Once upon a time, Romanists searched Arabic or Hebrew scientific manuscripts produced in Iberia or other Romance-speaking districts for Latin or vernacular glosses written in Arabic or Hebrew characters, in order to reconstruct the medieval pronunciation of those words. The Arabic and Hebrew transliterations at times provided information that the Latin spelling did not.\(^1\) But such glosses may also be studied for their own sake, as a testimony of the linguistic “ecosystem” of medieval Jews in Romance-speaking areas. This paper will follow the latter route and try to reconstruct the sociolinguistic horizon of the Jewish scholars and translators who rendered scientific texts from Latin into Hebrew.

In medieval Languedoc, the medical literature translated from Latin into Hebrew (occasionally of texts that were themselves translations from Greek or Arabic) provides clear evidence of the contacts between Christian and Jewish physicians. Indeed, recent studies have shown that the proportion of medical treatises among the Latin-to-Hebrew translations is strikingly high.\(^2\) This may be a result of the activities of the renowned school of medicine in Montpellier from at least the first half of the twelfth century. One of the most interesting instances of this translated medical literature is a collection of more than twenty medical translations produced by an anonymous scholar in southern France ca. 1197–1199, who employed the pseudonym “Doeg the

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Edomite.” One of them is *Sefer ha-Toledet*, a Hebrew translation of Muscio’s Latin version of Soranus’ *Gynaikêia*, composed originally in Greek at the end of the first or beginning of the second century CE. I would like to draw on the critical edition of this text by Ron Barkai and the French translation by Michel Garel in order to study the vernacular glosses it contains. Doeg’s translations incorporate glosses that are Latin words, modified slightly to correspond to the morphophonemic scheme of Occitan, or genuine Occitan words. Words in Romance vernaculars are a regular feature of medical texts translated from Latin into Hebrew and in other categories of texts as well. En passant, we will correct some errors in the identification of Latin or Occitan terms proposed by Barkai and Garel.

In Provence and Spain, the Latin and the vernacular cultures formed a continuum, a fact that is reflected in the existence of the aforementioned intermediate register between Latin and Occitan. Vulgarized Latin or Latinized vernacular words are particularly well attested in the Latin-into-Hebrew translations of medical texts. We find them in texts in which Jewish scholars refer to the Latin translation of the Bible, as well as in a Judeo-Provençal (Provençal written in Hebrew characters) pastiche of the book of Esther, written around 1327 by Crescas del Caylar (Qaslarī), a Provençal Jewish physician of Languedocian origin.

Consider now Doeg’s glosses and their significance for the study of the transmission of medical or pharmaceutical material from Latin to Hebrew. First, it stands to reason that when a text was copied in different parts of the Romance-speaking linguistic and cultural world, the vernacular terms were more likely to be modified than was the main Hebrew text. It is logical that an Occitan gloss would be Catalanized or Castilianized in Spain or Italianized in Italy. For each of Doeg’s texts, then, we need to compare all

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3 On Doeg as a translator, see Freudenthal, “Arabic and Latin Cultures,” and a forthcoming comprehensive study by the same author.