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Contents



- Cover Illustration: Ludovico Wolfgang Hart, ‘Derviches tourneurs’ 7
Roderick Grierson
- In Memoriam: Talât Sait Halman 20
Roderick Grierson
- Reflections of a Vanished World: Mevlevi Tradition after 1925 26
Kudsi Erguner
- In Constantinople Among Music and Dervishes: Reports by
European Travellers from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century 36
Giovanni De Zorzi
- The Inevitable Journey: Text, Translation, and Notes
on the Seventeenth *Tarjī‘-band* of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī 67
Muhammad Isa Waley
- ‘The Bashaw of Merryland’: The Sixth Baron Baltimore
and the Dervises of Pera 83
Roderick Grierson
- Be as You Appear: Photographs of *Semazens* 104
Shems Friedlander
- The Visitation of Mary and Rumi’s Comments
on the Nature of Story: *Mathnawi*, Book Two 117
Alan Williams
- Mevlana and the Illusions of Nationalism 123
Talât Sait Halman
- Three Poems by Jalal al-Din Rumi 158
Translated by W. S. Merwin with Talât Sait Halman
- The Mevlevī Sufi Shaykh Ismā‘īl Rusūkhī Anqarawī (d. 1631)
and his Commentary on Rūmī’s *Mathnawī* 163
Eliza Tasbihi

This is Such a Day – A *Ruba'i* by Jalal al-Din Rumi 183
 My Darling with the Rosy Face – A *Gazel* by Şeyh Galib 184
Translated by Talât Sait Halman

BOOK REVIEWS

Jawid Mojaddedi, *The Masnawi, Book Three*
Reviewed by Robert Abdul Hayy Darr 185

Alberto Fabio Ambrosio, *Soufis à Istanbul: Hier, aujourd'hui*
(XIII^e–XXI^e siècle)
 Alberto Fabio Ambrosio, *La confrérie de la danse sacrée:*
Les derviches tourneurs
Reviewed by Roderick Grierson 186

Shems Friedlander, *Winter Harvest: Bob Dylan to Jalaluddin Rumi*
Reviewed by Abdallah Schleifer 197

Mustafa Çıpan (ed.), *Mevlânâ Müzesi Kataloğu*
 Naci Bakırcı, *Konya Mevlana Museum: Guide*
Reviewed by Yassine Houari 204

Elvir Musić, *Mevlana i Mir: Rat i mir u djelima*
Mevlane Dželaludina Rumija
Reviewed by Slobodan Ilić 209

Talât Sait Halman, *Love Is All: Rumi's Life and Poems of Ecstasy,*
The Whirling Dervishes
Reviewed by Roderick Grierson 211

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS 225

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 231



In Constantinople Among Music and Dervishes: Reports by European Travellers from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century

GIOVANNI DE ZORZI



Neither of the East nor of the West, Qur'an XXIV: 35

The Ottoman capture of Constantinople on 29 May 1453 provoked a crisis in East–West relations and raised widespread alarm that the decisive battle of the millennium was about to take place. Nevertheless, as Jalal al-Din Rumi had remarked two centuries earlier, forces that seem to be in opposition often work together. As in the past, commercial and financial exchanges continued between ostensible enemies, political and cultural relations moved through several phases of diplomatic negotiation, propaganda, espionage, exchange of ambassadors, and eventually travel by men of letters, scholars, and artists who produced an entire literature animated by a curiosity for the ‘Other’, for the inhabitants of exotic lands who were believed to be unlike ‘Us’. Between the sixteenth century and the eighteenth century in particular, many Europeans wrote accounts that consider different aspects of this ‘Other’. Vice versa, many Ottoman accounts have survived that include descriptions of visits to European capitals or of the *Frenks* who arrived on Ottoman territory.¹

Among the reports of travellers who were motivated by a sense of curiosity for the ‘Other’, I should like to draw attention in the following pages to a recurring element in European descriptions: the highly visible and ‘picturesque’ ceremony of the Mevlevi dervishes.

Following a chronological order, and without any claim of providing an exhaustive list, I shall begin with the observations made by Guillaume Postel (1510–81), a highly gifted French linguist, astronomer, cabbalist, and

1 Among them were Çelebi Mehmet Efendi, who travelled to Paris and described the music that he heard at the court of Louis XV, Mustafa Hatti, who sent reports from Vienna in 1748, and Ahmet Resmi, who wrote similar accounts in 1797. See in particular Mehmet Efendi, *Les Paradis des infidels: un ambassadeur ottoman en France sous la Régence* (Paris: La Découverte, 2004).

diplomat who possessed a particular interest in spirituality. His travels were made during a period of alliance between the French king François I, who reigned from 1515 to 1547, and his new ally Sulayman ‘the Magnificent’ (Kanunî Sultan Süleyman), who ruled the Ottoman Empire between 1520 and 1566. It seems that the French king sent skilled musicians to play for the sultan, who had a reputation for being a lover of music.²

In his *De la republique des Turcs*, in which he describes the travels that he made in the 1530s, Postel provides a description of a dervish ceremony:³

*Commancent en branlant la teste, et tout le corps, l'un vers l'autre, disans 'alla, alla, alla, alla, alla' tant des fois et long de temps repentant qu'ils cheent à bas comme estourdis, et disent que alors leur esprit va avec Dieu porter lassala, ou l'oraison. En la Surie et Natolie ou Turquie en y a qui se mettent à fort tourner disant 'alla, alla' etc. que jamais pirouette n'est fist imitation, en fin que tous estourdis demeurent comme mors, et en extase, et alors dient que leur esprit va avec Dieu.*⁴

They begin by bowing the head, and all the body, one toward the other, saying ‘*alla, alla, alla, alla, alla*’ so many times and repeating it for so long that they fall as if they were stunned, and they say that their spirit takes the prayer⁵ to God. In Syria and Anatolia or Turkey there are some who begin to whirl so powerfully while repeating ‘*alla, alla*’ etc. that a pirouette could never imitate them; so that finally they are all stunned and remain as if dead, in ecstasy, and they say that their spirit goes with God.

If the first observation made by Postel seems to depict a *dhikr jāhrī* (vocal invocation) of the *qiyyam* (standing) type, the second phrase, with his precise verb *tourner* (to whirl), suggests a Mevlevi *sêmâ*. However, in the absence of any remarks about musical instruments, the whirling of the dervishes while repeating the name of God seems similar to the *raqs-i samō*

2 K. Reinhard and U. Reinhard, *Turquie* (Paris: Buchet-Castel, 1969), p. 33.

3 This and the following passages cited in this article preserve the original orthography and punctuation, despite obvious differences from modern forms of French, Italian, or English.

4 G. Postel, *De la republique des Turcs* (Poitiers: Enguilbert de Marnef, 1560), p. 52.

5 In the French original, *lassala* probably represents *lasalât*. In Arabic, *salât* is the stipulated ritual prayer, meant to be performed five times in a day, rather than spontaneous prayer.

diffused in Central Asia and among the *Naqshbandī jāhrī* (or *Naqshbandī āfāqī*) in what is now Xinjiang.⁶

The second report that I shall mention of a European traveller who encountered the Mevlevi is that of the Roman antiquarian, composer, musicologist, and Orientalist, Pietro della Valle (1586–1652). Between 1614 and 1626, his journeys took him to the Holy Land, through the Middle East and North Africa, and as far as India. In his second letter from Constantinople, he describes a visit to the Mevlevihane in Pera, the European quarter of the city.

Un venerdì, che secondo il costume de' Turchi si va più del solito alle meschite, e vi si predica, andai qui ne' borghi di Pera, dove noi abitiamo, in un luogo di dervisci, che ci è, dove aveva inteso che si soleva fare in tal giorno una buona musica . . . andai al luogo di costoro, che hanno qui fra le vigne di Pera, e trovai che già vi si predicava . . . finita la predica, si raunarono i dervisci in mezzo della meschita in giro; e quivi al suono di quattro o cinque flauti, fatti di canne, che con distinzione di tutte le voci, basso, tenore, contralto e soprano facevano una bellissima armonia, cominciarono a ballare: talora sonando senza ballare e talora sonando e ballando insieme a vicenda: e ballando, ora tutti insieme, ora alcuni di loro, ed ora alcun solo. Il moto de' piedi, ne' lor balli, è appunto il medesimo che quello degli Spagnoli nelle loro ciaccone; che i Mori, nella Spagna, dovettero insegnarlo, ma questi, ballando, si girano sempre attorno sopra un piede; e chi gira più presto, e dura più a girare, è più valent'uomo. Nel principio cominciano con moto lento e soave, adagio adagio: ma poi, poco a poco riscaldati, lo vanno ogni ora più affrettando; finché al fine, cresciuto quasi in eccesso il fervore, si danno tanta fretta e si aggirano con tanta velocità, che appena gli arriva la vista di chi gli riguarda. Nel girare invocano spesso Dio; replicando forte, volta a volta, la parola Hù, che si interpreta Esso, ovvero E', e s'intende per Dio, che solo ha vero essere . . . Però la musica che fanno è galante, e degna in ver d'essere sentita: e quei flauti che chiamano nai, ovvero più correttamente nei, che in persiano significa propriamente canna, come di canna son fatti, non si può credere quanto dolce suono rendano.⁷

6 G. De Zorzi, 'Con dervisci naqshbandī jāhrī nella valle del Fergana', in G. De Zorzi, ed., *Con i dervisci: otto incontri sul campo* (Milan: Mimesis Edizioni, 2013), pp. 173–210.

7 Pietro Della Valle, *Viaggi di Pietro della Valle il Pellegrino descritti da lui medesimo in lettere familiari al suo erudito amico Pietro Schipano* (Brighton: G. Gancia, 1843), pp. 47–48.

One Friday, the day on which by custom Turks go more than usual to the mosques, and listen to sermons, I went in the area of Pera, where we live, to a place of dervishes that is there, where I heard that good music would be played . . . I went to the place that they have there among the vineyards of Pera, and I found that they were already listening to the sermon . . . when the sermon had finished, the dervishes gathered in the middle of the mosque; and here, to the sound of four or five flutes made of reed, with a sweet harmony produced by all the voices, bass, tenor, alto and soprano, they began to dance: at times they played without dancing and at times they were playing and dancing at the same time: and at times they all danced together, at times some of them danced, and at times only one. The movement of the feet, in their dances, is the same as that in the dance of the Spanish, in their *chacónnes*; the Moors, in Spain, must have taught them, yet, when they dance, they whirl always on one foot; the one who whirls faster and longer is considered to be the most able. At the beginning they start with a slow and sweet pace, *adagio*, *adagio*: but after a while, they accelerate the movement little by little, constantly increasing the pace; at the end, attaining an almost excessive fervour, they whirl with such a speed that is difficult to follow them with the eyes. When they are whirling, they often invoke God; repeating loudly the word *Hu*, which means ‘He’, God, the only Being . . . But the music they play is really gallant, and worthy of being heard: and the flutes that they call *nai*, or more correctly *nei*, a term that in Persian means ‘reed’, because they are made of reed, it is impossible to believe what a sweet sound they make.

The remarks of Pietro della Valle about harmony are quite puzzling and may simply reflect his Western musical education: Ottoman music is monophonic and therefore lacks harmony. While there are indeed many sizes of *ney*, even if they were played together, they would play in unison by transposing the melody. His observation that the musicians alternated sections of music with sections of music and dancing accurately reflects the structure of an *âyin* in which purely musical sections, such as *na’at-i Mevlânâ*, *peşrev*, and *baş taksîm*, are included along with sections in which the *sêmâzens* are in motion. His remarks about the speed of the *sêmâzens*, gradually accelerating and attaining a great velocity, may recall comments

by the musicologist Jean During⁸ about the gradual shift of the Mevlevi *sêmâ* from an ecstatic ceremony, disordered and full of energy, as it appears in the observations of della Valle and in commentaries produced by the Mevlevi themselves, to the more formal and composed performances of modern Mevlevi ceremonies. Finally, his remarks on the *ney* accurately reflect the etymology and the sweet sound of the flute and confirm the status among the Mevlevi of an instrument that was obviously dear to Mevlana when he composed the eighteen distiches that open his *Mesnevi*.

Our next encounters with Europeans in Constantinople involve two residents of the city, rather than the occasional travellers who provide the majority of our accounts. We thereby depart from the usual description of dervishes, although dervishes are clearly present in their works and private lives.

With the first of these European residents, we enter into the most secluded part of the Seraglio, the private apartments of the sultan that were known as *Enderûn*, a word of Persian origin that was used to indicate the 'heart' or 'interior'. Wojciech Bobowski, who was known in Latin as Albertus Bobovius Leopolanus and in Turkish as 'Alî Ufkî, served as a page and musician in the Seraglio. Although the exact dates of his birth and death are not known, he wrote a book in 1665 that was entitled *Seray-ı Enderûn* (The Inner Palace) and was published in many European languages in order to satisfy public curiosity about the mysteries of the exotic Seraglio. The passage cited below is taken from the Italian version published at Parma in 1679.

Bobowski lived an adventurous life. He was born in Leopold, a city that has been held by many different states and has been known as Lemberg in German, Lwów in Polish, and Lviv in Ukrainian. After he was captured by Tatar marauders in 1633, he was sold at the slave market in Constantinople. The vendors had recognized and drawn attention to his skill at music, an ability that would have increased his value, and he was set to work at the court, probably to play the hammered zither known as *santûr*. As he had studied music while he was young, he transcribed the compositions that he had been learning by ear according to the *meşk* method, which is described below, so that he could refresh his memory:

Mescanè propriamente è la camera per l'esercizio di musica; stà aperta di giorno sino alla sera, in questa si esercitano i musici di

8 J. During, *Musique et extase: l'audition mystique dans la tradition soufie* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1988), p. 172.

camera & i musici di campagna: terminato il Diuano vengono i maestri e sedono nel Mescanè; li paggi anch'essi vengono da varie camere sedono dirimpetto à loro maestri, ora à voce sola, ora in compagnia: la più grata musica loro è la ripiena; . . . tutta la musica s'impara a mente, & riesce ad essi miracoloso il scriverla: io pigliate che avevo le mie lezioni le scriueuo per non scordarme; i maestri turchi vedendo in me quella virtù, molti mi consideravano: fui fatto erbasci, mastro del coro, gli altri paggi, che facilmente si scordavano, veniuano a pregarmi rinfrescarli à memoria le sonate, & cantate, il che facendo mi ringraziavano, anzi volevano gli insegnassi il modo di scriuere, mi scusaua con dire, che era arte lunga, & difficile; io non aspirauo ad altro che a libertà, così cercauo schivare ogni dilazione.

Cantano Poesie semplici con certi tuoni sforzati; trattano questi di guerre, di vita, e amori, patimenti, lontananze, & altre cose simili; gl'idioti si dilettono di queste, si come i detti vogliono le cantate in lingua Persiana: li loro strumenti sono kasangi, schestaz, santur, nitkal, nai, cioè violino, chitarra, salterio, zampogna, flauto, differenti tutti dalli Europei con questi accompagnano le canzonette delicate: anno i loro poeti, che cantano improuiso, e sono molto stimati.

Ogni martedì, che il Gran Signore si rade il capo, i musici di camera vanno a cantare in sua presenza, & talvolta il Gran Signore fa venire in camera Dame. All'ora i musici s'inuoltano un drappo intorno al capo, restando così priui di lume, & così bendati cantano, & sonano, anche di più col capo chino, & se alcuno mostra alzarlo, gli Eunucchi li danno un pugno sul collo, stando due di quelli con arco teso in atto di scoccare in caso, che qualcuno volesse mirare le sopradette Dame.⁹

Strictly speaking, *mescanè*¹⁰ is the chamber for the practice of music; it is open during the entire day from morning until night, and the chamber musicians as well as the country

9 Cornelio Magni, *Quanto di più curioso, e vago ha potuto raccorre Cornelio Magni nel primo biennio da esso consumato in viaggi, e dimore per la Turchia resta distribuito in questa prima parte in varie lettere scritte in Italia, le quali principalmente includono l'esame della metropoli di Costantinopoli, de' luoghi aggiacenti, e dell'esercito ottomano. Aggiuntaui la relazione del Serraglio del Gran Signore, e delle parti più recondite di esso, distesa da Alberto Bobouio Leopolitano trattenutosi con nome di Bey in qualità di paggio* (Parma: Galeazzo Rosati, 1679), pp. 550–55.

10 i.e. *meşk-khâne*, 'house of the meşk'.

musicians¹¹ practise in it: when the *divan*¹² is over, the masters come and sit in the *mescanè*; the page boys arrive from different chambers and sit in front of their masters and sing, now in solo and now all together. Their most appreciated music is the *ripiena*,¹³ . . . all music is apprehended by ear and the writing of it seems miraculous: when I finished my lessons, I always wrote it down in order to not forget; when the Turkish masters noticed this ability in me, many regarded me with admiration: I was appointed *erbasçi*, master of the choir, and the other page boys, who easily forgot, asked me to refresh their memory of the *sonate* and the *cantate*,¹⁴ and when I did they thanked me and asked me to teach this method of writing, but I excused myself, telling them that it was a long and difficult art; I longed for freedom and I was trying to avoid every delay.

They sing simple poems with some *sforzato* tones; their subjects are war, life, love, suffering, absence and other similar things; the ignorant take delight in this even though it is customary to sing these songs in the Persian language: their instruments are *kasangi*, *schestaz*, *santur*, *nitkal*, and *nai*, that is violin, guitar, dulcimer, bagpipe, flute, all different from the Europeans instruments, and with these they accompany the delicate songs: they have poets who are able to improvise as they sing and they are highly regarded.

Each Tuesday, when the *Gran Signore*¹⁵ shaves his head, the chamber musicians go to sing in his presence and sometimes the

- 11 The phrase '*i musici di camera & i musici di campagna*' probably refers to the musicians of the inner part of the palace (*Enderûn*) as opposed those of the external part of the palace (*Birûn*) and, by extension, of the country.
- 12 The word *divan* is used here in the sense of 'meeting, council'.
- 13 I have retained the original antique Italian '*ripiena*'. In Baroque music terminology, *ripieno* actually refers to the entire orchestra (also known as *tutti*) except for the soloists (also known as *concertino*). With this observation, Bobowski underlined a specific aesthetic trait of Ottoman music, in which music is played *tutti* by the entire ensemble heterophonically. The heterophony arises from the different timbres of the instruments, from the different musical registers involved, and from the different procedures of ornamentation in the same melodic line.
- 14 The modern reader may associate these two antique Italian terms with the specific genres of *sonata* and *cantata*, as they are applied in Western musical history to the work of composers such as Scarlatti or Handel. In this passage, however, the terms are used in the original and more general Italian sense. A *sonata* is 'what is played' (from the verb *sonare*) and a *cantata* is 'what is sung' (from the verb *cantare*).
- 15 Although *Gran Signore* might be translated literally as 'great lord', the Italian term here refers to the sultan himself, Murat IV.

Gran Signore brings women to his room. Every musician therefore wraps a cloth around his head, remaining unable to see, and in this way they sing and play, even bowing their heads, and if someone seems to raise his head, the eunuchs punch him on the neck, and two of them have bows and arrows ready, if someone wanted to look at the women mentioned above.

After his first years as a young musical page, Bobowski became a prolific author and an official translator or dragoman, his knowledge of Ottoman, Arabic, Latin, Italian, French, German, Polish, and perhaps other languages ensuring that his expertise was valued among the embassies in the Ottoman capital. It is generally believed that he converted to Islam, taking the name 'Alî Ufkî, and entering a Sufi brotherhood, the *Celvetîye*.¹⁶ In this sense dervishes are present in the private life of Bobowski. Finally, at the end of his life, after a career as a man of letters and translator, he entrusted two copies of the notebook containing his transcriptions and entitled *Mecmû'a-yi Saz ü Söz* (Collection of Instrumental and Vocal Compositions) to some travellers. These two copies, which are not identical, are preserved at the British Library in London and the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris. Both are precious sources of information about the music of the time because the author did not only transcribe the instrumental music of the elite, as the Moldavian prince Dimitrie Cantemir (1673–1723) was to do. On the contrary, Bobowski (and indeed the other contributors to the manuscript now in the Bibliothèque nationale) transcribed all the music that he heard at court and elsewhere – as a sort of *avant la lettre* ethnomusicologist – of secular as well as spiritual genres, including folk songs (*türkü*) and urban popular songs (*şarkı*), the songs of the dancing boys (*köçekçe*), as well as calls to prayer (*ezan*) and many dervish hymns (*ilâhi* and *tevşih*).

Mevlevi culture seems to have influenced in a subtle way the treatise composed by the second European resident, the Moldavian prince Dimitrie Cantemir, which is dedicated to the art music of the court and is entitled *Kitâbu 'İlmi'l-Mûsiki 'alâ Vechi'l-Hurûfât* (The Book of the Science of Music according to Alphabetic Notation). It was written in Constantinople

¹⁶ The *Celvetîye* was a branch of the *Halvetîye*, founded by Şeyh Uftâde (d. 1580). It was very active at the Ottoman court during the seventeenth century. According to the descriptions that have survived, *Celveti* dervishes seem to have performed a distinctive *zikr* with musical instruments. W. Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court: Makam, Composition and the Early Ottoman Instrumental Repertoire* (Berlin: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 1996), pp. 63, 68.

between 1700 and 1703, when Cantemir was held hostage in the capital to ensure that his father remained loyal to the sultan. The treatise comprises a theoretical section written in Ottoman, which is followed by a second section of 351 entirely instrumental compositions, mostly *peşrev* and *semâî*, which are anonymous or attributed to various composers. They are all written in a notational system often said to have been invented by Cantemir and therefore known as *kantemiroğlu notası*. However, according to recent scholarship, his system was a revision of an earlier and similar system of musical notation invented by the Mevlevi dervish Osman Dede (1652–1729), a composer and musician revered as the *kutb-u nâyi* (Pole of the *Ney*) of his epoch.¹⁷

After these descriptions of music at the court, we return to Mevlevi ceremony with a description written by French aristocrat Jean Antoine du Loir. It was published in 1654 and accompanied by a valuable and innovative albeit very short musical transcription from a setting of the verses beginning with *I ki hezar aferin bon nidge Sultan olur*. The transcription is accompanied by a translation from Ottoman into French.

Deux fois la sepmaine un des leurs fait une predication dans leur couvent, & les femmes qui par tout ailleurs n'ont point d'entrée aux lieux où sont les hommes y assistent par un privilege particulier, estant bien raisonnable qu'elles soient admises aux devotions de ces Religieux amans. Celuy qui preche prend pour texte quelque versets de l'Alcoran & je vous assure que les plus devots Chrestiens pourroient profiter de la Morale de son Sermon.

Cependant tous les dervichs sont renfermez dans une balustrade pour n'estre pas emportunez de la foule des assistants, & pour n'estre pas troublez dans l'exercice de leur ordre, que ie vais vous descrire.

La predication estant finie, les Chantres qui sont dans une galerie, comme sont icy les orgues dans les Eglises, accordant leur voix avec des flutes, qui pour estre merveilleusement harmonieuses sont deffendües a tout autre sorte d'usage, commencent un Hymne à la cadence d'un tambour de biscaye. Voicy les parolles de cét

17 *Kutb* (pole) referred to the axis around which the heavens turned. The term was applied to a figure of unrivalled sanctity and also to the foremost exponent of an art or science. For Cantemir's treatise, see O. Wright, *Demetrius Cantemir. The Collection of Notations. Part I: Text* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, SOAS Musicology Series, 1992) and *Demetrius Cantemir. The Collection of Notations. Volume 2: Commentary* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000). On the relationship between the musical notation system invented by Osman Dede and by Cantemir, see Feldman, *Music of the Ottoman Court*, pp. 33, 52, 92.

*Hymne, que j'ay nottéés, afin que ceux qui sçauent la Musique en puissent juger.*¹⁸

*I ki hezar aferin bon nidge Sultan olur,
 Kouli olan kichiler husie-u hhakan olur,
 Ayaghinung tozini sureme theken gucceuzine,
 Nesne gurur gueuzi xim valihu heïran olur,
 Che beiinnung catresin her kim ither dgiuresin,
 Gungli guhert doluben sinesi ùmman olur,
 Sanga direm, dedey salma deui dunsade,
 Nefsi deuin zapriden dinde suleyman olur,
 Sen malungne tapmaghil, xiokchu saray yapmaghil,
 Ol dourouchub yaptughung sung oudgi viran olur,
 Beslemeghil icnugni nimet-u bircan ile,
 Bir gun olur ol tenung damoude biriain olur,
 Her xichi kimal bolour senma ki deuler bouleur,
 Deuleti boulan kichi allah: boulan olur,
 Her ki bougun velede inanuben yuz sure,
 Yokhsoul ise bai olur, bai ise soultan olur.*

Voicy l'explication de cette Hymne, dont asseurement vous trouverez le sens meilleur que le chant.

*Ha combine de loüanges merite, & combien est grand
 ce Seigneur,
 dont toutes les esclaves sont autant des Rois.
 Quiconque frotera ses yeux de la poudre de ses pieds,
 verra quelque chose qui luy donnera tant d'admiration
 qu'il tombera en extase.
 Celuy qui boira une goutte de son breuvage,
 aura le sein comme un Ocean remply de pierreries & de liqueurs
 precieuses.
 Je te le dis, ó pere! Ne lasche point dans ce monde la bride
 à tes passions,
 quiconque le reprimera sera un vrai Salomon dans la foy.
 Ne t'amuse point à adorer les richesses, n-y a bastir des kiosks,
 & des palais.*

¹⁸ The following words appear in a small typeface under the musical score: *Dons les caracteres on esté fournis par monsieur Ballard, seul imprimeur du Roy pour la musique* (Whose characters were provided by M. Ballard, sole musical printer of the King).

*La fin de ce que tu aurais basty n'est que ruyne,
 Ne nourris point ton corps avec tant des delicatesses &
 des friandises.
 Il arriveroit un iour que ce corps resteroit dans les enfers.
 Ne t' imagine point que celui qui trouve des richesses trouve
 du bon-heur.
 Celui qui trouve le bon-heur n'est autre que celui qui trouve
 Dieu.
 Tout ceux qui se prosternent avec respect & humilité, croiront
 aujourd'huy en Velé,
 Seront riches, s'ils estoient pauvres, & s'ils estoient riches
 deviendront des Rois.*

*I ne vous ay point escrit cette traduction interlineaire, parce que
 la phrase du François ne se rencontre pas avec celle du Turc, & i'ai
 cru que ce seroit traduire ces Vers assez exactement que de mettre
 ligne pour vers comme ie vous l'enuoyer. Vous remarquerez seule-
 ment que le ay, ay qui est une particule d'exclamation, ni le mot
 agianum qui signifie mon ame, ne sont point partie des deux
 premiers Vers, mais que souvent il les mettent à la cesure & à la fin
 des couplets, & qu'ils ont plusieurs semblables mots qu'ils appliquent
 de mesme en chantant, mais a propos et selon le sujet.*

*Durant le premier Verset de cét Hymne tous les Dervichs sont
 dans une posture fort devote, assis sur les talons, les bas croisez &
 la teste baissée. Le Superieur qui est dans la queblé, orné d'une
 estolle de poil de chameau, frappe des mains aussitôt que le second
 commence, & tous les dervichs s'estant incontinent levez, les plus
 proche de luy passant devant le saluë, avec une profonde inclina-
 tion de teste, & se met à tourner, pirouëtant petit à petit d'un
 mouvement si viste qu'à peine peut on s'apercevoir ; Celui qui suit
 en fait autant, & aussi tous les autres qui sont trente ou quarante.
 Cette danse circulaire ayant duré quelquefois plus d'un demy-quart
 d'heure, dans son plus rapide mouvement cesse tout d'un coup au
 mesme signal qu'elle a commencé, & les dervichs, comme s'ils
 n'auoient bougé de la place où ils se trouvent, se remettent assis sur
 en leur premier posture iusques à ce que leur Superieur les fasse
 encore recommencer. Ainsi cette danse continuë quelquefois une
 heure et plus, a quatre ou cinq reprises dont les derniers durent
 toujours plus longtemps, parce que les dervichs sont plus en haleine
 & plus en bransle pour tourner, estans vestus fort à propos pour ce*

*suiet d'une espece de Iupon volant, taillé en rond comme les chemisettes des femmes en France.*¹⁹

Twice a week one of them makes a sermon in their convent, and the women who cannot enter elsewhere in places where there are men are granted a special privilege, so it is reasonable that they be admitted to the devotions of these religious lovers. The one who preaches takes as a text some verses from the Qur'an and I assure you that many devout Christians could benefit from the moral of these sermons.

Meanwhile all the dervishes are gathered within a balustrade in order not to be disturbed by the crowd of the audience, and to avoid being troubled in the exercise of their order, which I am going to describe to you.

When the sermon is over, the singers, who are in a gallery like those which exist where the organs in churches are [kept] here, begin to tune their voices with some flutes, which are beautifully harmonious and are prohibited for any other use, beginning a hymn to the beat of a frame drum.²⁰ Here are the words of this hymn, which I have written, so that anyone who knows music can judge.

[The transcription from the Ottoman, beginning with the line *I ki hezar aferin bon nidge Sultan olur*, is provided above.]


Here you have the translation of this hymn, whose sense you will assuredly find better than the song.

Ah, how many praises he deserves and how great is this lord,
 all of whose slaves are so many kings!
 Whoever will rub on his eyes the dust of His feet
 will see something so admirable that he will fall in ecstasy.
 Whoever will drink a drop of His wine,
 his breast will be like an ocean full of precious gems
 and liqueurs.

¹⁹ J. A. du Loir, *Les voyages du Sieur du Loir* (Paris: Gervais Clovzier, 1654), pp. 153–57.

²⁰ According to C. Soullier, *Dictionnaire de musique* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, n.d.), a *tambour de biscayne* is a sort of 'tambour de basque avec grelots et castagnettes' which means that it was a frame drum with cymbals. Du Loir very probably depicted an Ottoman *def* or *daire*.

Hymno.



I ki hezar a feryn, ay ay, I ki hezar
a feryn bou nidge Sultan olur dgianum
Kouli olan Kichiler, dgianum, husreu u hba-
kin olur.

*Dons les caractères ont esté fournis par Morsf. ur Ballard,
seul Imprimeur du Roy pour la Musique.*

I Ki hezar aferin bon nidge sultan olur,
Kouli olan kichiler, husreu-u hukan olur,
Ayaghinung rozini surmic theken guceuzine,
Nesne gurur yueuzi kim valihu heiran olur,
Che-beinung carresin her kim isher dgiurefin,
Gunyli guher doluben sinefi umman olur,
Sanga direm, dedey salma deni dunsade,
Nefsi denin zaps iden dinde suleyman olour,

Musical transcription of the hymn 'I ki hezar aferin' from Jean Antoine du Loir, *Les voyages du Sieur du Loir* (Paris: Gervais Clovzier, 1654), p. 154. The following words appear beneath the score: *Dons les caractères on esté fournis par monsieur Ballard, seul imprimeur du Roy pour la musique* (Whose characters were provided by M. Ballard, sole musical printer of the King).

I tell you: O father! Do not let your passions run unbridled
in this world,
whoever will tame them will be a real Solomon of the faith.
Do not indulge yourself by worshipping wealth; do not build
kiosks and palaces:
The end of what you have built is nothing but ruins.
Do not feed your body with so many delicacies and
sweetmeats:
The day will arrive when your body will remain in hell.
Do not imagine that one who finds wealth finds happiness.
He who finds happiness is none other than he who finds God.
All those who prostrate themselves with respect and humility,
who believe today in the Friend,
Will become rich if they are poor, and if they are rich
will become kings!

I did not provide an interlinear translation, because the phrases in French do not correspond with those in Turkish, and I also thought that it would be tedious for you if I translated these verses so exactly that the lines were placed together. You will notice that I have omitted from the first verses the exclamations *ay, ay*, just as I have omitted the recurring term *agianum*, which means ‘my soul,’²¹ but often these are in the caesura and in the end of the couplets, and there are many similar words that may be used in the same way while singing, but according to the subject.

During the first verse of this hymn all the dervishes are in a very devout posture, sitting on their heels, their arms across the breast and their heads bowed. The Superior who is in the *qibla*, dressed in a robe of camel hair, claps his hands as soon as the second begins, and all the dervishes rise up at once, the nearest passing in front salutes him, with a deep bow, and begins to whirl, spinning little by little to attain a movement so rapid that it is difficult to see. The one who follows does the same, and so do all the others who are thirty or forty. This circular dance having sometimes continued for more than half of a quarter of an hour, suddenly stops at its maximum speed with the same signal that began it, and the dervishes, as if they had not moved from the

21 *Agianum*, which the author translates as ‘mon ame’, is clearly an attempt to represent the Turkish *canım*.

place where they were, return again to the same posture, as if nothing had happened, remaining sitting in their initial posture until their Superior makes them begin once again. So this dance continues sometimes for an hour or more, four or five repetitions of which the final ones continue for longer, because the dervishes are more transported and aroused for whirling, being dressed very suitably for this task in a sort of a flying petticoat cut round like the chemisettes worn by women in France.

Many remarks could be made about the passage written by du Loir, from the presence of women at the ceremony to the accurate and pioneering translation of the Mevlevi hymn *Hey Ki Ezar Aferin* at a time when the study of Turkish was only beginning in Europe. The hymn, which is often reduced to its first four verses, recurs many times in the corpus of Mevlevi ceremonies. It first appears in the third *selâm* (salutation) of the *âyin* in *makâm pençgâh*, which is considered to be the earliest Mevlevi *âyin*, onward.²² While interested readers can listen to the hymn in many versions, I suggest the warm and intimate performance by the late Nezi̇h Uzel (1938–2012), to whom this article is dedicated.²³ Finally, the posture of the dervishes while they are sitting and the deep bow that they make to the shaykh before they begin turning are the same that we see today, although once again the speed with which they are said to turn seems very different from the severe and highly composed performances of the modern era.

The next description is that of John Covell (1638–1722), an English cleric and scientist who became Master of Christ's College at Cambridge and Vice-Chancellor of the University. While serving in Constantinople as Chaplain to the Levant Company,²⁴ Covell travelled widely in Asia Minor in search of ancient Greek texts. His diaries were published between 1670 and 1679 and contain a rather different account of dervishes, music, and musical instruments because they include so many details about finance and administration.

22 Texts of the hymns that are sung in the ceremonies (*âyin-i şeriflerin güftelerin*) are conveniently presented in S. Heper, *Mevlevî Âyinleri* (Konya: Konya Turizm Derneği Yayını, 1979), pp. 533–60.

23 *Music of the Whirling Dervishes* (New York, Atlantic Recording Corporation, 1987): CD 82493, track 6.

24 The Levant Company was an English chartered company formed in 1581 and reformed in 1592 to oversee trade with the Ottoman Empire. See A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935) and, more recently, J. Mather, *Pashas: Traders and Travellers in the Islamic World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

I was at the Dervises in Galata, which Dervise Mustapha the Nâizam bashè,²⁵ or head of the players of the pipe which they call Nâi.²⁶ He hath been there 14 years, his pay is 45 aspers; to the rest he payes 5, 6, 7, 8, or more, as they are deserving. They have 100 kilos of wheat per annum vacoof,²⁷ 3000 aspers per man; from the G. Sr²⁸ 10 sheep at little Beiram,²⁹ 100 at Ramazan. They have usuall prayers in the houses, and he that is devout may pray all night long, fast etc. There are 4 Tekyes or monasteryes, of them here one, two Kasoumpasha, 3 Bisicktash, 4 Yenicapon;³⁰ on Stambal side there are eighteen sorts of them. These founded first by Molâh Hunkyör, Harset meulanâh, for he goeth by both the names. Heretofore they preach't, danc't, and piped every Tuesday and Friday. 3 lye here buried. 1. Arzéh Mahmet Effendi, a great benefactor to them; 2. Ismél Effendi, another benefactor, who was once their sheik (or head, though it signifies prince) and benefactor. 3. Ismaél Effendi, another benefactor, who built them 10 chambers and left 1,000 dollars. They let their neighbours be there buried for their money. Formerly, the *Baltagee*³¹ of Galata seraglio were buryed; now they have a corner apart. There Govisë Achmet is their Sheich now, who receives all the money and himself 1½ d. per day. Their musick is a Tamboor, and a long week small lute with wire strings, to which they sound their Nai or pipe, whereof they have two sorts, a base and a treble; for the middle ones partake of that to which they are nearest. The little pipes have 7 holes on the upper side all in a row, and an eighth at the bottom, a little of one side, and just in the middle (measuring from that lowest eighth hole upwards) on the back in a 9th hole. Some of these are a foot and ½ long; some lesse, some more. The long pipe hath six holes, on one side three, and three at equal distance, and on the back side, just half way there is a 7th hole. There is neither a fipple³² above, nor noze³³ in the mouth, but the

25 'Head ney player', i.e. *neyzenbaşı*.

26 Nâi = a flute made out of a reed (note by John Covell).

27 *Vakouf* = money from the mosque property (note by John Covell).

28 i.e. *Gran Signore*. 29 i.e. *Ramazan Bayramı*, at the end of Ramazan.

30 i.e. the Mevlevihanes of Kasımpaşa, Beşiktaş, and Yenikapı; Beşiktaş later moved to Bahariye on the Golden Horn.

31 i.e. *baltacı*, lit. a maker or seller of axes, a halberdier in the palace.

32 i.e. Fipple = a stopper. 'In recorders, which go with a gentle breath; the concave of the pipe, were it not for the *fipple*, that straiteneth the air much more than the simple concave, would yield no sound.' (Bacon, *Nat. Hist.*, 116). (Note by John Covell).

33 Noze = nozzle (note by John Covell).

head is a horn sloped up and brought to a very fine edge, which leaning sideways to the mouth, gives the sound, as boyes (with us) used to whistle in acorn cups, this *πλαγιαυλος*;³⁴ whence our flageolet. Shepherds use small pipes of wood with such mouths, and some I have seen of the wings and thigh bones of Crowes, Bistards, Pelicanes etc.,³⁵ from whence of old were cal'd *tibia*. These dervish pipes are very dear, not one of twenty proving good and true. The smallest and deepest he ask 3 dollars for, and some of the largest he valued at 20 dollars. One (which had belong'd to the Convent these 300 years) he valued at 50 dollars; yet more for its sweetness, than antiquity. They play mournfull tones, but seldom any point of musick. They are all made of Indian canes, just as we make our fishing rods in England of; the workmanship and luck in proving good give them their price.³⁶

As we remarked above, Covell provides a pragmatic or even mundane account of the Mevlevi that might in places seem rather dull. Nevertheless, it includes very valuable information. After all, Covell is the first visitor who mentions the four Mevlevihanes in Constantinople at the time, rather than only the famous Mevlevihane at Pera to which ambassadors, diplomats, and travellers were evidently taken as part of the usual tour of the city. He is also very accurate and indeed modern in his approach to musical instruments.

We shall pass over the short observations about music, without any references to dervishes, made by the Venetian ambassador (*bailo*) Gianbattista Donado (1627–99), which were published in 1688³⁷ and whose conclusion contains several rare musical transcriptions of quatrains (*murabba'*) of an erotic nature. Instead, we shall examine another description of Mevlevi ritual, which is accompanied by a precious musical transcription made by the Sieur Chabert. They appear in the famous *Recueil de cent estampes représentant les diverses nations du Levant*, published in 1714 and reprinted with additional plates in 1715. When Charles de Ferriol (1652–1722) was sent

34 Mod. Gr., a transverse flute (note by John Covell).

35 Still in use in the Greek islands (note by John Covell).

36 *Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant*, ed., J. T. Bent, vol. I, *The Diary of Master Thomas Dallam, 1599–1600*. vol. II, *Extracts from the Diaries of Dr. John Covell, 1670–1679, with some account of the Levant Company of Turkey merchants* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1893), vol. II, pp. 168–70.

37 G. B. Donado, *Della Letteratura dei Turchi. Osservazioni fatte da Gio. Battista Donado senator veneto fù bailo a Costantinopoli* (Venice: Andrea Poletti, 1688). Music scores appear in unnumbered folding pages after p. 140.

by Louis XIV as ambassador to the Ottoman court, he invited a young Flemish artist named Jean-Baptiste Vanmour (1671–1737) to accompany him. The collection of engravings that the ambassador published were based upon work by Vanmour and served as models for a large number of later painters and engravers.³⁸ In the present context, perhaps the most important of the engravings that depict Ottoman instruments were those produced for the *Gabinetto armonico pieno d’Instrumenti* of Filippo Bonanni (1639–1725). The book was published in 1716 and provides the first modern essay in musical organology.³⁹ In his *Recueil de cent estampes* Ferriol wrote a few paragraphs entitled ‘Derviches qui tournent’ in order to describe an engraving depicting Mevlevi dervishes and to introduce the rare musical transcription made by Chabert.

Cette Planche represente le Temple des Dervichs de Pera, qui est fait en Dôme; il est clair, & bien parqueté: il y a une Tribune où l’on met la Musique. On a joint icy l’Air noté que les Musiciens jouënt pour faire tourner les Dervichs: ils tournent les bras ouverts, & paroissent extasiez: les jeunes tournent d’une vitesse incroyable. Le Superieur & les vieux tournent plus lentement; & quand ils sont las, ils se mettent à genoux le visage contre terre. C’est la Musique qui les anime; ils prétendent qu’elle a quelque chose de divin: plusieurs ont assuré M. de Ferriol que, sans la Musique, ils ne pourroient pas faire trois tours sans tomber, au lieu qu’ils tournent près d’une heure.

La danse est précédée par la lecture de quelques passages de l’Alcoran que le Superieur, ou un des ses principaux Dervichs explique aux Assistans.

Le double cercle, qui est suspendu en l’air, ne sert qu’à mettre des Lampes dans les tems du Ramazan; & les Inscriptions qu’on voit au-dessus des colomnes, & autour du Dôme, sont des Sentences, ou des passages de l’Alcoran à la loüange de Dieu.

Il y a encore un Couvent des mêmes Dervichs sur le canal de la Mer noire.⁴⁰

38 See R. Grierson, ‘A Proper Cutt: William Hogarth, *Motraye’s Travels*, and the Dervishes who Serve God on their Tiptoes’, *Mawlana Rumi Review* 3 (2012), pp. 95–119.

39 See C. Ghirardini, ‘“Eyewitness” Accounts of Turkish Music and Dance in the Eighteenth Century’, *Imago Musicae* 26 (2013), pp. 47–77.

40 Charles de Ferriol, *Recueil de cent Estampes representant les differents Nations du Levant, tirées sur les Tableaux peints d’après Nature en 1707. et 1708. par les Ordres de M. de Ferriol, Ambassadeur du Roi a la Porte, Et gravées en 1712. et 1713. par les soins de*

This engraving represents the temple of the Pera Dervishes, which is a dome; it is clear and well parquetted: there is a gallery where the music is performed. We have added here the musical notation of the air which the musicians play in order to make the dervishes turn: they turn with open arms and seem in ecstasy: the young turn at an incredible speed. The Superior and the elders turn more slowly, and when they are tired they place themselves on their knees with their faces to the ground. It is music that animates them; they claim that it is in some way divine: many have assured M. de Ferriol that, without the music, they would not be able to perform three turns without falling, while they turn for nearly an hour.

The dance is preceded by the reading of some passages from the Qur'an, which the Superior, or one of his principal dervishes explains to the audience.

The double ring, which is suspended in the air, is only for lamps which are hung during the period of Ramazan, and the inscriptions under the columns, and around the dome, are sentences or passages from the Qur'an in praise of God.

There is another convent of these same dervishes on the Black Sea channel.⁴¹

Although concise, the description provided by Ferriol is accurate when compared to the travellers who preceded him. In its very concision, however, the passage raises an important and difficult question. For centuries, Westerners believed that the dervishes whirled in response to the music. Dervishes themselves, however, offered a different explanation: ecstasy lies in the human soul from the primordial covenant between man and God known in Turkish as *bezm-i elest*.⁴² The act of listening (*samā'*)

Mr. Le Hay (Paris: Le Hay & Duchange Collombat, 1714). The expanded edition published in the following year included a second title page: *Explication des cent estampes qui representent differentes nations du Levant avec de nouvelles estampes de ceremonies turques qui ont aussi leurs explications* (Paris: Jacques Collombat, 1715). The passage cited above appears on page 26. The music score appears on page 27. In some editions, the caption above the score contains not only 'Air sur lequel tournent les Derviches de Pera' but also 'Noté par le Sieur Chabert qui était avec Mr. de Ferriol, et qui en a composé la Basse' (Air to which the dervishes of Pera turn, written down by the Sieur Chabert who was with Mr. de Ferriol and who composed the bass.)

⁴¹ i.e. the Bosphorus.

⁴² lit. 'Assembly of Alast'. The first word is the Persian *bazm* (assembly, meeting, banquet) and the second is Arabic, adopted from the question that God asked mankind on the Day of Creation: *alastu bi-rabbikum* (Am I not your Lord?). See Qur'an VII: 172.

Air sur lequel tournent les Derviches de Péra.

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled 'Air sur lequel tournent les Derviches de Péra'. The score is written in a single system with two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic melody with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The piece is marked 'Allegro' at the beginning. The score is divided into several measures, with some measures containing multiple notes beamed together. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Musical transcription entitled 'Air sur lequel tournent les Derviches de Péra, Noté par le Sieur Chabert qui était avec M^o de Ferriol et qui en a composé la Basse' from Charles de Ferriol, *Recueil de cent Estampes representant différentes Nations du Levant* (Paris: Le Hay & DuChange Collombat, 1714), p. 27.



Les Dervichs dans leur temple de Péra, achevant de tourner, engraving by Jean-Baptiste Scotin after a design by Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, from



the expanded edition of Ferriol, *Recueil de cent Estampes representant différentes Nations du Levant*, which was published in 1715, pl. 102.

revives this immanent but often disconnected inner state. What counts is the intention of the listener (*niyya*) toward the act of listening. With this in mind, it should be emphasized that there is no Sufi music per se, but, rather, music *listened to* by the Sufis.⁴³ The views attributed to the dervishes by Ferriol are therefore intriguing and need to be explored in greater detail and at greater length.

I mention only in passing a long and detailed essay written in 1751 at Constantinople by a French dragoman named Charles Fonton (1725–93), illustrated by his friend Jean-Baptiste Adanson (1732–1803) and entitled *Essai sur la musique orientale comparée à la musique européenne*.⁴⁴ It does not discuss the question of dervishes aside from an illustration in which a Mevlevi dervish with his conical hats (*sikke*) is depicted playing the *ney*.

Our final encounter is with a scholar who is considered to be the last European traveller in the eighteenth century who made a significant contribution to the study of Ottoman music, bringing to an end an epoch that had been marked by a curiosity for *Turcherie*. Giambattista Toderini (Venice, 1728–1799) was a Jesuit abbot who arrived at Constantinople in October 1781 after a busy career as a scholar and teacher. He travelled in the entourage of the Venetian ambassador (*bailo*) Agostino Garzoni and his wife Pisana Quirini Stampalia who had asked him to serve as a theologian and preceptor for their son. As he wrote in the introduction to his *Letteratura*, he remained in the city from October 1781 to May 1786 and lived in the house of the ambassador. During the first months of his sojourn, he began

42 lit. 'Assembly of Alast'. The first word is the Persian *bazm* (assembly, meeting, banquet) and the second is Arabic, adopted from the question that God asked mankind on the Day of Creation: *alastu bi-rabbikum* (Am I not your Lord?). See Qur'an VII: 172.

43 The distinction between Sufi music and Sufis listening to music is ancient. For a survey on aphorisms by Sufi masters see the whole chapter *Les mythes et les rites de l'audition mystique* in J. Dering, *Musique et extase: l'audition mystique dans la tradition soufie* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1988). The position of the Sufis was actualized on a number of occasions by mevlevi *ney* master Kudsi Erguner: firstly in his *La fontaine de la separation. Voyages d'un musicien soufi* (Paris: Le bois d'Orion, 2000). Then in: Giovanni De Zorzi 'Un tè con Kudsi Erguner', *World Music Magazine* (Rome, n. 68, September/October 2004), 17. And finally in his most recent: Kudsi Erguner, *La flûte des origines. Un Soufi d'Istanbul* (Paris: Plon, 2013).

44 C. Fonton, *Essai sur la musique orientale comparée à la musique européenne*, Bibliothèque nationale MS. 9137. The work was translated by R. Martin and published as 'Essay Comparing Turkish Music with European Music', *Turkish Music Quarterly*, Autumn (1988), pp. 1–9; Winter (1989), pp. 1–11. The same essay was translated and edited in German by E. Neubauer as 'Der *Essai sur la musique orientale* von Charles Fonton mit Zeichnungen von Adanson', *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 2 (1985), pp. 277–327 and 3 (1986), pp. 277–324. A Turkish translation and commentary was published by C. Behar as *18 yüzyılda Türk müziği: Charles Fonton* (Istanbul: Pan, 1987).



Engraving of musical ensemble by Jean-Baptiste Adanson for Charles Fonton, *Essai sur la musique orientale comparée à la musique européenne*, in which a Mevlevi dervish is depicted wearing a conical hat (*sikke*) and playing a reed flute (*ney*).

to devote any available time to research that followed his earlier interests. Little by little, however, the idea occurred to him that he should write a history of printing in Constantinople that would include a survey of all the books that had been published there. As the idea grew, he began to study Turkish literature in its entirety, pursuing his investigation through the main archives and libraries of the imperial capital and eventually producing the three volumes of his *Letteratura Turchesca* (Turkish Literature). They were published at Venice by Giacomo Storti in 1787, only a year after Toderini returned from Constantinople.⁴⁵ The wide circulation and enthusiastic reception of his work by a European readership consisting of scholars and intellectuals seems to be proven by the many reviews that it received immediately after its publication and by the two translations, into French and German,⁴⁶ that were published within three years of its appearance. In the midst of the eighteenth-century curiosity for *Turcherie*, which had been nourished by the accounts of travellers, *Letteratura Turchesca* provided a solid point of reference that was increasingly admired as a reliable source of information about Ottoman culture.

Through the centuries, *Letteratura Turchesca* has also served as a source for the study of Ottoman music. The reason for its importance to musicologists is the lengthy Chapter XVI, consisting of thirty pages and

⁴⁵ G. Toderini, *Letteratura Turchesca* (Venice: Giacomo Storti, 1787).

⁴⁶ G. Toderini, *De la literature des Turcs*, trans. by the Abbott de Cournaud (Paris: Poincot, 1789); idem., *Litteratur der Türken. Aus dem Italianischen des Hern Abbé Toderini, Mit Zusätzen und Anmerkungen von Philipp Wilhelm Gottlieb Hausleutner* (Königsberg: Friederich Nicolovius, 1790). A Spanish translation by the Chilean Jesuit Warcisse Vas remains unpublished.

two engravings, which appears at the end of the first volume. Entitled ‘Musica,’ it contains observations on the subject that are often the fruit of Toderini’s conversations with Mevlevi dervishes. He deals with many topics and themes, from the history of Ottoman music, in which he follows Cantemir,⁴⁷ to its theoretical basis in the context of Arab-Persian musicology, an alphabetical Greek and Arab-Persian notation, and a description of musical instruments and the division of the octave into twenty-four unequal microtones, ending in a series of epistolary exchanges with his Jesuit colleagues Abbott Pizzati (1732–1803) and Abbott Juan Andrés (1740–1817). Moreover, the chapter concludes with two illustrations that have become very famous: the first depicting a long-necked lute known as a *tanbûr*, including its fretting and its inherent musical system of 24 unequal microtones, and the second of a composition entitled *Concerto Turco Nominato Izia Semaisi*.

From a dense chapter written in eighteenth-century Italian, I have extracted only the passages that concern the Mevlevi:

La maggior parte de’ ragguardevoli Turchi, e signori piglian piacere della Musica, la quale, come usavan li Greci, entra nel sistema della loro educazione. Su false relazioni scrisse il Niebuhr,⁴⁸ che i Turchi di condizione signorile crederebbono disonorarsi apprendendo la Musica. Nella sua Repubblica determinava Platone, che s’applicassero i giovani tre anni a questa scienza. I Turchi coltivarla lungamente, e i più cogl’istromenti a corde e col Neî. Tengono schiavi, e schiave, che suonino a lor diletto. Disdegnano però i Signori d’alto stato di farsi udire nelle pubbliche adunanze, fuorchè suonando il Neî tra gli amici, perché viene reputato stromento di studio. Così imparai da Ibraimo Efendi, mentre nelle praterie di Bojux-derè, ove concorrono molti d’ogni nazione a diporto, sonò un Ulemà mio amico in compagnia del più valente Dervis Mevlevi, venuti quel giorno perché sentissi il suono dolcissimo dello stromento . . .⁴⁹

47 See D. Cantemir, *Histoire de l’Empire Othoman, où se voyent les causes de son aggrandissement et de sa decadence* (Paris: Le Clerc, 1743). The treatise *Kitâbu ‘İlmi’l-Mûsiki ‘alâ Vechi’l-Hurûfât*, which has been mentioned above, was not in wide circulation during the life of Toderini.

48 Toderini provides the following note: ‘Niebuhr, *Voy. En Arabie*, T. I. p. 142.’ He is referring to Karsten (or Carsten) Niebuhr (1733–1815) and to his *Reisebeschreibung von Arabien und anderen umliegenden Ländern*, which was first published in 1772. French and Dutch translations of Niebuhr’s narratives were published during his lifetime. Toderini seems to have used the French translation that was published in the Netherlands: C. Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arabie & en d’autres pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam: S. J. Baalde/Utrecht: J van Schoonven, 1776).

49 Toderini, *Letteratura Turchesca*, p. 228.

Most of the notable Turks, and the nobility take pleasure in music, which, as it was among the Greeks, has entered their system of education. Based on an unreliable source Niebuhr wrote, that Turks of high social standing are convinced that their honour is diminished if they learn music.⁵⁰ In his *Republic*, Plato recommended that the young apply three years to the study of this science. The Turks study and practise music for a long time, in particular [focus] on stringed instruments and on the *Nei*. They keep male slaves, and female slaves, who can play for their amusement. Yet, the nobles of high rank do not want to be heard in public, unless they play the *Nei* among friends, because it is considered to be an instrument of study.⁵¹ This I learned from Ibraimo Efendi in the meadows of Bojux-derè,⁵² when my friend, a man of religious learning, played for me in the company of the most talented Mevlevi dervishes, who came that day in order to make me listen to the sweetest sound of that instrument . . .

*I Dervis Meveli, così nominati dal Fondatore, avendo introdotto qual religioso culto la danza nel loro Oratorio (che in nessuna maniera vuol chiamarsi Moschea) coltivano molto la musica, e sono de' migliori sonatori. Usano stromenti da fiato, e timpani, come vidi trovandomi presente alle turbinose lor danze, ove celeramente s'aggirano quasi un palèo. Suonano finamente il Nei, non usando, come noi, dell'estremità delle dita, fuorchè del mignolo, ma delle seconde giunture. Stromento egli è questo di malagevole imboccatura, essendo tutto aperto nell'alto, di singolare dolcezza, e somigliante alla voce umana.*⁵³

The Meveli⁵⁴ dervishes, who are named in this way after their founder, having introduced the dance as a religious devotion in their oratorio⁵⁵ (which they would in no way call a mosque)

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ It is not clear if the Italian *stromento di studio* is intended to refer to the usual study and practice of a given instrument or if it alludes to a form of inner practice, typical of those who devoted themselves to the *ney*, especially among the Mevlevi.

⁵² Although the area is still known as Büyükdere, the meadow can no longer be seen.

⁵³ Toderini, *Letteratura Turchesca*, pp. 241–42.

⁵⁴ Either Toderini or his publisher has written 'Meveli' instead of 'Mevlevi'. The latter form is obviously correct and appears elsewhere in the chapter.

⁵⁵ As with the terms *sonata* and *cantata*, which have been discussed above, modern readers may be tempted to understand *oratorio* in terms of European music during

practise music assiduously, and are among the best musicians. They play wind instruments, and kettledrums, as I saw when I was at their whirling dances, where they turn quickly in the manner of a spinning top. They play the *Nei* well, not using, as we do, the top joint of the finger, apart from the little finger, but using the second phalanx. It is a difficult instrument to play, being all open on the top, but of a singular sweetness and similar to the human voice.

Toderini makes the following comment about attempts at musical transcription that preceded him.

L'aria, sulla quale ballano li Dervis, vedesi riportata con note europee nell'opera illustre dell'Ambasciatore Ferriol.⁵⁶ Sonata da valente Maestro sulle corde del violino non la riconobbero per dessa i Turchi uditori e bellamente ne risero. A dir vero, alcuni tuoni sono inesprimibili affatto coll'usate note europee. Conviene formare nuove figure, e darne loro giusto valore: faccenda alquanto spinosa, che domanda lunga meditazione, e non volgare perizia nella Musica nostra e nella turchesca.⁵⁷

The melody, to which the dervishes dance, can be seen in European notes in the illustrious work of the Ambassador de Ferriol.⁵⁸ However, when it was read and played on the violin by a talented master, the Turkish listeners did not recognize it at all and had a good laugh. To be honest, some tones are inexpressible in European notes. It is necessary to form new figures, and give them the correct value: a thorny task that requires prolonged meditation and unusual skill, both in our music as well as in Turkish.

the classical period. However, the term was used here in its Latin sense, referring to an oratory, which is a place in which people pray (*oratorius*, from the verb *orare*), normally distinct from the church. With this in mind, the comment by Toderini is rather subtle. It assumes a clear distinction between a mosque and a Mevlevihane, especially a *semâhâne*, the space in which the Mevlevi performed the *semâ*, the liturgy accompanied by music.

56 *Recueil de cent estampes de Mr Ferriol*, p. 26. à Paris, 1714. (Toderini's footnote). Here the author refers to the above quoted '*Air sur la quelle tournent les Dervichs*': an analysis of this very particular musical transcription would give material for a whole other article.

57 Toderini, *Letteratura Turchesca*, p. 242. 58 See note 40.

Or veggasi la Tavola I e II, che presenta al lettore nuovo saggio, ossia tentative sulla Musica Turca espresso con note nostre Europee, approvate da'pratici esperti in questa scienza. Anzi i non esperti, se udirono l'arie, e sonate Ottomane, in queste note ravviseranno il genio e l'indole della Musica, che non avverrà loro sonando le carte di Mr. Ferriol Ambasciatore di Francia alla Porta, nè le alter più antiche del Bailo Donado mentovate più sopra.

Queste cognizioni apriranno per avventura nuovo campo ai Maestri per arricchire e vie più adronare la Musica Italiana. Queste potranno spandere nuova luce sulla scientifica Teoria, e illuminare l'oscura storia della Musica antica negli autori Greci e Latini.⁵⁹

Now let us see Illustrations I and II, which present to the reader a new attempt, a tentative approach to expressing Turkish music in our European notes, approved by the real experts in this music. Even non-experts, when listening to these Ottoman arias and sonatas, will be able to perceive in these notes the genius and the spirit of this music, which will not happen if they play the musical scores arranged by Mr. Ferriol, French Ambassador at the Porte, or the earlier ones by *bailo* Donado mentioned above.

This knowledge may perhaps open a new field for the maestros to enrich and embellish Italian music. In this way they can shed new light upon scientific theory, and enlighten the obscure history of the ancient music of Greek and Latin authors.

Toderini is very acute in identifying Plato as a common source for the Ottoman conception of music as an ennobling practice while at the same time citing Islamic assumptions that music as an abstract science or as a source of amusement is licit, even if making a living by performing it would not be thought suitable for a member of the Ottoman elite. As he says, 'the grandees do not want to be heard in public'. The descriptions of the Mevlevi are standard, aside from the conversation that he seems to have conducted with them in the meadows of Büyükdere. Again, he seems to have made a very acute distinction between a *semâhâne* and a mosque. He demonstrates that he knows the musical transcriptions that preceded him and he criticizes them on the basis of a new formulation in which the musical scale is divided into twenty-four unequal microtones, a remarkable innovation if we remember that the Cairo Congress of Arab Music, at which the octave was divided

59 Toderini, *Letteratura Turchesca*, pp. 241–42.

Concerto turco nominato izia samaisi Tab. II.

Musical transcription of the *Concerto turco nominato Izia Saz Semaisi*, Table II from Giambattista Toderini, *Letteratura Turchesca* (Venice: Giacomo Storti, 1787).

into twenty-four equal quartertones, would not be held until 1932. The last part of his chapter is primarily concerned with theory, transcription, and interval ratios as well as the two famous illustrations. The first of these illustrations, which represents a *tanbûr* with its fretting and its inherent microtonal musical system is discussed in detail by Toderini throughout the chapter. Most readers of the *Mawlana Rumi Review* are likely to find the second illustration of greater interest. It presents a composition to which Toderini gives the name *Concerto Turco Nominato Izia Semaisi*.⁶⁰ With some variation, it is a composition that is now very well known: the *Hicâz Saz Semâ'îsi* that concludes at least three Mevlevi *âyinler*. In chronological order, it concludes the *âyin* in *makâm beyâtî* composed by Derviş Küçük Mustafa Dede (d. 1683), the *âyin* in *makâm hicâz* composed by Musahip 'Vardakosta' Ahmed Ağa (1724–94) and the *âyin* in *makâm hicâz* composed by Abdürrahim Kunhi Dede (1769–1831). Toderini or his assistants could have listened to the *hicâz son yürük semâ'î* from at least one of these *âyinler* and decided to transcribe it because they admired its beauty or because its presence in Ottoman music was so noticeable.⁶¹

If we compare the reports of European travellers, we can notice a number of recurring traits and patterns. These raise the possibility that

60 The *Concerto* has been recorded several times, for example by Concerto Köln with the Ensemble Sarband in *Dream of the Orient*, Deutsche Grammophon (2003), CD: 474 193–2, track 4.

61 During my first visit to Konya in 1991, the composition could be heard almost everywhere in the city and it resonated in my memory long after my return to Venice.

earlier published accounts were read by those who travelled in later decades and provided inspiration or were used as sources when they wrote their own descriptions of their journeys. This would recall the development of European painting that depicted Ottoman themes. As Cristina Ghirardini has demonstrated, the eyes of an ‘eyewitness’ were often influenced by what earlier eyes had seen.⁶² The influence of earlier depictions of the Mevlevi *sêmâ* in particular has been discussed in some detail by Roderick Grierson.⁶³

Now, if we could place all the books on a table in front of us, and collate the elements that appear in them, we would have a series of arrivals in the great city and promenades through its streets, perhaps with notes about the *mehter* musical ensemble that greeted the travellers, followed by observations about language, religion, costumes, details about archaeology, and perhaps a visit to ancient Greek or Byzantine sites such as Chalcedon. And then, *et voilà* ambassadors, aristocrats, wealthy merchants, and other worthy travellers would be taken or at least directed to the famous Mevlevihane at Pera. More than the other Mevlevihanes in the Ottoman capital, it was the location of most of the descriptions by foreign travellers that are listed above.

Similar programmes, of course, were provided in other cities when ambassadors or distinguished visitors were received. Here in Venice, for example, Ottoman dignitaries were taken to the Mercerie street market and then up to the bell tower at San Marco. There, on top, they were offered refreshment and shown the city, the lagoon, and the surroundings hills from its vantage point, after which they were taken to look at the ships under construction at the Arsenale, and were finally presented with gifts that were likely to be appreciated and admired, such as mechanical devices or glass from Murano.⁶⁴

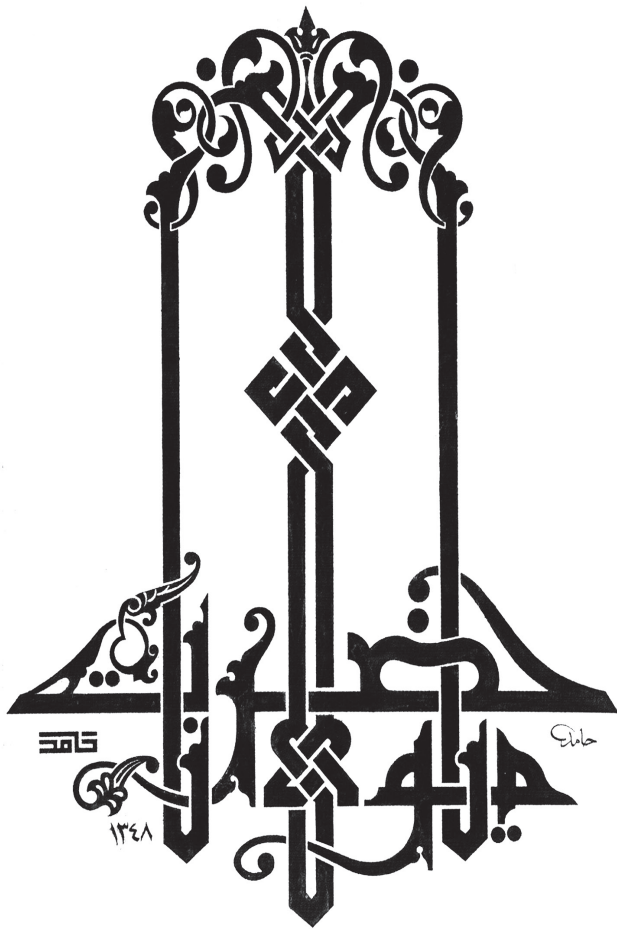
With this in mind, we need to ask what the Mevlevi *sêmâ* was likely to have represented for Ottoman hosts. Was it a performance of which they were especially proud?⁶⁵ Why did Ottomans think that European visitors would have enjoyed such a ceremony or been impressed by it? And for their part, why were Europeans almost invariably fascinated? What did they see in such rituals? From at least some European descriptions, we might suppose that the aesthetic element was less important than it is now, that the rituals were more spontaneous and less composed. Why has their attraction

62 See note 39. 63 See note 38.

64 M. P. Pedani, *Venezia porta d'oriente* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2010), pp. 144–45.

65 The profound influence of the Mevlevi on the Ottoman establishment and indeed on Ottoman culture as a whole, especially on literature and music, is almost impossible to exaggerate.

endured for so many centuries despite the obvious commercialization of Mevlevi liturgies for tourists in Istanbul and elsewhere in Turkey? Many answers could be suggested for such questions and at least some of them might approach or even exceed the limits of historical research. For the moment, we have reached the limit of a single article, although we hope to return to these questions in the near future. Far more research is needed by specialists in musicology as well as in the history of literature and the visual arts if we would understand the extraordinary influence of the Mevlevi *sêmâ* upon both East and West.



Notes on Contributors



ROBERT (ABDUL HAYY) DARR travelled and lived in Pakistan and Afghanistan during the 1980s. He was introduced to Sufism in the 1970s through the works of Idries Shah. By 1985 he left the Shah groups and began working in the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan and making overland trips inside Afghanistan. In the ensuing years, he befriended a number of Sufis in the region. Darr spent the next couple of decades studying traditional Sufism along with specialized disciplines such as *abjad* (Islamic numerology). For almost two decades he was a student of the Afghan Sufi, Raz Mohammed Zaray. For a decade, he studied miniature painting with Afghanistan's great miniaturist, Homayon Etemadi (d. 2007). Darr is the author of *The Spy of the Heart* (2007), his own personal autobiographical account of initiation into a Sufi order in Afghanistan, and several books on Sufism, including a translation of the *Quatrains of Khalilullah Khalili* (2002) and a translation of *The Garden of Mystery: The Gulshan-i raz of Mahmud Shabistari* (2007).

GIOVANNI DE ZORZI is Lecturer in Ethnomusicology at the Ca' Foscari University of Venice. His main research areas are the Ottoman and Central Asian traditions of classical and Sufi music. He alternates a life of musical performing (Ottoman *ney* flute, both as a soloist and with his Ensemble Marâghî) with field research, scientific writing, music and academic teaching. He regularly collaborates with the IISMC (Institute for Comparative Music Studies) of the prestigious Giorgio Cini Foundation, Venice, and with the great Italian MITO Settembre Musica festival, creating and organizing concerts, masterclasses and academic conferences. His eighty publications include: *Musiche di Turchia. Tradizioni e transiti tra Oriente e Occidente, con un saggio di Kudsi Erguner* (Milan: Ricordi/Universal Music, 2010); *Con I dervisci. Otto incontri sul campo* (Milan: Mimesis, 2013); and the editing and translation of Jean During's *Musica ed estasi. L'ascolto mistico nella tradizione sufi* (Rome: Squilibri, 2013). Notable among his recordings are: Ensemble Marâghî, *Anwâr. From Samarqand to Constantinople in the Footsteps of Marâghî* (2010); Ensemble Bîrûn (dir. Kudsi Erguner), *Composers at the Ottoman Court*, (2013). Ensemble Bîrûn (dir. Kudsi Erguner), *Armenian Composers of Ottoman Music* (2014).

KUDSI ERGUNER lives and works in Paris as a musician, composer, musicologist, teacher and author. He is one of the foremost Nay masters of our times, particularly famed for his activities helping to introduce Ottoman and Sufi music to the world with internationally acclaimed projects and recordings. He has made authoritative contributions to world music, having documented and revived nearly forgotten musical traditions and brought them to the attention of the Western public, thus securing them a place within Europe's cultural inheritance. Erguner comes from a family of Turkish musicians, and his involvement with various Sufi brotherhoods, whose music and teachings he studied, left their decisive marks on him. He received his training directly from his father, Ulvi Erguner, who was the last great master of the Nay. Kudsi Erguner also studied architecture and musicology in Paris, has given concerts and played in major festivals throughout the world and has researched the music of India, Pakistan and Turkey, founded diverse music ensembles, recorded numerous albums and has worked with such well-known artists as Peter Brook, Carolyn Carlson, Maurice Béjart, Peter Gabriel, Robert Wilson, Georges Aperghis, Tony Gatliff, Didier Lockwood, Michel Portal, Marc Minkowski, Fazil Say, Mehmet Ulusoy, Cristoph Lauer, Michel Godard, Renaud Garcia-Fons, and many others. In this way, Erguner has initiated a renaissance in the study and performance of Ottoman Classical and Sufi music in Turkey. He has devised many original projects for the International Istanbul Music Festival, among which can be mentioned: 'From Sufism to Flamenco', 'Ghazals', 'Ferahfeza Whirling Dervishes Ceremony', 'Songs from Vienna and Istanbul: Schubert-Sevki Bey', 'Rembetiko from Istanbul', 'Works of Prince Dimitri Kantemir & Ali Ufki', 'Islam Blues', 'Taj Mahal', 'La Banda Alla Turka', 'Ottomania' and 'Fasl- Ottoman court music.' Erguner is regarded as one of the most important pioneers and contributors to Ottoman Sufi and classical music as well as to the world music. He currently lectures on Ottoman Court and Sufi music at the Rumi Association in Paris, at the Istituto Interculturale di Studi Musicali Comparati di Fondazione Cini in Venice and at the Conservatorium of Rotterdam.

SHEMS FRIEDLANDER is a professor at the American University in Cairo and has studied with Sufi shaykhs throughout the Middle East, in Mecca, Medina, Cairo and Istanbul. He is the author of many books including *Rumi: The Hidden Treasure*, and *Rumi and the Whirling Dervishes* as well as the acclaimed *When You Hear Hoofbeats Think of a Zebra*. He has had many exhibitions of his photography and paintings and has won more than 30 awards, including the Silver Award of the New York Art Directors' Club for

graphic design. He has also directed and produced several short films including, *Rumi: The Wings of Love*.

RODERICK GRIERSON is Menteşezade Research Fellow and Director of the Rumi Institute at Near East University, Nicosia, Cyprus. He has recently edited and written an introduction to *Deviant Histories: New Perspectives on Turkish Sufism*, a translation of Ahmed Yaşar Ocak's *Türk Sufiliğine Bakışlar*. He has also edited and prepared an introduction and bibliography for a revised version of *The City of the Heart*, the first translation into English of the complete text of Yunus Emre's *Divan* according to the edition published in 1961 by Abdülbâki Gölpınarlı. In 2009 he delivered the Süha Faiz Memorial Lectures, which will be published as *The Road to the City of the Heart*. In 2014 he delivered the Robertson–Hastie Lectures at the University of Glasgow, in which he discussed the career of William Hastie, the author of *The Festival of Spring from the Divân of Jelâleddîn*. He has just completed the first English translation of the *Risalat al-Nushiyya* of Yunus Emre and is preparing an exhibition catalogue of historic engravings, lithographs and photographs of Mevlevi dervishes.

SLOBODAN ILIĆ is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Theology at Near East University in Nicosia, Northern Cyprus, and Research Fellow at the Rumi Institute there. After earning degrees at Sarajevo and Belgrade, he completed his doctorate at the Otto-Friedrich-Universität in Bamberg and then taught at the Department of History at Bilkent University in Ankara and the Department of History at Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta, Northern Cyprus. Prof. Ilić has lectured and published widely on the history of Sufism in the Balkans and Anatolia, especially on its more heterodox varieties. His first book, *Hüseyin Lamekani: Ein osmanischer Dichter und Mystiker und sein literarisches Werk*, was published by Otto Harrassowitz in 1999. His most recent book, *Evliya Çelebi in Bosnia and Dalmatia: From the Fifth Book of the Seyahatname*, was published by Brill in Leiden in 2010. He is a member of the editorial board of *Middle Eastern Literatures* and is a contributor to the third edition of the *Encyclopedia of Islam*.

WILLIAM STANLEY MERWIN (born in New York City, Sept. 30, 1927) is an American poet, credited with over fifty books of poetry, translation and prose. Merwin's first collection, *A Mask for Janus* (Yale University Press, 1952), was praised by W. H. Auden for its technical virtuosity, and bore the influence both of Robert Graves and the medieval poetry Merwin was

translating, in its focus on classical imagery and myth. During the 1950s he was a close friend of and belonged to the circle of writers that surrounded Robert Lowell, and in the 1960s while living in Europe became close friends of Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes. In 1967, Merwin published the critically acclaimed volume, *The Lice* (Atheneum, 1967), followed by *The Carrier of Ladders* (Atheneum, 1970), both of which remain his most influential collections. Both books use classical legends as a means to explore personal and political themes, including his opposition to the Vietnam War. In 1971, Merwin received the Pulitzer Prize for *The Carrier of Ladders*. In 1976, Merwin moved to Hawaii to study with the Zen Buddhist master Robert Aitken. Merwin settled in Maui, in a home that he helped design and build. The rigorous practice of Buddhism and passionate dedication to environmentalism that Merwin devoted himself to in Hawaii has profoundly influenced his later work, including his evocative renderings of the natural world in *The Compass Flower* (Atheneum, 1977), *Opening the Hand* (Atheneum, 1983), and *The Rain in the Trees* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), as well as *The Folding Cliffs* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), a novel-in-verse drawing on the history and legends of Hawaii. Over the course of his long career, Merwin has published over twenty books of poetry. His recent collections include *The Moon Before Morning* (Copper Canyon Press, 2014); *The Shadow of Sirius* (Copper Canyon Press, 2008), which won the 2009 Pulitzer Prize; *Present Company* (Copper Canyon Press, 2007); *Migration: New & Selected Poems* (Copper Canyon Press, 2005), which won the 2005 National Book Award; *The Pupil* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2001); *The River Sound* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), which was named a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year; *Flower and Hand: Poems 1977–1983* (Copper Canyon Press, 1997); *The Vixen* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1996); and *Travels* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1993). He has also published nearly twenty books of translation, including *Collected Haiku of Yosa Buson* (Copper Canyon Press, 2013), with Takako Lento; *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2004); *Dante's Purgatorio* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2000); and volumes by Federico García Lorca and Pablo Neruda. His numerous plays and books of prose include *Unchopping a Tree* (Trinity University Press, 2014); *The Book of Fables* (Copper Canyon Press, 2007), a collection of his short prose; *Summer Doorways* (Counterpoint, 2006), a memoir of his childhood; and *The Lost Upland* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), his memoir of life in the south of France. He has received many awards. Most recently, he received the 2014 Harold Morton Landon Translation Award from the Academy of American Poets, for his *Selected Translations* (Copper Canyon Press, 2013).

ABDALLAH SCHLEIFER is Professor Emeritus of Journalism at the American University in Cairo, where he founded and served as first director of the Kamal Adham Center for Television and Digital Journalism. He is a senior fellow at the Royal Aal al Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, a columnist for Al Arabiya News and senior editor of the annual edition of *The Muslim 500*. He has served as NBC News bureau chief in Cairo; Al Arabiya bureau chief in Washington, DC; Middle East correspondent for *Jeune Afrique*; special correspondent for the *New York Times* in Amman, Jordan and managing editor of the *Jerusalem Star/Palestine News* published in then Jordanian Jerusalem. Schleifer was an original signatory of *A Common Word Between Us and You* and participated in the first Common Word conferences held at Yale and at Georgetown. He did his graduate studies on Islamic political thought at the American University in Beirut.

ELIZA TASBIHI holds a Ph.D. (2015) in Religious Studies from the Department of Religion, Concordia University and an MA (2007) in Islamic Studies from the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. Her master's thesis was based on Mulla Hadi Sabzawari's philosophical commentary on Rumi's *Mathnawi*. For her doctoral thesis, she examined the seventeenth-century Ottoman Mevlevi commentary by Isma'il Anqarawi on the apocryphal text known as 'Book Seven' of the *Mathnawi*. Her fields of interest include Sufism, classical Persian literature and Ottoman Sufi literature. She is particularly interested in the teachings and Sufi doctrines of Jalal al-Din Rumi. Her scholarship is based on analysis of pre-modern Ottoman and Persian manuscripts and she has done extensive research in the manuscript libraries of Turkey, Sarajevo and Iran. Dr. Tasbihi has taught and lectured in several courses on Rumi, Sufism, Islamic Thought, Western Religions and Persian language at McGill and Concordia Universities, Montreal Canada. She has presented her research at international conferences and seminars and contributed to several peer reviewed journals and anthologies such as *al-Masaq*, *Journal of the International Society for Iranian Studies*, the *Encyclopedia of Pivotal Events in Religious History* and the *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*. Her articles include: 'The Concept of Divine Love according to al-Ghazali' (2011), 'Shams-i Tabrizi: His Critique of Philosophy' (2006), 'Qajar Implementation of Shi'a Islam in Iran' (2016) and 'The Emergence of Sufism' (2016). She works as a consultant for the Persian Sufi Opera project at Scripps College. She is currently working on her book monograph entitled, *Isma'il Anqarawi's Commentary on Book Seven of the Mathnawi: A Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Sufi Controversy*. Dr Tasbihi is fluent in Persian, Azeri, Arabic and Ottoman.

MUHAMMAD ISA WALEY graduated from the University of Cambridge in Oriental Studies. He was appointed as Assistant Keeper in charge of Persian and Turkish manuscripts at the British Museum in 1971. On the creation of the British Library in 1974, he was transferred there on secondment. He was responsible for the same collections until 2010, when he became part-time Lead Curator for Persian. He embraced Islam in 1974 and performed Hajj in 1976. He was awarded his Ph.D. in 1990 by London University's School of Oriental and African Studies for a thesis on the *Tarji'at* or stanzaic poems of Jalal al-Din Rumi. He has published many articles on classical Sufi literature and spirituality, as well as on Islamic manuscript studies and bibliography, besides editing numerous books, articles and works of reference, including the English edition of *Islamic Codicology: An Introduction to the Study of Manuscripts in Arabic Script* (London, 2005). His most recent work is a translation of the *Chihil kalima* or *Arba'in* (Forty Traditions of the Prophet) by 'Abd al-Rahman Jami (London, 2012).

ALAN WILLIAMS is Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Religion at the University of Manchester. His translation of the first book of the *Mathnawi* into English blank verse was published by Penguin in 2006 as *Rumi, Spiritual Verses*. Although he began to read classical languages at Oxford, he was inspired by Nicholson's famous edition and translation of the *Mathnawi* to read Persian and Arabic instead. After graduating from Oxford, he completed a doctorate in old and middle Iranian studies and Zoroastrianism at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London. He has published extensively on the history of Iranian religion as well as Sufism. In 2010 he was joint winner of the Ehsan Yarshater Book Award for *The Zoroastrian Myth of Migration from Iran and Settlement in the Indian Diaspora* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

