A little bit more than two hundred poems preserved till the present day, and eighty of them refer to the genre of folk songs. The many of poet’s works are full of grief and despair.  

32. A Song official, historian, bibliophile, and calligrapher Song Shou (宋邁, 991—1040), whose posthumous name was Xuan-min, Xian. Already in young age he showed a desire for studying and rich home library contributed to it. He took the degree of jinshi with passing the examinations. He started to serve early in his life and held a number of high posts at court. He was canzhi zhengshi (1033), musei in the court academy Hanlinyuan, as well as took part in compiling the chronic of the emperor Zhen-zong’s rule and preparing the materials for the Song Dynasty history. He was a connoisseur of historical and canonical writings by Confucius and a recognized master of old style prose. The collection of his works was lost and only separate writings in some anthologies survived to this day. The official biography of Song Shou is given in juan 291 of the Song Dynasty history.  

33. Zuo Qiu-ming (左丘明) in the end of 6—5 centuries BC — an outstanding historiographer of Chinese ancient times, Confu- cian contemporary (251—479 BC), the author of commentaries “Zuo Zuan” (左轉 Zuo’s Commentaries)” to a well-known historical chronicle “Chun qin” (“Springs and Autumns”). The text of the artefact presents a chronicle of events from 722 to 468 BC, and mostly contains the description of historical events and dialogues of historical figures.  

34. Zhuan Zhen (左轉, ca. 369 — ca. 286 BC), also known as Zhuan-zhui, was a famous Chinese philosopher, one of the Daoist founders, the author of the “Zhuan-zhui” treaty. For some time he held a petty post in the government, but then he left the service to lead an independent life.  

35. An ancient Chinese poet Qiu Yuan (屈原, 3497—2897 BC) is meant. His poem “Li sao” (離騷, “Grief of an Exile”) tells about bitter luck of a man who was exiled because of their wish to prevent the fall of his motherland (the empire of Chu, conquered by Qin), and about not less tragic destiny of a people betrayed by the government officials. In exile Qiu Yuan lost hope to attain justice and committed suicide by jumping into the river.  

36. I, e., a famous ancient Chinese poet Song Yu (宋玉, 2907—2237 BC), who is considered to be the second greatest poet after Qiu Yuan. There is an opinion that Song Yu could be a relative of Qiu Yuan. His most famous writing is the poem “Nin’s Disconsolations” that has a lot in common with “Li sao”.  

37. “Historical Notes” by Sima Qian — “Shi ji” (“史記”) is the first in China historico-biographical work that in many aspects defined the following historiographical tradition and that became a model of an official historical chronicle for many centuries to come. The writing covered the time period from the rule of mythical Huang Di (Yellow emperor), and till Han Dynasty’s pear Wu-di (武帝, 140—87 BC). The author of “Shi ji” Sima Qian (司馬遷, 145—9 BC) was a historian, a writer and emperor’s historiographer in the Han court. In 99 BC he called down the wrath of the emperor, who put him in prison and castrated. His father started to write “Shi ji” and Sima Qian managed to complete it in 93 BC.  

38. i.e., the Han emperor Han Wudi (漢武帝, 202—157 BC), the third son of the Han Dynasty founder, ruled during 110—157 BC. He considered agriculture to be the basis of the state and in order to develop it he reduced taxes several times, however landlords were the first to benefit from it. Complete abolishment of land tax in 167 BC contributed to consolidation of central administration. The state’s requisition of central administration was also supported by the practice of selling titles and ranks introduced during the Wen-di ruling, which matched the ambitions of the nobles. Wen-di also paid special attention to developing legislation, which stimulated consolidation of power and improved the life of common people. The emperor fought senseless wastefully, particularly, he opposed pomposious banquets ceremonies. He improved the relation with the government body Hanlinyuan that had declared independence from Han. Wen-di managed to make Hanlinyuan a part of the state again. In 162 BC Han concluded an alliance with Xiongnu that had a trouble to the empire before, and though xiongnu still railed the state, Wen-di neither paid special attention nor responded to it. Wen-di died of a disease in the age of forty six.  

39. i.e., Liu Bang (劉邦), 256—195 BC, the founder of the Han Dynasty. He got the title of an emperor in 202 BC. In order to solve the problem of labour shortage (the population decreased as a result of the previous devastating wars) he partly dismissed the army and gave freedom to personally dependent people. He introduced the laws common for the whole empire on the basis of Qin legislation, but with additions, changes and reductions to the latter. Liu Bang pursued a policy of dispersing the merchant class. He banned silk clothes and carriages for the merchants and imposed heavy taxes on them. Gradually he started to fight the nobility depriving them of land and influence. Though he was born to a family of an ordinary peasant and didn’t have much education, Liu Bang foresightedly cancelled the Qin laws on forbidding Confucian books, started to attract scholars to state government, established emperor’s protection of Confucian followers. In other words Liu Bang greatly contributed to the formation of a new class of well-read scholars, who closely associated the teaching of Confucian with service to centralized monarchy headed by an emperor.  

40. Measure of weight, a bit more than 3.5 kg. Shi together with dan (105.5 kg) was a traditional unit for counting monthly salary of an official. In the time of Tan and Song the salary of officials was generally counted in shi or dan and was paid in a combined way, i.e., with corn and money (about one third) and with goods (including clothes, silk, food materials, stationary, etc. The amount of salary depended on the rank of the post. The Han Dynasty was the first to introduce such officials salaries instead of just giving the amount for labor or allowing the officials for withhold taxes in the controlled territories.
In Yezidis, an esoteric or non-material world was created first and later the differentiation of some phenomena took place. After the manifestation of these phenomena, they came down to the earth.

The creation in Yezidi cosmogony ends with the myth of the creation of the first man, who in Yezidism is also called Adam. The end of creation is closely connected with the leaving (moving away) of the Creator from the Universe's affairs. His creation of mankind and the transition from mythical time to historical time. Below I will give a summary of the Yezidi view on the names of God and various forms of address to God as it is given in the religious hymns, as well as based on the Yezidi understanding of this question. First of all, I will give the brief reference to the name(s) of God and after that I will list some form of addresses to God with the examples from the religious texts.

### Names of God in Yezidism

Yezidis believe that a number of names of God exist:

#### Kurdish Text

Di baweryya me de, Ezî navê Xûdevaye, Pâdshay navê Xûdevaye, Ezî navê Xûdevaye, Bêr navê Xûdevaye, Mezîn navê Xûdevaye [8].

In the religious texts of Yezidis, nevertheless, it is said that:

#### Kurdish Text

Sîlênt Ezî bî xo Pâdshay ye Navê xer û xer navê xo dayê Nênavê mezîn Xûdevaye [9].

In the Yezidi religious hymns, one can find much insightful information about the names of God. For example, it is said that the name of God is eternal (Her û her), in: Navê wî (Xûdî) ji her û her e [11]. Lit.: “His (i.e. God’s) name is eternal”.

#### Kurdish Text

Padianiyê mintez Xezar û xer navê e [12].

In one of the religious texts, for instance, it is said:

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Sê xezar dîr Xûdevaye ne Sê xezar xerê Xûdevaye ne Sê xezar xêravê Xûdevaye ne Sê xezar xêravê Melekê xêlêkêne Sê xezar xerê navê Xûdevaye ne [14].

During one of my interviews conducted with Yezidis from the priesthood caste of Pîrs from Armenia [17] they mentioned the existence of a large amount of God’s names:

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During one of my interviews conducted with Yezidis from the priesthood caste of Pîrs from Armenia [17] they mentioned the existence of a large amount of God’s names:
In Yezidism there are diverse attributes of God, which shows His creative nature, unity, perfection, eternity, all-forgiveness, charity, all-knowledge, omniscience and omnipotence, greatness, justize and truth, immutability, impassibility, etc.

Forms of Address to God in Yezidism

In the Yezidi religious texts, various forms of address to God are used. The words of Iranian origin Weekd (God), Xadan (Master), Xusvan (the Lord), Padshah (the King), Mir (the Prince) and some words of Arabic origin, as Rebê (MY Master) or Reb (Master), are commonly used.

Weekd ("God")

The most commonly used form of address to God by all Yezidis is Weekd / Weekdi (God), while in the religious hymns this form of address to God is not so prevalent. Weekd / Weekdi is a word of Iranian origin, which is used both in the direct case — Weekd, and in the oblique case — Weekdi. Nowadays the oblique form case, Weekdi, is often also used in place of the direct case.

Kurdish Text

Weekê hijîya, hijîya, hijîya, bê sîn û goş, bê sîn û goş, hemà ci di rebaî rûmê. Weş û rebaî rûmê, ewi nêw Weekê xêna, go, bêniê. Ewel bêniê go : "Yo Xwêdê!". Adam rûmê [31].

Weekê. Lit. : "God". In : Her tu Xwêda ji [29], Lit. : "Only you are God". Also in : Padshên mi Xoê da [30], Lit. : "My King is God".

In the Yezidi religious hymns and legends, one can find the information that the first word, which was pronounced by the first male human being — Adam, was Weekê (i. e. God).

Translation

When he trembled, trembled, trembled, became blood and flesh, became blood and flesh, at this moment he sat down. When he sat down, at first, he pronounced the name of God, he sneezed. At first, he sneezed [32] and said : "Oh God". Adam sat down.

Xadan ("Master")

In the Yezidi religious hymns, one can often find such address to God as Xadan (Master). It is usually used in the descriptions of God as the Master of natural or transcendental phenomena:

Xusanê Hîvêşê, Lit. : "The Master of Hope". In : Dibeşsinin Xusanê hîvêşê [33], Lit. : "He is forgiving, the Master of Hope". In : Xusvan xev û re, Lit. : "Master of night and of day". In : Padshên mi Xusanê xev û re û dema [34].

Xusvan ("the Lord")

Xusvan (or Xusvanid) is another word of Iranian origin, which means "the Lord".

Xusvanid me, Lit. : "Our Lord". In : Xusvanid me Rebe el-semed [37], Lit. : "Our Lord is the Eternal Lord." Also in : Xusvanid me erda [38] çekir, ezmân

Kurdish Text

Xusvanid me inê kir esase Sitê bêrê kerêsa Curtenê kir silane Heyzêl sal paş hevwa [42] hat duarn û kave.

Translation

Our Lord laid the foundation on Monday On Saturday he drew up a plan On Wednesday he completed it Seven hundred years later the Seven Mysteries came to the Pearl and the Cup [43].
Rebeh Mase, Isa, Mihmedon. Lit.: "The Lord of Moses, Jesus, Muhammad". In: (Padidin min) Rebeh Mase, Isa, Mihmedon e. Hemj jë roa bir siculon [61]. Lit.: "My King is the Lord of Moses, Jesus, Muhammad. All bowed before Him".

Ibiho ("Oh My God")

Ibiho. Lit.: "Oh my God". In: Ibiho, te ne weklee e, Û ne te kefli e [64]. Lit.: "Oh my God, you have no Guardian, you have no Custodian". Also in: Ibiho, te ne tefli e [65]. Lit.: "Oh my God, you have No Child".

Meliq ("King")

Meliq. Lit.: "King". In: Te meliql melkec chibon [68]. Lit.: "You are the King of the kings in the world".

Mekke Berc. Lit.: "The Ancient Lord". In: Padidin min melkec berce [69]. Lit.: "My King is the Ancient King". Also in: Xadde melleq berce [70]. Lit.: "God is the Ancient King".


Sëssin xelhec Elia. In: Sëssin xelhec elia [66]. Lit.: "Sheikh Hesen is the friend of God". Yeq Elia. Lit.: "One God". In: 'Yeqelxela dinin min yeq elia [67]. Lit.: "My declaration of the Faith is One god".

Xadde, te melkec 'eqqa ye [71]. Lit.: "Oh God, you are the King of the Throne". In the Yezi religious texts there is a number of forms of address to God which each shows the superiority of God and His authority. The corpus of divine names in Yezi isism is connected with the attributes of God which were not included in the present study due to size constraints.

The Religious Hymn of the Lord (Qeswé Padiça)

There is a religious hymn of the Lord (Qeswé Padiça), which is dedicated to God. This variant of the religious hymn, which I recorded from the Yezi recitation of the religious hymns in Iraqi Kurdistan [72], includes 35 stanzas (sekheen). There is another variant of this religious hymn which includes 42 stanzas [73]. Because the order of stanzas are the same, I added 8 stanzas from the last variant to the first one. These additional stanzas are numbered 18-25. The first variant also has a stanza which the second variant has not. In general, the Qeswé given below is formed of 43 stanzas.

Qeswé Padiça (The Hymn of Lord (God))

Kurdish Text

1. Padidin min Padiça
Enwi [74] çë kërc çuwa ye ëstie [75]
En negaq hemjë negaq.
2. Padidin min xetar e
Jë na ve têlim [76] chibare
Bo dinaqay ëh chër ên qëna.
3. Padidin min dinim xeq kë
të ëhl tësee ëh chëk ëh pêk kë
Bëir. 'Adem ëlk dëg xemê kë.
4. Padidin min Suer ëlsena
Xadade xeç ëh ëstie ëh dema
Jë na ve têlim këremona.
5. Padidin min Rebeh Moljebeta [81] e
Rebeh ëh ëstie Surrël [82] ëh têsee
Jë na ve xëteqxë xetarë xëhbyte.

Translation

Oh my King of all Kings,
He created mountains and plains
He is the planner of all plans.
My King is all-forgiving.
From Him come decisions
For the world and all four sides [77].
My King made the world green
He brought laws and order to it [78].
Human beings settled in it.
My King is the Mystery [79] of Heaven,
Master of night, of day and of times [80].
From Him come favors.
My King is the Lord of Angels
Lord of all seven Mysteries [83], who are potent
And of all seven (Holy) Men [84], who are great.

My King created the Universe from the Pearl and Jewels [85]
And entrusted [86] to all seven eternal Mysteries
This day He made Tawësh Mëlek the leader [of them].
My King is the Lord of Adam
From Him [L. e. God] comes mercies
He is in all times and all periods.
My King is the Ancient King [88]
The Lord of the prophet [99] and the Mehdi [100]
He is my highest God.
My King is the Lord of Solomon
God of human beings and jinn [91]
They all bowed to Him.
The father of Ibrahim son of Khalil
By himself offered God a promise.
Therefore He had given a sacrifice for God his son Ismail.
My King is the eternal Lord
Lord of Moses, Jesus, Muhammad
All bowed before Him.
My King is the Lord of the high
Lord of priests [92], wandering devotions [93] and Surfis [94]
Lord of my Sheikh 'Adi.
My King is great
And a Lord of all believers
The Lord of the world is my Ezra.
My King is forgiving
He is the Creator of fire and light [95]
He is always equitable and forgiving.
My King is dependable
From Him come good tidings
For all creatures and all (existent) religions.
My King is the Lord of the Universe
We pay attention to Him
We will forgive us.
My King is the Leader
God is the only great one
His name is eternal.
My King is the only worthy of worship
Master of the Preserved Table
Words of prayers and bows.
My King is a Lord of the Truth
He is forgiving, the Master of Hope
He gives good things [happiness].
My King is equitable
He is perfect from all sides
He is the object of all hearts' wishes.
My King is the Master of livelihoods,
The object of the Faith of all hearts.
He is so to all people.
In all periods and all times
He is a King of the earth and the Throne.
From Him comes livelihood and fate.
My King is the Grantee of wishes
Master of good luck and well-being
In spite of all explanations, He is a Mystery.
24. Pedšey minayi berešetša Naletzi na e ne eši
Xudəne dőňu à ašetša.
25. Xudane ašetša à dőňu Ḩalil key nišuna mnišu
Eshane nišu à ti šaši.
26. Padešišini rekšim a [98]
Ewe šetšeneši ašetša
(Sešišiši šišu ašetša.)
27. Padešišini mni Xudal [99] ye
Dihrandu we li suv a şe şe ye
Ciyiši və li hemi dila ye.
28. Padešišini mni sëtæ e
Xudajiski čerbaš e
Ciyiši və li hemi ciya a war e.
29. Padešišini mni hoxšiye
Ewe šišu ašetša
Ewe li šišu erda ye.
30. Padešišini mni Nīr e
Ewe šišu me li së dër e
Ewe šišu erda tišu a šišu a hemi xaiši tišu a bëhr a kare.
31. Padešišini mni bëhr e
Kia neš mnyi li bëhr.
Her a kor rohmi li sëm bëhr.
32. Padešišini mni qedim e
Li dini a šešer heziš e
Li hemi derra owi šešer heziš e.
33. Ya Xudal, tu ruhi dhibey, tu ruha šali
U ti šešer a aruma dilo doqšiši
Tu dëxayi ni a sašišišiši.
34. Rëya Xudal rašat ye
U kari Xudal wašiši
U Suvra Xudal wšiši ye.
35. Rëya Xudal mni rašat ye
U padįšayi a ḡiš ti šeši
Xudal mšiši šešer he.
36. Ya Xudal, tu Xudalni mšišetši
Tu Xudalni našišu a šešetši
Tu Xudalni dini a šešetši.
37. Ya Xudal, tu mšiši ḡešu ya
Tu ti alaman baqši a
Tu li hemi erda ya.
38. Ji Qewil Šeš Frëjzbeh bəbatr e
Xudal, bəbatr e, ebaš e,
Xudal melki bər e.
39. İlbaši, te ne walk a [102]
U te ne kif e
Tu li še hemi dewwa a bəbatr e.
40. İlbaši, te ne sigši e
U te ne da, ti ne he e, ti ne hal e,
U šešer bərov šešer bərov e.
41. Ya Xudal, tu dhibey, tu šali
Tu dhibey, tu dhibey
Tu renowkli ti me da šišetšiši.

Oh my blessed King,
Who let well-being and good luck descend to earth.
Mister of this world and the next.
Mister of the next and this worlds
Grant my wishes!
Oh my God, the only one.
My King is gracious
He causes the rain to fall.
[Sešišiši šišu ašetša.]
My King is God
Befitting Him is a goodness and joy for us
His place is in all hearts.
My King is a sanctuary [refuge],
He is the all-powerful God
His place is in all places and areas.
My King is a Preceptor
He is well-informed about the world
He is in all areas [100].
My King is Light
He is not far from us
He knows earth, heaven, and deep oceans.
My King is the greatest
He does not take revenge on anybody
He always showers mercy on them.
My King is ancient
This and the next worlds [He] is great
For all pains He is a healer.
Oh God, you take souls, you bring / give souls.
You sow patience and calmness in the hearts
You make a hair and do not allow it to be torn.
The way of God is the Truth,
And work of God is Justice,
And a Mystery of God is concealed.
The way of my God is the Truth
There is no governor and no doubt
God is the Ancient King.
Oh God, you are the Lord of magnanimity
You are the Lord of well-being and good luck
You are the Lord of this world and the next.
Oh God, you are the King of the Thrones
You are well-informed about the world
You are in all areas.
From the Qewil of venerable Sheikh Fekhr [101]
God is the only [one], is the greatest
His name is eternal.
Oh my God, you have no Guardian [103]
You have no Custodian
You are present in all periods and epochs [104].
Oh my God, you have no child.
You have no mother, no father and no grandfather.
Without you everything is empty [105].
Oh God, you take away, you bring
You give, you take away
You shower mercy on us.

Oh God, you take, you bring
You break and pull together
Only you shower mercy on us.
Oh God, you open, you squeeze
You give, you take away
You shower mercy on us.
We are imperfect and God is perfect [106].
After 700 years the Seven Mysteries came around the Cup, means that for 700 years Adam's body remained without a soul.

Qewl Padixa, sebeq b.

Qewl, sebeq 32.

Qewl, sebeq 17.

Qewl Hezir or Yek Nav.

QShll, sebeq 1, 2. From the interview with Merwan, son of Khelil. 22.07.2007, Oldenburg, Germany.

From the interview with Pir Tosiniq Qero. 16.10.2007.

Qewl "When the world was the water". According to Yezidi cosmogony, the world at first was liquid.

From the interview with Pir Tosiniq Qero. 16.10.2007.

Shekethiya Din. From the interview with Pir Rizayé Kakx, St. Petersburg, Russia.


Qewl Zebléh Meksir, sebeq 8 from the interview with Merwan, son of Khelil, 22.07.2007, Oldenburg, Germany.

Qewl Padixa, sebeq 7.

Qewl, sebeq 5.

Qewl, sebeq 12.

Qewl, sebeq 8.

Qewl, sebeq 11.

Qewl, sebeq 12.

Qewl, sebeq 5.

Qewl, sebeq 39.

Qewl, sebeq 40.

Shekethiya Din.

Qewl, sebeq 12.

Qewl, sebeq 35.

Qewl, sebeq 37.

This variant of the religious hymn of the Lord was written down by me from Merwan, son of Khelil at 22.07.2007, in Oldenburg (Germany). This variant is known among the Yezidis in Iraq.

It was published in Hecl, op. cit., pp. 203—08.

Ewî along with the commonly used form ws is also a possible form of the oblique case of the personal pronoun of the 3rd person singular ewe in the masculine gender.

The word order in the poetical religious texts is not the usual SOV (subject, object, verb), but can be different and the main rule, that the verb should stay at the end of the sentence, can be broken.

The northern Kurmanji variant of the verb bittin ("to come") in the 3rd person plural form is dib.

According to the Yezidi cosmogony, the four directions were made after the Pearl was broken into four parts.

In the beginning of the creation of the world there was no order in the Universe.

Sure could be translated as "a divine Mystery", but the meaning of this word is not just a "Mystery", it is much deeper.


Mellow is an Arabic plural form meaning "angels".

The is a possible form of the plural form of a noun in the South Kurmanji could be -êr or -êd instead of the northern Kurmanji -in. In spoken language and Transcaucasian sub-dialect it could be -êr.

The term Sûr ("Mystery") is a term with a very huge meaning but in this context it is applied for seven Angels created by God.

A term Mu'm ("Holy Men") here applied for seven sheikh, who are considered as manifestations of seven Angels in the Earth.

According to the Yezidi tradition, God created the world from one big white Pearl (Dar), which was separated from God (Qewl Zebléh Meksir, sebeq 6, 12; Kreyenbrook, Rashow, op. cit., p. 26).

After the was created, God entrusted it to the Seven Angels, created by Him, in particular to the leader of them, to Mohel Mêdem.

Obviously, the preposition li ("in") should be used in the beginning of the sentence: Li hemû xwetta à hemû dema.

For the word "King" several words of different origin are used, i.e. Padixa of the Iranian origin, and Mohel or Reb of the Arabic one.

There is no prophet in Yezidism, but in the Yezidi religious texts the names of prophets of other religions can be found. Here the meaning of this line could be that God is God of everybody, of prophet and the Mehel as well.

According to the Yezidi tradition, Sherdîn is appeared in the role of the Mehel during the Last Day (also called End of Time). According to Feqir Hecl, it is Sultan Ézîd(d) who will make Sherdîn the Mehel. But because the name of the Mehel is
PRESENTING THE COLLECTION

ITALY IN THE HORN OF AFRICA AND THE ETHIOPIAN ISLAMIC LITERARY TRADITION: L. ROBECCHI BRICCHETTI AND HIS COLLECTION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Prolegomena

One should not underestimate the role played by travellers, explorers, adventurers, commercial agents and more official representatives of European powers in paving the way for the colonial expansion in Asia and Africa.

However, it is a well known fact that these forerunners of the military occupation were sometimes also scholars, sincerely interested in the culture of the local peoples, or at least conscious that it would have been impossible to control the “natives” without knowing their culture and languages. They thus promoted the collection of manuscripts, artefacts, oral histories and traditions to gain a clear image of the peoples whose territories they were visiting.

1. Luigi Robecchi Bricchetti: Some Biographic Data


He graduated as a mechanic engineer at the Polytechnic Institute in Zürich and then moved to Karlsruhe where he completed his studies [5].

Robecchi Bricchetti’s first long trip was to the Libyan desert in Egypt in 1885—1886. He reached the oasis of Siwa, which hosted the famous temple of Jupiter Ammon. He visited the ancient ruins whose structure and decoration he described in a series of beautiful sketches. During his stay in Siwa, Robecchi Bricchetti secretly managed to enter the wide necropolis beside the temple and to collect thirty skulls which are still nowadays kept in the Anthropological Museum of Florence and in the Civic Anthropological Museum of Pavia [6].

* An abridged version of this article was submitted in the cultural panel of the World Public Forum Dialogue of Civilization, Rhodes, 09/10/2009.

A. Gori

ITALIANS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA are no exception to this cultural and historical phenomenon. One of the most accomplished scholars in the field of Ethiopian and Somali Studies, Enrico Cerulli, while on duty in the Italian Legation in Addis Ababa in 1926—1931, travelled extensively in the Horn and thus acquired a firsthand knowledge of scarcely known countries and peoples, languages and cultures [1].

Here I should like to focus on Luigi Robecchi Bricchetti, a relatively unknown Italian traveller to the Horn of Africa, and to show how his stay in Harar contributed to the creation of one of the very few collections of Ethiopian Arabic Islamic manuscripts in Europe.

1. Luigi Robecchi Bricchetti: Some Biographic Data

In 1888—1889 he carried out his expedition to Harar with which I deal at some length in the following lines. In 1890 supported by the “Italian Geographical Society” [7] he travelled to the Benadir region (an Italian protectorate since 1889). He landed in Hobyo where he was hosted for a month by the local sultan, Yusuf ’Ali. From Hobyo he headed northwards to explore, for the first time ever, the valley of the Nogal river which he described from a geographical, anthropological, geological and environmental point of view.

In 1891 he was once again in Hobyo as a guest of Yusuf ’Ali. From there, he went south to the Webi Shabeel which he started exploring [8]. Robecchi Bricchetti tried to penetrate the Somali hinterland: his idea was to reach Harar from Somalia. He did not succeed, due to the Ethiopian pressure on the border areas. He thus decided to completely change direction and moved northwards to Barbera and the “Aromatica regio” (the land of the perfumes: the ancient Punt, where myrrh and frankincense are produced). He explored the Somali
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Notes to Contributors

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Submissions

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