CHAPTER 10

Quotations, Translations, and Uses of Jewish Texts in Ramon Martí’s Pugio fidei

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1 Introduction

Ramon Martí’s discourse in the Pugio fidei is replete with quotations, often unacknowledged and sometimes very extensive, which contribute to the work’s function and are revealing of its author’s method. These quotations come from a variety of fields (Greek and Latin classical literature, Arabic literature, the Bible, Christian literature, rabbinical literature) and are very often given in the original language before being translated. They are so intricately interwoven that setting them apart distorts their function to some extent; it is nevertheless necessary in order to identify them.

A survey of the Arabic quotations has been undertaken by Miguel Asín Palacios, Ángel Cortabarría, and now by Ryan Szpiech and Damien Traveletti;1 I have recently published a study on Martí’s Latin sources.2 Hebrew quotations have occasioned some in-depth studies, which are sometimes very controversial, yet limited to one aspect of Martí’s work.

An exhaustive study of Jewish sources is, of course, out of the question in the present paper. Such a study should be based on a complete edition of the Pugio fidei, taking into account the entire manuscript tradition. At this stage of our common research, this article aims at providing an overview of the sources and describing their treatment. It will conclude with a comparison with other sources employed by Martí, which will allow us to determine whether the

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elements that are constantly interwoven in his discourse are treated differently in his argumentative strategy.

2 The Pugio fidei

Composed by a former fellow student of Thomas Aquinas, the Pugio fidei (The Dagger of Faith) is a veritable summa intended to be used for preaching and polemical debate. It was conceived as part of the Dominican effort to convert Jews and Muslims. Beginning in the middle of the thirteenth century, this effort had been bolstered by the foundation of the Studia Linguarum, in which the clergy being trained for missionary service were taught Arabic and Hebrew language and culture.

We are dealing with a vast work: the text of the Leipzig edition amounts to 641 pages, and the manuscript in Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, MS 1405 (hereinafter the BSG manuscript)—the oldest and most complete—has 428 folios and 851 pages (excluding the guard leaves). Following a prologue in which the author introduces the circumstances of the work’s composition and his intentions, the body of the Pugio fidei is divided into three parts of unequal length:

– A “first part” (Prima pars), made up of 26 chapters and dedicated to the refutation of the opinions of the philosophers (as well as those of certain Christian heretics) on theological questions (such as God’s existence, the supreme good, the immortality of the soul, the eternity of the world, divine providence and the knowledge of particulars, the resurrection of the dead, etc.)

– A “second part” (Secunda pars), made up of 15 chapters and dedicated to the tribes of Israel and to the different Jewish sects in Jesus’s time (chapters 1 and 2), then to questions related to the messianic advent (chapters 3 to 15).

3 The date usually given for the completion of Pugio fidei (1278) is inaccurate, since it is based on a note occurring in the middle of the book (chap. 11, 10, p. 395 in the Leipzig edition; see following note).