

IL SUONO DEL CUORE

Studi islamistici per Alberto Ventura

a cura di
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(Alberto Ventura, 26-9-1953 – 9-8-2022)

“..et uno con l’altro s’intendono con il cuore”.
The beginnings of Sufi studies in Marsili’s
manuscripts

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Introduction

The study of Sufism as part of Islamic studies is usually considered as starting with d’Herbelot’s translations of the *Golestān* of Sa‘adī included in his *Bibliothèque Orientale*. His interest was certainly driven by the beauty of the rhyming prose of the text. However, d’Herbelot was not the first, and not the only one who translated texts about Sufism and Sufi orders. In this paper it will be presented a text that briefly describes the history and practices of 19 *ṭuruq* active in the Mediterranean at the end of 17th century, as reported in two separate manuscripts realized for the Bolognese count Luigi Ferdinando Marsili (d. 1730). Although the information provided by this text is often prone to the legend, it is quite accurate and, most important, it is translated from an Islamic source.

The text presented in this paper is one of the first, if not the very first, translations of an Oriental text about Sufism and Sufi orders. European travelers often collected information from friends

^{*} The present study has received the support of “The European Qur’an” ERC project, under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (grant agreement no. 810141).

and fellows about rituals and in some cases even attended the *samāʿ* ceremony of the Mevlevis or the *ḥaḍra* of the Qādirīs. All this came to us in travel accounts and historical books that were mediated by an ideological and religious bias. It was also influenced by an obvious lack of information about the spiritual and textual background of Sufism, that was presented to their eyes as a popular practice, made of spectacular events, crooks and beggars.

Marsili and Islam

The fulcrum of the story of this text is Luigi Ferdinando Marsili. He is a figure that, more than many others, can be defined larger than life. General, scientist, intellectual at the court of Queen Margaret of Sweden and slave in the hands of Tatar Muslims. Along with his activities as military engineer for the Hapsburg, he spent most of his life around Europe, looking for or writing books.

The biographical work of John Stoye (Stoye 1994) and the studies² on his scientific and military personality prevent us from giving a detailed account of his life. We can rather focus on a turning point in his career, his first trip to Istanbul, accompanying the *bailo* (ambassador) of Venice Piero Civran³. Here he had the occasion to meet a number of Ottoman *ʿulamāʾ* who introduced him to their own world. A figure worth mentioning is Ḥusayn Efendī, better known as Hezārfenn (Thousand-skills, d. 1691)⁴. They probably met in both Marsili's trips, the first in 1679 and the second in 1691, right before the former's death. Marsili was primarily looking for maps and information about the Turkish enemy, that could help him build a career in the army fighting against the infidels. Hezārfenn, a polymath and a man of science like Marsili, did not find any harm in sharing

² A primary source for Marsili's life are his autobiographical accounts. Luigi Ferdinando Marsili, *Autobiografia di Luigi Ferdinando Marsili*, 1930 provides Marsili's own account of his career, although it is essentially a *pro domo sua* after he was wrongfully accused of being guilty of the loss of the fortress of Breisach (1703). A series of studies and translations can be found in Marsili 1930, published for the second centenary from Marsili's death. For an account of the period of slavery, see Marsili 1996. For an evaluation of his scientific and military career see Gherardi 2010.

³ For a general biography see Benzoni 1982. About Marsili's activities in Istanbul see Molnár 2014.

⁴ Ménage 2012. See also (Yildirim 2020) and (D'Amora 2020).

with him several of his books about Ottoman administration and military.⁵ All this ended in his *Stato Militare dell'Imperio Ottomano*, published after his death in French and Italian.⁶ He also started collecting Oriental manuscripts, apparently not only for career purposes. In the unpublished preface to the catalog of Oriental Manuscripts⁷ prepared by abbot Giuseppe Simonio Assemani (d. 1768):

Da questo principio di cognizione presi motivo di sollecitare l'affettuoso Effendi di darmi più notizie della letteratura, e studio de' Turchi; questo cominciò a mostrarmi che non vi era in Costantinopoli Moschea Imperiale, o altre fondate da persone ricche, che non avessero scuole pubbliche con alunni e maestri stipendiati con le rendite delle stesse Moschee, il che anche nelle città più principali di tutto l'imperio si praticava e particolarmente nella Meca ov'era un'Università di migliaia e migliaia di scolari. Che in esse scuole si insegnavano li principi dell'Eloquenza più scielta mescolata con l'Arabo e Persiano, la Filosofia Aristotelica la loro Legge Civile e Canonica quali sono anche sull'Alcorano, l'Aritmetica, nella quale vi sono Uomini d'esperienza incredibile, l'Astronomia, la Medicina, l'Alchimia in sommo grado, la Poesia la Musica, ed infine la Storia che se in veruna parte è difettosa è quella d'essere troppo suddivisa, passando alla noia. D'ogni Imperadore Ottomano hanno la storia in forma di Diario, essendovi nel Seraglio chi scrive di giorno in giorno tutto ciò che fa il Sultano. Vi sono libri di tutte le Arti, anche Meccaniche, non mancano Pittori seguaci del gusto secco, ma però vago de' Persiani, ed a Costantinopoli vi sono tanti, che vivono a fare figure ne' loro libri a dipingere fiori, bastimenti navali.⁸

Such an interest in Islam, as a religion and as a culture went well beyond a superficial curiosity for the enemy and the other. Marsili

⁵ Bortolotti 2010: 31.

⁶ Marsili 1732a and Marsili 1732b.

⁷ The only copy of this catalog (*Index librorum Bibliothecae Marsiliana Graecorum, Latinorum, Hebraicorum, Arabicorum, Turcicorum et Persicorum, nec non Ruthenico et Illyrico sermone, tum manuscriptorum, tum impressorum, quos excellentissimus Dominus Comes Aloysius Ferdinandus Marsilius Bibliothecae Instituti Scientiarum Bononiensis addixit. In septem partem divisus*. Opera Josephi Simonii Assemani, Sacrae Theologiae Doctoris, et linguarum Orientalium in Bibliotheca Vaticana scriptoris, et in Collegio Urbano de Propaganda Fide Professoris) is held in the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB), n. 2951.

⁸ Marsili e Sorbelli 1930: 177-78.

never read Arabic or Turkish and used interpreters for all conversations and translations of texts.⁹ He first took advantage of the help of Civran's interpreters, but then he preferred to rely on a Jewish interpreter (Abraham Gabai) who could introduce him in local intellectual milieus, despite (or thanks to) Marsili's non-official role in Istanbul.

Gabai was an emissary of Louis XIV and had a printing house in Istanbul active since the 1660's.¹⁰ His position was similar to the one of Marsili, as both had not an officially recognized role in Istanbul, but both worked out a career thanks to this very marginality. Hacker's study gives some information about the printing house Gabai had in the Ottoman capital.¹¹ In a 1702 letter¹² we can see that his printing house was burned down in a fire and that he could only save some of his types. In the same year Michael Talman (d. 2nd half of 17th cent.)¹³ was about to publish his catalog of Marsili's Oriental manuscripts.¹⁴ Gabai mentions that the Bolognese count asked him some leather, possibly to prepare the covers for his catalog or to re-bind some of the manuscripts before sending them to Bologna. What is quite curious about this document, is that Marsili, having left Istanbul for the last time some ten years before (1692), asked his old friend Gabai about printing materials, resorting to his old network.

A forgotten aspect of Marsili's permanence in Istanbul is his relation with the *giovani di lingua*, trained in the Venetian school in Istanbul¹⁵. What is more interesting is the kind of texts that he asked to translate. Along with the ones shared by Hezārfenn about Ottoman army or coffee, we have Italian versions of texts about Muslim religion, its beliefs and practice.

Most of these documents are included in BUB 51, a large folder that contains Marsili's annotations about the first part of his travel to Istanbul in 1679 and several texts about Islam, its practices and creed.

⁹ Marsili e Sorbelli 1930: 176 where Marsili mentions Abraham Gabai.

¹⁰ The date is taken from the publication of (The capitulations... 1632).

¹¹ Hacker 1987.

¹² BUB 82, Letter n. 1. Autograph letter 8 April 1702. See Frati 1928: 97.

¹³ On this figure see Kerekes, 2004; Szabados 2013.

¹⁴ Talman 1702.

¹⁵ For a general overview of the roles of dragomans in Istanbul see Rothman 2021. For Venetian dragomans and their training see Pedani 2016. See also Lucchetta 1984 and 1989.

They are sparse notes and only in few cases they appear as excerpts from texts or conversations, whose translations were preserved.

Marsili wrote some notes himself, like those on the *Eruditione Turchesca* (Turkish Erudition, f. 87) or a *Studio de' Turchi* (Study of the Turks, f. 111), both reporting sparse information about culture and customs of the Ottomans, and the *Nota sopra la religione maomettana* (Note on Mahometan Religion, ff. 153-157). There are also transcriptions of conversations, like the *Discorso havuto con Ussaim Effendi et un altro scolare di Vani Eff [sic] in ora predicante e teologo insigne de' Turchi* (Dialogue with Hussein Effendi and another scholar called Vani Efendī, who is a preacher and a respected theologian of the Turks, f. 170), in which they discussed about Doomsday and the state of body and soul of the dead before it.

In other cases, there are translations of short texts from Turkish (or Arabic) to Italian. One of the most interesting and significant ones is the translation of a short Islamic catechism¹⁶ taken from a an *Assale libro* (possibly a *Kitāb al-ṣalāt*, a book on prayer)¹⁷. Unfortunately, the name of the translator is not reported.

Marsili showed some interest also in Islamic devotional texts. He had translated a *ḥilyat al-Nābī*, a formalized description of the physical and spiritual features of the Prophet, particularly diffused in the 17th century Ottoman lands. Few years before Marsili's arrival in Istanbul the famous calligrapher Hafiz Osman (d. 1698)¹⁸ elaborated a graphic layout for this text, that soon became the standard for the *hilye*, as it is called in Turkish. It seems likely that Marsili asked for a translation of the text included in such a diffused and beautiful artifact. His manuscripts also contain a partial (and not very understandable) translation of a *du'ā'* (invocation):

Laude senza numeri
e che non si conta a
Quel vivo di sempre in sempre
Et un tereno senza propri luogo
Et era nominato Chibria

¹⁶ BUB 51, ff. 330-32.

¹⁷ BUB 51, f. 162. Part of the text has been reported in Frati 1904: 27-28. A full transcription of the text is in Favalini 1982: 186-187.

¹⁸ Schimmel 1990: 74-5.

Il Laudo senza fine, e di grandezza, e molto numero, et investimento d'Unità, laudato di beneditione nel modo, che lo dichiara il Profeta in quanti aliti diede senza numero. A quel creatore di huomini, e demonij et adunanze del pesce e del Mare, e creature del Cielo, e presente i presenti e che vede, e guarda - Dio primo
E Re che non ha pari, che tutto il luogo del Regolato soprassiedente. D'essenza ha edificato de al Popolo fatto con officii sopramodo impossibile ha stabilito l'essere. -
e le parti dell'unione sopra il stabilirla giusto l'ha permessa
del bene della creazione sopra il punto delle meraviglie intelligenza fortemente l'ha mandata
La scrittura dell'huomo, e nel meglio delle figure l'ha scritto in modo vero, l'ha fatto Lettrica [sic]. E doppo la strade del negozi
Gli ha fatto intendere di dichiarare dall'essenza¹⁹

This seems to be a working translation, most probably made from Arabic by a person who was not familiar with the Islamic religious lexicon. It was also written in haste, with some passages omitted, signaled by a stroke of the pen. Given then scarce readability of the handwriting and the inaccurate Italian rendition, it has been impossible to identify the original text. It also ends *ex abrupto*, and it suddenly turns into a text about horses, written in a different hand.

Some drafts also include Marsili's attempts at writing original texts about Islam and the Ottomans, that went beyond the simple translation. Monika Molnar²⁰ already highlighted the *Lettera al Signor Gio. Battista Donado della letteratura de' Turchi*, an epistle addressed to the *bailo* Giovan Battista Donado (Donato or Donà) and written in Vienna on the 14th May 1688, who had published in 1688 the *Della letteratura de' Turchi*²¹. Molnar identified other two writings of Marsili, *Della lingua e della poesia turchesca* and *Studio de'*

¹⁹ BUB 51, f. 211v.

²⁰ Molnar 2012.

²¹ Donado 1688.

*Turchi*²². More recent research has discovered another manuscript that contains an earlier draft of the *Lettera*. The two versions show very few differences, that amount essentially to revisions and few passages added or removed. The epistle is the result of some years of data collection, that include texts translated from Turkish or Arabic to Italian, and that are still waiting to be explored in detail. Donado's book does not appear in Marsili's inventories and the only copy in Bologna was bought by the composer Gianbattista Martini (d. 1784) and still preserved in Bologna Museum of Music.

Marsili's epistle allows very little space to religion itself and its practices. It is divided according different sections:²³

Teologia, Medicina, Retorica, Poesia, Musica, Astronomia, Geografia, Architettura

Despite this detailed plan presented in the introduction, Marsili focused essentially on the evidence he personally gathered during his trips and his slavery among the Turks. Therefore, religious matters are only slightly touched.

Marsili and the Sufis

One of the texts that escaped the attention of the scholars is a rather long one about Sufi orders. The reason is simple and quite old. The document is called *Notta di Nomi e diversità delle Religioni di Dervissi Turchi*. A similar title has been elaborated by Lodovico Frati in his catalog of Marsili's personal manuscripts²⁴: *Nota delli diversi nomi de' religiosi Turchi. Tradotta da Domenico Balzarini*. The latter elides the mention of the dervishes, making it impossible for those browsing the catalog to properly identify the topic of the text. This is an example of a rather ancient tradition of naming

²² Respectively in BUB 51.f. 111; f. 348, and BUB 81 ff. 83r–88v.

²³ In the draft in BUB 81, f. 765v, included a list: Teologia; Medicina; Retorica; Poesia; Musica; Astrologia; Geografia; Architettura. In the margins of the same ms Marsili annotated another version of the list: Poesia; Architettura; Musica; Astrologia; Geografia; Medicina. The absence of theology and rethoric is noteworthy.

²⁴ The catalog has been published in variious issues of *La Bibliografia* and later collected in a single volume, to which I will refer here Frati 1928: 33.

Sufi orders *religioni*, that mounts back to Menavino²⁵ and Sansovino²⁶, who reported the latter's account.²⁷

This relative peculiarity cannot be ascribed to Frati or Marsili, though, as the text is a translation made by Domenico Balzarini, whose signature is clearly readable at the end of the document. Balzarini was an Ottoman subject belonging to a dragomans' family²⁸ collaborating with the *bailos* since the second half of 16th century.²⁹ Marsili learned some spoken Turkish during his captivity in the years 1683-84, but there is no information pointing to his ability to read or even translate a text without the help of a dragoman.³⁰

Marsili possibly alludes to this text in his *Prefazione al catalogo dei manoscritti orientali*, where he talks about a certain Ismā'īl Efendi who promised him a copy of a book about the anchorites who were the masters of the founders of Sufi orders.

... tra gli altri tomi che mi prometteva vi era quello, che narrava l'esatta maniera e denominazione di tanti anacoreti, cristiani che vivevano nell'Egitto, e che servirono di norma all'istituzione dei Dervissi, o loro Santoni e del numero d'essi, e loro istituzioni, e vestiti fra miei manoscritti tradotti n'ho una distinta e succinta relazione³¹.

²⁵ Menavino 1548a: 72-82; Menavino 1548b: 59-64.

²⁶ Sansovino 1568: 11-13.

²⁷ I would like to thank Maurizio Busca and Davide Scotto for pointing my attention to this antecedent of the use of *religioni* for Sufi orders. At the present state of research, the use of *religione* for *ṭarīqa* and *religioso* for *darwīsh/ṣūfī* is attested in few dictionaries that may have been used by Balzarini, like Bernardo da Parigi 1665: 1762.

²⁸ Rothman 2021: 29.

²⁹ In 1588 another Domenico appears in the chancellor's registry of the bailo office as “fidefacente”, i.e. as a trustworthy person who could be used as testimony: Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASVe), BaC, b. 266, reg. 375, cc. 73v-74v (30 agosto 1588).

³⁰ Folders 51 and 52 of the BUB contain some manuscript notes that attest for the names and the kind of texts that Marsili had translated while in Istanbul. BUB 51 f. 581 is a *marca* of 1611 (1022 Hijri). BUB 51 (ff. 141-142) is a letter from Meninski (d. 1698) to Marsili, explaining the translation of some words. BUB 52, ff. 530-31 contains a translation by “Vincenzo Lio, giovine di lingua” of a letter of the orthodox patriarch of Alexandria about the state of the Church.

³¹ Marsili 1930: 184. Ismā'īl Efendi is said to have provided Marsili with a book on the history of Christianity in Greek, translated in Arabic, distinct from the list

It is not clear whether Marsili got the whole book or had access just to the excerpt that was later translated by Balzarini. Unlike the latter's one, the figure of Ismā'īl Efendī is of no simple identification, as the name is quite diffused and there is no other testimony of the encounter. They met, according to what Marsili says, in Edirne (*Adrianopoli*) in 1691, during his second trip to the Levant, after his meeting with the famous livornese renegade Muṣṭafā Aghā³² and, possibly, in the context of an encounter with the emir Fazl Mustafa Köprülü (d. 1691, killed during the Slankamen battle).

If the context of reception of the text is not completely clear, the reasons behind Marsili's interest in it can be traced back to Giovan Battista Donado's *Della letteratura de' Turchi*, published in Venice in 1680, to which the Bolognese general replied with an epistle.³³ This book marks an epistemological shift from earlier travel accounts and historiographical books on the Levant, where European travelers reported what they saw with no or very few sources written in Oriental languages. Their observations carried the weight of the scarce information about Islam and, in particular, about Sufism. This happened in the same period of although few years before, the publication of the *Bibliothèque Orientale* of d'Herbelot (d. 1695), completed by Antoine Galland (d. 1715) only two years after its author's death³⁴. This work was a reorganized translation of Ḥājī Khalīfa's (d. 1657) *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, a nearly contemporary compendium of literatures and sciences of the Muslim world. D'Herbelot also provided in the *Bibliothèque* and in the now lost *Appendix* translations from the *Golestān* of Sa'adī of Shirāz (d. 1291), considered as a compendium of the rules of conduct and teachings of the *dervishes*. The acquisition of such erudite approach³⁵ by Donado and Marsili cannot be directly ascribed to the *Bibliothèque*. A factor that certainly fostered this

of the names of the Christian anchorites, initiators of the first Sufis, that possibly corresponds to BUB 51, ff. 532-537, called *De' Religiosi Greci*. See Frati 1928: 38. The recurrence of the term *religiosi* is here significant of the categorization operated by Marsili and his translators.

³² Marsili 1930: 184. See also Wurm 1971: 62.

³³ See above the *Della lingua e della poesia turchesca*.

³⁴ Herbelot 1697.

³⁵ For a discussion of the context and the modalities of the genesis of the *Bibliothèque*, see Dew 2009.

change was the institutionalization of schools for *giovani di lingua* in Venice and Istanbul³⁶ certainly contributed to the availability of first hand translations from Oriental languages (Turkish, but also Persian and Arabic). Young dragomans, to earn their living, worked also as interpreters for non official meetings³⁷, providing their services to European visitors who, like Marsili, were eager to know more about the Turks from their writings and their mouths.

The *Notta* is found in two manuscripts, one part of folder BUB 51, that includes most of the translations from Oriental languages discussed above.³⁸ This version of the text is written in a quite polished handwriting, with the names of the 19 Sufi order put in the margin and very few emendations. Balzarini's signature at the end gives the impression of a commissioned translation of an existing text, and not of a rendering of some discourse.

A Shorter Version

The second witness reports a significantly shorter version of the list of the names of the Sufi orders. BUB 52 ff. 270v-272v is written by a different handwriting from Balzarini's one, hastier and making use of more abbreviations. A comparison with Marsili's personal annotations taken during his trips to Istanbul³⁹ showed that the two hands are remarkably different. It can be therefore assumed that the text was not written by the Bolognese general, and that it has to be the product of another person, possibly another translator working for Marsili. This could imply that the latter had access to the source at least twice, in two different moments. Or that this text was copied for Marsili, who gave it to two different translators. At first he obtained a succinct translation, then he asked Balzarini to improve it.⁴⁰

The table at the end of this study shows the two texts subdivided according to paragraphs, that correspond to the title and the description of the practice of single Sufi orders. Also a very cursory

³⁶ Lucchetta, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1989: 21–61.

³⁷ Rothman 2021: 218–20.

³⁸ BUB 51, ff. 163r-166v.

³⁹ BUB 51, ff. 177–78.

⁴⁰ The possibility that the short version is a summary of the long one, made on the text in Italian, is ruled out by the presence of some differences in the rendering of Turkish names.

look can easily determine that the two texts are based on the very same source. The order of the *ṭuruq* is almost exactly the same, with the exception of the inversion of the order in two points: the first is in the list at the beginning of the text, that in the longer version (henceforth A) has Rifā'ī - Badawī - Sa'adī, while the other (henceforth B) has Rifā'ī - Sa'adī - Badawī. In B the order of the names of the Sufi orders is also inverted in the text (with respect to both the list at the beginning and A): Badawī - Rifā'ī - Sa'adī.

The rest of the text presents significant differences in the information reported, that are more quantitative than qualitative. B version has significantly less details about all the orders, that are, in most cases, coherent with the ones of the longer version. A main difference lays in the description of the Naqšbandiyya, that the shorter text considers as founded by “Abu bekir Keret”, that roughly corresponds to “Abubechir”, meaning both Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, the first caliph of Islam. The term “Keret”, of dubious reading, is difficult to understand, as it does not correspond neither to a name or to an epithet attributed to the founder of the order. The wording of the two versions is also significantly different. In A the ritual of the silent *ḥaḍra*, typical of this order, is described as the disciples sitting in circle on the ground, bending their heads while silently invoking God's Name.⁴¹ In B Naqshbandīs are depicted lowering their gaze and joining their hands. This particular is not only absent in the longer version, but it is also not a gesture that is usually enacted during *ḥaḍra*.

A more important difference, from the point of view of the content, is the complete absence in the B of the idea that all Sufi orders among the Turks derive from the Halveti and the Naqshbandī. This point is the main doctrinal assumption made in this text.

The idea that all the *ṭuruq* derive from one or two main orders or branches is pretty ancient, and mounts back to the development of the Qādiriyya in diverse ramifications, geographically dislocated⁴². A more ancient root, that pertains to the method more than that it does to the affiliation, is the distinction (and, to a certain

⁴¹ For a technical description of this practice see Ventura 2019: 39-ff.

⁴² Trimingham 1971: 43.

degree, opposition) to between the *Malāmatiyya* of Central Asia and the Sufis of Baghdad in 10th century.⁴³ Our text, however, uses the concept of derivation in an improper, yet significant way. Sufi orders are roughly organized according to the subdivision between vocal (*ḡahrī*) and silent (*sirrī*) modalities of *dīkr*. From a historical point of view such a division is not tenable, as both forms of Sufi practices co-existed since the beginning of formalized Sufi affiliation in Baghdad.⁴⁴ In 17th century Ottoman lands, however, the distinction between the two practices acquired a different significance. The diffusion of the puritan ideas of the Kadizadeli in 16th century Anatolia may have played a role in the preference for less evident practices, that anyway existed before. On the other hand, the association, made by our text, between the Ḥalwatiyya and the practice of loud *dīkr* is also problematic, as it is not exclusive of this order, nor it is established by its masters.⁴⁵

Even the twofold division of the *ṭuruq* does not involve all the ones listed in the text. An explicit association between the Ḥalwatiyya and other orders is made only for the Bayrāmiyya and the Aṣrafiyya. No order is said to be directly derived from the Naqṣbandiyya. As for the others, the longer version distinguishes only if the *dīkr* is loud or not, which constitutes only a partial link to one of the two foundational *ṭuruq*. The division is based on the form of the *ḥaḍra*, that determines the belonging of a Sufi order to one of the two groups.

The account of the foundation of the orders is particularly interesting under this respect. Most of the sections report the name of the founder, in some cases both versions report additional details. For the Naqṣbandiyya the information provided is the name of the founder, identified in Bahā'uddīn Naqṣband (d. 1389). More interesting is the reconstruction of the spiritual lineage before the foundation of the *ṭarīqa*, that here is correctly linked to the caliph Abū Bakr. The latter detail, however, is reprised in the shorter version, that omits the name of Bahā'uddīn. For the Ḥalwatiyya, where origin and lineage are more blurred, both versions

⁴³ A good synthesis can be found in Melchert 2001.

⁴⁴ Karamustafa 2007: 20-22; 40 where it is reported that already at the time of Sahl al-Tustarī there was a vocal form of *dīkr* that could be listened to.

⁴⁵ See Trimingham 1971: 194-ff.

of the text identify in ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib the founder of the order. The implicit reference to a spiritual initiator, and not to one of the actual masters who “invented”, as the text says, the *religione*, is made only for the Naqšbandiyya and the Ḥalwatiyya. In all the other cases the founder is correctly identified. In some instances, some details about their biographies are also provided. The information provided in the two version of the text is almost always coherent, although the shorter one is quite laconic.

Taking the example of the Mawlāwiyya, initiated by Ġalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273), both versions assert that the master of the *ṭarīqa* must come to Istanbul to gird the sword on the new Ottoman Sultan.⁴⁶ The account is semi-legendary, as they consider Rūmī as the first Ottoman Sultan, who gave up the throne to ‘Uṭmān. This story circulated (and was possibly forged) to support the idea that the Turkish domain on Islamic lands was also spiritually rooted.⁴⁷ The long version continues with a detailed description of a *samā‘* session, while the short one briefly reports that the descendants of Rūmī go to Istanbul to for the girding ceremony.

Another Sufi order where the short version is significantly more succinct is the one of the Bektašiyya, which was politically and militarily relevant at Marsili’s times. Both versions identify, with different transliterations, the founder in Ḥağḡī Bektāš (d. 1271). The shorter seems to confirm the link between the *ṭarīqa* and the Janissary corps when it refers to the use of sword and harquebus. On the other hand, the long version gives a distinctive image of Bektašīs, with their segmented caps, the woolen *hirqa*, and decorated belts. What is more surprising is the assertion that there are no *conventi* (*tekke*) of the Bektašiyya in the area of composition of this text, that could presumably be Istanbul. Sayyid Vani Mehmed Efendi (d. 1685), a leader of the movement, was carrying on a campaign against Janissaries and Bektašīs, which included the destruction of the their shrines.⁴⁸ Such an affirmation would locate the production of the text not in a generic manual, but in a specific context. Marsili even met Sayyid Vani, if we consider the

⁴⁶ A firsthand account of this ceremony can be found in Hasluck 1913. For the symbolism of girding in Sufi orders see Zarcone 2008.

⁴⁷ See Gürbüz 2022: 113-11.

⁴⁸ See Currie 2015.

“Vani Eff<endi>” mentioned in BUB 51, f. 170 the same figure. This confirms that although singular individuals belonging to this order were present in late 17th century Istanbul, they were not able to publicly practice their rituals.

The local nature of this text is confirmed in the accounts of the Rifā'iyya and the Sa'diyya involving venomous beasts. The former are said to be able to incantate snakes and scorpions (in the short version with the use of spit, that kills them). They are diffused in Arabia, but if they came to “these lands” (*questi paesi*) no one would recognize them. The same is said for the Sa'dī, that are said (in the short text) to have their *tekkēs* in Damascus and Iraq (*Babilonia*).

From Europe and Back

What has remained in the background of this analysis is the very nature of this text. The longer version is a translation from Turkish. This is confirmed by some details in the rendition of the names (Abubechir for Abū Bakr, Veissi for Uwaysī)⁴⁹ that closely follow Turkish pronunciation of Arabic words.

The account of the Ašrafiyya provides two complementary examples. In A the founder is called “figliuolo d'Assref”, meaning the son of Ašraf, that is the literal translation of Ashrafzadeh, or “Eshrafsade” as it is written in B. In the latter the shrine of the first master of the *ṭarīqa* is located in Iznik (Nicaea, in the text given as “İsnik”), near the lake. The place is called “Ciri Isnighindé”, that could be (hardly) read as the rendering of the Turkish for *Gölü İznikinde*, the “Lake near İznik”.⁵⁰ The presence of transcriptions of Turkish in both versions confirms that the text was in this language.

This raises an issue about the content and the structure of the *Notta* itself. Starting from the title in A version, *Dichiarazione di Costumi*, meaning “Declaration of habits”, intended both as dress and as practice. As far as my research has gone, no Arabic or Turkish work about Sufism lists Sufi orders describing only the way in

⁴⁹ The list could be quite long, as practically all the names given in the two versions of the text reproduce a Turkish pronunciation.

⁵⁰ The locative *-inde* is rendered “vicino a” in the shorter version.

which adepts are dressed and their rituals.⁵¹ The text in question should have been composed not too long before Marsili's visit to Istanbul (1679-80), as it reports information about the absence of Bektaşī lodges in the Ottoman capital.

The description of the habits closely follows the ones produced by European travelers to the Orient since the times of Menavino (d. mid 16th century)⁵². He already divided the Sufis in four groups, dealt with in separate sub-chapters of his *I cinque libri della legge, religione, et vita de' Turchi et della corte, & d'alcune guerre del Gran Turco: Jāmīs (Giomailer), Qalandarī (Calendaer), dervishes (Deruisi), and Torlaq (Torlachi)*.⁵³ The description given in this texts is focused on their dresses, the way in which they shave their heads and, to a certain extent, their rituals. Both also note the presence of Sufi shrines object of periodical pilgrimage.⁵⁴ This form of description clearly set a model that endured for at least a century.

Other accounts like those of Jean de Thévenot (d. 1667) or of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (d. 1689) do not offer a systematic description of the rituals and the dressing specific for each *ṭarīqa*. The latter presents *Dervis* as dressed in animal skins, roaming bazars asking for alms in exchange for flowers.

Ces Der[406]vis viennent tous les jours sur les trois ou quatre heures apres midy dans les Bazars d'Ispahan, prenant chacun son quartier, & un vieux avec un jeune. Ils vont d'une boutique à l'autre, & instruisent le peuple sur quelque point de la loy, le jeune Dervis répondant par intervalle au vieux qui fait comme l'office de Predicateur. Ils n'on pour tout habit que deux peaux de mouton ou de bouc qui leur pendent devant & derriere, avec une grande ceinture de cuir large de quatre ou cinq doigts, & garnie de plusieurs grosses plaques de letton. Ils on une autre peau de mouton sur les épaules laquelle ils attachent par devant sous le menton ; & leur coiffure est une autre petite peau d'aigneau en forme de bonnet, à laquelle ils laissent les pieds qui leur viennent pendre

⁵¹ Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive study of *ṭabaqāt* literature in 17th century Ottoman lands. My inquiry is based on Niyazioğlu 2017.

⁵² On him see Schwarz 2014: 512-522.

⁵³ Menavino 1548: 57-64.

⁵⁴ Menavino 1548: 60. The relations of Menavino's account and the one of de Nicolay in his *Navigations* seems to be still to be explored.

sur le cou & sur les jouës. Ils ont une grosse massuë à la main, & c'est à peu pres comme les pentres nous representent saint Jean Baptiste dans le desert. Ces Dervis fourrent entre leur ceinture & la peau qui les couvre quelques méchantes fleurs selon la saison, & au défaut de fleurs plusieurs sortes d'herbes, que tant le vieux Dervis que le jeune apres leur exhortation donnent aux marchands & aux artisans, de qui ils reçoivent en mesme-temps quelque aumône. Vers le soir ils se retirent à leur maison, & j'oubliois de dire qu'ils tiennent toûjours devant la porte un grand vaisseau plein d'eau avec plusieurs petits pots, & en été de la glace, tous les passans qui ont soif pouvant aller boire en ce lieu-là sans qu'on leur demande rien.⁵⁵

This description is based on practices in Isfahan, so they could be different from the ones used in sunnite Ottoman Istanbul. Tavernier reports what he saw, without any attempt at understanding what a *dervis* was and what his practices meant. In his *Nouvelle relation de l'intérieur du serrail du Grand seigneur*, he gives a scanty definition of the Sufis saying

Les Dervis son des Religieux Turcs qui vivent pauvrement, & Dervis aussi veut dire pauvre. Ils sont la pluspart ridiculement vêtus, & tous generalement de grands hypocrites.⁵⁶

Disparaging Sufis and accusing them of hypocrisy, is a *cliché* present already in Menavino, who saw the contrast between their apparent poverty and their lustful habits of drinking wine and frequent sexual intercourse. Thévenot, in his *Relation d'un voyage fait au Levant* published in 1665, provides a first distinction between two types of Sufis. The first one is substantially equivalent to Tavernier's one, although it is based on his observations in Istanbul. The other describes the *dikr* of the Sufis in Cairo. Thévenot says that, being hypocrites as the Turks, the *Mores* - a term that he uses for North Africans in general - have also their *Santons*, phony saintly figures that lead astray their followers. If the dancers of Istanbul are quite pleasant, the Egyptians are horrible in their practices, when they move their bodies back and forth invoking God's name to the

⁵⁵ Tavernier 1676: 405-406.

⁵⁶ Tavernier 1675: 69.

point that they end up breathless. Hence, according to Thévenot, the word *Allāh* becomes *Hū*, which, he says, means also God. The practice here described is typical of the Qādiriyya, and of others which adopted the same form of *ḥaḍra*, but Thévenot fails to provide any name for this order, although he was well informed about the meaning of the words uttered by the *derviches*.⁵⁷

The account closest in time to the one in Marsili's papers is by Paul Rycaut (d. 1700) in his *Present State of the Ottoman Empire*⁵⁸. Rycaut, like the Bolognese general, joined an ambassador to the Sublime Porte and, thanks to his linguistic skills, became consul in Smyrna from 1667 to 1678, just one year before the arrival of Marsili in Istanbul. The customary discussion of Islam, and large part of the book, is based on first-hand information and on an unidentified "Turkish history", to which he refers primarily for administrative and military details.⁵⁹

The first similarity with Marsili's text consists in considering Ḥalwatī and Naqṣbandī which are regarded as the first two organized orders, the "two fountains whence other orders are produced".⁶⁰ He also reproduces a scheme for their derivation. From the *Calvettee* derive the Ni'matullāhiyya, the Qādiriyya, the Qalandars, the Adhamīs, the Hiḡrawī and the Bektaşī. From the other derive only the *Ebrbuharee*, that can be identified with the followers of Amīr Buḡārī (d. 1516),⁶¹ and the Mawlāwiyya.⁶² Although the idea at the bottom of the subdivision is the same, the orders mentioned are completely different. Also, the division is not based on the form of *ḍikr* practiced, being silent or loud. Rycaut does limit his discussion of single orders to a few ones among those mentioned above, not including the Ḥalwatiyya and the Naqṣbandiyya. Also, the difference between the form and the content of the discussion is quite patent. The history of Ibrāhīm b. Adham, for instance, is presented according to a tradition that sees his father as a slave from Abyssinia who went to Cairo to discuss with the

⁵⁷ Thévenot 1665: 497-498.

⁵⁸ Rycaut 1668.

⁵⁹ Rycaut 1668: 261; for the "Turkish History": 114, 129, 159, 357.

⁶⁰ Rycaut 1668: 262.

⁶¹ Ménage 1975: 162-64.

⁶² Rycaut 1668: 262.

king Ibn Malik. Rycaut is well aware of the scarce reliability of this story along with the description of Ibn Adham piety, the food they usually consume, the diffusion of their “convents” and their clothing. Marsili’s text is more historically accurate, although significantly shorter in both versions. Ibn Adham is said to be the king of Balkh, in Persia. He left the kingdom to follow a spiritual master, whom he surpassed to start a new *ṭarīqa*.

As for the Mawlāwiyya, Rycaut reprises the sword girding argument. According to him one of the priors of the order was the tutor of the first Ottoman sultan who places his former teacher on the throne out of devotion.⁶³

The description of the *samāʿ* ritual is quite long but offers less details than the one in BUB 51, specially from the spiritual point of view. It is a sheer description of their dresses and their actions which imitate those of the founder. Rycaut was informed of the polemics made by Vani Efendi and Kadizadeli about the prohibition of listening to music, to which Mawlāwīs respond that they follow the example of the Prophet David.⁶⁴

The examples provided show how there was a certain standardization in the description of Sufis in European sources, that focused on few essential elements: the founder, the dress, the practice and the diffusion of “convents”. These same elements are found in Marsili’s text, in both versions, although the text was most probably written in Turkish. And are also the same mentioned in his *Prefazione*, when he talks about his meeting with Ismāʿīl Efendī in 1691: their masters (*Santoni*), their number, their institutions and convents, and their dressing. Marsili also talks about a *succinta relazione*, meaning a short summary that he has among the manuscripts that contain translations. It is possible, thus, that the translators of the two versions picked what seemed more interesting in their eyes, following the model of previous travel account that dealt with dervishes. This could be possible if we consider that Marsili had the book promised by Ismāʿīl Efendī, but that it was in Turkish, and not in Arabic. The confusion between the two languages may be due to Marsili’s scarce competence and his feeble

⁶³ Rycaut 1668: 262.

⁶⁴ Rycaut 1668: 265.

memory when writing the *Prefazione*. Considering that the traces of the Turkish original are only in personal and place names, it is possible that the rendition of some names has been done in Turkish, while the text is in Arabic. Without the identification of the original text it is impossible to formulate more than mere hypotheses.⁶⁵

Some points are, anyway, quite firm. Marsili's interest in Islam, and in Sufism in particular, is attested by a number of unpublished texts, although his project of writing an epistle to the Hapsburg Emperor about Islam remained unachieved. The working papers show the essential role played by the dragomans and their translations. Marsili's approach, although cannot be defined fully scientific, is part of a significant shift in the study of the Ottomans. He systematically collected texts in Oriental languages, had them translated and finally tried to organize them.

The downside of relying on dragomans is that Marsili had no control on his sources. The translations present here are a testimony of how problematic could be the synthetic rendering of a text. The two versions report similar information and only one claims to be the direct translation of a Muslim text. The way in which the information is presented closely resembles travel accounts and histories of the Ottoman Empire written by 15th-17th century europeans. Although it is theoretically possible that figures like Hezārfenn could have composed a work inspired by European standards for the description of Sufi orders, it seems more likely that the same standards inspired the Domenico Balzarini and the other unidentified translator in picking the information that seemed relevant. Marsili's reference to a synthesis of the - much

⁶⁵ It is also possible to formulate another, more fascinating, hypothesis: that the text translated by Domenico Balzarini for Marsili was in itself a Turkish rendition of a European report (being a travel account or a more erudite elaboration, like Sansovino's one). This could fit the idea that the original text was written by a Christian, although most probably not in Greek, as said by Ismā'il Efendī. Or that, most probably, the *relazione* mentioned by Marsili is based not on this text, but on another one obtained in Istanbul. Here Hezārfenn had met Rycaut, Galland and other Europeans travelers willing to share views and information with a Turkish intellectual. The use, in their conversation of *rūmī* instead of *yunānī* may have led the translator working for Ismā'il Efendī to think that the work was from Greek and not Anatolian sources.

larger - work obtained from Ismā‘il Efendī in Edirne in 1691. This filtered the information ended up in the Italian versions with some significant changes in the approach to Sufism. The most evident one is the complete lack of any derogatory comment towards dervishes, their attitudes and the sincerity of their beliefs. Secondly, the information about the location of the orders, their presence (or absence) in Ottoman Turkey is collected by a Marsili from primary written sources. Considering the draft of his letter to the Hapsburg emperor about Islam, Marsili, in a rather pro-orientalistic attitude, wanted to report the translation these sources, keeping his personal opinions in the introduction. Although no mention is made of this text about Sufis, it is possible to argue that he wanted to include some information on dervishes in that epistle. Marsili's neutrality towards Islam and the Sufis was the result of the precise choice of relying upon primary Islamic sources, with the intention, as he did later with the *Stato Militare*, of producing the most accurate picture of the enemy, even admitting that the Turk had a sincere spirituality.

Further research will probably identify the *Vorlage* of Marsili's text on Sufism⁶⁶, being it in Turkish or Arabic. This will lead to a better understanding of the way the document was obtained and translated. What is clear even from the two translations presented here is that the last quarter of 17th century was a turning point in the approach of European travelers to Sufism and Islam. The availability of written sources, quickly translated in European languages, is not simply the result of the institution of schools for *jeunes de langue*. The latter was a response to a demand for accuracy, objectivity and reliability that came from politicians, military and intellectuals. Marsili, as others in the same period, applied a scientific methodology to both hydrology and, in the limits of his own abilities, to the study of Islam. This is not true for all those who wrote on Islam in 17th and 18th century, but represent an early sign of the emergence of Islamic studies.

⁶⁶ At the moment there are multiple “candidates”, among whom the *Menākub-i Hvoca-i Cihān ve Netice-i Cān* of Vahidi seems to be the most promising one, although there are significant differences between this work and Marsili's text, namely the number of Sufi orders described and some of the data reported. See Karamustafa 1993.

Appendix

This is a transcription of the text in BUB 51 163r-167r (A) and BUB 52 270v-271v (B). The abbreviations in the texts have been made explicit between angle brackets. Both texts are written in the original on the right half of the page, as it was customary in 17th century. What is written in the left half of the page is given in square brackets. The subdivision operated is intended to compare the sections of the text devoted to each Sufi order in each version of the text.

The footnote apparatus is aimed at providing basic clarifications on the names mentioned and few additional references. Possible alternative readings and emendations to the text are also reported. For names and terms transliterated from Ottoman Turkish or Arabic, the transcription in the notes is provided according to the Arabic system, considering that the writing of these names was done using Arabic alphabet, and that the pronunciation by Turkish speakers did not affect, in most cases, the written form.

Notta di Nomi e diversità delle Religioni di Dervisi⁶⁷ Turchi Nachssibendî, Kalvetî, Zelvetî, Giulssenî, Cadri, Bairamî, Seirî, Ussachi, Mevlevî, Adkamî, Assrafi, Vaissî, Reffaî, Bedawî, Sadî, Bechtassî, Semissî, Kaidarî, Kasser Abdalî	[dei Religiosi Turchi] Le varie sorte di Re..g<iosi> che si tro= vano fra i Monsulmani [Religiosi Turchi] Naxibendi – Kaalveti [sic] – Gelveti Giulseni – Kaderi – Bairami Zeini – Usachi – Mevlevi – Ademi – Esrefi – Veissi – Refai Sadi – Bedawi – Bectassi – Semsî – Aideri – Abdal
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⁶⁷ The double “s” often, but not always, transcribes the sound “sh”, corresponding to the Arabic letter *šm*.

Dichiarazione di Costumi	
[Primo 1. Nacchsibendi⁶⁸] di questa Religione di Nachssibendi sono stati li loro fondatori primo il Profeta Abubechir⁶⁹ doppo il Koza Bakaidin⁷⁰ quali sono li loro principali, et eseguiscano la loro regola, qual' è che nel tempo che vogliono far oratione, si sentano in terra in forma di circolo, inarcando il colo verso il petto invocano il nome d'iddio, senza esser intesi, et uno con l'altro s'intendono con il cuore, senza parlare et questi sono li costumi che patticano.	I Naxibendi vantano per loro fonda. tore Abu bekir Keret, che devono tenere Gl'ochij bassi, e le mano giunte, e parlar piano sempre
[2]do Kalveti⁷¹] Il fondatore di quest'altra Religione fu il Profetta Allì⁷² doppo di lui in fino al tempo presente furono in quantità e di buona vita li Sciek che lo seguirono, che vuol dir li superiori del medemo convento le altre dicissette Religioni si sono separate da queste due prime cioè Nachssibendi, et Kalveti, ma considerando la distinctione tutti loro vengono à Esser uno, et seguaci di Maohmeto, pero l'ordine suo fu	I Kalveti hanno per loro fondatore Ali, e tutti gl'altri derivano da questi due fondatori, che dicono le loro orationi giravolanti per il gran fervore di chiamare Dio

⁶⁸ Naqšbandi.

⁶⁹ Abū Bakr al-Siddīq, first caliph of Islam (d. 634).

⁷⁰ Bahā'uddīn Naqšband (d. 1389), founder of the eponym Sufi order. See Giordani 2019.

⁷¹ Halwatiyya, usually transcribed as Halveti. See (Martin 1972; Karataş, 2014).

⁷² 'Alī b. Abī Tālib (d. 661).

che li Nachssibendî, debbino fare le loro preghiere sotto voce, et li Kalvetî con voce sollevata, andando attorno in forma di circolo.	
[3]o Zalvetî ⁷³] L'antecessore di q<ue>sti fu Estade Effendi quale è sepolto in Bursia. adesso vi si truovano in luoco [163v] suo li suoi figliuoli i quali facendo oratione gridano con alta voce invocando il nome d'Iddio senza moversi dal loro luoco ne meno andar attorno come gl'altri ancora Makmud Effendi ⁷⁴ da Scutari ⁷⁵ , fu di questa Rel<i> gione.	I Gilveti han<n>o per suo primo Ustede Ef= endi, che è sepolto in Bursa, e questi dicono le loro orationi sentati gridando frasi ... chiamar il nome di Dio
[4]o Giulssemi] Quest'altra fu fondata dal Seik Ibraim, di cognome Giulssemi ⁷⁶ la sepoltura del quale si truova in Cairo; adesso li Seik che vi si truovano nel suo luoco sono tutti della sua linea, quali nel tempo dell' Oratione levano in piedi, et formando un circolo vano attorno gridando con alta Voce, invocano il Nome d'Iddio in diverse maniere.	I Giulseni, che han<n>o per fondatore Sec Ibraim Iulseni ; che è sepolto in Cairo, e v'è della sua discendenza in ora facendo come gl'Alveti

⁷³ Ġilwatī or Ġalwatī. It was founded by Šayḥ Uftāde (d. 1580-81) and established as such by his disciple 'Azīz Maūmūd Hudā'ī (d. 1038/1628-29). See Gölpınarlı 1991; Türier 2005: 242.

⁷⁴ Azīz Maḥmūd Hudā'ī, see note above.

⁷⁵ Üsküdar, a suburb of Istanbul.

⁷⁶ Ibrāhīm Gölşenî (d. 1534). See Türier 2005: 229-30; Curry 2021: 510-513.

[5]o Cadrì⁷⁷] Il Capo di qsti altri fu Abdul Cadir Gilanì⁷⁸, che fu sepolto in Babilonia⁷⁹, li seguaci del quale facendo oratione gridano come li sodetti, andando attorno in forma di circolo, et nel medesimo tempo gonfiando un'Utre dove vi è un piffaro⁸⁰ attaccato balano con quel suono.	I Kaderi han<n>o per fondatore Abdil Kadir gilani et è sepolto in Babilonia, ...i fan<n>o le loro orationi in come gl'Alveti
[6]o Bairamì] La seguente Religione fu fondata da Kazi Bairam Sultan⁸¹ quale fu stimato da molti Santi Turchi, et è sepolto in Natolia nelli luochi circonvicini di Burzia, li [164r] seguaci del quale fano le loro orationi, come li Kalveti gridando con alta voce, si formano in circolo et invoca<n>do il nome d'Iddio vano attorno.	Li Bairami per fondatore Agi Bairam [271r] Sultan, che è sepolto appresso Brussa e questi fan<n>o come gl'Alveti

⁷⁷ Qādiriyya.

⁷⁸ ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ġilānī (d. 1166), founder of the eponym order. The literature on the Qādiriyya is enormous, as it is one of the most ancient and widely diffused *ṭuruq*. A collection of recent studies can be found in Ekrem Işin, Thierry Zarcone. « The Qādiriyya Order ». *Journal of the History of Sufism*, special issue, dedicated to Alexandre Popovic, Istanbul: Simurgh Press 2000.

⁷⁹ It is a common indication for Iraq and Mesopotamia. See Bîrsan and Maxim 2010: 60. For the branches of the Qādiriyya in Ottoman Anatolia see Türier 2005: 225-26.

⁸⁰ The use of bagpipes among Qādirīs is not mentioned in other sources.

⁸¹ Hāğgī Bayrām Sulṭān or Hacı Bayram-Veli (d. 833/1429-30). See Türier 2005: 223, 238-4.

[7]o Seinì] Il fondatore di quest'altra fu Sinaildin Kaffi⁸² questi ancora si fano nel medemo circolo, andando attorno, ma nell' invocare il nome d'Iddio lo proferiscono con gran Vehemenza del gargato.	I Zeini han<n>o per suo fondatore Zeinidini Kafi, e fan<n>o come gl'Alveti
[8]o Ussachi] Di questi altri fu capo Ussachi Effendi⁸³, quale si truova sepolto nel medemo suo Convento ch'è a Cassum Passà⁸⁴ li seguaci suoi nel tempo della loro preghiera [sic], gridando pregano Iddio, mà non si movono dal loro luoco, andando attorno come gli altri, ne meno vogliono accettar, paga ne si contentano star divisi in in [sic] diverse Camere, ma tutti uniti dormono in'una stanza chi sopra la pelle di Cervo e chi di Pecora.	Gl'Usachi il loro fondatore è Usachi Effendi, che sta sepolto a Cassim Passa, e dicono le loro orationi a sedere, e p... <non> possono pigliare paga, et usano stare tutti in un loco
[9]o Mevlevi] Quest'altra Religione fu fondata da Zallaidin Rumì Monlà⁸⁵ Kunchiar⁸⁶, che vuol dire sacerdote et Imp<erato>re quale fu sepolto in'Iconia nel medemo suo Convento, adesso li Seik che sono	I Mevlevi han<n>o per loro fondatore Mu-la Ungiar sepolto in Iconia, et oggigiorno vi sono di loro descendentì, il capo di questi, che è della famiglia Sole venire a Cost<antinopoli> a giungere la spada

⁸² Zayn al-Dīn Ḥwafī (d. 1435). On him see Norris 1990. Recent studies put him also in the line of the Suhrawardiyya; see Kaya 2019.

⁸³ Ḥasan Ḥusām al-Dīn 'Uṣṣākī (d. 1001/1592-3). On him see Türer 2005: 234.

⁸⁴ Kasımpaşa, where the *tekke* of Ḥusām al-Dīn 'Uṣṣākī is still present.

⁸⁵ Mawlānā Ḡalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 1273).

⁸⁶ See note above.

nel medemo, vengono dalla sua discendenza, et quando si fa nuovo Grans Sig:re, il Capo di questa Religione , e' quello [164v] che li cinge la spada, nel luoco chiamato Eiup, facendolo venire da Iconia⁸⁷ apostata per q<ue>sto effetto, la Causa è q<ue>sta, che il sod<etto> Zallaidin, era mollà d'un Sig<no>re quale morendo senza figli et restata la Sedia Vacua, il popolo lo ellesse per Rè quale accettò la Carica per pocco tempo, doppo rinunciando l'Imperi<o> a Osmanzich⁸⁸, che fu il primo Gran Sig<no>re di q<ue>sta Casa Ottomana formò questa Religione; onde per mostrare d'haver havuto l'Imperio da q<ue>sto vogliono, che sii cinta la spada a ogni nuovo Re dalli suoi discendenti; Fusanze l'usanze delli q<ua>li et Religione non assomigliano alle altre questi vestono di sotto Lana, e di sopra un vestito di pano in forma di farazé⁸⁹ con maniche large [sic], che lori [sic] chiamano	in liut [sic]⁹⁰ al Re, che sonano i flauti, e girano
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⁸⁷ Konya.

⁸⁸ Osmançık, a district in Northern Anatolia, where the first Oghuz Turks settled. The link with the Ottomans is based on the legendary descent of 'Uthmān I from the Oghuz Turks.

⁸⁹ Also spelled *farazā* in the text. Possibly from Persian *farağī*, indicating a large garment covering the shoulders, usually with a light blue tint.

⁹⁰ Probably *vita*.

Kircà⁹¹, alla Coppa portano un fazzuolo di Setta, che piccoli da tutte due le parti d'avanti; la beretta che portano in testa, è di feltrone, et per portar la toccha, è a piac cimento d'ogni'uno. Li giorni destinati dell'oratione, si uniscono tutti in una Salla⁹², et doppo il Mezzogiorno, il loro Sup<erio>re monta in Pulpito et predicando tutti li dervissi stanno in terra ascoltare con gran Silentio, finita la predica viene abasso, et si canta, et gl'altri sentono tutti in Terra [165r] in mezo a quella Salla in forma di Circolo stando col Collo inar cato procurando di metter la testa apresso il petto per più che sia possibile; fra questi ci sono alcuni , che sonano di flauto, et altri che cantano delle orationi in lode di Maometo, il restante stano come di già si disse con il collo storto à sentire. Doppo in'un medesimo tempo sbattendo le mani in terra tutti d'accordo con gran crepito levano in piedi, fermandosi nel medemo luoco per un pocco, poi tutti insieme fano alquanti giri doppo	
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⁹¹ *Hırqa*, the iconic Sufi robe, that usually is considered the symbol of spiritual investiture.

⁹² *Şalât*.

si fermano et quelli i quali, hano d'andar attorno si spartono dal Circolo, e buttando in terra l'habbito di sopra, e restano con quello di sotto quale è in forma di Cottolo da dona, et facen dosi a mezo girano a guida di trotolo, et nel girare passando d'avanti il loro Capo inchinando la testa lo salutano tre o quattro volte, e da nuovo continuano il loro girare, fino al fine della Canzone, che sonano con li flauti, in q<ue>sto mentre li altri loro compagni stano in piedi con le mani giunte al petto et doppo finito ancor loro si sentano, et il loro Capellano levando in piedi, dice un oratione e poi finisce	
[no 10 Adkamì] Di quest'altra Religione fu il fondatore Ibraim Adkam⁹³ quale essendo Re di Belkh nelle parti di Persia, abbandonò il [165v] Regno et si messe a servir un Seik⁹⁴ santo, il quale havendolo superato di Santità, fece apostata altra Religione, li segua ci della q<ua>le portano nel Capo una Beretta, informa [sic] di sportella, che li copra gli occhi, et per sopra vesta come un	Gl'Ademi han<n>o per ... f<on>datore Ibraim ... Edemi questo era in Beli⁹⁵ Re, e la= scio il comando andando a servire un Su<ltano>⁹⁶

⁹³ Ibrāhīm b. Adham (d. 161/777-78). On the legends about his life see (Sato 2007).

⁹⁴ Šayḥ.

⁹⁵ Possibly reading the final ḥā' as a yā'.

⁹⁶ Possibly *Sec*.

farazé nomato Kirchà come li sopraccenati Mevlevi in questo paese di Cos<tantino>poli si trovano pocchi, ma alla Mecha Arabia et Vetechia⁹⁷ vi sono Assai.	
[no 11. Assrefi] Il fondatore di quest'altra Religione, fu il figliuolo d'Assref quale fu sepolto nel suo convento chè lontano di Cos<tantino>poli cento miglia nel luoco nominato Ciri Isnighindé⁹⁸ dove si fabbbbrica no le maioliche, et nella medema Religione, vi sono in suo luoco, e porto [sic] li suoi figliuoli fano l'oratio<ne> come li Kalveti, andando attorno invocano il nome d'Iddio	Gl'... Esrefi, che sono stati fondati da Esrefsade, et è sepolto in Isnik Vicino al lago, e questi fan<n>o come gl' Alveti.
[no 12 Veissi] L'inventor di questa Religione, è questo Vaissi che fu da una Città della Persia nominata Curàn⁹⁹, e per questo si chiama Veissil Curàn di q<ue>sti vi sono in gran numero ma in Arabia quali se venissero qui non sarebbero conosciuti. Questo Vaissil	I Veisi furono ... fondati da Veisin Karani¹⁰⁰, e di questi ve ne sono molti in Barbaria

⁹⁷ Dubious reading. Possibly Valachia.

⁹⁸ The reference is to İznik, a town famous for the production of majolica.

⁹⁹ This appears to be a simple derivation from the *nisba* "al-Qarani" of the famous Muslim figure of Uways al-Qarani (d. 640 ca.). On him see Baldick 1992: 15-21. The text put the place in Persia, where, in fact, several places named Kūrān are located. A possible source for the identification of Kūrān with a city and not with a Yemeni tribe (which is the generally accepted hypothesis) can be Lāmi'is *Masnavi* narrating the life of Uways al-Qarani. See Rieu 1888: 253. On Lāmi'ī see Gibb and Brown 1904: 21-34.

¹⁰⁰ Qarani. See note above.

Curan fu assai devoto et Amico di Maometto; il quale havendo inteso che à Maometto li fu rotto un dente alla Guerra, lui da disperatione se ne cavò uno delli suoi con le proprie [166r] mani, dopo considerando tra di lui quale potesse esser si cavò à uno per uno tutti li denti in diversi giorni.	
[13 Reffai] Quest'altra Religione fu fondata dal Seik Akmet Riffai¹⁰¹, questi con l'auttorità e potenza che Iddio li permette con un certo gridare che fano incantano ogni sorta di Bisse, et Scorpi, il convento delli quali si trova in Arabia et se in questi paesi vi venissero niuno li conoscerebbe.	I Bedawi il loro fondatore si chiamano Sec Hemet Bedawi,¹⁰² che sta sepolto in vicino il Cairo e questi ... dicono fece un miracolo che in un gior= no de l'an<n>o tornando intro la Came= ra dove è la sua sepultura due schiavi con i ferri ai pedi senza esser disbolate le parte¹⁰³
[14. Bedawì] L'inventore di quest'altra fu il Seik Akmet Bedawì quale si truova sepolto in Cairo, dove un giorno dell' Anno unendosi tutti li suoi seguaci, entrano nel luoco dove è posto il suo Cadavero, et truovano due Schiavi con le catene; quali poi vengono liberati.	I Refai han<n>o come loro fondatore Sec = Hemet Refai, che non han<n>o paura de serpenti, ma ad un segno, che si li spu= tano in boca muore¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī (d. 1182). See Trimingham 1971: 37-ff.; Karamustafa 2006: 48-49.

¹⁰² Here the transcription is different from the one of Balzarini, who reports “Akmet”.

¹⁰³ BUB 51, f. 271 r.

¹⁰⁴ BUB 52, f. 271 r.

[Sadi] Di quest'altra Religione fu capo Abdul Cadir Gilati Gillani discepolo di Seik Sadi¹⁰⁵, ancora questi sono come li Riffai che incantano le Bisse li Conventi delli qualli [sic] sono in Arabia, et se in questo paese vi venissero niuno li conoscerebbe	I Sadi han<n>o per fondatore Sec Sadi, che come i detti non han<n>o paura de ser= penti, che se lo veddono li dicono fer= [172v]mo, et ... obbidisce pigliandolo in mano e muvifancandolo [sic]¹⁰⁶, e lo buttano morto, e questi sono in Damasco, e lochi cir= convicini, e Babilonia.¹⁰⁷
[16 Bechtassì¹⁰⁸] Quest'altra fu fondata da Kazi¹⁰⁹ Bechtasì santo da Turchi molto stimato quale fu sepolto in Asia nel medemo suo Convento, et si chiama protettore di tutte le sorti [166v] da soldati Turchi li seguaci del quale vano vestiti con una Beretta à fette, et li loro Kirchà sono di Lana et portano sotto il petto nella Cinta attaccata una pietra di Agata, o di qualche altra pietra tralucente di quattro detta di larghezza, ma in ottangolo; et il petto sco= perto, li quali per non haver convento in questi paesi	I Bectassi han<n>o havuto loro fondatore Agi¹¹⁰ Bictas, che è capo d'ogni sorta di gente, che portano spada, et archibu= gio, e van<n>o con le carni discoperte sonando uno corno.

¹⁰⁵ See Trimnghan 1972: 39 n. 4; 73 n.2. See also Lane 1907: 248-ff.

¹⁰⁶ Possibly *mummificandolo*.

¹⁰⁷ BUB 52, ff. 271r-271v.

¹⁰⁸ Bektaşî. On the early history of the Bektaşîyya see Yildirim 2020. On the Bektashiyya in 17th century Anatolia see Türer 2005: 247-250.

¹⁰⁹ Although it may be read also ad *qādî*, it should be considered a rendition of *Hağgî*, in continuity with Balzarini's habit of rendering *h* with *k* and *ğ* with *z*.

¹¹⁰ *Hağgî*.

non si può sapere la loro usanza; se non che Caminano per il mondo pellegrinando, ma per haver la licenza dal loro priore di Caminar il mondo, bisogna che prima servino nel loro convento Mille et un giorno.	
[17 Semissi¹¹¹] Di questa seguente Religione fu l'inventore Semissì di cognome Betrizi¹¹² li seguaci del quale caminano come li Bechtasì con il petto scoperto, quali portano per sotto Vesta una pelle di Marochino, che li ariva in fine li genocchi, et non portano Camisa ne meno Bragesse et in luoco di portar farazà portano un Kirchà òvèro si legano attorno una pelle di Cervo ò di Pecora.	I Semsi han<n>o per loro fondatore Semsi¹¹³ Te= bressi e questi sono come quelli d'Agi= Bictas portando il petto meso disco= perto, e le gambe.
[18 Kaidari¹¹⁴] Questi altri sono come li Bechtasì solamente portano un orecchino attaccato nella Orecchia, altro non hanno di diferenza; il loro Convento era in Co<stantino>poli [167r] avanti l'incendio ma adesso tutto li dervissi vano a pelle grinando, et il convento restò vuoto.	Gl'Aideri¹¹⁵ il loro fondatore e sono vestiti come quelli d'Ai [sic] Bictas portando un orecchino.

¹¹¹ Šamsī. See Türier 2005: 223-239, passim.

¹¹² Tabrizī, with a possible inversion of the order of letters. On Šams-i Tabrizī and his mystical thought see Tabriz 2017.

¹¹³ Šamsī.

¹¹⁴ Haydarī. See Türier 2005: 85-87.

¹¹⁵ Haydarī.

[19. Kesser Abdal¹¹⁶] Ancora questi sono come li Bechtassì¹¹⁷ li quali vano per il mondo pellegrinando, andando con li bracci nudi et hanno diversi Conventi, ma lontano di Co<stantino>poli	Gl'Assam Abdali han<n>o per loro fondatore Abdal Assano, e sono come quelli d' Agi Bectas, e questi van<n>o per il Mondo. Dove vi sono quantità di questi fan<n>o il Sec¹¹⁸ come ... priore
Tradotte da Mé Domenico Balzarini G A L	

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1720

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Bernardo da Parigi

1665

Vocabolario italiano-turchesco ... per l'utilità non solamente di quelli che bramaranno d'imparar la lingua turchesca, ma ancora di quelli, che sapendola, voranno tradurre le scritture turchesche ; tradotto dal francese nell'italiano con la fatica dal P. F. Pietro d'Abbauill. Roma : nella stamperia della Sac. Congreg. di Propaganda Fide.

¹¹⁶ The text may refer to the so-called Abdal-i Rum. The two terms *Kesser* and *Assam* can be read as renderings of *Ḥasan*.

¹¹⁷ An historical connection between the Abdals of Rum and Hāḡḡī Bektash seems plausible according to the *Velāyetnāme*. See Karakaya-Stump 2020: 156-187.

¹¹⁸ *Şayḥ*.

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