

# **“To Recall the First Intention”: On Maimonides’ Reformist Enterprise**

Sarah Stroumsa (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

This paper examines reformist moves in the work of the Jewish scholar, community leader and philosopher Moses Maimonides (1138-1204). It first summarizes Maimonides’ innovative legal compositions in their historical context, and then discusses the place of these innovations in his philosophical agenda. Pursuing the recurrent key-concept “first intention” in his legal and philosophical work allows us to reassess what can be called his economy of tradition. By changing the priorities of Jewish traditional scholarship, Maimonides attempted to begin a healing process that will bring back the valuable tradition, lost to Judaism through historical circumstances.