining the main features of this translation, as well as its objectives and the public addressed, it is useful to mention some other works written by Yedidya. This will give us a more consistent intellectual framework that can be useful to better understand his Italian translation, whose title is *Erudizione de' confusi*.¹²

Yedidya Recanati's works

As one can infer from a letter written before the drafting of the *Erudizione*—characterised, like all of his letters,¹³ by a proficient use of Renaissance rabbinic Hebrew—Yedidya was particularly proud of two of his works: the first was the explanation of some difficult passages from Eliyahu Mizrahi's supercommentary of Rashi's biblical commentary; the second was the so-called *Sefer turgeman*, a translation into literary Italian of the biblical verses whose understanding was not obvious: that is, almost all of them.

Most of Yedidya's works—all of which remained manuscripts—were mainly prompted by two different needs, *i. e. to explain* and *to vulgarise*, where the latter should be understood as the translation of a Hebrew text into the vernacular language. The 16th and the 17th centuries were the golden age of "Volgarizzamenti" from Latin and Greek into Italian, and exactly in that period the Jews contributed to this important endeavour with a series of Italian translations of Hebrew texts; Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati is one of the leading figures of this Jewish contribution.

The *Sefer turgeman*, an ambitious and quite voluminous work, was fairly successful, since it was copied several times in the surroundings of San Marino

11. The first one is the draft of the author and contains a great number of corrections [Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, Cod. Parm. 3069 (Richler 1259; De Rossi Ital. 5)]. The second one is the final version: Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487 (Steinschneider 55). Another fragment of the text is conserved in Jerusalem, The National Library of Israel, Ms. Heb. 8°3908.

12. I have already dealt with this work in a preliminary way in GUETTA, 2005.

13. Yedidya gathered 150 of his letters (authentic or conceived as models for different situations) and other texts (in verse or in prose) in a book called *Ketavim u-melitsot* (*Writings, proses and poems*), Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Opp. Add. 8° 38 (Neubauer 2416).

and Pesaro, the two cities where Yedidya lived. It is actually an almost complete translation of the Bible, written in excellent “literary” Italian, *i. e.* Tuscan, using the Hebrew script. Its language is very different from the previous versions written in the so-called “Judeo-Italian” that strictly adhered to the original Hebrew text: such versions were written exclusively for didactic purposes and, therefore, their authors were not interested in creating elegant, flowing translations.¹⁴

The aim of this work was, as highlighted by Yedidya himself in a letter, to provide teachers with a flowing, almost complete version of the Bible. Nonetheless, it seems that its author decided to make his endeavour easier by borrowing (or rather, adapting and copying) from an already existing and quite popular Italian version of the Bible, which was forbidden in those years, being on the blacklist of the Inquisition: Antonio Brucioli’s translation of the Bible, which had been published about forty years earlier and re-printed several times. Brucioli’s version was doubly forbidden: as a vernacular translation—since 1559, the Latin *Vulgate* was the only permitted version—and as a work of a crypto-protestant author.

Unlike other Italian Jewish translators and lexicographers, Yedidya, although he possessed the skills to create his own original version, decided to draw fully from an existing text that, being very faithful to the Hebrew original, appeared to him as the most reliable option; the only change he had to do was to re-write the Christological interpretations contained in Brucioli’s version.

Another work is a translation in the other direction, namely from Italian into Hebrew, of the Book of Judith *mi-sefer notsri*, *i. e.* from a Christian book (most probably in its Italian version). The Book of Judith was excluded from the Jewish canon but included in the Greek *Septuagint* as well as in Jerome’s *Vulgate* and in several vernacular translations in different languages, among which also in Italian.¹⁵

Yedidya’s version is written in excellent Hebrew, even though it contains some Italianisms. He was certainly not the first Jewish author to undertake a translation of this book, but he was probably not aware of the previous versions.¹⁶

Both the translations of the Bible and of the *Guide of the Perplexed* were aimed at providing teachers and their disciples with learning tools written in Italian, which was their everyday language. As for Yedidya’s translation of the Book of Judith, it was undertaken for a different purpose, that was to bring this book back from being a “Christian book” to the fold of Jewish culture, to which it belonged

14. Cf. FERRETTI CUOMO, 1995; GUETTA, 2016.

15. Jerusalem, The National Library of Israel, Ms. Heb. 28°4001, ff. 81r-87v.

16. Cf. HABERMAN, 1975, pp. 42-74.

by right, thus realizing a sort of national re-appropriation. In the very same years, 'Azarya de' Rossi in his *Me'or 'enayim* "brought back" to the Jewish culture the philosopher Philo of Alexandria and translated into Hebrew the Greek *Letter of Aristeeas*, itself dealing with the Greek translation of the Bible, the *Septuagint*. Besides that, we should also mention that in those decades there was a general interest for the character of Judith, as shown by numerous literary works and paintings inspired by this heroic character.¹⁷

The *Erudizione de' confusi*: its objectives, its features

For which readership was the translation of the *Guide* intended? And what are its main features? Yedidya prefaces his translation with a presentation of his work, which is extremely helpful to understand his purposes. He presents Maimonides as a man of science, a great expert in theoretical disciplines—which he calls "contemplative" disciplines. The outstanding personalities of the past, to whom he is compared, are not other Jewish thinkers, but rather Greek philosophers and scientists:

A man whose knowledge of contemplative disciplines was flawless, [as great] a mathematician as Euclid of Megara, [as great] a natural philosopher as Galen, more divine than Plato, a more sublime astrologer than Ptolemy and, at large, a man who possessed all virtues, who was able and had the desire and the skills to teach us and show us the truth in a straightforward manner; who was able to explain every concept, no matter how difficult, obscure or transcendent it can appear to be, in a plain, easy and clear way, so that any intellect is satisfied by his words.¹⁸

17. Only to mention Italy, the book of Judith was elaborated into theatrical dramas by Luca Ciarafello de Clerio (*Giuditta e Oloferne*, Naples 1540) and Giovanfrancesco Alberti (*Oloferne*, Ferrara 1593). It was painted by Vasari, Caravaggio, Artemisia Gentileschi and many others. An important scholarly literature has been devoted to the character of Judith in European literature and art, from the Middle Age to the modern period.

18. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487, f. 1; SACERDOTE, 1892; GUETTA, 2005, f. 290-291: «*Homo ne le contemplative discipline perfetissimo, matematica [sic] come Euclide megarense, filosofo naturale quanto Galeno, divino più di Platone, astrolago perfetissimo più di Tolomeo, e in somma homo di ogni valore, il qual in vero ha saputo, ha voluto e ha potuto insegnarci e mostrarci la verità a dito, e rendere ciascun punto, per sublime e difficile et oscuro che si fosse, talmente basso, talmente facile e chiaro, che qual si voglia intelletto pò restare da le sue parole soddisfatto.*»

The same idea of scientific dissemination is restated once again, just a few lines below. It seems that the metaphysical-religious nature of the *Guide of the Perplexed* was of secondary importance for Yedidya. The criticism of anthropomorphism, the negative theology, the theory of prophecy, the meaning of the *mitsvot* (divine commandments), the issues of evil and divine providence: such central themes of the *Guide* seem to count less than Maimonides' sporadic scientific remarks. The traditional fidelity of Italian Jewish scholars to Maimonides' philosophic teachings, and even more so, what has been called a "liturgic repetition" of his doctrine,¹⁹ both of which had been alive in the first part of the 16th century,²⁰ were definitively over.²¹

Since I have met plenty of beautiful minds and sensible intellects who are in need of the light that this book can shed and who would greatly benefit from it, and would gladly study it if they could be assured that the obscurity of many simple words would not be of any hindrance for them, and if they knew that, should they find any unclear passages, they could express their doubts to a man of knowledge and so solve them, and that such a man would not be simply a Jew with knowledge of Jewish sciences but also a mathematician expert in mathematics and an astrologer expert in astrology. For these reasons, I have endeavoured to translate the present מורה into the vernacular Italian language, which everyone is familiar with.²²

19. SERMONETA, 1965.

20. BONFIL, 1974-1975.

21. But Sermoneta's statement, that the Hebrew-Italian philosophic glossaries of the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century were "totally anachronistic," a sort of "merciful act of one who wants to keep a relic of the past [...] but being aware of the oblivion into which the 'science' to which those lemmas belonged had fallen" (cf. SERMONETA, 1969, pp. 78-79), has to be mitigated. Aristotelian categories were still the mental frame of an ordinary scholar of that time, be he Jewish or Christian.

22. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487, p. 2: «Onde avendo io conosciuto molti belii ingegni e molto delicati inteletti che hano bisogno de la inteligenza di questo libro s'avarebbono con il suo aiuto gran profitto, e volentieri vi si meterebino atorno se fossero asicurati che non l'impedisce laoscurità [sic] di molte semplici parole e che fossero chiari venendoli dubio qualche punti potere e sapere esprimere il loro dubio a qualche valente homo, non tanto a un ebreo nelle scienze ebraiche quanto a un matematico de le cose matematiche e quanto a un astrologo de le cose de l'astrologia. Per questo, dico, mi son messo a tradur esso quale ora vedete e renderlo in lingua volgara italiana familiare a tutti.» In a previous

Further on, the translator reintroduces the “moral things” as well as the “divine things” among the topics dealt with by Maimonides. The translator’s main aim is providing Jewish students with an Italian version of the most difficult terms, so that they could understand passages from the book and eventually master the different aspects of those disciplines, helped by specialised teachers (“be he a mathematician, a natural scientist, an astrologist or a theologian”— *matematico, naturale, astrologo o teologo che sia*):²³

Nor should any beginner consider the reading of this translation as an easy task, since he will find in many parts of this work different concepts relating to moral issues as well as to mathematics, natural sciences, geometry, and issues concerning the divine; in each part, I attempted to translate by using the most clear words and the most appropriate terms for each concept, as dealt with by their authors. And even when beginners will not be able to grasp the essence of certain propositions, at least they will be able to formulate adequate questions with the aid of my translation. In fact, by using the appropriate vocabulary, they will be able to adequately formulate their questions and be understood by any man of knowledge—be he a mathematician, a natural scientist, an astrologer or a theologian—who will finally help them overcome the difficulty of those passages with an oral explanation, and so make them knowledgeable, within the limits set by the degree of complexity of a given concept and the perspicacity of their intellect; and they will be satisfied. Therefore, they will have to be grateful not only to the authors as such, but also to the scholar who will explain them any unclear concept; and to me, as I will have guided them on the straight path by giving them the words to formulate a correct question and so be understood. They will always remember my intention and the goal I

passage, Yedidya writes that Ibn Tibbon’s version can be obscure to many readers, who therefore abandon its reading: “I am so sorry, my dear book; don’t blame me, my dear author, if I leave you” (*«Autor mio, abii pazienza, libro mio, non ti sdegnar meco se io ti lascio»*).

23. A quite similar remark can be found in the vernacular (Castilian in Hebrew letters) philosophical work *Regimiento de la vida* by Moshe ben Barukh Almosnino (Salonic, 1564). Almosnino would have preferred to write this work in Hebrew, but he hoped that Spanish would help his readers to exchange on these subjects with scholars who did not know Hebrew. See NELSON NOVOA, 2011.

was aiming at, which was nothing but that of being helpful to them and to others who are in a similar condition.²⁴

Yedidya translated Maimonides' work into Italian, *i. e.* into a "vernacular language everyone is familiar with" («*in lingua volgare italiana familiare a tutti*»). His Italian is flawless, but at the same time, he decides to use the Hebrew script.²⁵ There are several reasons behind his choice: first of all, using the Hebrew script was part of a consolidated tradition; in fact, Italian Jews will definitely stop using the Hebrew script to write in Italian only in the first decades of the 17th century. The important Hebrew-Latin-Italian dictionary by David de Pomi (*Tsemaḥ David*), published in 1572, is still characterised by the Hebrew transcription of the Italian terms in order to make it accessible to Jewish readers.

Secondly, this work was expressly destined for Jewish students. Yedidya was essentially a teacher, and the current written language at that time was Hebrew, at school as well as in personal correspondence between the teacher and his students. It is clear that Yedidya did not have the ambition to present his work to the *République des Lettres* of Italian intellectuals, regardless of their faith. Perhaps he lacked the audacity to do so: he makes a considerable effort to excuse himself in advance for unwanted inaccuracies that might have occurred in his work, in order to pre-empt criticisms:

I say so in order to defend myself from the slanderers, that have no respect for someone else's efforts and hardships he had to go through just for the sake of bringing them some benefit: such

24. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487, f. 2: «*Né arà alcuno principiante da tener per cosa lieve a legere questa mia traduzione, peroché troverà egli in molti lochi de l'opera l'autore trattare quando di cose morali, quando di matematica, quando di cose naturali, quando di sfera, quando di cose divine, e ciascun punto mi son sforzato tradurre con le più chiare parole e con li lor proprii termini e vocaboli i nomi trattati dali lor autori istessi. E se bene il principiante, legendoli, non intenderà la sostanza della proposizione, saper almeno con l'aiuto de la mia traduzione dimandare quello che non saperà. Però ché troverà il punto ristretto con tal parole, che proferendole a alcuno de la professione, sarà di subito inteso — da matematico, da naturale, da astrolago o teologo che si sia; dal qual finalmente a voce viva li potrà eser spianato la difficoltà di quel passo, e farlo capace quanto comporterà la natura del concetto e la forze [sic] del suo intelletto, a tal che restarà egli sodisfatto. Il che avendoli, meritamente averà egli d'aver obligo, a l'autori, come autori, e a quel dotto che li spianarà il caso, e a me anco per averlo incaminato per la via retta, metendogli in bocca come egli abbia a dimandare per esser inteso. Massimo tenendo lui sempre a memoria l'intenzion mia, e il fine che io mi ho preposto, non esser stato altro, che di giovare a lui e a simil a lui.*»

25. On this issue, see FREEDMAN, 1972 and BUSI, 1987.

people open their mouth and rinse their teeth with calumny, driven only by toxic envy and the desire to curse someone else's efforts.²⁶

It is legitimate to wonder how did Yedidya approach and study the *Moreh nevukhim*, which is quite difficult to understand without the explanation of a competent teacher. It cannot be ruled out that he read and studied it by himself, with the help of some commentaries from the 15th century (Efodi, Asher Crescas, Shem Tov ben, Yosef Ibn Shem Tov), that were present in the editions printed in 1551 (Venice) and 1553 (Sabbioneta).

In any case, his understanding of the text is perfect. His translation is characterised by a significant degree of faithfulness to the source, which clearly shows that the tradition of calque translations still played an important role at that time. Moreover, one can frequently observe the addition of words to better explain a difficult concept. For instance, in I, 2, the Hebrew *nit'atsem* (from *'etsem*, substance, literally "what constitutes a man's substance," here referring to the intellect, that distinguishes men as such) is translated as "[man] really and truly receives his own being."²⁷ In the same chapter, the injunction *we-hitbonen*, "look," "note," is rendered by "note with subtlety";²⁸ *megannehu*, litt. "[man] despises it," referring to man's nudity in *gan 'eden*, is, in the Italian translation, "[man] had judged it dishonest and reprobates it as ugly."²⁹ Similarly, in I, 5, which treats, among other subjects, Moses' praiseworthy action of "covering his face not to look at God," one can find the following: "not to look at God's *divinity*," which has the function of explaining the meaning of this passage avoiding any anthropomorphic explanation, following Maimonides' spirit.³⁰

26. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487, p. 3: «*Tutto questo dico per difendermi da' maldicenti che non riguardano né a fatica né a strazio alcun che l'altrui abia patito per porgere giovamento loro: generalmente insieme con gli altri, aprino la bocca [p. 4] e si sciacquino i denti con l'infamia de l'altrui, spinti solo da una pessima invidia a danare le fatiche de l'altrui.*»

27. *Ibid.*, p. 22: «*... cognizione dalla quale riceve il suo essere veramente e realmente.*»

28. *Ibid.*, p. 24: «*e nota sotilmente*». The same is found in I, 17 (*ibid.*, f. 34): «*e nota questo fatto sotilmente*», "note this fact with subtlety," where the Hebrew has only *we-da' zeh gam ken*, namely "and know this too."

29. *Ibid.*: «*aveva giudicato disaunesto [sic] ... riprobato per brutto.*»

30. Similarly, the word *or*, the light shining at the top of Mount Sinai (I, 18, f. 37), is rendered by *la divinità santissima*, namely: "the very holy divinity," which avoids the reference to a physical perception.

In some cases, the addition of a word can provide interesting insights in Yedidya's cultural context. In I, 9, the word *kisse* is explained by Maimonides, after its obvious meaning "chair," as the seat of very honourable people, such as the kings; here, Recanati adds the word *il prelato*, "the prelate, *i. e.* a Church dignitary." Clearly, the catholic context played a role in this choice. Even if his translation is addressed to Jewish readers, in Recanati's eyes an important person is, almost by definition, an ecclesiastic authority.

Such additions and paraphrases are present in practically all the chapters, or *capi*, of the *Erudizione de' confusi*, also called *Precettore de' confusi* (*Guide of the Perplexed*). (First title *Insegna a' dubitanti*, as it appears in the draft, then erased).

A short glossary of the philosophical terms of Maimonides' *Treatise of Logic*, *Millot ha-biggayon*, is appended by Yedidya at the end of the second part of the translation. This list helps us to understand to what extent he was acquainted with the main philosophical terms in Italian, and a closer look at his choices will tell us more about his knowledge and orientation.

With these specific characteristics, and notwithstanding some very rare imperfections—taking a negation instead of an affirmation, some changing of verbal persons, a few unclear or too involved and complicated sentences and a certain instability in the translation, the *Erudizione de' confusi* can certainly be considered a remarkable work, both for the history of the reception of Maimonides' *Guide* in the late Renaissance and for the history of linguistic. The historian of Italian language will be interested by the kind of Italian used by Yedidya: did he keep a "Jewish" nuance, following the so-called Judaeo-Italian idiom?

The philosophic and religious orientation of Yedidya Recanati

Besides Yedidya's personal motivations, which he admitted openly ("No one had ever done it, even those who could have done it much better than I, and a sort of ambition pushed me to the endeavor")³¹ as well as his alleged scientific considerations (*i. e.* to provide Jewish students with a scientific vocabulary in Italian so that they could be able to discuss with Jewish and Christian scholars),

31. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487, p. 2: «Ma la verità è questa: che la guida che mi ha in ciò guidato e la causa che a questo fatto mi ha costretto è stata una certa emulazione — o invidia che vogliamo dire — di avere inteso, conosciuto e veduto tanti e tanti ebrei del mondo e non esser stato nesuno (che io sapia) che si sia risoluto a tradurlo sino al dì di oggi, benché ciascun di loro di gran lunga l'arebbe saputo e potuto fare meglio che me.»

is it possible to detect an intellectual strategy (implicit, at least) that inspired the writing of the *Erudizione de' confusi*?

This question leads us to further investigate the role of Maimonides' thought in general, and his *Guide of the Perplexed* in particular, in the culture of Italian Jews towards the end of the 16th century.

From the above mentioned *Ketavim u-melitsot* (a collection of paradigmatic letters, including some texts of a different nature, such as elegies, poems, etc.) one can infer the author's constant utilization of the *Guide*, that provides him with Hebrew expressions and inspires some of his theological ideas. In one of these letters, Yedidya refers to some of his earlier works:

והניעני החפץ האלקי לחבר ספרים עד אשר לא יהיה אבדם באבדי אשר אי
 אפשר מבלעדיו.

And the divine desire has led me to write some books, so that my
 death—which is unavoidable—would not cause their extinction.³²

This is indisputably a reference to the text of the "Preliminary observations" that opens the third section of the *More nevukhim*.

Another letter, which tells us something about Yedidya's philosophical interests, is centered on the concept of the supreme good, or the highest finality,³³ הטוב העליון או התכלית האחרון. Here, Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati talks about Plato's error, who did not make any distinction between the good in God and the good on the level of human beings, where the latter is to be considered just a homonym (*meshuttaf*) of the former.

Plato made an error in using the expression "supreme good," referring indistinctly to the various meanings of this term, which should be considered simply as homonyms. In fact, the plain, absolute good is only God Himself, may he be blessed and sanctified, to which nothing can be added nor subtracted; such absolute good is in no relation whatsoever with our [human] goods, as it is entirely distinct from the latter. Such goods are in fact nothing but a shadow compared to it.³⁴

32. *Ketavim u-melitsot*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Opp. Add. 8° 38, f. 42v.

33. *Ibid.*, f. 48r/v.

34. *Ibid.*: "אלא שטעה אפלטון בשנות ... השם של הטוב העליון המשותף לשני מובני' האלה טוב בהחלט ובפשטות וזה אינו כי אם אל ית' וית' אשר עליו אין להוסיף וממנו אין לגרוע שאין לו יחס עם אלה הטובות שלנו ונבדל מהם

One of the fundamental themes of the *Guide of the Perplexed* is indeed the unbridgeable chasm between human and divine qualities, which our language is unable to express: we have the same word (a homonym) for two completely different notions. Here, Yedidya is resolutely Maimonidean. However, one can also notice a certain platonic influence in his statements, which is not present in Maimonides' work, at least not so explicitly: God is "the good," whereas the human good is nothing but a "shadow" of the divine one. God as the supreme good is a common notion in Maimonides' *oeuvre*; it is the reference to the "shadow," typically platonic, that seems to be absent in the philosophical vocabulary of the Andalusian philosopher.³⁵

In another passage of the same book, a deceased man was praised by him in an elegy—authentic or conceived as a model, like all the letters and writings of *Ketavim u-melitsot*—in the following way:

He made wings to himself to fly from the mathematical knowledge to the physical one, and from the latter to the metaphysical.³⁶

Which is a clear reference to the *curriculum* of the true sage, as it is expressed in the *Guide of the Perplexed*. In the same letter, he praises the association of *Torah* and rational sciences.³⁷

The importance of the intellect is constantly recalled: in another letter, its divine origin is emphasized, probably—again—with a neo-platonic nuance:

The preparations that bring man to perfection (which is the intellectual understanding) [...] to the point where the intellect becomes stronger than all human faculties [...] acting and being acted, receiving and giving, speaking and listening, guiding and being guided by the perfect and divine light, whence it was taken.³⁸

הבדל גמור, והאחרי' הם לגבי ידידה צל של טובות ולא טובות באמת.

35. See among others LOBEL, 2011.

36. *Ketavim u-melitsot*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Opp. Add. 8° 38, f. 39r: "עשה עשה לו כנפים לעוף מן הלאמודיות אל הטבעיות, ומן הטבעיות אל האלקיות."

37. *Ibid.*: "סוף דבר, קנה לו דברי תורה עם שאר החכמות העיוניות", "To sum up, he acquired the knowledge of the Torah with other rational sciences."

38. *Ibid.*, f. 21v: "ההכנות המגיעות האדם לידי שלמות (משכיל על דבר) ... עד כי יגבר יד שכלו על כל הכחות האנושיות ... פועל ומתפעל, מקבל ונותן, משמיע ומושמע, מדריך ומודרך מן האור האלקי השלם אשר לוקח משם."

We could not find any other references to Maimonides in Yedidya's writings, neither in his letters, nor in an interesting booklet, the *Pinqas*, that was probably written for his own personal use.³⁹ In this notebook, our author/translator wrote down in alphabetical order some difficult Hebrew words and other terms of particular interest, providing for each of them a brief definition and a reference to the bibliographic sources he drew on. At a first, quick reading of this Jewish library of the late 16th century, the *More* seems to be absent.

This notwithstanding, it would be wrong to infer that philosophy was absent in this specific Italian Rabbinic cultural milieu. True, one cannot ignore that Yedidya, in his *Index of midrashim*, a comment upon biblical passages, also quotes the *Zohar*, the main *corpus* of cabbalistic writings; moreover, we know that Yedidya was asked by the father of his students to copy out the "secrets of the Torah," *i. e.* the hidden and disguised elements of practical *qabbalah*.⁴⁰

The translator of the *Guide* did not see *qabbalah* and a good knowledge of Aristotle's and Plato's thought as contradictory according to the intellectual synthesis typical of the Late Renaissance. In another letter addressed to a student, when interpreting a difficult passage from a book (probably *'Aqedath Yitshaq* by the Spanish author Yitshaq Arama, 15th century), Yedidya undertakes an analysis of the concept of "supreme good" according to Aristotle (in his *Nicomachean Ethics*) and Plato. This analysis does not encompass Maimonides' thought; on the contrary, the rationalistic position of the author of the *Guide* is implicitly criticized in the following passage, where the object of criticism is Aristotle:

According to Aristotle, the highest purpose of human being is knowledge. However, his comprehension was not able to conceive the level represented by prophecy, which enables to know and understand that practical happiness (*ha-osher ha-má'asi*) is superior to intellectual happiness (*ha-osher ha-'inyani*).⁴¹

39. Budapest, Jewish Theological Seminary, Ms. K. 203.

40. סתרי תורה ושפוני סמוני קבלה מעשית. *Ibid.*, f. 53r. In another letter (*ibid.* f. 67r/v) there is a quotation from the *Zohar* (Part II, f. 161b), but emptied of its theological content and used only for rhetorical purposes.

41. *Ibid.*, f. 47v. The conclusion of the *Guide* (III, 53 and 54), where Maimonides insists on the importance of the practical translation (justice) of the human intellectual qualities, can have legitimately inspired Recanati's position. Other exegetical passages of philosophical nature—dealing with Arama's affirmations—were proposed by Yedidya to his student (Yitshaq of Urbino?) and were copied in the ms. Jerusalem, National Library of Israel, Ms. Heb. 8 4001, esp. ff. 53-58.

The articulation of his thought is not completely clear, since Yedidya deals with very complex issues in just a few lines. However, as much as we can infer from what he writes, it seems that his position was the following: Aristotle, the best of the philosophers, ("the chief of the philosophers and their prince," as Recanati translates *Guide* 1, 5)⁴² thinks that man's supreme good consists in intellectual contemplation, while the Jews, as depositaries of the Torah, know through prophecy that above this level there is a higher degree of happiness that derives from the fulfilment of the commandments or from dedication to the Torah.

In another letter, remarkable for its eloquence, he talks about the love of the Torah for those who study it and are dedicated to it:

אין לך אהבה כאהבה של תורה (ידידי הנכבד) דדיה ירוו את האדם בכל עת,
באהבתה ישגא ירבה יפרוץ טוב החסד ושלוש בעולם, היא היא הנותנת לו לאדם
עצה ותושיה, היא היא המארכת ימים ומוספת גבורה בגבורה [...] ומה מתוק
מדבש ומה עז מאד ידידות האוהב עם הנאהב, הנקשר בחוט המשולש לתורה
נביאים וכתובים

There is no love comparable to that of the Torah, my honourable friend. Her breast nourishes man in every moment; by loving her, good and peace are strengthened and spread throughout the world; it is she who gives man intelligence and cleverness, it is she who prolong his days, adding strength to strength [...] the friendship between the lover and the beloved is sweeter than honey, and very strong too, it is bound with the triple cord of Torah, Prophets and Hagiographers.⁴³

Such a representation of the Torah as a living being, together with the relegation of intellectual happiness to a lower degree of importance, are closer to Yehuda ha-Levi's sensibility and to that of cabalists, rather than to Maimonides'.⁴⁴ Among the Italian Jews, Yehiel Nissim ben Shemuel of Pisa had clearly showed such sensibility some decades before, in 1539, in his book *Minḥat gena'ot*,⁴⁵ and in the same years 'Ovadya Sforno published *Or 'ammim* (*Light of the nations*), which can be considered as the last great Jewish philosophical

42. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487, p. 26: «*il capo de' filosofi e lor principe*.»

43. *Ketavim u-melitsot*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Opp. Add. 8° 38, ff. 48v-49r.

44. On Ha-Levi's influence in Renaissance (or Late-Renaissance) Italy, see SHEAR, 2008.

45. KAUFMANN, 1898b.

synthesis of pre-modern age: in this book, Aristotle and Ibn Rushd are the main protagonists, while Maimonides is almost completely absent. In 1589, *i. e.* in the same period of *Erudizione de' confusi*, Yehuda Moscato showed a similar attitude in his well-known sermons, published under the title *Nefutsot Yehuda*: he wrote in a philosophical style, drawing also from Maimonides, but putting aside his rationalistic orientation.

Some of Maimonides' main ideas, *i. e.* the synthesis (or even the identification) between philosophy and the Torah, the relation between scientific evidence and mystical love, the view of the divine commandments as a mere means to reach the supreme good, which is the intellectual contemplation of God in an ideal religion with no rites nor prayers, were ideas that could not be accepted by the Jewish culture of the Late Renaissance, nor by the culture of what could be defined as the Baroque age. To put it roughly, in those years, piety associated to religious practice, and not intellectual contemplation, was seen at the highest human achievement.

But in the intellectual world of Yedidya Recanati the influence of Maimonides was still great: not in the details of the doctrine, but as a general inspiration, and even in common expressions used in rhetorical contexts.

In Italy, the reputation of the author of the *Guide* never completely faded away: it was printed twice in a short span of time, in 1551 and 1553, it was widely studied and it was long considered a classic of Jewish religious literature, even when its overall inspiration ceased to be an active presence in the landscape of Jewish Italian culture of that period.

Yedidya's outstanding work filled a gap in the library of classical books of Italian Jews in translation, which was being shaped in those years. On the other hand, its very limited circulation probably shows that it did not correspond to a necessary, urgent intellectual endeavour of that time.

Appendix—Translation of philosophical terms

The first list of words (placed at the end of section 1 of *Erudizione de' confusi*) is taken from Maimonides' *Millot ha-higgayon*, the introduction to Logic, in the Hebrew version by Samuel Ibn Tibbon, as already remarked by G. Sacerdote;⁴⁶ more precisely, from the end of each chapter in that work.

The second list (p. 164) aims at giving the translation of the names of the main disciplines.

46. SACERDOTE, 1892, p. 314.

[Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. Quart. 487 (Steinschneider 55), p. 161]

<i>Sogetto</i>	נרשא
<i>Predicato</i>	נרשא
<i>Proposizione</i>	משפט
<i>Sentenza definitiva</i>	מאמר הפוסק
<i>Afermativa</i>	מחייב
<i>Negativa</i>	שוללת
<i>Universale afermativa</i>	מחייב כללי
<i>Universale negativa</i>	שולל כללי
<i>Particolare afermativa</i>	מחייב חלקי
<i>Particolare negativa</i>	שולל חלקי
<i>Indefinita</i>	סתמי
<i>Singolara</i>	פרטי
<i>Defnita universal afermativa</i>	הקף כללי מחייב
<i>Defnita universal negativa</i>	הקף כללי שולל
<i>Defnita particular afermativa</i>	הקף חלקי מחייב
<i>Defnita particular negativa</i>	הקף חלקי שולל
<i>Quantità de la proposizione</i>	כמות המשפט
<i>Qualità de la proposizione</i>	איכות המשפט
<i>Proposizion binaria</i>	משפט השני
<i>Proposizion triplice</i>	משפט השלישי
<i>Modo</i>	צד
<i>Verbo</i>	דבור
<i>Verbo sostantivo</i>	דבור המציאות
<i>Oposizione</i>	התנגדות
<i>Contrarii</i>	הפך
<i>Contradizione</i>	סתירה
<i>Opositi</i>	מתנגד
<i>Contrari</i>	מתהפכים
<i>Contraditorii</i>	סותרים
<i>Sottocontrari</i>	מה שתחת המתהפכים
<i>Proposizion afermativa</i>	משפט מחייב
<i>Necesaria</i>	הכרחי

<i>Proposizion assoluta</i>	משפט מוחלט
<i>Proposizion impossibile</i>	משפט נמנע
<i>Proposizion possibile</i>	משפט האפשר
<i>Proposizion in essere</i>	משפט המציאות
<i>Conversion de la proposizione</i>	הפוך המשפט
<i>Contradetta de la proposizione</i>	הפך המשפט
<i>Proposizion convertita</i>	משפט הפוך
<i>Proposizion conversa</i>	משפט מהופך
<i>Silogismo</i>	ההקש
<i>Proposizione</i>	ההקדמה
<i>Conclusione</i>	תולדה
<i>Conseguenza</i>	רדיפה
<i>Mezzo termine</i>	גבול אמצעי
<i>Magior estremità</i>	קצה הגדול
<i>Prima estremità</i>	קצה הראשון
<i>Ultima estremità</i>	קצה האחרון
<i>Minor estremità</i>	קצה הקטן
<i>Proposizion maggiore</i>	הקדמה גדולה
<i>Proposizion minore</i>	הקדמה קטנה
<i>Prima figura del silogismo</i>	תמונה הראשונה מן ההקש
<i>Seconda figura di quello</i>	תמונה שנית ממנו
<i>Terza figura di quello</i>	תמונה שלישית ממנו
<i>Le specie dele figure del silogismo</i>	מינים תמונות ההקשים
<i>Categorici</i>	משאיים
<i>Silogismi condizionali</i>	הקשים התנאיים
<i>Condizional congiunta</i>	תנאי מדובק
<i>Condizional disgiunto</i>	תנאי נחלק
<i>Silogismo categorico retto</i>	ההקשה משאי הישר
<i>Silogismo del impossibile</i>	הקש החילוף
<i>Esempio</i>	הקש המשל
<i>Induzione</i>	הקש החיפוש
<i>Sensibili</i>	מוחשים
<i>Primi concetti</i>	מושכלות ראשונות

<i>Secondi concetti</i>	מושכלות שניות
<i>Cose note</i>	מפורסמות
<i>Probabili</i>	מקבלות
<i>Proposizion vera</i>	משפט אמת

[p. 162]

<i>Arte dimostrativa</i>	מלאכת המופטים
<i>Silogismo dimostrativo</i>	הקש מופטי
<i>Silogismo topico</i>	הקש הנצוח
<i>Silogismo retorico</i>	הקש ההלצה
<i>Silogismo sofisto</i>	הקש המטעה
<i>Arte sofistica</i>	מלאכת ההטעה
<i>Silogismo poetico</i>	הקש השירי
<i>Arte poetica</i>	מלאכת השיר
<i>Concorente</i>	הנסתר
<i>Materia</i>	חומר
<i>Forma</i>	צורה
<i>Agente</i>	פועל
<i>Fine</i>	תכלית
<i>Cause propinque</i>	סבות קרובות
<i>Cause remote</i>	סבות רחוקות
<i>Elementi</i>	יסודות
<i>Prima materia</i>	חמר ראשון
<i>Prima materia</i>	אל היולי
<i>Prima materia</i>	אל טוצר
<i>Genere</i>	סוג
<i>Genere generalissimo</i>	סוג העליון
<i>Ultima specie</i>	מין האחרון
<i>Specie di mezzo</i>	מינים האמצעיים
<i>Arte topica</i>	מלאכת הנצוח
<i>Generi di mezzo</i>	סוגים אמצעיים
<i>Generi singolari</i>	סוגים חלקיים

<i>Generi superiori</i>	סוגים העליונים
<i>Predicamenti</i>	מאמרות
<i>Sostanza</i>	עצם
<i>Definizione</i>	גדר
<i>Descrizione</i>	רושם
<i>Specia individua</i>	מין האשי
<i>Diferenza</i>	הבדל
<i>Propria</i>	סגולה
<i>Acidente inseparabile</i>	מקרה קיים
<i>Acidente separabile</i>	מקרה נפרד
<i>Sostanziale</i>	מה שבעצמות
<i>Accidentale</i>	מה שבמקרה
<i>Cose sostanziali</i>	ענינים עצמותיים
<i>Cose accidentali</i>	ענינים מקריים
<i>Quelo che è in potenza</i>	מה שבכח
<i>Quelo che è in atto</i>	מה שבפעל
<i>Potenza prossima</i>	כח קרוב
<i>Potenza remota</i>	כח רחוק
<i>Contrari</i>	הפכים
<i>Contrari senza mezzo</i>	הפכים שאין ביניה' אמצעי
<i>Contrari con mezzo</i>	הפכים אשר ביניה' אמצעי
<i>Abito</i>	קניין
<i>Privazione</i>	העדר
<i>Relazione</i>	הצטרפות
<i>Relativo</i>	מצטרף
<i>Relativi</i>	מצטרפים
<i>Obliquo</i>	נוטה
<i>Precede per tempo</i>	קודם בזמן
<i>Precede per natura</i>	קודם בטבע
<i>Precede per dignità</i>	קודם במעלה
<i>Precede per logo o per grado</i>	קודם במדרגה
<i>Precede per causa</i>	קודם בסבה
<i>Insieme in tempo</i>	יחד בזמן

<i>Insieme in logo</i>	יחד במקום
<i>Insieme in grado</i>	יחד במדרגה
<i>Insieme per natura</i>	יחד בטבע
<i>Sostanza</i>	עצמות
<i>Nomo retto</i>	שם הישר
<i>Nomo obliquo</i>	שם הנוטה
<i>Nomo imperfetto</i>	שם בלתי מוגע
<i>Nomo derivativo</i>	שם נגזר
<i>Primo esempio</i>	המשל הראשון
<i>Absenti</i>	נסתרים
<i>Pronomi dimostrativi</i>	כנויים

[p. 163]

<i>Sinonomi</i>	שמות נרדפים
<i>Univochi</i>	נבדלים
<i>Equivoco assoluto</i>	שם המשותף במוחלט
<i>Proposizion composta di condizione e dichiarazione</i>	מאמר אשר הורכב הרכבת תנאי וביאור
<i>Nomo detto aplicito</i>	שם הנאמר בהסכמה
<i>Nomo ambiguo</i>	שם מסופק
<i>Nomo detto in genere e specie</i>	שם הנאמר בכלל ויחוד
<i>Nomo prestato</i>	שם המושאל
<i>Nomo trasportato</i>	שם נעתק
<i>Potenza razionale</i>	כח המדבר
<i>Parlar intrinseco</i>	דבור פנימי
<i>Arte dialetica</i>	מלאכת ההגיון
<i>Arti contemplative</i>	מלאכות העיוניות
<i>Arti ative</i>	מלאכות המעשיות
<i>Filosofia umana</i>	פילוסופיה האנושית
<i>Scienza civile</i>	חכמה המדינית
<i>Matematiche</i>	חכמת הלמודים

<i>Scienze liberali</i>	חכמות הממוששות
<i>Scienza naturale</i>	חכמה הטבעית
<i>Scienza divina</i>	חכמה האלקית
<i>Sopra naturale</i>	מה שאחר הטבע
<i>Morali</i>	המדות
<i>Virtù morali</i>	מעלות המדות
<i>Vizio morale</i>	פחיתות המדות
<i>Virtù razionali</i>	מעלות הדבריות
<i>Buone Maligne</i>	טובות, רעות
<i>Decreti</i>	חקים
<i>Statuti</i>	נמוסים

[p. 164]

<i>Gramatica</i>	דקדוק
<i>Logica</i>	הגיון
<i>Retorica</i>	הלצה
<i>Aritmetica</i>	מספר
<i>Geometria</i>	הנדסה
<i>Astrologia</i>	תכונה
<i>Musica</i>	נגון
<i>Fisica</i>	שמע הטבעי
<i>Matematiche</i>	למודיות
<i>Metafisica</i>	מה שאחר הטבע
<i>Dialetica</i>	הגיוניות

Bibliography

'AZARYA ME-HA-ADUMYM, 1866, *Matsrefla-keseif* [Hebrew], Shemuel Yosef Fin, Vilnius, 174 p.

'AZARYA ME-HA-ADUMYM, 1991, *Selected Chapters from Sefer Me'or 'enayim* [Hebrew], ed. BONFIL Reuven, Mossad Bialik, Jerusalem, 420 p.

BIANCHI Matteo, 2012, «Ebrei e cultura a Rimini» in *Studi Romagnoli*, n° 63, pp. 629-666.

BONFIL Reuven, 1974–1975, “The Commentary of Moshe Provenzano on the Twenty Five Axioms of Maimonides” in *Kiryat Sefer*, n° 50 [Hebrew], pp. 157-176.

BUSI Giulio, 1987, *La istoria de Purim io ve racconto. Il Libro di Ester secondo un rabbino emiliano del Cinquecento*, Luisè, Bologna, 107 p.

FERRETTI CUOMO Luisa, 1995, «Traduzioni bibliche giudeo italiane ed umanistiche» in *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie*, n° 111, pp. 206-243.

FREEDMAN Alan, 1972, *Italian Texts in Hebrew Characters: Problems of Interpretation*, Steiner, Wiesbaden, 120 p.

GASPERONI Michaël, 2011, *La Communauté juive de la République de Saint-Marin, XVI^e-XVII^e siècles*, Publibook Éditions Université, Paris, 155 p.

GUETTA Alessandro, 2005, «La traduzione italiana cinquecentesca del *Moreh nevukhim* di Maimonide» in IOLY ZORATTINI Pier Cesare (a cura di), *Percorsi di storia ebraica*, Forum, Udine, pp. 281-303.

GUETTA Alessandro, 2016, “Antonio Brucioli and the Jewish Italian Versions of the Bible” in MANDELBROTE Scott & WEINBERG Joanna (eds.), *Jewish Books and their Readers in Early Modern Europe*, Brill, Leiden/Boston, pp. 45-71.

HABERMANN Abraham Meir, 1975, *Hadashim gam yeshanim* [Hebrew], Ruben Mass, Jerusalem, 254 p.

KAUFMANN David, 1897–1898, „Der ‘Führer’ Maimūni’s in der Weltliteratur“ in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, n° 11, pp. 335-373.

KAUFMANN David, 1898a, «Jedidiah of Rimini; or, Amadeo di Moise de Recanati» in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, n° 11, pp. 662-670.

KAUFMANN David (hrsg. v.), 1898b, *Minchath kenaoth von Jechiel B. Samuel aus Pisa*, Itzowski, Berlin, 118 p.

LOBEL Diana, 2011, “Being and the Good: Maimonides on Ontological Beauty” in *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, n° 1, vol. 19, pp. 1-45.

NELSON NOVOA James W., 2011, “The Peninsula Hither and Tither: Philosophical Texts in Vernacular Languages by Sephardic Jews before and after the Expulsion” in *Hispania Judaica*, n° 8, pp. 150-156.

SACERDOTE Gustavo, 1892, «Una versione italiana inedita del *Moreh nebukhim* di Mosheh ben Maimon» in *Rendiconti della Reale accademia dei Lincei. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, Tipografia dell’Accademia, Roma, pp. 308-325.

SERMONETA Giuseppe, 1965, «La dottrina dell’intelletto e la ‘fede filosofica’ di Jehudàh e Immanuel Romano» in *Studi medievali*, s. III, vol. 6, fasc. 2, pp. 3-78.

SERMONETA Giuseppe, 1969, *Un Glossario filosofico ebraico-italiano del XIII secolo*, Edizioni dell’Ateneo, Roma, 568 p.

SHEAR Adam, 2008, *The Kuzari and the Shaping of Jewish Identity, 1167-1900*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 384 p.

STEINSCHNEIDER Moritz, 1878, *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königliche Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Bd. II, Asher, Berlin, 176 p.

WILHELM Kurt (hrsg. v.), 1967, *Wissenschaft des Judentums im deutschen Sprachbereich*, Bd. II, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 796 p.

YAARI Avraham, 1953, *Serefat ha Talmud be Italiyah*, Avraham Zioni, Tel-Aviv, 64 p.

Abstract: In 1581, Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati—who lived in San Marino and Pesaro, in the North-eastern regions of Italy—wrote an Italian translation (in Hebrew characters) of the *Guide of the Perplexed*, based on the Hebrew version by Samuel Ibn Tibbon. According to his words in the introduction, this work was destined for Jewish students who, thanks to the translation of difficult words and expressions of Maimonides' book, could address Jewish and especially non-Jewish scholars, in order to have further explanations, in particular on scientific matters. Yedidya Recanati was a brilliant and prolific scholar, though almost completely unknown; actually, his rich literary production—biblical exegesis, epistolography, lexicography and translations from and into Hebrew, besides scattered Halakhic response has never been printed. The translation of the *Guide*, whose title is *Erudizione de' confusi*, is the evidence of the persistent importance of Maimonides' work within Italian Judaism, even in a period of growing defiance toward rationalistic philosophy.

Keywords: Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed*, Italian translations, Vulgarisations, Early Modern Jewish Culture, Early Modern Italy.

Résumé : En 1581, Yedidya ben Moshe Recanati – qui vécut à San Marino et Pesaro, dans le Nord-Est de l'Italie – composa une traduction italienne (en caractères hébraïques) du Guide des égarés, basée sur la version de Samuel Ibn Tibbon. Il indiqua dans son introduction que ce texte était destiné aux étudiants juifs qui, grâce à la traduction d'expressions et de mots difficiles, pourraient s'adresser à des savants Juifs et surtout non-Juifs pour obtenir des explications ultérieures, en particulier dans des matières scientifiques. Yedidya Recanati composa une série d'ouvrages dans de différents domaines – exégèse biblique, épistolographie, lexicographie, traductions de et vers l'hébreu, en plus d'une série de responsa juridiques – mais qui ne furent pas imprimés et sont demeurés presque totalement inconnus. La traduction du Guide, dont le titre est *Erudizione de' confusi*, est la preuve de l'importance persistante de l'œuvre de Maïmonide dans la culture juive italienne, même à une époque où la philosophie rationaliste commençait à décliner.

Mots-clés : Maïmonide, Guide des égarés, traductions italiennes, vulgarisations, culture juive au début de l'ère moderne, Italie au début de l'ère moderne.

תקציר: בשנת 1581, ידידיה בן משה ריקנאטי—שחי בסאן מארינו ובפיזארו, במחוזות צפוניות-מזרחיות של איטליה—חיבר תרגום לאיטלקית (באותיות עבריות) של מורה נבוכים,

מבוסס על הגרסה של שמואל אבן תיבון. כפי שהוא כתב בהקדמה, החיבור היה מיועד לסטודנטים יהודים, שיוכלו הודות לתרגום לפנות לחכמים יהודים ובמיוחד נוצריים על מנת לקבל הסברים של ביטויים קשים, במיוחד בתחום המדעי. ידידיה רקנאטי כתב סדרה שלמה של ספרים בפרשנות המקרא, מלונאות (לקסיקוגרפיה) אגרונומיה (אפיסטולוגרפיה) ותרגומים מ-ולעברית, ומספר תשובות בהלכה, שלא זכו לפרסום וכמעט נשכחו. התרגום האיטלקי של מורה נבוכים הגו הוכחה ברורה של חשיבות הספר בין יהודי איטליה, אפילו בתקופה של התרחקות מהגישה הפילוסופית השכלתנית.

מלות מפתח: הרמב"ם, מורה נבוכים, תרגומים לאיטלקית, תרבות יהודית בראשית התקופה המודרנית, איטליה בראשית התקופה המודרנית.