

The Arabic Manuscripts of the Riccardiana Library of Florence and the Retrieval of Alessandro Pini's Allegedly Lost Collection*

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A recent cataloguing project of the Arabic manuscripts preserved in the Biblioteca Riccardiana of Florence allowed to reconstruct the history of 20 codices which had arrived in the library before 1736. A close analysis of the material, and of the information contained in the letters exchanged between Alessandro Pini and Francesco Redi, two physicians at the Medici court in Florence, has shown that they were part of goods, shipped by Pini from Cairo in 1681, which were believed to have been lost in a shipwreck. In the paper I identify the manuscript according to a list of lading made by Pini and their actual content. I also outline the phases of their cataloguing and description and provide a tentative reconstruction of their history before their acquisition by Gabriello Riccardi.

In 2019, a project of the University of Florence gave me the opportunity to work on the collection of Arabic manuscripts preserved today in the Biblioteca Riccardiana of Florence. The aim of the project was to produce scientific descriptions of the material within the national on-line repository for manuscript material (*Manus OnLine*) and the publication of a catalogue in the *Series Catalogorum* of the Istituto per l'Oriente C. A. Nallino, Rome (forthcoming).¹ The oriental manuscript collection of the Riccardiana is not fully unknown: indeed, a few catalogues and inventories related to this specific corpus of manuscripts had been compiled since its first nucleus was gathered by the marquis and sub-dean Gabriello Riccardi (1705–1798).² Three

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1 The project, directed by Prof. Paolo La Spisa, was funded by the Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze and the (then) Dipartimento LiLSI (Lingue Letterature e Studi Interculturali) of the University of Florence. The metadata of the Arabic manuscripts described in *Manus OnLine* (< <https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/>>) will be soon available as reference to the on-line images of the manuscripts (for the Riccardiana collection see <<http://teca.riccardiana.firenze.sbn.it/index.php/it/>>; for the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze (hereafter BNCF) see <<https://teca.bncf.firenze.sbn.it/manos/browseF.jsp>>).

2 On the library of Gabriello Riccardi see Bartoletti 2017. For a description of the catalogues see, Bartoletti 2011, 233–237 and 241–243 (NB: at p. 235 'Minorita' to be corrected in 'Maronita'); see also Minicucci 1983, 179.

of them are available among manuscripts preserved in the Riccardiana Library itself. The first (ms Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 3822, ff. 157r–159v) was compiled in 1736 by two Coptic priests during their stay in Florence, at the request of Giovanni Lami (1697–1770), the librarian of the Riccardi House’s collection.³ The second in chronological succession (ms Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 3580) was authored in 1741 by the Archbishop of Apamea Stefano Evodio Assemani, famous for being involved, together with his uncle, Giuseppe Simonio Assemani, in several cataloguing projects of oriental manuscripts in Italian libraries, among which the Biblioteca Vaticana and the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana of Florence.⁴ In 1867, Lupo Buonazia was entrusted by the Italian Ministry of Education to revise Assemani’s catalogue and produced his own accurate descriptions; they are available in the autograph manuscript preserved within the archive of the Riccardiana (ms Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Archivio, no shelf-mark) and, despite the almost total absence of codicological descriptions, it remains an excellent reference for the descriptions of the manuscripts’ contents, especially considering the bibliographic tools available in his time. There are also two printed tools to access the collection of oriental manuscripts: one is the short list of Arabic manuscripts that Olga Pinto compiled in 1935, without knowing Buonazia’s work; the other one is the milestone catalogue of Persian manuscripts published by Angelo Piemontese, which includes also codicological and historical information related to the single codices, but not to the constitution of the collection itself, and only refers to Persian works, thus covering a very small section of the collection.⁵ The historical stratification and development of Gabriello Riccardis’s collection has been described in the major monograph by Guglielmo Bartoletti, who also devoted a specific study to the oriental manuscripts, identifying the main phases of their acquisition.⁶

3 Minicucci 1983, 180.

4 Hereafter BML. See Levi della Vida 1962; Farina 2021. Assemani’s project, never realized, to publish this catalogue together with those of the BML and Palatina libraries is recorded in the letters he exchanged with Anton Francesco Gori; cf. Minicucci 1983, 181–182. A short list of the oriental manuscripts, on the base of Assemani’s catalogue, was then included in the *Inventario* (1810), 8a–9a.

5 Pinto 1935, 238–242; Piemontese 1989, 131–137. Of the 58 oriental manuscripts in the collection, 35 are in Arabic, 9 in Ottoman-Turkish, 4 in Persian, 8 a mix of these mentioned languages, and 2 codices in one of the previous languages mixed with Latin or European vernacular. The historical core of the oriental collection runs roughly from shelf-mark Ricc. 167 to Ricc. 219bis, including also Ricc. 213, that is in Greek, and Ricc. 220, the only one in Hebrew within this group. Ricc. 4104, 4234, and 4240 are recent acquisitions.

6 Bartoletti 2017; 2011, 237–239, 241. The different phases of acquisition are also outlined in Bartoletti 2007 and 2009.

These tools are a precious key of access to the study of the Arabic manuscripts in the collection, but at the same time they show some inconsistencies in the reconstructed history of the fund, when compared to the information obtained from the manuscripts themselves.⁷

The corpus of manuscripts to which I refer in this contribution is part of the oldest set of oriental manuscripts acquired by Gabriello Riccardi. The first information about the presence of this material in the Riccardiana collection is in a travel report made by Giovanni Lami in 1740, in which he narrated his encounter with Stefano Evodio Assemani in 1737.⁸ In the account Lami made an explicit reference to the acquisition of 40 codices from the library that had belonged to the famous Giovanni Battista Doni (1594–1647) ('comprati da quello che fu già del celebre Giovambattista Doni').⁹ There is no specific documentary trace of this acquisition, but from the inventories of Gabriello Riccardi's collection it is clear that, for his library, this was the most relevant increase, counting more than 900 manuscripts.¹⁰

Giovanni Battista Doni was a renowned Florentine erudite whose interests spanned from geography, rhetoric, geometry, to music composition and musicology.¹¹ His innovative theories in this latter field—and his competence in humanistic studies—put him into contact with many contemporary scholars, personally, during his stay in Rome and France, and also via lively ex-

- 7 The work by Guglielmo Bartoletti, to whom I am largely indebted, is still essential, but the contribution from different disciplinary and linguistic fields to this kind of research, and a codicological and historical-archaeological analysis of the material objects can always add crucial information.
- 8 From the same report we discover that it was Riccardi himself to ask Assemani to correct the descriptions made by the Coptic priests, and to add those for the Turkish and Persian manuscripts (Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 3799, f. 123v; published in Bartoletti 2011, 235–236; Minicucci 1983, 179).
- 9 And not 'comprati da quello che fu già il celebre Giovan Battista Doni', as Bartoletti by mistake transcribes just two pages after (Bartoletti 2011, 237). A direct acquisition from Giovan Battista Doni was clearly impossible for chronological inconsistency (see n. 21 below). To be precise, of the 40 manuscripts, 37 were previously part of the Doni House's collection, and three were acquired in 1735 from Anton Maria Salvini (1653–1729), one of the major representative of the Florentine *Republic of letters*; see Bartoletti 2009. These three items have been identified by Bartoletti as mssRicc. 167, 190, 192, but there is clear evidence of inconsistency in the identification of Ricc. 167 as it will be pointed out below (cf. n. 38).
- 10 The catalogue of the Doni House's Library is preserved in Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 3575 which lists, at f. 1v, the 37 Arabic manuscripts ('Auctores arabici codices XXXVII'). The descriptions in this list refer only to the format and size of the manuscripts ('in 4° e in 8°', 'piccoli' or 'grandi'), also hinting to their aesthetical and/or codicological quality ('libri' or 'libretti').
- 11 Formichetti 1992.

changes of letters dealing with literary, scientific and bibliographic subjects.¹² Famous orientalists, such as the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (1602–1680) and Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1637) were among his contacts.¹³ His works remained largely unpublished until his death, but, except for a general curiosity for oriental music, there is no evidence that could entail his proficiency in oriental languages. The first hint at this specific interest is found in his biography compiled by Angelo Maria Bandini (1726–1803), the famous learned bibliophile and director of the Biblioteca Laurenziana and of the Marucelliana, founded in 1752. According to him, Doni started to study oriental languages during his stay in Pisa, from 1620, acquiring at least a certain knowledge of Hebrew.¹⁴ Bandini also recalled the acquisition of Doni's oriental manuscripts by Gabriello Riccardi, possibly on the basis of the already mentioned report by Lami, asserting also that *he was not unacquainted* ('non ignarus') with oriental languages.¹⁵ But Doni's actual interest in oriental texts is better defined in his epistolary exchanges: more than a direct engagement testifying his skills in the oriental linguistic domains, he certainly played a crucial role as 'bibliographical broker' especially between the Florentine and Roman intellectual milieux, but also with other cultural centres. In fact, he had been appointed custodian of the Medicean collection by Grand Duke Ferdinando II de' Medici (1610–1670, r. 1621–1670) and facilitated the access of scholars to that extraordinary book heritage.¹⁶ This was the case for the study and translation of the Arabic version of the *Conics* by Apollonius of Perga, in which the Lebanese Maronite Abraham Ecchellensis (Ibrāhīm ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Dāwūd Ḥāqilānī, 1605–1665) was engaged, thanks to the mediation played by Lucas Holstenius (1596–1661).¹⁷ From these indications it is not clear if and how Doni had a proper knowledge of oriental languages, nor is there any mention of his personal oriental book collection and its origin, apart from the above mentioned inventory that does not identify the works. In any case his specific care for the oriental manuscripts and a certain awareness of their content is evident in the explicit mentions of the Medicean oriental

12 See Doni's epistolary published together with his biography in Bandini 1755 and his exchanges with Lucas Holstenius (1596–1661) in Mirto 1999.

13 Bandini 1755, cols 155–156, 169; Miller 2015, 90, 107.

14 Bandini 1755, x.

15 *Ibid.* lv i, n. 3.

16 Bandini 1878, 38–39.

17 Letters from Lucas Holstenius to Doni in Bandini 1755, cols 170–173, nos CVIII–CX, and also pp. ciii–civ; letters from Doni to Holstenius in Mirto 1999, 134, 140–141, nos 63, 69. On the manuscripts and edition of the *Conics*' Arabic translation by Abū al-Faṭḥ b. Maḥmūd al-Faḍl al-Iṣfahānī see Fani and Farina 2012, 100–103. On Abraham Ecchellensis see Heyberger 2010.

collection—mainly gathered in Rome during the activities of the *Typographia Medicea Linguarum Externarum*—in his epistolary exchange with the Roman traveller and orientalist Pietro Della Valle (1586–1652).¹⁸ Doni shared with him the interest for music, the main subject of their correspondence, but he also asked Della Valle for his Turkish grammar, to which the Roman traveller replied in 1641, writing that the work was still unpublished, and that he intended to have it printed by the *Congregazione de Propaganda Fide*.¹⁹ Within this framework, Doni's Arabic manuscripts collection could represent a sort of showpiece, not necessarily something with which the owner could engage, but rather the materialization of a crucial part of human knowledge, which was rediscovered during the Renaissance and could not be excluded in any learned man's curriculum, or at least in his library.

In any case, a closer analysis of the oriental manuscripts allegedly ascribed to Doni's collection, supported by codicological and documentary evidence, has surprisingly shed light on the origin of twenty manuscripts included in this first nucleus of the Riccardiana collection, revealing a part of its still unknown history set in the orientalist milieu of seventeenth-century Florence. The oriental manuscripts considered to have been part of Doni's library by Bartoletti are mss Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 168–189, 191, 193–201, 204–205, and 207–209.²⁰ Some of these, such as Ricc. 184 and Ricc. 194, show on their fly leaves notes in Arabic, which are later than Giovanni Battista Doni's death, thus excluding the possibility that the manuscripts—at least these two—ever were in his private possession.²¹ There should have been someone else who enriched the Doni Library with oriental manuscripts after the death of its founder (who, in any case, could have previously collected a part of them).²² Focussing on these two codices, it was possible to note that they share a common feature, namely a short note in Italian related to their contents on their first folios. The notes clearly show the same hand and, surprisingly, they are not unique to these two books. On mss Ricc. 185 and 188, for example, similar notes are preceded by *ex libris* written by the

18 Solerti 1905, 286–288. On Pietro Della Valle see Micocci 1989. On the *Typographia Medicea* established in 1584 see Fani and Farina 2012, with bibliography.

19 Solerti 1905, 299, n. 9.

20 Bartoletti 2011, 245–246.

21 Cf. n. 9 above. ms Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 184, f. 2r, has a note of purchase in Cairo dated 12 Šawwāl 1091 (= ad 5 November 1680), ms Ricc. 194, f. 130r has an ownership note dated 1078 (= ad 1667/1668).

22 So far I have not been able to identify the collector (or collectors) of the Doni family who acted before 1736 (cf. Bartoletti 2017, 47–48); the *terminus post quem* of this activity is 1681, as I will explain in the following paragraphs.

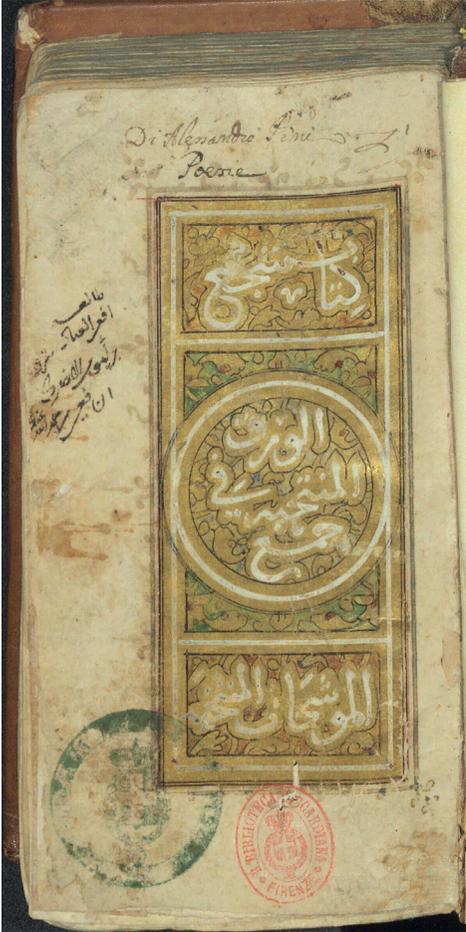


Fig. 1. Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 185, f. 1r, © by permission of Ministero della Cultura.

same hand, ‘Di Alessandro Pini’, which represented the cornerstone for the reconstruction of their lost piece of history (see figs 1, 2).

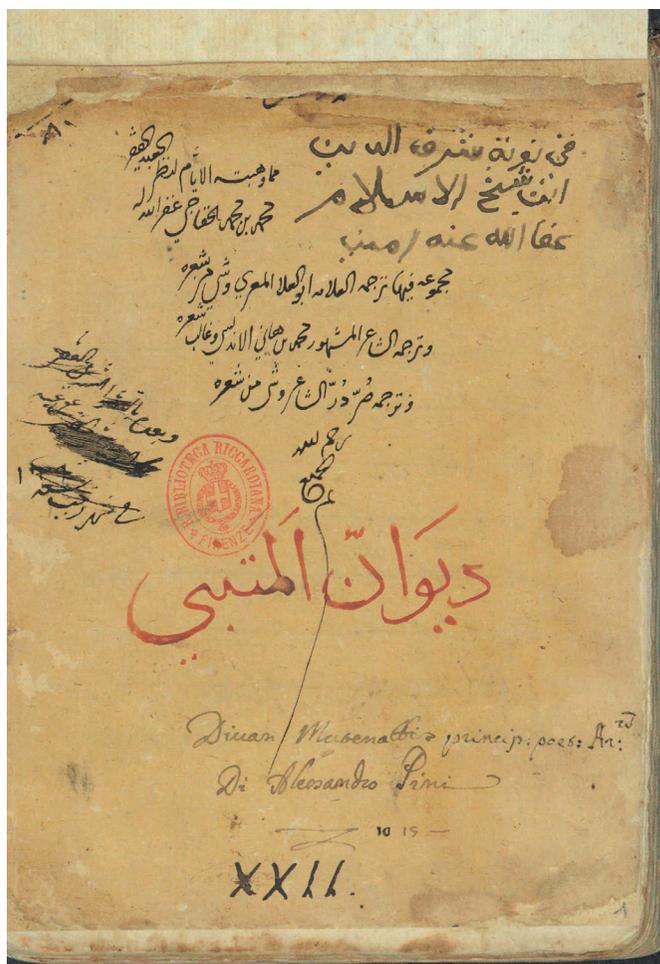
Alessandro Pini (1653–1717) was a Florentine physician whose competences spanned from medicine and philosophy to botany and classical erudition.²³ In Florence he studied and collaborated with Francesco Redi (1626–1697),²⁴ whose role and orientalist interests within the circle of the Tuscan erudite personalities and academics has been wisely outlined by Pier Mattia Tommasino.²⁵ Both of them worked for the Medicean court, under Ferdinando

23 Baldi 2015.

24 Bucchi and Mangani 2016.

25 Redi was better known for his contributions to the foundation of modern biology and parasitology, but he also engaged in literary compositions. After 1666 he

Fig. 2. Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 188, f. 1r, © by permission of Ministero della Cultura.



served at the Medici Court as head physician and superintendent of the grand ducal apothecary. Tommasino underlines how Redi's orientalism was not fostered by missionary intents, but was rather secular and without any confessional implication. These are the terms in which, for example, he asked one of his collaborators for a relation on the Qur'anic text (Florence, BNCF, Pal. 1907, ff. 107–110 'Notizie intorno all'Alcorano'), read in the translation made by Giovanni Battista Castrodardo (Venice, 1547), and according to a political and historical perspective (Tommasino 2015). Redi's cooperation and intellectual exchange with European orientalists and Muslim scholars living in Italy are illustrated in Tommasino 2018. See also MS Florence, BNCF, Pal. 1095, ff. 327–328 where Redi copied an excerpt of the catalogue of the Medicean oriental collection compiled by Barthélemy d'Herbelot in 1666 (MS Florence, BNCF, Naz. II.II.115; another copy in Paris, BnF, Ms. it. 480).

II and his successor Cosimo III (r. 1670–1723). The latter entrusted Alessandro Pini with a mission to Egypt, under Redi's scientific supervision: it was in fact to him that Pini addressed his reports during his fieldwork.²⁶ The official aim of the mission was experimenting the method for candying the cassia,²⁷ but behind this front activity Pini was also supposed to gather intelligence related to the Ottoman military activities. The challenging travel was also the occasion for other collateral activities appreciated by his sponsors, and in compliance with Pini's competences and interests.²⁸ Among them was the collection of seeds, coins, antiquities, reproductions of inscriptions, and, in general, detailed relations about the territory, and its people. His biographers—even those contemporary to him²⁹—attest that he was also entrusted with particular and secret assignments by the Grand Duke, also referring to the task to lead back to Italy a certain Domenico Cantieri, a Tuscan whom he met in Cairo.³⁰ Pini could not convince the latter to come back to Florence, and it seems that this was one of the reasons why, once he was back home, he lost the favours of the Grand Duke and decided to move to Venice. After a period of service as a physician in the Venetian galleys during the Morea War, and then in Constantinople following the Bailo Giulio Giustiniani, he

- 26 The letters are mainly preserved in ms Florence, BML, Redi 212 'Registro di lettere scritte a Francesco Redi dal dottor Giovanni Pagni pisano quando fu mandato in Tunisi, dal dottore Alessandro Pini fiorentino, quando fu mandato al Cairo, e in Gerusalemme e in Aleppo. Dal dottor Michelangelo Tilli da Castelfiorentino quando fu mandato in Costantinopoli, e quando si trovò a Belgrado nella corte del Granturco nel tempo dell'assedio di Vienna', published in Pintaudi 2004.
- 27 The *Cassia* L. is a genus of flowering plant of the legume family (Fabaceae), with large-scale pharmacological properties, for which it is largely employed in Asian and African traditional medicine until today (see Khurm et al. 2021). It is evident that the candying ('canditura') was a method of conservation of various parts of the plant and its properties; Pini's method of work is partly explained in his letters to Redi (cf. Pintaudi 2004, 138, 157–158).
- 28 Similar missions were entrusted by the Medici also to other physicians, such as Giovanni Pagni (1634–1674) in Tunisia, and Michelangelo Tilli (1655–1740) in Constantinople and elsewhere, before and after Pini's mission; see Pagni 1829; Bono 1964; Aglietti 2001, 43–55; Brevaglieri 2019.
- 29 See for example the article by Caterino Zeno published in the *Giornale dei Letterati d'Italia* in 1717 (Pintaudi 2004, 6–7).
- 30 When Pini met him, he was the chief of the pages of the Grand Pasha of Egypt, Osman Pasha the Bosnian (d.1683). He helped Pini in currying the favour of the governor, who, after having been healed by him, allowed him to carry on his scientific activities. The healings were clearly directed to the Grand Pasha and to the chief of the Janissaries in Cairo, and not to the Grand Vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa (adoptive son of the Köprülü family), who resided in Constantinople (Pintaudi 2004, 6–7; cf. Baldi 2015).

established in Pera with his Genoese wife until 1715. Then they moved to Nafplio, in the Peloponnese, where he had acquired properties as a reward for his services to the Serenissima. Unfortunately, once there, the Ottoman army invaded the city and they were captured and transferred to the jails of Constantinople, where Pini perished of plague while his relatives in Florence were negotiating his ransom.

The information about his life is here reduced to the aspects that are relevant in this context; details are retrievable in his already mentioned biographies, and in his epistolary exchange with Francesco Redi.³¹ According to these sources he had more than one reason and certainly more than one occasion to engage with Arabic texts (but we could extend the statement also to Ottoman Turkish): he had to satisfy the curiosity and requests of his sponsor Cosimo III, those of his scientific supervisor Redi, his own interests related to the Arabic contributions in various scientific fields, and, last but not least, his need to learn the languages spoken in the lands where he resided to gather information. In fact, a list of Arabic manuscripts collected during his ten-months stay in Egypt appears in the penultimate letter he sent to Redi from Cairo (on 27 December 1681), before leaving for the Holy Land.³² There, Pini informed his supervisor about all the relics, naturalistic samples, and objects he was going to send in a forthcoming expedition. And there he listed also the Arabic books, as a sort of advanced bill of lading. In order to make every codex recognisable to the addressee, he listed their content in very short notes, often only the authors and title of the texts (at least the presumed ones), which correspond to what he had written on the first folia of the codices themselves. It is interesting to note that this method was not necessarily adopted assuming the addressee's scarce knowledge of the language, but rather depended on the scarce knowledge of Arabic of the sender himself, as some examples of inconsistency between the notes and the real content of the codices demonstrate.³³ Most likely Pini was guided by someone who could read Arabic, and knew about Arabic literary production, maybe by the very book sellers who provided him with these manuscripts in the market of Cairo. In some of the codices, in fact, there are notes referring explicitly to such an acquisition context, and in some cases the books show features which could comply with market

31 In addition to the already mentioned studies, I am pleased to announce the forthcoming monograph on Alessandro Pini, by Baldi Bellini.

32 Florence, BML, Redi 212, ff. 165v–166r (reproduced and transcribed in Pintaudi 2004, 163–165).

33 In a letter from Livorno dated 7 January 1683 (ms Florence, BML, Redi 212, ff. 221r–222v) Pini admits that he can understand just a bit of Classical Arabic, while he was quite proficient in the Egyptian dialect, even if elsewhere he had claimed that he was versed in both (Pintaudi 2004, 166, 193).

strategies, such as the sometimes arbitrary integrations in case of acephalous codices,³⁴ or the wrong (or deliberately false) identifications of the texts.³⁵

The list of books in ms Florence, BML, Redi 212, ff. 165v–166r is the following (the numbering is mine):

1. Abucrates * cioè Ippocrate
2. Ebn Calican de vitis Sapientum * questo è un libro raro delle vite di tutti li savii maomettani, o huomini insigni in lettere e in arme
3. Poesie intitolate Chetab el Sabe' * libro eccellente
4. Mulana Sceich el Sebchi * libro assai stimato fra i dotti maomettani
5. Mulana Sceich el Sebchi tomo II *
6. Chetab Diuan el Sababa * cioè libro di Poesie assai raro
7. libro di Chimica *
8. historia del mondo *
9. El Sciarhh el tani el baghie el uardie, parte seconda di uali alla ellarachi * libro rarissimo
10. Libro di Orazioni de i maomettani
11. Magemua el Baharin * libro buono
12. Poesie* cioè di diversi, et è libro buonissimo
13. Sciaar Mahammed ebn abd el manaem * poesie buonissime
14. Galeno medico * imperfetto assai non avendo altro li arabi che l'arte parva
15. Magemua Camel di abbu el abbas di Beccheri * libro rarissimo, essendo una raccolta di poesie di diversi autori buoni. Noti che magemua vuol dire raccolta in arabo e Camel, perfetta.
16. Chetab lumaa el Cauanin *
17. Diuan Mutenabbis principis poetarum arabum * il Virgilio delli Arabi
18. Poesie, di Alessandro Pini * non so ancora che libro sia questo per non lo aver letto che però li ho posto questo nome
19. Hada diuan Cafaz * buonissimo Poeta il pindaro o l'Orazio de i Persiani tradotto in Arabo forse meglio che non è in sua lingua
20. Magemua ibn Mahammed * libro rarissimo

Here below are the transcriptions of the notes found on the first folia of the Riccardiana's manuscripts, following the order of the list in Pini's letter to Redi, and the identification of the texts they contain.

1. Ricc. 175

Note f. 1r: 'Abucrates – no. 12', other marginal notes by Pini at ff. 2r–v. *Hikmat Ibuqrāt wa-mā šuriḥa fthā*, by uncertain author.³⁶

34 Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 175, 177, 178 (+206, ff. 3–25), 180.

35 Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 172, 176, 188. See also the indications of the price he paid, which is annotated next to the same notes on some of the codices ('medini ...'); cf. Scali 1759, 189–190.

36 It is a collection of medical texts ascribed to Hippocrates and here translated into Arabic by an uncertain author. For the Arabic versions of Hippocratic writings see GAS III, 23–47; Ullmann 1970, 25–35; *EP*, Suppl., 154–156.

2. Ricc. 178 + Ricc. 206, ff. 3–25³⁷
 Note Ricc. 206, f. 1: ‘Chetab tege el maaref ua taurihhe el Chalaif ebn chalican - 20’.
Tāğ al-ma‘ārif wa ta’rīh al-ḥalā’if, by Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. Abī al-Sa‘ādā b. Abī al-Ġūd al-Salmūnī (fl. 1494).
 GAL II, 54; GAL S II, 52.
 Ricc. 178, ff. 178v–180v: *Al-‘uqūd al-durriya fī al-umarā’ al-miṣriyya*, by Yaḥyā ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīm Ġamāl al-Dīn al-Ġazzār (d. 1280).
 GAL I, 335; GAL S I, 574; Karabulut 2006, 3929, n. 10826/2.
3. Ricc. 167³⁸
 Note f. 2r ‘Chetab el - saba; poesie’.
Nasīm al-ṣabā, by Badr al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Umar Ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥalabī (131–1377).
 GAL II, 37; GAL S II, 35; al-Ziriklī 2002, II, 208; Karabulut 2006, 854, n. 2280/17.
4. Ricc. 173
 Note f. 1r ‘Mulana Sceich Sebchi – 19’, other notes by Pini at f. 1v.
Taršīh al-tawšīh wa-tarğīh al-tašhīh, by Tāğ al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Waḥḥāb b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Kāfi Abū Naṣr al-Subkī (1327–1370).
 GAL II, p. 89; al-Ziriklī 2002, IV, p. 185.
5. Ricc. 172
 Note f. 1r ‘mulana Sceich el Sebchi tomo II’.
Kitāb al-umm, by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Šāfi‘ī (767–820).
 GAL I, 179–180; GAL S I, 304; Karabulut 2006, 2599, n. 7042/26.
6. Ricc. 184
 Note f. 1r ‘chetab diuan el sababa – 6’.
Dīwān al-ṣabāba li-ahl al-‘išq wa-l-ka’āba, by Ibn Abī Ḥağala Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Šihāb al-Dīn Abū ‘Abbās al-Tilimsānī (1325–1375).
 GAL II, 13; Karabulut 2006, 557, n. 1382/4.
7. Ricc. 187
 Note f. 1r ‘libro di Chimica – 3’.
 ff. 1r–12r: *Risālat al-šams ilā al-hilāl*, by Muḥammad Ibn Umayl al-Tamīmī (c.900–c.960).
 ff. 14r–169r: *Al-mā’ al-warqī wa-l-arḍ al-nağmiyya*, by the same author.
 GAL I, 241–242; GAL S I, 429; Karabulut 2006, 2634, n. 7099/4, 6
8. Ricc. 177
- 37 The first quires of Ricc. 178 have been bound with the composite codex Ricc. 206.
 38 Note that Bartoletti considers this codex as one of the three coming from Salvini’s collection, but the note is evidently by Alessandro Pini, so it most probably arrived in the Riccardiana with the Doni collection, as the others here presented (cf. Bartoletti 2009, 143; 2011, 245).

Note f. 1r: ‘historia del mondo – 5’.

Al-Ta’rīḥ al-mağmū’ ’alā al-taḥqīq wa-l-taṣdīq, by Sa’īd Ibn al-Baṭrīq (877–940).

GAL I, 148–149; GAL S I 1937, 228; GCAL II, 33–35.

9. Ricc. 170

Note f. 1r ‘el Sciarhh el bahgie el uardie, parte Seconda di uali alla ell’arachi – num. 1 – med. 25’.

Al-Nahğa al-marḍiyya fī šarḥ al-Bahğa al-warḍiyya, by Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Abū Zur‘a Walī al-Dīn Ibn al-‘Irāqī (1361–1423).

GAL I, 394; GAL II, 66–67 (with the title *al-Bahğa al-marḍiyya*); Karabulut 2006, 300, n. 813/21.

10. Ricc. 174

Note f. ivr ‘Libro di Orazioni de i Mahomettani’

Ḥādīm al-Rāfi’ī wa-al-rawḍa, by Abū ‘Abd Allāh Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Bahādūr al-Zarkašī (1344–1392).

GAL II, 92; GAL S II, 108; Karabulut 2006, 2642 n. 7122/11.

11. Ricc. 195

Note f. 1r ‘Magmaa el baharin – 10’.

Mağma’ al-baḥrayn wa-multaqā al-nayyirayn, by Muḥaffar al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī Ibn Sā’ātī al-Bağdādī (d. 1295).

GAL I, 383; GAL S I, 658; Karabulut 2006, 346–347, n. 944/3.

12. Ricc. 191

Note f. 1r ‘Poesie – 7’.

ff. 1r–33v: *Muḥtaṣar Dīwān al-ṣabāba li-Ibn Abī Ḥağala al-Tilimsānī*, by Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Šihāb al-Dīn al-Qaṣṭallānī (1448–1517).³⁹

GAL II, 87–88; GAL S II, 78–79; Karabulut 2006, 458–462, n. 1174.

ff. 34r–43v: *Ğilwat al-‘uṣṣāq wa-ḥalwat al-muštāq* (also known as *Muqaddimat Risālat al-tayf*), by ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Irbilī (m. 1293).

ff. 44r–60v: *Risālat al-tayf*, by the same author.

GAL S I, 713; Karabulut 2006, 2109, n. 5655/3.

13. Ricc. 186

Note f. 1r ‘Sciaar Mohammed ebn abd el menaem num. [...] m[edini] 25’

Dīwān šī’r li-Ibn al-Ḥiyāmī, by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Mun’im b. Muḥammad Šihāb al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥiyāmī (d. 1286)

GAL I, 264; al-Ziriklī 2002, VI, 250.

14. Ricc. 180

39 The text is a compendium of the *Dīwān al-ṣabāba* by al-Tilimsānī (see *supra* n. 5, Ricc. 185) and it is explicitly attributed to the famous šāfi’ite faqīh al-Qaṣṭallānī in the text, even if it is not attested in the repertoires.

- Note f. 1r ‘Galeno Medico – 7’
Al-Talwīḥ ilā asrār al-tanqīḥ, by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Faḥr al-Dīn al-Ḥuḡandī al-Isfahānī (m. 1157).
 al-Ziriklī 2002, VI, p. 217; Karabulut 2006, p. 2832, n. 7621/3
15. Ricc. 194
 Note f. 1r ‘Magmua Camel di Abu ell’abbas di Beccheri libro raro – num. 7 - - [?]’.
Maḡmū’ kāmīl, by Abī al-‘Abbās al-Bakrī.⁴⁰
16. Ricc. 183
 Note f. 1r ‘Chetab Lumaa el cauanin – 2 – med[ini] 25’
Luma’ al-qawānīn al-muḏḏīyah fī dawāwīn al-diyār al-Miṣrīyah, by ‘Uṭmān b. Ibrāhīm al-Nābulusī (d. 1261).
 al-Ziriklī 2002, IV, 202; Karabulut 2006, 1933, no. 5186/1
17. Ricc. 188
 Note f. 1r ‘Diuan Mutenabbi princip[is] poet[arum] Ar[abum] Di Alessandro Pini – 10 15 [?]’
[Biographies and selected poems of Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma’arrī, Ibn Hānī’ al-Andalusī, and ‘Alī b. al-Ḥasan Ṣarra Durr], by anonymous author.⁴¹
18. Ricc. 185
 Note f. 1r ‘Di Alessandro Pini – 1’ ‘Poesie’
Saḡ’ al-wurq al-muntaḥiba fī ḡam’ al-muwašṣaḥāt al-muntaḥaba, by Aḥmad b. Mūsā al-Saḡāwī (d. before 1480).
 ‘Atā 2001, 24–25, n. 11
19. Ricc. 176
 Note f. 1r ‘hada el Diuan hafadz – 13’
Rawḍat al-‘irfān wa-nuzhat al-insān, by Abū al-Mawāhib Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Ṣiddīqī (1566-1628).
 al-Ziriklī 2002, VII, 62–63
20. Not identified⁴²

The events that brought these manuscripts into the Doni House library are not clear. What is clear from Pini’s penultimate letter to Redi from Cairo is that, before leaving for the Holy Land, he was managing to ship to Alexandria a

40 It is a collection of poems not identified in the repertoires.

41 The biographies are largely based on Ibn Ḥallikān’s biographical dictionary *Wafayāt al-a’yān wa-anbā’ abnā’ al-zamān* (GAL I, 326–328; GAL S I, 561; Karabulut 2006, 405–407, n. 1057/3) translated into English by William Mac Guckin de Slane in 1842–1871.

42 The manuscript could be identical with Ricc. 171, a didactic collection of Arabic dialogues and fables, which does not show the usual note by Pini, but it does contain his translation of part of the text at ff. 40r–45r. Cf. *supra*, n. 33.

trunk containing them to be sent to Livorno; on the same occasion he underlined that they were very expensive and that it was difficult to bring books outside Egypt. According to the same letter he would have kept the best books with him, planning to bring them to Florence in person. He made a list of what he had planned to send back together with the books: the equipment received from Florence for candying the cassia, a Turkish sword, 200 bronze medals, other goods of lower value, and various botanical samples.⁴³ When he started to write again, more than five months later, after a journey passing through Jerusalem, Damascus, Aleppo, Tripoli of Syria, Gaza, and other cities, he affirmed that he had been informed that one of the trunks he had sent, containing porcelains, got lost in a shipwreck, but he made no specific mention of the one containing the books.⁴⁴ In January 1683, he wrote to Redi from the lazaret of Livorno, where he had arrived from Alexandretta with a Flemish vessel. In his previous letter, now lost, Redi had evidently asked for information regarding the medals mentioned in Pini's shipment inventory, which he had never received. He was certainly referring to the cargo which included also the twenty manuscripts, and, in fact, Pini also specified that he had not brought other books (i.e. other than those twenty) with him, but just two or three booklets of no value.⁴⁵ These two details led Pini's biographers to think that also the books were in the lost trunk, or in another one lost during the same shipwreck, but this is not what emerges from the correspondence. In any case it is clear that Redi never received the twenty Arabic manuscripts bought by Pini with Cosimo III's money in Egypt. The passage to Doni's collection should have happened via a different channel: indeed, other oriental manuscripts collected by Redi are now preserved in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, and probably this would have been the fate of Pini's twenty manuscripts, had they passed through Redi's possession.⁴⁶ It cannot be ruled out that Pini himself used this misunderstanding to his own advantage, to avoid the delivery of that precious shipment to Redi and the Medici. An ownership note on the last fo-

43 Florence, BML, Redi 212, ff. 163r–166v (Pintaudi 2004, 159–166).

44 Florence, BML, Redi 212, ff. 143r–146v: letter from Tripoli of Syria, 19 May 1682 (Pintaudi 2004, 171).

45 Florence, BML, Redi 212, ff. 221r–22v: letter from Livorno, 7 January 1683 (Pintaudi 2004, 192, 193). This evidently contradicts what he had stated in his letter from Cairo of 27 December 1681. Other manuscripts pertaining to Pini are in the composite codex Ricc. 206, ff. 27–46, and ff. 47–58 containing Pini's own notes of Ottoman-Turkish vocabulary and phraseology with Italian translation. This material could be what he mentions in this letter, but, considering the language and the subjects, it could also be identified as material he produced during his later stay in Constantinople which somehow came back to Florence.

46 Florence, BML, Redi 4 and 39.

lium of ms Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 177 supports this hypothesis: the name of Agostino Pini, Alessandro's brother, could in fact hint to the appropriation of the manuscripts by Pini's family, maybe collecting the cargo in Livorno while Alessandro was still wondering in the Holy Land. According to his tense relationship with Redi and the Grand Duke after his return to Florence, for not having accomplished the intelligence tasks entrusted to him, it would not be surprising if Pini simply informed the brother to keep the books at their arrival in Livorno. Then the manuscripts could have been sold to some representative of the Doni family, to enrich an already gathered collection of manuscripts in oriental languages, that continued to expand until 1736.

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