Paradigms
in Jewish Philosophy

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The Universe as a Phenomenon of Language: Saʿadiah Gaʾon's Commentary to the Book of Creation

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Saʿadiah Gaʾon begins his *Commentary* to the *Book of Creation*[1] saying:

> The greatest thing the thoughtful contemplated about, the most difficult that the thoughts of the masters found to perceive, is the first element *(al-ʿunṣur al-awwal)*, from which all these evident elements were derived. Not only the sages *('ulamāʾ)* of Israel and the sages of the philosophers were confused about it, but also some of the prophets, when they thought about it on their own accord, not as prophets.[2]

These words seem both informative and meaningful. First, Saʿadiah leaves no doubt about the goal he will pursue in his *Commentary.* It involves the search for the primary principle of things. One can hardly be more definite about the aim of philosopher per se. Further, Saʿadiah qualifies this primary principle as the "first element." One might think that the choice of a term in a context so important indicates Saʿadiah's preference for a definite phraseology used by certain school of Greek philosophy. It is a wrong premise; this term is no more than a label-word.

Several pages later, Saʿadiah uses as synonyms the following terms: "simple elementary foundation" *(al-ʿaṣl al-ʾunṣur al-basīṭ)*, "mother" *(ʿumm)*, "clay" *(ṭīna)*[3], "first matter" *(hayūla)*[4], emphasizing that they all have the same meaning for him: "I have already mentioned that the elements *(ʾanāṣir)* are called foundations, mothers, first matter, primary elements *(ʿustuqus-sāt).*"[5] After having set for himself a traditional philosophical task, Saʿadiah displays a surprising "farsightedness" regarding the ancient philosophical tradition. Only from a considerable

distance could such a celebrated historian of ideas judge all the above-mentioned terms as "one and the same." It is clear that Saʿadiah, though resolute to follow the tradition of philosophizing, does not associate himself with any classical school of philosophy.

There is another proof for this in the words cited above. The sages of Israel and the sages of the philosophers are considered as partners of a kind, joining their efforts in a common search for the primary principle of things. Even if their alikeness is negative (for it is expressed by equal inadequacy of their answers: they all are confused about the problem), it is nevertheless significant. The wisdom of Israel and the wisdom of ancient philosophy can be equally relevant in philosophical pursuit. This is the point that, I think, fully explains the mentioned "farsightedness" of Saʿadiah. No school of Jewish philosophy exists yet— so he finds no philosophical tradition to follow.

Two centuries later, Judah Ha-Levi will draw a sharp line of distinction between the "sages of Talmud," whose wisdom we may at best aspire to learn, very often not understanding it in its profound depth, not to speak of contributing to its development, and the "philosophers" whose contemplation with all its results is absolutely irrelevant for one's search for "the mode of actions true by its nature."[6] Nothing of the sort is implied by what Saʿadiah says. Not only is the same general notion (the "sages," or the "learned"—ʿulamāʾ) is used to refer to the wise men of Israel and ancient philosophers (furthermore, Saʿadiah often speaks generally of the sages, feeling no need to specify the category), but the final and absolutely authoritative answer is detected in neither community. It's a triviality to say that philosophy means a free search for answers to questions that are put freely, but this freedom is sometimes not so easy to gain. Saʿadiah affirms his right to this freedom in a gracefully refined manner.

Finally, even the prophets, Saʿadiah informs us, did not solve the enigma (at least, they did not give an ultimate and full solution) in their ordinary human, and not prophetic, sayings and writings. This statement refers to "some prophets," and Ecclesiastes is cited to confirm it. However, it cannot fail to apply to the (alleged) author of Sefer Yezirah, too. Thus, Saʿadiah guarantees himself a needed degree of freedom and detachment from the text he comments upon. If not explicitly, these words at least implicitly contain a project of a serious and original investigation. Saʿadiah will direct his philosophical discourse towards

"principles" (mabādiʾ) that would describe the universe as it existed in Jewish wisdom.

Of course, the commentary is not the form that best suits the goal of constructing, and (on our side) of reading and comprehending, a systematic philosophy. Nevertheless, I think it is not a grave exaggeration to call Saʿadiah a systematic thinker. In this paper I make an attempt to present his doctrine in a number of short theses that form an interrelated set of basic ideas, for which the Commentary serves as a lengthy elaboration.

The interpretation of Saʿadiah's text that I propose is the result of a kind of a dialogue, so it is a record of the answers which the Commentary proposed to my questions. Any question, of course, presumes expectation of an answer. These expectations were not always met. This means that my interpretation of Saʿadiah is a record of my misunderstanding too—that is to say, a false presumption of understanding, questions for which the answers turned out to be not only unexpected, but were given in a mode quite different from that anticipated. However, I think that such instances are of no less importance for our interpretation of the thinker than the answers that we anticipate correctly (and therefore consider them "natural" and "sound"), for they show us exactly what Saʿadiah does not agree to, what he sees as inappropriate and not suiting his theoretical constructions.

Of course, there always remains the problem of justifying the selection of certain theses from the bulk of the text analyzed as fundamental. I do not claim any sort of "objectivity"; my only hope is to have avoided grave aberrations. Following Saʿadiah's discourse, I'll try to point out its chief turning points.

The universe of Saʿadiah's thought includes three main components, namely, God, the world, and the Commandments. I will try to show that they make up a systematically organized whole. Since any of them could be the subject of a special and independent study, they are in fact subsystems that the totality of the "universal system" includes. Thus, the task of composing an integral philosophical system that Saʿadiah pursues is divided into a number of steps. First, one must provide a description of each of these subsystems; second, their interrelations are to be studied; third, the system should be treated as a whole, that is to say, common principles must be found for all the three subsystems that would bind these (relatively independent) entities into one whole. Quite naturally, the solutions of the three problems should be coherent, since otherwise they cease to be subsolutions of one problem. Following Saʿadiah's thought, we will see

that he solves the first task with ease,[7] describes his solution of the second in some detail, and pays his main attention to the third, without which the first two actually make no sense.

Of the three elements named above, let us first talk about God and the world. Sa'adiah studies the relationship between these two in his commentary to the first paragraph of the first chapter of the *Book of Creation*. This paragraph reads as follows:

> Thirty-two hidden ways of wisdom are there. They were drawn by the Eternal, the Lord of the armies, the God of Israel, the Living, the Omnipotent, the Sufficient, the Sublime, the Great, the Everlasting (sainted be His name!). He created His world in three: writing *(khaṭṭ)*, number, and speech, which are 10 numbers sealed and 22 letters— 3 principal, 7 double and 12 simple.[8]

The ten names mentioned here are in fact all the Commentary says describing God. Of course, Sa'adiah spares no effort trying to justify and find valid reasons for the choice of these names by the author of the *Book of Creation*,[9] repeating and somewhat developing in his Commentary the passage quoted. But principally, Sa'adiah solves the task of describing *what* God is by this description. One might add that these attributes are to be understood as implying "no corporeality *(tajsīm)* and no definition *(taʾḥdīd)*" of God.[10]

As for the world, which is the second element of the system, the problem of describing it is solved more easily. Sa'adiah just points to its solution, which anyone can obtain as wisdom firmly established. There is no doubt for him that all the knowledge about anything to be known is provided by means of ten Aristotelian categories. So evident is this truth that Sa'adiah does not wish to waste any time proving it; he in fact is justified in expecting his contemporaries to be well acquainted with and to share this assumption.

Thus the description of God (as far as it is possible) and of the world (exhaustive, from Sa'adiah's point of view) is provided. Now comes the turn of discussing their interrelation. As we approach an important moment in Sa'adiah's reasoning, I will quote his words in full:

> Since the author of this book[11] wanted to imagine how all the things emerged and the beings came to be, systematized by the learned and apprehended by the thoughtful, he found that they are ten things exactly, no less and no more: substance, quantity, quality, relation *(iḍāfa)*, place, time, possession, disposition *(ḥāl)*, action and passiv-

ity. When the sages perceived these ten categories, no rational idea (ma'nan ma'qūl) in the world remained but it was falling under them, except the idea of the Creator (ma'na al-khāliq), for He is above all that is apprehended or known. So in the beginning of the book he mentions the ten names that nearly resemble these ten categories. . . .[12] Thus it is proved that these ten names are corresponding to ten categories, so that nothing remains there but fixed in this book as created by Him.[13]

We now have enough material to start systematizing Sa'adiah's doctrine. Let us try to present the discussed ideas in the form of brief theses.

1. Everything is comprehended through ten Aristotelian categories.
2. God is something not bound by these ten categories.
3. God has ten names.
4. Ten names of God correspond to ten Aristotelian categories.
5. It gives evidence to the fact that God created everything.

The first three theses announce what we know about the existence of "God" and "the world," of their noncoincidence (which means that they may be treated as relatively independent entities), and ways of describing and apprehending them. The first of Sa'adiah's three tasks (description of the subsystems God and the world) is solved through what is implied by these three theses. The solution of the second problem (defining the relationship of God and the world) is found in the fourth and fifth propositions.

Let us look at what was attained at each of the first two stages of construction of the integral system, and how the solutions match each other. There is no ground to raise any question about the methods of describing God and the world adopted by Sa'adiah. He himself calls them "premises" (muqaddimāt),[14] which leaves us with the alternative of either taking them as they are or leaving them altogether.

Let us then consider how Sa'adiah treats the relationship between God and the world. The correspondence between the ten names of God and the ten Aristotelian categories, Sa'adiah claims, serves as evidence that everything was created by God. Now this proposition cannot be accepted unquestioned. On what basis does Sa'adiah claim that the correspondence between the names of God and the ten categories gives evidence to the created nature of the world? Also, is it because of this that we know that

God is the creator of the world? Does not just one of the divine names—the Creator—suffice to assert it? Finally, is there any need to look for a foundation and justification of that fact, after all that was divinely revealed and preserved for us by religious tradition?

The proposition in question is all the more embarrassing since the thesis *the world was created by God* serves for Jewish thinkers (at least in the Middle Ages) as a starting and unquestioned point of discussion. Moreover, for Sa°adiah himself it is a well-established truth that he never hesitates to support.[15] What is the point, then, of his declaration insisting on the exactly matching correspondence between the names of God and the categories describing the world?

The new questions arise when we try to link the solutions given to the first and the second tasks (the description of the parts of the system as such, and the definition of their relationship). Sa°adiah explicitly says that any piece of knowledge falls under the ten categories. However, our knowledge about God is altogether excluded from the bulk of knowledge that we arrive at through developing the system of categories, and Sa°adiah is quite definite about that too.[16] It can only mean that the logic we follow in our cognition of the world is basically incompatible with the logic of cognition of God. This conclusion would have been a mere triviality if Sa°adiah had not stated at the same time[17] that the binding link between these two incompatible—as long as they are treated on their own—entities may be established by means of a rational procedure. What Sa°adiah says may be in fact expressed as follows: There is a way of describing the universe that would overpower the incompatibility of two different logics. The philosophic ideal of the system's unity turns out to be stronger than the incompatibility of principles on which the cognition of different parts of that system is based. Thus, the passage analyzed announces a fundamental methodological position. Sa°adiah says that an integral description is possible for a system of which the parts are described by different and incompatible logics.

What such a description might be, Sa°adiah tells us not or, rather, gives only a hint. He mentions numerical correspondence: the ten names of God correspond to the ten categories. But this correspondence, of course, is not only numerical, for otherwise Sa°adiah would not have made such an effort to interpret each of the divine names in a way that makes it "resemble" one of the categories.[18] What is the content of the correspondence

relationship, and what else, except the numerical correlation, is implied by it? It is the search for an answer to these questions that constitutes the essence of building up Saᶜadiah's system.

Soon after the passage discussed, Saᶜadiah introduces the third element of his universal system—the Commandments:

> By profound examination and deep analysis we found in our contemplation that the Ten Commandments which our fathers heard on Mount Sinai, correspond to these ten categories, so that no law (sharīᶜa) remains there but falling under them. . . . So it is proved that the Ten Commandments embrace (aḥāṭa) all there is to be known in the world.[19]

The text leaves no doubt abut Saᶜadiah's authorship in establishing this correspondence. It seems rather obvious, too, that he undertakes this investigation on his own accord, for the text of *Sefer Yeẓirah* does not suggest such a necessity. This point is quite important, for it shows that the text Saᶜadiah comments upon serves as a foundation and starting point for constructing a system of his own but does not shackle his horizons.

So now we have the third fundamental unity of Saᶜadiah's universe: the Ten Commandments. There is no need to describe it, since anyone can easily read the Decalogue (if he or she fails to remember it).[20] It is the way Saᶜadiah sees the relationship of the Ten Commandments and the world that now has essential importance for us.

We have already seen that different logics are applied to describe God and the world. The same applies to the Commandments. Those ten categories, which Saᶜadiah talked about as "systematizing and embracing" everything we know of, do not comprise the Commandments. It is "the laws"[21] that fall under these ten categories, while the Commandments themselves "embrace all there is to be known in the world." The Commandments are an independent entity not included in "all knowledge." At the same time, the Commandments stand to ten categories in the same correspondence relation that binds God and the world.

So the three entities, the God, the world, and the Commandments, each having its own special logic of description, together make up a unity. What secures this unity and binds the three parts together? Proceeding from what Saᶜadiah has said until now, we may answer: a system's unity is secured by the correspondence relation of its parts.

Now we approach the point at which Saᶜadiah's reasoning may

for a moment appear illogical. If the correspondence relationship is so important to secure universal unity, if it binds, as we have seen, God and the world, the Commandments and the world, would it not be natural enough to expect Saʿadiah to close the triangle of these relations and say that the ten names of God correspond to the Ten Commandments? In terms of mathematics, it would have meant that the correspondence relationship is transitive.[22] It would have been a step of no little importance for us to find out that the fundamental relation in our integral system is transitive: it would have meant that its three elements— God, the world, and the Commandments—are uniform as the elements of the system, and the system on the whole is homogeneous. Following is an illustration to our inquiry about the transitive nature of the system's fundamental relationship:

Is the correspondence relation transitive?

the Commandments   God

correspondence   correspondence

the categories
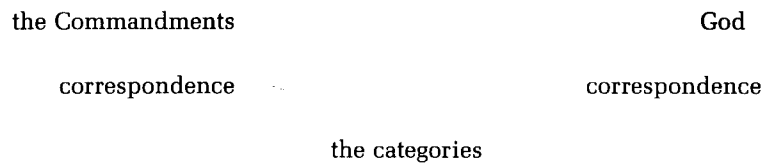
If Saʿadiah answers this question positively, it will mean that the system has a symmetrical composition and no element has a specific and unique place. However, the Commentary does not declare that any correspondence between the Ten Commandments and the ten names of God exists. Instead, Saʿadiah says of the Commandments that "our fathers heard [them] on Mount Sinai." That is to say, the Commandments were given by God; and though the numerical correspondence between the Ten Commandments and the ten names of God is evident, Saʿadiah seems to ignore this correspondence willingly, confining himself to "were given," and thus answering our question negatively.

It appears to me that the denial of the transitive character of the relationship playing the fundamental role in securing the system's overall unity is of major importance for defining the principles of its formation. Our investigation, I hope, will make this importance more evident.

Meanwhile we have several other propositions summarizing Saʿadiah's arguments:

6. The Ten Commandments were given by God.
7. The Ten Commandments correspond to ten categories.
8. The Ten Commandments therefore embrace all the laws.
9. The Ten Commandments embrace all-there-is-to-be-known.

Before moving further, let us clarify the relationship in which propositions eight and nine stand to each other. Their sequence appears opposite to what would be logically consistent. Since the "all-there-is-to-be-known" notion is more general than "all the laws," the two propositions should be put in inverse sequence. This may be justified by our consideration that since all-there-is-to-be-known includes any law, the Ten Commandments, by virtue of embracing all-there-is-to-be-known, include any law, too. Strictly speaking the eighth proposition is in that case unnecessary. And we really find that Sa‘adiah says: "As long as it is true, and since the 613 laws are among what is in the world, these 613 laws are necessarily falling under the Ten Commandments, so that no one of these remains outside them."[23] On the other hand, we deduced the eighth and ninth propositions from Sa‘adiah's own words cited above,[24] where he defines the cause-and-effect relation exactly as reflected by our propositions. Does he now change his point of view, and should we also correct the above propositions? Let us take a closer look at the problem.

After Sa‘adiah had established that the Commandments correspond to everything in the world, including the laws, we might expect that he would clarify under which category each of the laws falls. This he does not do; instead, he changes the topic and shifts his attention to defining the direct correspondence of the Commandments and the laws. As we have seen (see note 22), the embracing (or including) relation may be regarded as transitive. Since the Commandments correspond to the categories that embrace all-there-is-to-be-known, while all-there-is-to-be-known embraces 613 laws, the Commandments embrace 613 laws. This is what Sa‘adiah proceeds from when he says:

When I started classifying them and including (ḍamm) into each Commandment what resembles it, I found 80 [laws] included into the first Commandment, 60 into the second, 48 into the third, 75 into the fourth, 77 into the fifth, 50 into the sixth, 58 into the seventh, 59 into the eighth, 52 into the ninth, and 54 into the tenth, which makes up 613.[25]

Sa'adiah does not tell us on what basis he groups the laws attached to this or that Commandment. But since he occupies himself with that procedure immediately after making the statement about the full correspondence between the Commandments and the categories, we have enough reason to suppose that the laws are "included" in the Commandments on the basis of their falling under the categories. Let's not forget, however, that this is only a supposition.

The procedure as described by Sa'adiah requires that the laws be united into groups in any succession. It might be necessary, let's say, to unite law 1 with laws 45 and 198 to make a group corresponding to the sixth category. Anyhow, Sa'adiah's statement does not exclude any arbitrary succession. So, we may say that

10. Each of the Ten Commandments includes a group of laws.

Immediately after that, Sa'adiah informs us that the number of the letters with which the Commandments are written, is 620, of which 613 correspond to 613 laws and 7 are superfluous.[26]

Now this is a statement that clearly indicates that the Commandments include the laws not through correspondence to ten categories, but directly. Thus another correlation of the Commandments and "laws-existing-in-the-world" is established. Their correspondence studied above (correspondence through categories) may be called numerical, analogical to correspondence between the names of God and the ten categories. The correspondence that we talk about now is established in a different way. The Commandments are linked to the laws by a direct (independent of the ten categories) relationship, by virtue of the letters. Thus, Sa'adiah states that correspondence may be not only numerical, but a correspondence of letters too. Thus we get one more proposition:

11. The Ten Commandments consist of 620 letters, of which 613 correspond to 613 laws, and 7 are superfluous.

Now we return to the question posed above. The Ten Commandments include any law because they correspond to ten categories and, consequently, include everything that falls under them; the laws fall under the categories, so they fall under the Commandments. On the other hand, the Ten Commandments

include all the laws because every letter of the Commandments corresponds to one of the laws.

Should we prefer one logical implication to another? Should we actually choose one of the two logics that Sa'adiah proposes that we follow? Is the choice really necessary, and is the double proof really redundant? One may answer this question in the affirmative as well as the negative. Nothing in the Commentary explicitly gives preference to this or that answer. Yet it appears to me more attractive to answer negatively. Let us imagine that the two types of correspondence (and, consequently, of logical implication) are not exclusive but complementary. It seems to me that this would be a better match for Sa'adiah's idea. Not only shall we avoid the otherwise necessary procedure of "correcting" Sa'adiah's words and making them "more accurate," but we shall also have an opportunity to notice what escapes our view when a positive answer is given. The fullness of interpretation is the criterion giving preference to the second answer.

So, we admit that correspondence "through the categories" (numerical correspondence) and direct correspondence (correspondence by letters) of the Commandments and the laws do not contradict each other. Now we have made a certain progress in understanding the nature of relationship uniting God, the world, and the Commandments as parts of Sa'adiah's universe. We can say that it is a relation established by means of numbers-and-letters.

This numbers-and-letters correspondence may be treated as one (integral) relation only in case the numerals and letters aspects of the correspondence do not exclude or contradict, but add to and comply with each other. This condition, generally speaking, is not met in any case. In other words, the division of 613 laws into groups on the basis of mutual correspondence of laws and Commandments to ten categories does not necessarily coincide with what is established through the correspondence of the letters of each Commandment to the relative number of laws. The necessary conditions for such a coincidence are the following: 1) the sequence of laws is not fixed prior to the procedure of dividing them into groups, and 2) the number of laws falling under each of ten categories and, accordingly, each of the Ten Commandments, exactly equals the number of letters in which this Commandment is written. It is evident enough that these conditions, though appearing formal, influence the substance and essence of the two elements for which the numbers-and-letters correspondence is established. Sa'adiah tells us noth-

ing about whether the Commandments and 613 laws meet these conditions.

So the numbers-and-letters correspondence is the principle of unity of the universe which includes God, the world, and the Commandments. It throws a new light on the leading thesis of the *Book of Creation* that says, "the principles of all the things (*mabādiʾ al-ashyāʾ*)" are "numbers and letters."[27] It implies more than that the harmonious similarity of diverse structures in our universe may be discovered; for example, of the world, the human being, the year, as mentioned by the author of *Sefer Yeẓirah*, or any other structures that could be, and actually were, singled out by different esoteric and mystical teachings of all kinds. Another implication appears to be yet more important; these diverse entities of our universe may be studied as interrelated subsystems composed in a common language. It is this possibility, in fact, that constitutes the foundation for discovering structural parallelism whenever we look for it—and what else are most esoteric doctrines but a chase for universal similarity. In that case the system that we discuss is actually a system by virtue of being produced by means of this one common language. The principle of unity of language thus becomes the principle of systematic unity (unity of the universe, in the case discussed).

It is this common language that subdues the incompatibility of inner logics of description of different parts of the universe. Overpowering it does not abolish it: the one common language describes different elements of the system in different ways. Due to the diversity of description procedures, the different components of the system are diverse and incompatible—to the extent to which these procedures are incompatible; by virtue of the language unity, the system preserves its unity too.

Now the possibility of treating the universe as an integral system created by means of common language needs to be provided with some basis, for such an intention can hardly be called self-evident. We discover its justification in a passage of Saʿadiah's commentary to the words of the *Book of Creation:* "He created His world in three: writing, number, and speech":

He wants to say that all the things have three [modes of] fixation (*thalāthat dawāwīn*). But we find that the sages apprehended them in four [modes], for they said that the thing exists in four senses: either by itself (*dhāt*), as when we see a person, or in speech, as when we say "a person," or in writing, as when we write "a p-e-r-s-o-n," or in our thought, as when we mentally consider the notion

(ma'nan) of person. How then does the author of this book make them three?[28] To this we shall say: he refrained from mentioning the thing's existence by its self, because it is one of the most evident things known. That is why he had no need of it, and went to speak about how it is fixed and in what it is apprehended.[29]

This argument may be evaluated along various lines. One might say that Sa'adiah strives to reconcile the author of *Sefer Yezirah* with Greek philosophical wisdom at any cost; or that he makes a naive, or even easygoing and unconcerned, attempt to make the reader believe that the "real" existence of things is self-evident and that this self-evidence eliminates the necessity of discussing and even mentioning it. Yet I think that if we take this argument at face value, we let ourselves be misled. Is it not too easily that Sa'adiah wants us to abandon the study of things' self-existence (for example, their ontological study) for the study of their "three modes" (and it turns out to be a purely epistemological investigation), which, let us add, will soon be reduced to the "two-modes" (totally linguistic) study? Perhaps behind this lightness there stand reasons weighty enough to make Sa'adiah first disclose to us the disagreement between the text of *Sefer Yezirah* and the opinion of the sages, and then dismiss it—by such an unconvincing reference to "self-evidence."

I think this appearance of lightness in Sa'adiah's argument is deceptive. In fact, the proposition in question is one of the central theses justifying the possibility of treating the universe as a phenomenon of language. Sa'adiah removes from the list of topics to be discussed that very modus of existence that cannot be characteristic of the Commandments. There is no doubt that the Commandments exist in writing and in speech; it is not so difficult to treat them as an idea or notion *(ma'nan)*, but it would be problematic to speak about them as existing in the form of "self" *(dhāt)*—that is, of essence, like other substantial things of the world. By removing the necessity of studying "the being of things by their selves," Sa'adiah discharges the need to find an ontological ground for the Commandments. Instead, he makes it possible now to treat the whole universe from a perspective appropriate for the study of the Commandments—as existing "in writing, speech, and thought."

Following Sa'adiah's discourse, we will try to clarify the relations between the elements of our system as "fixed in writing, speech, and thought." It means that we abandon altogether an "ontological" point of view and substitute it with a "purely epis-

temological" approach. It gives us the right to ignore the process by which the ties between the system's elements were generated;[30] our sole interest now is describing these ties, as if they "just were there." For example, we don't know how and why the Commandments were given by God; the content of this "were given" will remain forever the mystery of a free divine action. Similarly, we don't know how and why God created all the elements and thirty-two universal principles "at once and in the least portion of time."[31] But this ignorance does not stand in our way: it remains "outside"[32] of the philosophical system, which is being constructed as if the world and the Commandments were really produced by numbers-and-letters. Thus the logical foundations of the universe are separated altogether from its ontological foundations. Of course, it is very easy to forget about this *as if* mode and to consider the numbers-and-letters ontological principles of the universe.[33] This seems to have occurred in some doctrines of Arabic *hurūfiyya* and Jewish kabbalah; Saʿadiah's text, however, sticks to this distinction rather steadily.[34]

Having secured for himself the freedom of this *as if* mode by avoiding the necessity of finding an ontological ground for his system (and preserving at the same time the possibility of keeping his theoretical construction in relation to Greek and Jewish wisdom), Saʿadiah moves further and reduces the epistemological to the linguistic approach. To exist "in writing, speech, and thought" means to be a number-and-letter—this is the proposition he argues for. "Why did he[35] substitute thought as a whole by number, which is one of thought's species," he asks.[36] The way the question is asked makes it clear that such a substitution is incorrect from the point of view of Aristotelian logic, as well as of Greek philosophy in general. The ease of finding the answer almost makes it a mere excuse: the reason for it is that thus all the three modes of existence are expressed alike, as s-f-r.[37]

So here are a few more propositions to add to our list:

12. The ten numbers and twenty-two letters are universal principles.[38]
13. The numbers-and-letters correspondence links the Ten Commandments with 613 laws.
14. Everything is to be studied as existing "in writing, speech, and thought," or in numbers-and-letters.

We have already found out that the numbers-and-letters correspondence ties the Commandments and 613 laws (for example, the Commandments and part of the world) together. To finish

constructing the system, we have to know whether the same relation exists between the Commandments and the world as a whole, and what is the relation between other subsystems. (We presume it is numbers-and-letters correspondence too.) Of course, the numbers-and-letters correspondence is a general relation which assumes its special form in any individual case (when it binds each pair of elements). Above we asked whether the correspondence relation is transitive. The question was put in regard to numerical correspondence—an aspect of numbers-and-letters correspondence. What we learned about the part applies to the whole as well: the numbers-and-letters correspondence is nontransitive. It means that the relations between different parts of the system are described by numbers-and-letters in different ways (by means of different procedures).[39]

So we have to find out why the numbers-and-letters correspondence is nontransitive. To reach this goal, let us take a closer look at the language of numbers-and-letters, that very language that, developing itself, provides us with the description of the universe in terms of numbers-and-letters correspondence.

The language of numbers-and-letters used by the author of the *Book of Creation* and its commentator is based on a fundamental principle that comes to light through its functioning. To be more precise, the text refers to two such principles. They are the principle of "counterbalancing" *(muqābala)* and "centering" *(tawassuṭ)*. It appears to me that these two principles are not only compatible, but suppose each other. That's why I think I do not contradict the text when I interpret them as one principle of "centered counterbalance." Though not using this formula, Saᶜadiah speaks about this principle in similar expressions when talking about the three principal letters.[40]

Let us give a more detailed account of what the author of *Sefer Yeẓirah* and Saᶜadiah Gaᵓon say concerning the two "sides" of this principle (that is, centering the balance of opposites and counterbalancing the centered opposites). According to the order and logic of the text, we'll start with counterbalance. The function of counterbalance is to make explicit all the variety of possible aspects of being,[41] so we may define it as all-revealing. Saᶜadiah points to two major types of counterbalance: that of numbers and of letters.

Counterbalance of numbers

1 2 3 4 5	6 7 8 9 10

The first five are counterbalanced by the second, this opposition being reproduced in every group of ten.[42] Since ten is the basis of counting (moreover, any calculating process boils down to calculating the ten), establishing the counterbalance is an immanent trait of calculation. When calculating, that is, using numbers-and-letters language, we fix the counterbalance; in fact, we can't help fixing it.

Let us note that it is a number, and not a digit, that is counterbalanced here. It reminds us that the term *numbers-and-letters language* is not quite correct. One should have used instead either the concepts of digit and letter or, rather, of number and word. Maybe this asymmetry is due to the fact that while the numerical counterbalance is established only for numbers, the letters' counterbalance can be fixed for letters proper as well as for their combinations (that is, words).

The counterbalance of letters is subdivided, in its turn, into natural and combinatorial. The first is represented by the counterbalance of "double letters" *(ḥurūf muḍāʿafa)* which appear as "strong" and "weak," according to the position they occupy in a word.[43] Thus one and the same letter doubles itself, disclosing all the possible variety of senses.[44] The second reveals itself in the process of combining any chosen letter with all the other letters of the alphabet, which are, in the course of this process, regarded as its balancing opposites.[45] There exists a vast, though countable, multitude of such combinations, of which Saʿadiah speaks in great detail.[46]

The counterbalance principle is developed to produce the "overturning," or "reflecting" principle (Saʿadiah uses a number of terms to denote it: *taʿkīs, ʿaks, inʿikās, taqlīb, taqliba).* The close relation of the two principles is proved by the condition Saʿadiah formulates while discussing combinations of pairs of letters. Only different letters, he says, may be used in this combining procedure, for the two identical letters "have the same figure in the air and the same pronunciation in speech, so there is no overturn for them, for if overturned, they stand as they are."[47] We can now say that the counterbalance is the principle of disclosing and making explicit the variety of senses exactly by virtue of overturning.[48] The counterbalanced opposites are "equal" because they can take the place of each other. The capability of being overturned is consequently a criterion of equality, or fitness for counterbalance.

For the counterbalance to exist, it needs a sort of foundation, some supporting point. The image of the scale provides a ready paradigm: the opposite scales are balanced by the central pivot.

Thus, we come to discover the second principle: the principle of standing-in-the-center, or, in short, the centering principle. As for its function, Sa'adiah is quite definite about it. "It cannot be denied, he says, that the central sense *(ma'nan)*[49] supports all the margins."[50]

Types of centering: As the counterbalance turned out to be counterbalance of numbers and counterbalance of letters, one might expect to discover the same two aspects in the centering principle. This expectation is not justified, or, to be more precise, not fully justified. The centering principle is elaborated in the *Book of Creation* and Sa'adiah's Commentary in much less detail than the counterbalance principle.

In its most distinct way it is exposed in the discussion concerning three principal letters: *alef, mem, shin.* Paragraph 2 of chapter 3 of *Sefer Yeẓirah* reads as follows:

> The three principal letters are *alef, mem, shin.* Corresponding to them are fire, air and water: the sky is made of fiery element, air— of the windy *(rīḥ)* element, and water—from the element of ground. Fire ascends up, water falls down, air is fixed firmly between them. The same is the form of these three letters: the form of *mem*—as if it was sinking down low, of *shin*—as if it was rising up high, and of *alef*—as if it was established in the center.[51]

Three principal letters centered by *alef*

falling low   rising high
mem   shin

alef
standing in the center
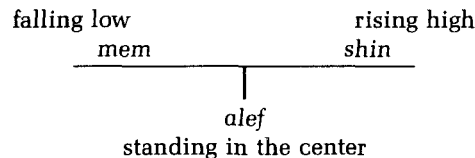
It might be interesting to note that this counterbalance is established in space: the central position of *alef* provides a middle point for opposite orientations of *mem* and *shin.*

The seven double letters also display the centering principle as a basis of their structure. Paragraph 3 of chapter 2 of the *Book of Creation* informs us:

> They are seven, not six and not eight, because corresponding to them is a subject *(mawḍū')* [placed] in the center of six directions *(jihāt)*, as if you were saying: up, down, east, west, south, north, and in the center of them—Jerusalem.[52]

Sa'adiah's commentary to this passage appears rather interesting:

Any place *(makān)* inevitably has seven things: first, something es-
tablished in this place *(mutamakkin bī-hi)*, and after that—six direc-
tions. They all point at this centered *(mutawassit)* [element], for the
"up" is his up, and the "down" is his down, and "directions" are his
directions. So, this seventh is inevitably bound with them. This is a
general proposition, it holds for any subject *(mawḍūʿ)*.[53]

The pairs of "directions" are evidently counterbalanced oppo-
sites. What makes this example interesting is the fact that the
middle (centering) element turns out to be a necessary and inevi-
table consequence of the opposed entities. More than that, it is
in fact the logical starting point of the whole structure, for the
opposed directions are defined in relation to it.

As for the numbers, Saʿadiah gives us no example of numerical
centering. It could be due to the fact that the main number—
ten—has, as it seems, no centering element. However, one can
easily notice that when talking about the centering procedures
for the letters, we described them with the help of numbers.
Thus they might be considered examples of centered numerical
systems too: the three and seven possess a middle centering ele-
ment. Also, both times it was the first of the succession of ele-
ments that turned out to be the centering: *alef* in the first
example and the subject in the second. Possibly this is a realiza-
tion of the idea of a supporting element: the whole of the cen-
tered system finds its support in the first element that opens the
row (the row of letters, in the first case, and the row of orienta-
tions in space, in the second) and without which the row
wouldn't have existed.

We can summarize our analysis of the principles underlying
the numbers-and-letters language in the following propositions:

15. The counterbalance is established for equal entities.
16. The counterbalance, together with overturning procedures sup-
    posed by it, make all the possibilities explicit.
17. The overturnable counterbalance is established by centering
    procedure.

Now we can return to our discussion of the numbers-and-
letters correspondence. We said that this relation, securing the
unity of the universal system constructed by Saʿadiah, is estab-
lished through description of different parts of the universe
(God, the world, and the Commandments) with numbers-and-
letters language. We also said that this description differs—not

in content (it is evident), but from the point of view of the procedures of applying this language.

Actually, we find a single irresolute attempt to outline the dependence between the numerical and alphabetical characteristics of the divine names and their meanings in Saʿadiah's commentary to paragraph 5 of chapter 3 of *Sefer Yezirah*.[54] As for the world, Saʿadiah described in enough detail in various places in the Commentary the process of creating the first elements, together with their properties, by letters, and the subsequent construction of all the existing things by combining these elements (following the principle of counterbalance and overturn) and structuring them by means of numbers.[55] The Commandments provide a "pure" example of a text written with letters and saturated with important numerical laws.

The nontransitive character of the numbers-and-letters correspondence relation, expressing itself in this diversity of procedures that describe different parts of the universe, must be justified.

Now we come to the crucial point of our discussion. The fundamental relation of the three parts of the universal system discloses itself as that very relation which the numbers-and-letters language is built upon. The structure of the universe may be presented as a realization of the centered counterbalance principle:

<div align="center">

The Universal Structure

counterbalance

the world   the Commandments

God

the centering point

</div>
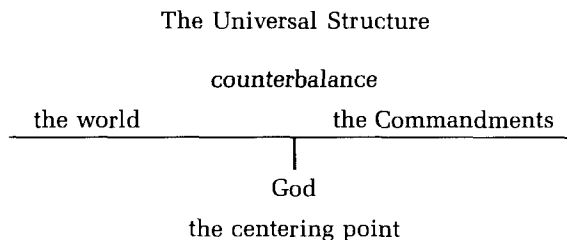
Thus, we get the needed description of the universe in language terms. God is centering (and supporting) the two counterbalanced opposites: the world and the Commandments. The terms "counterbalance" *(muqābala)*, "equilibrium" *(muʿādala)*, and "correspondence" *(bi-izāʾ)* denote the same relation, which we express as "an opposition of correlated entities." They point at this idea of "creative counterbalance" in its various aspects: in numbers-and-letters language, in God's actions, in the universe created by Him. But in language this relation is presented in its most exact and evident form.

It is interesting to note that the idea of counterbalance presup-
poses the equality of the opposed. And it is not surprising to
find that the Commandments are actually equal to the world:
their equality is epistemological, for the Commandments include
and embrace all-there-is-to-be-known in the world. But for this
opposition to be true, there should be a contrariety in some re-
spect at least. The opposition between the Commandments and
the world from this point of view is, I think, best expressed in
terms of the freedom-necessity controversy. By a free divine act,
the Commandments were given (as we saw, the mystery of this
"were given" is left outside Saʿadiah's philosophical discourse;
it is neither formulated nor discussed as a problem), and by our
free act they are being fulfilled. Thus freedom enters the world
of necessity; the world that cannot escape the bounds imposed
by Aristotelian categories. The 613 laws are the nucleus and
kernel of this freedom in our world, the seed which is to reshape
the world.

It is with much eloquence that Saʿadiah speaks about the cen-
tering function of God. "The Creator is in the center of His crea-
tion," he says, and adds: "The words of the faithful, who say:
'The Creator is inside all the things,' have a sublime meaning."[56]
The freedom of the Commandments and the necessity of the
world are centered and counterbalanced by God: they are op-
posed to each other, but in this point they come together and
merge with each other. God as the center of the universe is its
life and reason.[57]

The centered counterbalance, which is the principle of con-
structing the system as a whole, is also discovered inside its two
opposed parts: the world and the Commandments. The world is
a multiplicity of things arranged in time and space; now the
center of time-and-space, giving balance to and thus supporting
all that "was and will be," is Jerusalem.[58] As for the Command-
ments, one can easily see that the first one (I am the Lord thy
God) is the basis and center giving balance to the prescription
and prohibitions expressed by other Commandments.[59]

In conclusion, let us compare briefly Saʿadiah's constructions
with analogous teachings developed by medieval Arab thought.
The Arab "doctrine of letters" (hurūfiyya)[60] differs much from
that presented by the Book of Creation and Saʿadiah's Commen-
tary. First, it is characterized by monism rather than dualism:
either the letters are the sole foundation of all constructions
(while numbers are introduced as numerical values of letters,
not as an independent principle), as we find it in Sufi hurūfiyya

teachings; or else the symbolism of numbers, with no allusion to letters, is elaborated, like what is found in some Ismaʿili writings.[61] Certainly, the content of these teachings differs considerably. But in the current perspective it appears to me much more important that *hurūfiyya* did not pretend to be a philosophical system. Although the "doctrine of letters" was exposed by medieval Arab authors in great detail and many variations, it remained a component of esoteric practice rather than a purely theoretical teaching.

This seems to be an important point of contrast with the opinion expressed by Saʿadiah, who states quite definitely: "So it has become clear how the forms of letters are formed in the air. But from here we arrive at establishing it only in our thought, and do not arrive at doing it in reality, for this belongs only to the Lord of the worlds."[62] Here again we see another side of Saʿadiah's fundamental methodological principle applied in the Commentary—separating the epistemological from the ontological. In his case, *knowledge* will never become *force*. This position is obviously an antithesis to a statement made by a prominent Ismaʿili theoretician, Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, who holds that the knowledge of something guarantees our ability to bring that thing into being, provided that no insurmountable obstacles stand in our way,[63] or to a confession made by a great Sufī shaykh Ibn al-ʿArabī, who of his own free will refused to use the art of influencing the world by means of letters.[64] As for the purely theoretical aspect of the "doctrine of letters," both for Sufi and Ismaʿili thinkers, it was an element either subjected to the mainstream of philosophical construction, or, on the contrary, relatively autonomous and independent of it and therefore used as a kind of illustration. The *hurūfiyya* as an independent teaching occupied itself with an elaboration of numerological procedures elucidating the detailed structural correlations between different entities of the universe rather than with a philosophical investigation. As for our study, the doctrine of numbers-and-letters may be regarded as a philosophical construction claiming to give a description of the logical primary principles of the universe and an explanation of their functioning.

NOTES

1. I used the following edition of the text: *Le Gaon Saadya de Fayyoum. Commentaire sur le Sefer Yesira, ou Livre de Creation/publie et traduit par Mayer Lambert* (Paris: Emile Boullon, 1891), 105 (Arabic), 125 (French transla-

tion). Sa'adiah's text here is published in Arabic with French translation. All the subsequent quotations from *Sefer Yezirah* refer to the Arabic text of this edition.

2. Sa'adiah Ga'on, Commentary to the *Book of Creation*, 1. (Hereafter, Commentary.)

3. This term, when used by philosophers, also meant "nature."

4. Commentary, 4.

5. Ibid., 14. He adds yet another time: "When we say 'fathers' (*'abā'*), 'mothers', 'foundations', 'first matter', 'elements', 'primary elements', it all [has] the same sense" (ibid., 31).

6. Judah Ha-Levi, *Kuzari*, 1, 2.

7. Or rather regards it to be already solved—which makes no difference in the present context.

8. Commentary, 13–14.

9. See ibid., 18–19. Sa'adiah goes on to point out that the angels, stars, and the people of Israel also bear different names. The discussion of the diversity of names is summarized by the following definition: "The names of the angels, stars, and the people express the truth of their states, while the names of the Creator are a hint *(talwīh)* at His greatest deeds and their summary *(talkhīs)*" (ibid., 20).

10. Commentary, 72; cf. 70. One can easily recognize here one of the assertions of Mutakallimūn.

11. I.e., the *Book of Creation*.

12. I skip Sa'adiah's arguments concerning concrete correspondence of the divine names and Aristotle's ten categories.

13. Commentary, 20–21.

14. Commentary, 20.

15. In his preface to the Commentary Sa'adiah explicitly states it. However, I would like to return to this point later.

16. I allude to his words cited above: everything falls under the ten categories "except the idea of the Creator, for He is above all that is apprehended or known" (Commentary, 21).

17. And in the same place, in fact, for the two assertions follow one another in an uninterrupted string of reasoning.

18. Commentary, 21.

19. Ibid., 21–22. I skipped the passage where Sa'adiah discusses concrete correspondence between each Commandment and one of the categories.

20. This fact might be an explanation of the lack of interest and attention Sa'adiah shows for what was called the first stage of constructing the philosophical system, i.e., the description of its subsystems. It would not be unnatural to treat the subsystem of an integral system from approximately the same position, and since one of them (the Commandments, in our case) needs no special description, other subsystems are likely to be regarded as already studied, so the main attention would be paid to the relations between the subsystems. Anyhow, it's no more than a hypothesis that I don't dare to insist upon.

21. Sa'adiah uses the word *sharī'a;* the Ten Commandments are denoted as *'ashara kalimāt.*

22. One can show, for example, that the embracing *(ihāta)* relation, as Sa'adiah explains it, is transitive: the categories embrace all-there-is-to-be-known, the Commandments correspond to the categories (this proposition is less strong

than saying: embrace them), and this results in the Commandments embracing all-there-is-to-be-known.

23. Commentary, 22.

24. Ibid., 21–22.

25. Ibid., 22.

26. The Hebrew words *asher le-re'akha* (to your neighbor) contain seven letters. These seven letters (the difference between the 613 commandments and the 620 letters in the Ten Commandments) may be superfluous, since "to your neighbor" is contained in "everything" preceding it. Ibid., 22.

27. See, for example, Commentary, 11; this thesis is repeated more than once.

28. Let us pay attention to the question itself and the way it is formulated. It leaves no doubt that the opinion of the sages (which signifies here the sages of the philosophers) expresses, in Sa'adiah's view, the ultimate truth, with which the author of the *Book of Creation* was no doubt familiar, and which he for some reasons modified.

29. Commentary, 22.

30. Sa'adiah speaks of it, of course, but his philosophical contemplation, as described here, need not include these remarks.

31. Commentary 11, 12.

32. It is not difficult to notice that these are purely religious postulates that Sa'adiah thus separates from his philosophical constructions. Due to it the great ga'on, who believed in absolute harmony of reason and faith, remains, from a purely religious perspective, an example of a thinker who never took a step away from Judaism.

33. In that case, not only the world and the Commandments, but God too would have subdued itself to the power of numbers-and-letters. Sa'adiah's text, it seems, only once hints at a sort of analytical systematization of God's names by letters (we'll talk about it later), but this line is never elaborated.

34. In this regard the following words seem significant: "Exactly like the existing numbers witness a builder who built them (for you see them like a wall with stones combined with one another, like the layers of ground and other things constructed), all that is created out of these numbers is well-built, constructed, well-formed and joined, witnessing the One who made it, together with all other things" (Commentary, 37). The principle of the universe, onto-logically speaking, is the creative will of God, but it is "put aside" altogether when we get busy working out the language to produce the description of the universe.

Sa'adiah understands well that this position, though opening good epistemo-logical perspectives, nevertheless cannot transgress its own bounds and does not let us reach the "real foundation" of being: "There is no way to step out of [the circle of] neither ten numbers nor twenty-two letters. It proves that the created beings are encircled *(muhātūn)*, unable to cross the line drawn upon them by their Creator, Great and Exalted" (ibid.).

35. The author of the *Book of Creation*.

36. Commentary, 23.

37. The root *s-f-r* can, depending on how it is vocalized, refer to writing *(sefer = book)*, number *(sefar)*, and speech *(sippur)*.

38. There is no doubt that for Sa'adiah the list of principles is thus ex-hausted: "Even greater are the thirty-two simple things themselves, by which these composed ones are represented. I mean the ten numbers and twenty two

letters. The need for them is evident, and the inability of any sage to add to them stands quite clear" (Commentary, 35).

39. The "as if" mode, implying a purely epistemological point of view, is meant here. But it is always possible to translate it into ontology language. The ontologically oriented proposition sounds as follows: It means that some parts of the system may have a genetic relation to other parts, since their relation to being is not homogeneous. The nontransitional character of numbers-and-letters correspondence would be understood as ontological heterogeneity.

40. They are *alef, mem, shin:* the first is the central and balancing point to the two others. We shall talk about this later in more detail.

41. See Commentary, 25. This important point is clearly expressed by Saʿa-diah's quotation from Ecclesiastes: "God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him" (Eccles. 7:14). Later, talking about the applications of counterbalance principle, we'll see that it is not by chance that Saʿadiah chooses these very words of Torah stressing the link between the balancing-the-opposites procedure and fullness of creation.

42. Commenting upon the words of *Sefer Yezirah,* "Ten sealed numbers are for the number of ten fingers," Saʿadiah says: "There are three things necessary for the number: to know its foundation (ʾaṣl), division (qasma) and counter-balance (muqābala) of its parts. That is why he started with this number and said 'ten sealed numbers.' Then he divided it, and it became 'five and five,' then counter-balanced it, and it became 'five opposite to five.' As for dividing it into two halves exactly, it was done in order that we learn that only numbers of all that is counterbalanced display complete equality on all sides, and as for the rest, they agree in one and disagree in another, exceed in one and are not enough in another. And the mystery of this saying is that counterbalance in deeds of God is a perfect equilibrium (muʿādala saḥīḥa); just as we see it in ten fingers, so it is in every thing He created" (Commentary, 25).

Of course, the counterbalance of the two fives is only an example. Saʿadiah continues saying that in all of creation, as well as in religion and morality, there is "exact equilibrium and true counterbalance." (Ibid.)

43. Commentary, 42. I call this type of counterbalance "natural," for it is an inner property of these letters to display the opposite qualities.

44. For example, with the counterbalance of weakness-strength of double letters correlates the counterbalance of fundamental states (aḥwāl) of our exis-tence: life-death, peace-evil, wisdom-foolishness, richness-poverty, harvest-emptiness, beauty-ugliness, lordship-slavery (*Book of Creation,* 2, 3, Commen-tary, 42).

45. This procedure, Saʿadiah informs us, is called in Arabic qibāla (the word is derived from the same root as muqābala). In Saʿadiah's time qibāla was a routine school procedure for learning the alphabet.

46. See commentary, 80ff. This concerns combinations of pairs of letters. In yet another place (61ff.) Saʿadiah says that several letters (up to eleven—the number of letters in the longest word in the Torah) at once can participate in multiplying (ḍarb) and overturning (taʿkīs), thus producing new words.

47. Commentary, 81.

48. Saʿadiah elaborates this in great detail in his commentary to paragraph 5 of chapter 2, where he shows that "overturning" (taʿkīs) is applicable as a sense-producing procedure in linguistics, logic, law, geometry, and the science of the stars.

49. I translate this term giving its immediate meaning. It may be substituted,

according to the taste of the translator (or, for that case, the reader), by *idea*, *notion*, *essence* or any of the related concepts that are usually used to render it into English.

50. Commentary, 66.

51. Commentary, 58–59. Sa'adiah's Commentary reproduces these words. Paragraph 2 of chapter 2 contains a remark concerning these three principal letters: "Their mystery is great, surprising, hidden, magnificent: from here fire, air, and water are extracted" (Commentary, 41–42).

52. Commentary, 46.

53. Ibid., 46–47.

54. Commentary, 65.

55. See, for example, ibid., 51, 54, 74–75.

56. Commentary, 47.

57. Ibid., 70.

58. Ibid., 47. Here Sa'adiah speaks about the temporal side of Jerusalem's supporting-the-world function. As for the space aspect, he refers to it in another passage: "The standing-place of Jerusalem is the center of the earth" (28).

59. Sa'adiah points to the opposition and equality of prescriptions and prohibitions quite definitely. See ibid., 25–26.

60. The *hurūfiyya* existed as an autonomous doctrine, as well as an "element" of such large-scale teachings as Sufism, so this term may be used in a proper (narrow) and wide sense.

61. An example of this is provided in *Rāḥat al-'Aql* (Peace of Mind), a book by a major Isma'ili philosopher Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (10–11th century), who elucidates the fundamental role of the ten in providing orderly structure of the entire universe. It might be curious to note that these contemplations are supported by a quotation from Pirkei Avot (the only reference to Jewish sources in the book): "By ten decrees the world was created, on ten Commandments the world is established, and God is for you like the world's light" (Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī. *Rāḥat al-'Aql*, 2d ed., [Beirut, 1983], 245.)

62. Commentary, 83.

63. See Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī. Rāḥat-'Aql, 175.

64. Speaking about his debate with two groups of *hurūfiyya* masters, Ibn 'Arabī tells us: "To both of them I said: Test by experiment what I told you about. They did it and, having made sure I was right, rejoiced. Oh, I could have shown them the things most amazing, had I not given an oath never to disclose to others the influence of letters" (Ibn 'Arabī. *Al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya. Dār Ṣādir* [Beirut, vol. 1, 190]).