

**From Arabic into Hebrew: the ספר השיר לאריסטו and the vocabulary of the
Aristotle's Poetics in mediaeval Hebrew**

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In 1337 the *Middle Commentary* of Ibn Rušd on Aristotle's *Poetics* was translated from Arabic into Hebrew by Todros Todrosi of Arles. This young philosopher, was the last author active in Provence (South France) in the intellectual project called by the historians "the translation movement" who characterize the Jewish Intellectual History between XII-XIV century. Heir of the Tibbonid school of translation, Todrosi is the author of very literal translations from Arabic into Hebrew. His corpus includes the translations of the treatises on Logic by al-Fārābī, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rušd, and some unique translations of authors such as Faḥr ad-Dīn ar-Razi and Alexander of Aphrodisias. The Todrosi's hebrew translations represent a new stage of the Jewish philosophical thought of the XIV century marked by a renovate interest on Logic, Psychology, and on the role of imagination and intuition as epistemological tools. The translation of Ibn Rušd commentary on *Poetics* known as *Sefer ha-šir le-Aristo*, reflect the deep interest that Jewish Philosophers developed for the function of intuition and imagination in the process of knowledge. We could grasp this peculiar phase of the Jewish Intellectual History through the Hebrew vocabulary of the *Sefer ha-Šir*, that embody for the first time in Hebrew language, important concepts such as *mimesis* (חקוי), *mythos* (ספור טפלי), *comedy* (בזיון) and *tragedy* (שבח) or philosophical notions as the word *nefeš* (נפש) for "substance" or "essence" instead the current term 'ezem (עצם).

Beside the philosophic vocabulary of the *Sefer ha-Šir* I would like to present the Hebrew translation of the passage of *Poetics* (1456b, 20-22) where Aristotle analyze the six elements of speech who compose elocution. In this chapter the Hebrew language is defined as *lašon zaḥut* (לשון צהוה) concept derived by the translation of the Koranic expression 'arabiya al-fašāḥa "clear/pure Arabic". The discourse is composed by the following elements: the syllable (גזר), the conjunction (קשר), the disjunction (מבדיל), the name (שם), the verb (דבור/מלה), the inflection (כנוי/נטיה), the statement (אמר).

I would like to go through the Hebrew vocabulary of these terms in order to highlight two majors points: 1. First the peculiarity of Todrosi's translation based both on the Tibbonid tradition and his own linguistic understanding of the Arabic;

2. Second, proceeding from the important study of A. Elamrani-Jamal *Logique aristotélicienne et grammaire arabe* (Vrin, 1983), I would like to show the way in which the *lašon ha-meturgamim* invented a "philosophical grammar" parallel to the classic *diqduq* of Hebrew

language known till then. Indeed, following a very similar phenomenon occurred in the history of Arabic Language at the time of the translation of the Aristotle's logical works, Todrosi's translation of the *Sefer ha-šir* is a good sample that show the deep and original linguistic creativeness of Jewish Mediaeval Translators who created a philosophical language for philosophical works.