

Ewa Siemienieć-Gołaś

ANONYMOUS ITALIAN-TURKISH DICTIONARY

From the Marsigli Collection in Bologna



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KRAKÓW

Reviewer

dr hab. Grażyna Zajac

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Editor

Jan Czekalski

Cover design

Magda Dębicka

The publication is published both in print and in electronic version

The printed version is primary

This volume was published with the financial support of the Faculty of Philology,
Jagiellonian University in Cracow

ISBN 978-83-7638-481-8

KSIĘGARNIA AKADEMICKA

ul. św. Anny 6, 31-008 Kraków

tel./faks 12-431-27-43, 12-421-13-87

e-mail: akademicka@akademicka.pl

Internet bookshop:

www.akademicka.pl

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	7
Acknowledgements	9

PART I

Introduction	11
1. Description of the manuscript	11
2. The author and the age of the manuscript	14
3. The contents of the manuscript	16
4. Remarks on the transcription system used by the author	23

PART II

Dictionary	27
----------------------	----

PART III

Instead of the Conclusion	169
-------------------------------------	-----

PART IV

References	173
Abbreviations	175

PART V

Facsimile	177
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Preface

When discussing various human discoveries one can unhesitatingly say that they often occur as the result of fortune, or in other words, by chance.

This statement also concerns the manuscript discussed in the present work.

Several years ago, during a visit to the library of the University of Bologna, among the collection of oriental manuscripts preserved there, we found, by chance, a very interesting oriental dictionary. We are not going to describe precisely this visit, or rather visits, in *Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna*.¹ It is enough to say that direct contact with this unusual literary work² kindled a strong desire for research. Some time after this “discovery” a paper concerning this very manuscript was published,³ and a presentation on the subject was also given at a certain turcological conference.

However, several years had passed from the first visit to the library of the University of Bologna until the moment when we resumed the work on the manuscript. The reason for this long break lies in the difficulty in reading the manuscript. Initially, the manuscript, which we officially received from the library for research purposes, was only accessible in microfilm format. Only when new digitalizing techniques were introduced did faster work on the manuscript become possible.

Also, some advice given by two librarians from the library, whom we mention in the Acknowledgements, appeared to be very helpful and invaluable.

The manuscript constitutes a hand-written, anonymous dictionary prepared in the Italian language with a translation into Turkish.⁴

The aim of this work is to render accessible the Turkish vocabulary included in this manuscript, and to present it together with the description of the manuscript.

¹ Almost ten years after the first visit to the library of the University of Bologna we returned to this place in order to glance over the manuscript once more and to examine with great care the watermarks imprinted in the pages of the manuscript.

² In the further part of the present work reference is made to the explanation of why this manuscript proved to be peculiar.

³ See: References

⁴ More details on this subject in Part I of the work.

In the introductory part (Part I) of our work, one can find information concerning the collection of manuscripts to which the anonymous dictionary belongs. This part also includes a description of the anonymous work presenting its contents and the system of transcription used by the author, with its characteristic spelling features.

Part II comprises the dictionary of the Ottoman Turkish material excerpted from the manuscript, transcribed and arranged in the Latin alphabet order. In contrast to the arrangement in the original manuscript, the Italian commentary goes after the Turkish words. Therefore, the dictionary constituting the second part of this work is not Italian-Turkish but Turkish-Italian.

Needless to say, for the purpose of studying this work, all its contents, except words written exclusively in Arabic letters, have been rewritten in order to be read in the proper direction; that is, from left to right.

Additionally, Turkish equivalents have been added, in some cases with explanatory remarks. The subsequent parts of the work include Part III (Instead of the conclusion), Part IV (References, Abbreviations) and Part V (Facsimile).

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to two librarians working in the department of manuscripts in the *Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna*. The first librarian, whose name remains unknown and who during my work on the manuscript suggested an inspection of its watermarks as one of the helpful methods needed to determine the age of the historical, dateless documents.

The other – Mr Franco Pasti – rendered the manuscript accessible to me several times when I returned once again to the university library in Bologna in order to examine the exterior of the manuscript.

My thanks also go to Professor Kinga Paraskiewicz (Jagiellonian University, Kraków) who consulted some words from the lexical content of the manuscript whose origin was probably Persian.

Professor Ewa Siemienieć-Gołaś is the head of the Department of Turkish Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland. She holds a professorship in the field of linguistics. Her main fields of interest include historical linguistics, the Ottoman Turkish language and the history of the Turkic languages.

In the collection of oriental manuscripts preserved in the Marsigli Collection of the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna in Italy, one may find an anonymous and dateless dictionary prepared in the Italian language with a translation into Turkish. Judging by the watermark of the paper and certain features of the Turkish language, this manuscript is probably one of the earliest Italian-Turkish dictionaries. Moreover, the character of this work is quite unconventional since both Italian words and the transcribed forms of the Turkish vocabulary are written from right to left.

The aim of the present book is to render accessible the Turkish vocabulary included in the dictionary and to present it together with the description of the manuscript.



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ISBN 978-83-7638-481-8

