

CHAPTER 1

The Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns in the Philosophy of Judaism: Notes on Julius Guttman, *The Philosophy of Judaism*

I

There is no inquiry into the history of philosophy that is not at the same time a *philosophical* inquiry. Without question there is a longstanding need in scholarship for a handbook of the history of the philosophy of Judaism resting throughout on the most thorough knowledge both of the sources and of previous studies of them; and when this need is met so completely as it is by Julius Guttman's work, *The Philosophy of Judaism*,¹ the intelligent reader will first of all be very glad to be instructed in general and in detail by this prominent expert, and grateful to have the use of this long-lacking and henceforth indispensable handbook. The same intelligent reader will certainly soon realize, if he does not know or assume it from the outset, that Guttman would scarcely have been induced to write his *Philosophy of Judaism* by the previously mentioned need of scholarship alone, even combined with the additional need of collecting the results of his own researches, hitherto scattered in many separate studies and lecture notes: Guttman's project is the historical exposition of the philosophical problem that most engages his interest, viz. the problem of the "methodological value of religion" (10).

So as not to misunderstand Guttman's posing of the problem, one does well to recall his earlier work, "Religion and Science in Medieval and Modern Thought." At the end of this work, in express reference to Kant on the one hand and *Schleiermacher* on the other, he identifies as the task of "philosophy of religion" "the analysis of the religious consciousness" in its "autonomy . . . over against knowledge and morality" (66f.), or more precisely, "the definition of religion as against all other areas of subject matter and consciousness, the elaboration of the specifically religious world and its truth" (R69). Since he defines the problem of "philosophy of religion" in this way, he seems to view the task of philosophy in general as the understanding of "*culture*" articulated into its various "domains." Now it is striking, however, that in spite of his unmistakable inclination towards philosophy of culture, he very assiduously avoids the expressions "culture" or "cultural field," and prefers the more formal and hence less prejudicial expressions "field of validity," "field of truth," "domain of subject matter," "domain of consciousness." In this way he already suggests the suspicion that religion cannot be rightly understood in the framework of the concept of "culture." For philosophy of culture understands by "culture" the "spontaneous product" of the human spirit—but religion in its proper sense does not have this character (R65); and besides, the other "domains of validity" allow of being conceived as "partial domains of truth"—but religion raises the claim to universality (R70). The claim to universality on the part of "culture," which in its own view rests on spontaneous production, seems to be opposed by the claim to universality on the part of religion, which in its own view is not produced by man but *given* to him. Now Guttman admittedly does not go so far: as we have already noted, he believes that "sphere of validity" is the genus that comprehends both "culture" and religion. But in any case he finds himself driven to a remarkable distancing from philosophy of culture by the fact of religion as such, which thereby proves to be one crux of philosophy of culture.²

Guttmann leaves us in no doubt that the problem of the “methodological value of religion” is not a *primary* problem. One can say outright that his entire history of the philosophy of Judaism has no other intention, or at least no other result, than to demonstrate that the “methodological” formulation of the question, in spite of or because of its lack of primariness, offers the only guarantee of an adequate scientific understanding of the Bible. First of all, concerning its lack of primariness: neither does it emerge directly from religion (whether Biblical or Talmudic), nor is it a direct consequence of the conflict between (Biblical) religion and (Greek) philosophy. Out of this conflict the only question that arises directly is the question of whether the teachings of the revelation or the teachings of philosophy are *true*, and specifically the questions, *inter alia*, whether the world is created or eternal, whether providence extends to individuals or only to species, whether the soul or only the intellect is immortal—the questions, that is, with which medieval Jewish philosophy is primarily occupied, and the varied treatments of which and answers to which are thoughtfully and thoroughly presented by Guttmann. The alternative “revelation or reason?” is, to be sure, replaced at once, so to speak from the first moment on, by the harmonizing decision that the teachings of revelation are identical with the teachings of reason. To begin with, then, “religion and philosophy are not distinguished from one another *methodologically*, but harmonized with one another *substantively*” (10). In this way both philosophy and religion undergo essential modifications: the problems of philosophy are “framed and formed” from the “religious point of view,” and thus the “concepts of ancient metaphysics” undergo “essential transformations” in the direction of the “personalistic religion of the Bible” (10, 63f.); and on the other hand there arises a “striking transformation of the content of Biblical and Talmudic religion” (56), a more or less thorough-going abandonment of the Biblical concept of God, world, and man in favor of the Greek-philosophic (cf. esp. 36f., 120ff., 149ff., 186ff., 194, 198ff., 205, 256).³ It

became possible to preserve the Biblical conception more successfully in the element of philosophy only when medieval metaphysics, deriving from pagan antiquity, was replaced by the metaphysics of the Enlightenment (issuing directly from Christianity, indirectly from the Bible) (cf. 304). Of course, the ancient metaphysics that was authoritative for the Middle Ages was “teleological” and thus “capable of an accommodation with the religion of *revelation*,” while the “mechanistic transformation” of metaphysics in modernity, particularly “in Spinoza, made it necessary to break with the religion of revelation” (295, cf. also 156); but this loss is outweighed by the fact that it is precisely from the spirit of the “personalistic piety” of the *Bible* that the “tendency to a mechanistic concept of nature,” the horrified rejection, as of “a kind of polytheism,” of the supposition of forces acting teleologically, can arise and, in modern times, has in fact arisen (18f. and 151). Thus, even if the accommodation of Judaism with philosophy carried out (by *Mendelssohn*) on the basis of the modern Enlightenment is “essentially closer to the Jewish tradition” than the corresponding achievement of the medieval neo-Platonists and Aristotelians (305), nevertheless one cannot acquiesce in it. This is not only because Mendelssohn himself diverges from the Jewish tradition on one essential point (305), but also and especially because he clings to one premise of the entire Jewish tradition that he himself has already undermined: the idea of the revealed, given religion. Mendelssohn denies that the communication of rational truths by revelation is possible; for him, therefore—and all the more so since he admits no super-rational truths of faith—the revelation can have only a very limited meaning; indeed “there remains for him no place for the truth of the historical revelation” (317). Thus to be sure the *content* of the Bible is better preserved by Mendelssohn than by his medieval forerunners; but he can no longer account for its *form*, for its revealed character, as satisfactorily as his predecessors. This fact already suggests the surmise that if the content of the Bible is to be *perfectly* preserved in the ele-

ment of philosophy, the traditional conception of its form, that is, the belief that it is revealed, must be surrendered. The Bible must no longer be understood as revealed, but as the product of the religious consciousness; and the task of "philosophy of religion" no longer consists in the harmonizing of the doctrines of revelation with the doctrines of reason, but in the analysis of the religious consciousness. And hence Guttman in particular, who regards the determination of the "methodological value of religion" as the proper task of "philosophy of religion," had to surrender beforehand the belief in revelation (pp. 12f. and 20). All in all, then, the history of the philosophy of Judaism produces the doctrine that the outwardly so inconsiderable "formal," "methodological" way of thinking has, in the breakdown of the outwardly so much more imposing "substantive," "metaphysical" attempt at a solution, proved to be *the* condition of the possibility of an adequate scientific understanding of the Bible.

It cannot be denied that Guttman's argument for the superiority of modern over medieval philosophy—and this argument is the intellectual bond that ties together his very painstaking and detailed individual analyses—is extraordinarily attractive. The obvious doubt to which it is nevertheless open is indicated by Guttman himself, who says,

As much as the medieval thinkers are more strongly rooted as total personalities in the Jewish tradition and way of life, and belief in the divine authority of the revelation is more self-evident to them, to the same extent do the modern thinkers, in their theoretical interpretation of Judaism, hold fast with the greater staying power to the original meaning of its central religious ideas (342).

This statement admits of the interpretation that the adequate scientific knowledge of Judaism is bought at the cost of the belief in the authority of revelation, at the cost of a considerable loss to the Jewish "substance of life," generally stated, that the owl of Minerva begins its flight

at dusk. Guttman however does not think so fatalistically, so hopelessly. His meaning is rather that the scientific knowledge of Judaism is precisely an act of Judaism's self-assertion. Judaism is more endangered in the modern world, by the modern world, than ever before—granted; but its scientific self-knowledge is not so much a symptom of its illness as rather the most suitable means of relieving or even curing it. Judaism can overcome the danger on which it has fallen through the victory of reflection over primariness not by means of the necessarily fictive return to a point before reflection, but only by means of the decisive completion of the reflection: the least primary, least naive formulation of the problem is now the only one capable of preserving the primary, and that by teaching how to *understand* it.

Thus the result that Guttman reaches can be construed in completely opposite ways. One would have to come to terms with this awkward state of affairs if Guttman's thesis, as we have understood it, corresponded to the facts. But have we understood it correctly? We took Guttman to mean that modern Judaism, standing much less steadily on its feet, has at its disposal an essentially more adequate philosophic understanding of the content of the Jewish tradition than the much more vital medieval Judaism. This view, as has been shown, is ambiguous; but it is not only ambiguous, but also paradoxical, since it asserts a paradoxical incongruity between life and thought. This incongruity may be evident without more ado to the modern way of thinking, but one cannot deny that it is nevertheless dubious. And so we ask: does Guttman actually mean that modern philosophy enables Judaism better than medieval philosophy does to preserve intellectually the content of its tradition, albeit with the surrender of the belief in revelation?

II

Guttman concludes his history of the philosophy of Judaism with a critical exposition of the work of Hermann

Cohen. If "Cohen's great achievement" (362) is the fullest form in which modern Jewish thought has been expressed, the barrier dividing modern thought from Judaism must be most distinctly visible in it. Guttman's objection against Cohen is that Cohen can no longer "affirm" the existence of God "in its absolute reality:" on Cohen's premises, even the existence of God must "find its logical place within the posits of consciousness" (346). "The methodological bases of his system prevent" Cohen, even in his later period, when he was essentially closer to Judaism than before, "from conceiving of God as a reality" (361, cf. also 351). This inability is the more surprising since it is after all in Cohen, far more than in Mendelssohn and, particularly, far more than in the medieval philosophers, that the content of Judaism comes into prominence.

Cohen is by no means the only one marked by the inability to "conceive of God as a reality." The resoluteness of Guttman's insistence, in the programmatic statements at the end of his earlier work "Religion and Science in Medieval and Modern Thought," that "philosophy of religion" must not only deal with "religious experience" but must also take account of the "objective aspect" of this experience and, particularly, the "reality-character of religious objects" (R 68f.), testifies to the fact that the understanding, or even the very recognition, of this "reality-character" is the characteristic difficulty of the modern "philosophy of religion" inaugurated by Schleiermacher. Now, modern "philosophy of religion" differs from its earlier version in that it no longer has metaphysics as its foundation, but rather theory of knowledge (R 72). That is: no longer, or less and less, does modern philosophy understand man as a member of the cosmos, as one (though an exceptional) natural being among other natural beings; on the contrary, it understands nature from man or, more precisely, from consciousness as man's defining property. Precisely for this reason it cannot "discover" God from the cosmos, as the *creator*, but only from consciousness. Now whereas under the domination of the cosmological orientation—in spite of or be-

cause of all the difficulties concentrated in the problem of “analogy”—God’s “reality,” God’s “absolute actuality,” independent of consciousness, was self-evident, as soon as the modern orientation has been fully established, this actuality becomes essentially unintelligible. The difficulty becomes no less, but even greater, as soon as “consciousness” is replaced by “existence,” by “man.”

But what is existential philosophy doing here in these observations on Guttman’s *Philosophy of Judaism*, when Guttman himself says not a single word about it, even in its Jewish form, unless it be in that bare allusion to the “metaphysical and irrationalistic tendencies that generally dominate the thought of the time” (362)? But can he not still be referring to it, even if he does not speak of it in detail, or explicitly at all? And is not that bare allusion to existential philosophy rather, in fact, a bare dismissal of it? We shall attempt to develop somewhat more fully what Guttman meant and intimated, by following the signpost he set up in his critique of Cohen.

We had said that the difficulty in which modern thought finds itself becomes no less, but even greater, as soon as “consciousness” is replaced by “existence,” by “man.” For it is on the basis of this development that the fundamental cosmological distinction eternal/corruptible—authoritative for the older philosophy, preserved in the fundamental theological distinction God/creation, and called into question by the fundamental modern distinction spirit/nature—finally becomes completely obsolete. For if it comes down to the fundamental distinction man/nature and if, accordingly, it is asserted that the existence of God is not intelligible from nature but only from man, then one loses the sole guarantee that the existence of God will not get completely “internalized” and thereby evaporated. An unmistakable sign of this is that the doctrine of creation as the creation also of *non*-human nature is an even greater difficulty for existential philosophy than for idealistic philosophy. This appears most clearly in Friedrich Gogarten, who combatted idealistic philosophy from the ground of

existential philosophy perhaps more resolutely than anyone else. To be sure, even Gogarten says that the creation is “full of, overflowing with” the “gifts and works of God.” But he continues: “And thus the works of God, in which God’s being-for-us and, correspondingly, our being-from-God come to sight, in which, that is, He reveals Himself as our creator, in which ‘the good’ is God’s gift and claim together in one—these works of God consist in the fact that it is from one another that we men are what we are and who we are;” “this being-from [is] the primary being of man, and therefore the being proper to man. As such, it must not be understood as causal being, as, of course, the being of things, being in animate and inanimate nature, is understood.”⁴ One sees that it remains completely obscure here whether the “causal being” of the natural things must itself be understood as created being. In a more recent publication Gogarten indeed retains the equivocal reference to “causal being” and even cites a passage from Luther’s commentary on Genesis (in which, of course, the matter under discussion is *all* creatures), thereby appropriating as his own the assertion of creation in its original sense; but in his own statements he omits studiously, as it were, the createdness of non-human nature. Thus he says: “. . . wherever the law is fulfilled in its full sense, there the *creation* too becomes clear again, revealed again. Therein it is revealed how God created *man*.”⁵ We believe we are doing Gogarten no injustice if we say that for him, to the extent that the theological tradition no longer holds him in its sway, creation has meaning only as the creation of man. And if Gogarten is to be taken as representative of existential philosophy, we may furthermore say that existential philosophy is even less capable than idealistic philosophy of understanding the doctrine of creation in its original, Biblical sense. For while idealistic philosophy no less than existential philosophy had torn nature apart from men as a matter of principle (under the terms “Is” and “Ought,” or “nature” and “morality”), it had nevertheless preserved, thanks to its connection with Kant, the clearest memory that the “idea

of creation,” although it “[will] not explain theoretically the origin of the world,” nevertheless affects also and primarily “the relationship between God and world,” the relationship between God and non-human nature (cf. 14). Cohen, above all others, not only did not leave it obscure, but even made it the starting-point of his theological argument, that the idea of God (which is properly intelligible, to be sure, only from the moral consciousness) has a necessary bearing on the “causal being” of nature (347 ff.). Thus idealistic philosophy proves superior to existential philosophy in a decisive, not to say in *the* decisive point: it is superior because of its memory of the original meaning of the doctrine of creation. That this doctrine was admittedly only remembered by Cohen, and no longer believed, is shown not only by his inability, pointed out by Guttmann, to “conceive of God as a reality,” but also, far more directly, by his answer to the objection of an orthodox Jew against his theology: to the objection, “and what has become of the בורא עולם [Creator of the World]?” Cohen had no other answer than—to weep,⁶ and thus to confess that the gap between his belief and the belief of the tradition is unbridgeable. We do not doubt—indeed we know, since it has been openly and unhesitatingly asserted—that the existential philosophers could not share Cohen’s difficulty in answering: so completely lost is even the memory of the original sense of the doctrine of creation. But if idealistic philosophy, at least that of Cohen, thus proves superior to existential philosophy in the decisive point, still nobody will dispute that, for the rest, existential philosophy does grasp more securely than idealistic philosophy the “existential” meaning of the Bible. But this very superiority of existential philosophy over idealistic philosophy merely repeats the corresponding superiority of idealistic philosophy over medieval philosophy. Thus it becomes clear that the replacement of idealistic philosophy by existential philosophy presents not a radical break but only a progression: in this replacement too, the law posited by Guttmann with regard to the replacement of cosmological philosophy by idealistic philosophy

still holds true, the law that progress in the “theoretical understanding” of the Bible is purchased at the price of considerable loss to the “substance of life” of the religion of revelation. And thus, since idealistic philosophy and existential philosophy go together, we may draw this conclusion: whereas under the domination of the cosmological orientation there existed the danger that, with the complete inviolability of the belief in the existence of God as the creator also and precisely of nature, the content of the revelation would be misconstrued in the sense of Greek “humanism,” now, after the surrender of the cosmological orientation, there is the opposite danger, that with the intellectual preservation of the “existential” sense of the Bible not only the belief in revelation,⁷ as it seemed at first, but also the belief in creation, will be surrendered. It is therefore not “only” the belief in revelation that has fallen into danger through modern philosophy.

It is now clear that we have considerably misunderstood Guttman. In his critique of Cohen it comes to light that he asserts not *the*, but only *a certain* superiority of modern philosophy over medieval philosophy. Modern philosophy—so runs his thesis in truth—is more capable than medieval philosophy of preserving intellectually the “*inner world*” of belief; but it is less capable of acknowledging the essential relation of the God who rules this “inner world” to “external” *nature*. The least one has to demand under these circumstances is that modern and medieval philosophy must somehow supplement each other. It is only on the basis of this demand that one can reach a radical understanding of Guttman’s extraordinarily energetic interest in medieval Jewish philosophy. Thus it is no accident that of the approximately 360 pages of the *Philosophy of Judaism*, 245 are devoted solely to medieval Jewish philosophy. One would completely misunderstand Guttman’s philosophic motive if one were to see in this numerical proportion a mere reflection of the proportion between the amount of medieval Jewish philosophical literature and the amount of late antique and modern Jewish philosophi-

cal literature, or even a reflection of the proportions of their historical influence, or if one were to believe that Guttman gives so great a preponderance to medieval philosophy only in order to show how much progress we have made. Guttman knows too well that we have every reason to go to school to the medieval philosophers. It is for this reason, ultimately, that he has foregone even a discussion of existential philosophy: he does not deceive himself as to the fact that it is not the *natural progression* from idealistic philosophy to a “*new thinking*,” but rather the *resolute return* from the newest thinking to the *old* thinking, that can put an end to our present-day difficulty. And even if he concedes to modern philosophy a certain superiority over medieval philosophy, still he makes even this concession only with a view to the fact that modern philosophy brings the “central religious ideas” of the Jewish tradition into prominence more than medieval philosophy does: he thereby acknowledges the Jewish tradition, and thus a non-modern, pre-modern court, as the judge of modern thought, in this way demonstrating most clearly his insight into the essential inadequacy of modern thought.

III

As we have seen, Guttman asserts not *the* but only a *certain* superiority of modern Jewish philosophy over medieval. Now even this very limited assertion, which we would understand in the sense explained above, rests on the premise that belief in the revelation does not belong to those “central religious ideas” of Judaism whose preservation in the element of reflection has been purchased at the price of surrendering the belief in revelation. But does not this belief *necessarily* belong to the “central religious ideas” of Judaism, and not only as one inseparable factor among many, but as the necessary condition of the possibility of them all? Do those ideas still remain themselves, or do they not rather change their meaning *from the ground up* if one understands them no longer as given by God, but as pro-

duced by the “religious consciousness” of man, albeit “before God”? If, in fact, Judaism is *essentially* a “monotheistic religion of revelation” (10, cf. also 20, 41 and 53), then medieval philosophy stands incomparably closer to Judaism than modern philosophy. For at least “the formal recognition of the authority of the revelation is a self-evident presupposition even for the most radical thinkers of the Jewish Middle Ages insofar as they wish to remain Jews” (259). In the light of this powerful, compelling point of superiority, one can disregard with a good conscience, when comparing medieval and modern philosophy, the fact, doubtless justly emphasized by Guttmann, that there are important “religious ideas” of Judaism that are on the whole grasped more clearly and securely by the moderns than by the earlier thinkers.

For what “central religious ideas,” specifically, are grasped more clearly and securely by the moderns than by the medievals, and by what path do the moderns arrive at this superiority? These ideas are nothing other than the core of the Biblical religion; but “the religion of the Bible has its specific character in the ethical personalism of its consciousness of God” (12). And these ideas are secured by the moderns not through exegesis, not theologically, but through analysis of the “religious consciousness,” an analysis inaugurated by the “epoch-making” achievement of Schleiermacher (R63–67). Now its “personalistic character” puts “Biblical religion into effective opposition to the other type of spiritual and universal religion, which, despite every essential difference, nevertheless lies at the basis of both mysticism and pantheism” (14). It is on the basis of this typology, whose modern origin is written on its face, that Guttmann demonstrates the superiority of modern over medieval philosophy. For the medieval philosophers are, according to him, inferior to the moderns precisely because they re-interpret Biblical religion in the sense of the religion of “mysticism or contemplation,” which is diametrically opposed to it (v. esp. 159 and 201). But if the idea of an analysis of the “religious consciousness” finally turns

out to be *the* condition for the possibility of the intellectual preservation of the Biblical “type of piety,” then one cannot dodge the question: in orientation to what “type of piety,” actually, was this idea originally conceived? Guttman’s answer is unequivocal: Schleiermacher’s “characterization of religion agrees in its decisive factors with the descriptions of religious experience often given in the literature of *mysticism* and its associated concept of religion” (R65). Although “later research diverges very far from Schleiermacher’s views in its interpretation of the content of religion,” although it has thus taken up precisely the analysis of the characteristically Biblical “type of piety,” nonetheless “its working method is determined by [Schleiermacher]” (R66). Now Guttman, who sees the task of “philosophy of religion” as the determination of the “*methodological* value of religion,” is the last one who needs to be taught that a “method” is never an indifferent, impartial technique, but always pre-determines the possible content. Hence there emerges, from insight into the genesis of the modern method of analysis of “religious consciousness,” the *suspicion*—which at first of course is *only* a suspicion—that the modern method, while leading to a surer knowledge of the Biblical “type of piety” than the medieval method, permits only a supplementary correction of the concept of religion acquired in connection with “mysticism,”—just as medieval philosophy could bring into prominence only by way of supplement, only in the framework of the pre-determining Aristotelian or neo-Platonic way of thinking, Biblical religion’s concept of God and its “inner attitude.” In other words, we harbor the unallayable suspicion that the same thing emerges in modern philosophy as in medieval philosophy, that is, the betrayal of the Biblical heritage for the sake of an alien “piety.” And indeed, the betrayal committed by modern philosophy appears to us much graver than the lapse of its predecessors: not only because the moderns are unequivocally instructed by a modern court, that is, by their own historical research, about the danger of this very betrayal, and thus knowingly do what

the medievals did inadvertently; not only because they have surrendered the belief in revelation, which was a “self-evident presupposition” for their predecessors; but above all, because the moderns commit their betrayal in a much more covert and therefore much more “substance”-destroying manner. Such at least would have to be the verdict of one who acknowledges the Jewish tradition as the judge of modern thought.

But, however one must or may decide our *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, it is established that for medieval philosophy, in contrast to modern philosophy, not only is the recognition of the authority of the revelation a “self-evident presupposition,” but the “philosophic justification” of this recognition is an essential desideratum. Guttman goes even further. According to his view, “philosophy of religion” is actually *the* original achievement of medieval philosophy. “To have made religion a problem for philosophy is the original achievement of the Middle Ages. Otherwise wholly dependent on the ancient tradition and productive only in the elaboration and extension of the received themes of thought, medieval thought here opened up a new problem area and brought a new theme into philosophic consciousness” (R3).

Guttman’s assertion that “philosophy of religion” is *the* original achievement of medieval philosophy is at first glance open to several doubts.⁸ But even more debatable than the assertion itself, it seems to us, are the premises from which it derives such evidence as it has. Since Guttman, as we have seen, admits only a certain superiority of medieval over modern philosophy, he does not see himself compelled to a radical critique of the basic modern concepts. In particular, therefore, he is free to proceed from modern divisions of philosophy in his study of the Middle Ages. If one starts from the division of philosophy into theory of knowledge, logic, ethics, aesthetics, and philosophy of religion, thus assuming, for example, that the problems of natural theology and rational psychology are to be treated under philosophy of religion—and it is in this sense

that Guttman calls Mendelssohn's "Phaedon" and "Morgenstunden" his "chief works of philosophy of religion" (304)—then one is in fact compelled to look for the originality of medieval philosophy exclusively or primarily in philosophy of religion. That one would arrive at a different conclusion if one started from the ancient division of philosophy—much more obvious, after all, in a study of the older philosophy—into logic, physics, metaphysics, ethics, and politics; and furthermore, that it is not merely a technical question whether to label a problem "metaphysical" or "religio-philosophic"—needs no further elucidation.

In spite of the questionableness of its premises, the assertion that "philosophy of religion" is *the* original achievement of medieval thought is quite justifiable. One need only provide it with the qualifications proposed by Guttman himself. Guttman does not deny, but expressly asserts, that medieval philosophy proposed "fundamental modifications" of ancient metaphysics; but in Guttman's view, medieval philosophy thereby merely gave un-ancient answers to ancient questions, without essentially modifying the questions themselves; the only un-ancient *question* it posed is the question of the meaning and the possibility of revelation and the relationship between revelation and reason. Just as little does Guttman deny that the "fundamental modifications" of ancient philosophy carried out by medieval philosophy (cf., e.g., 91, 130, 135 and 159) made possible, historically, the break with the ancient way of thinking carried out by modern philosophy, and thus that it is not only on account of its "philosophy of religion" that medieval philosophy concerns us; but this modification of ancient philosophy was carried out in the Middle Ages not so much for a philosophical purpose as from the need "to accommodate the world-view of ancient metaphysics to the personalistic religion of the Bible" (63f.). Thus the discussion of Guttman's assertion that *the* original achievement of medieval thought is "philosophy of religion" threatens to become endless. Therefore it is time that we cease tearing this assertion from the only context within which it acquires a clear sense.