

Some Further Remarks on the Old Harari *Kitāb alfarāyid*

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Il contributo passa brevemente in rassegna la storia degli studi sul *Kitāb alfarāyid* (*KF*) hararino antico, a partire dall'edizione fattane da Enrico Cerulli nel 1936, concentrandosi su cinque aspetti principali. (i.) Le tre diverse attribuzioni e la testimonianza di alcuni manoscritti indicano che si tratta di un'opera formata dall'unione di tre diversi opuscoli tutti chiamati con lo stesso nome, che venivano copiati insieme e che alla fine vennero percepiti come un unico testo lasciando al massimo una sola attribuzione. (ii.) La definizione dei confini e delle giunzioni tra i tre diversi opuscoli. (iii.) La presentazione dei ventun testimoni attualmente noti del *KF*. (iv.) Le datazioni presenti in alcuni dei manoscritti, e (v.) i glottonimi che compaiono negli *incipit*, *explicit*, o colofoni di diversi testimoni dell'opera.

While he was in Ethiopia, Enrico Cerulli visited the city of Harar many times, where he met several local learned people. Among different manuscripts he was shown, some were copied for him, in some instances in an abridged form. Other ones he instead managed to acquire, such as one that contained a long prose text in Old Harari known as the *Kitāb alfarāyid* (*KF*).¹ It is followed by a long poem of more than 500 lines known as (*zi-*)*harat Ḥalīfāč qaṣīda*, in Italian *Canzone dei Quattro Califfi*, or as *zikri* of ʿAbdalmālik,² and another poem most of whose lines begin with *Subḥāna Allāh* “God be praised!” The *KF* was and still is quite prominent in the literary tradition of Harar, and local people used to read it on important ceremonies such as those that take place during the nights of the holy month of Ramadan. Its Old Harari language is quite different from present day Harari, and the adaptation of the Arabic script to Harari, i.e., Harari Ajami now differs in several features from the orthography of the *KF*, as shown by the

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¹ *Sic!* All the manuscripts of this text use plain *yā'* in this word, never *hamza ʿalā kursi*.

² As shown in Banti (2005: 75 f.; 2010: 156 f.), this is the poem that has been published as Text B by Wagner (1983: 53-216), who was not aware of Cerulli's manuscript in the Vatican Library, nor that the Italian scholar had called it the *Canzone dei Quattro Califfi*. For further data on this poem and some of its witnesses see Wagner (1997: 22 ff.).