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Persian Cultural Heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Local Poets Who Wrote in Persian and Most Valuable Persian Manuscripts in Libraries

Abstract: This paper reads about the Persian cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina which represents an invaluable treasure for studying its cultural and historical tradition. During the Ottoman rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina (15th to 19th century) the Persian language was considered as language of literature, poetry and heritage of Sufism. So, the Persian classics and their works like Rumi's *Masnavi*, *Pandnama* related to Fariduddin Attar Neishaburi, Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Hafiz's *Divan*, Jami's *Baharistan* were widespread and popular in this territory and the huge impact of their famous texts is evident on the literary work of Bosniaks¹ in Oriental languages. This study examines the Bosniaks' Literary Legacy in Persian, so this paper presents the most important writers and poets whose works were written under a powerful influence of the Persian classics. The great interest for the classical Persian works in this area is reflected in the significant number of valuable manuscripts, which have been preserved in libraries in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The author lists the most important libraries like Gazi Husrev Bey's library, the Library of the Bosniak Institute and the Library of the Institute for Oriental Studies in Sarajevo, and valuable manuscripts of the Persian classical works as well as some dictionaries as part of these libraries.

Key words: *Persian cultural heritage, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosniaks, literary heritage, Ottoman Empire, Persian classics, manuscripts, libraries*

¹ Bosniak is the ethnic name of Bosnian Muslims.

Introduction

The literary heritage of Bosniaks in oriental languages represents priceless treasure for studying the cultural tradition in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is well known that during more than four centuries (15th to 19th century) of the Ottoman rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the three Oriental languages were widely used: Ottoman Turkish was the official language and the language of administration and education, Arabic was the language of theology, law and scholarly works, and Persian was the language of literature, poetry and heritage of Sufism. Several hundred Bosnian authors actively participated in the literary and scholarly life of the Empire, contributing to the literary heritage developed in four languages: Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, Persian and Bosnian.

The Ottomans were affected by the influence of Persian culture, particularly in literature, which has also left trace in Bosnia-Herzegovina's culture, especially in literary tradition over a long period of the Ottoman Empire. Many well-educated Bosnians went to Istanbul and other cultural centers of the Ottoman Empire to acquire knowledge in Oriental languages. Besides, two cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo and Mostar, had very important role in the cultural history of Ottoman Bosnia. Considering its geographical location, climate, rich cultural life, and the great interest by its scholars in poetry, it can be concluded that Mostar, in the southern Slavic lands, represents the counterpart of the Iranian city of Shiraz (Malić 2016: 51–52). Famous classical Persian texts were read and interpreted in these cities and they gave outstanding authors who wrote in Persian and other oriental languages. Actually, “the Bosnian and Herzegovina's literature in Persian language which was firstly developed in 15th century, at the peak of classical Persian literature, did not catch up with literature in the two other oriental languages, Turkish and Arabic, in terms of quantity, but in terms of content and influence of Persian culture and the literary tradition it exceeded them by far” (Haverić 2014: 29).

Therefore, it is logical that words from Turkish, Arabic or Persian have found their way to Bosnian language. These words were introduced to Bosnian language mostly through Turkish and are, for that reason, referred to as *turcisms*.² As loanwords, *turcisms* began to be used during the 500-year-long Ottoman rule in Bosnia-Herzegovina, when the contact with the Turkish language and culture was direct. The number of *Turcisms* in Bosnian is quite impressive. For instance, Škaljić's *Dictionary of Turcisms* contains 8,742 words (expressions) and 6,878 terms (1979: 23). Compared to Turkish and Arabic, lexis of Persian origin is the least present, so book *Words of Persian Origin in Bosnian language* lists a total 1,808 words of Persian origin, out of which 842 basic (See: Haverić–Šehović 2017).³ This proportionately smaller number of words of Persian origin in relation to the other two languages is quite

² However, “a more scientifically approved term is *orientalism* since not all of these words belong to the Turkish lexical material, and since they involve a great number of Arabic and Farsi phrases. Apart from that, not all the words of eastern origin entered the Bosnian language through Turkish exclusively, as there is a number of words that entered Bosnian directly from Arabic or Persian” (Haverić–Šehović 2017: 11).

³ In Škaljić's *Dictionary of Turcisms* there were total 1031 words of Persian origin, out of which 653 basic words and 378 derivatives (Akopdžanjan 2010: 180).

reasonable and logical since there was no direct contact between the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Iran, as was the case with Ottoman Empire, which ruled in our region for more than five centuries. Although there was no direct contact between the two nations, influences and legacy of Iranian civilization in the Balkans, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, were visible for centuries before the arrival of the Ottomans and Islam, since the Slavs settled in this region. The penetration of Iranian civilization and culture on our soil continued through the expansion of Manichaeism, so the influences of this civilization were maintained in teachings of Bogomil, and later after the arrival of the Ottomans and the acceptance of Islam in this region were restored and preserved through various Sufi and Dervish movements (Džaka 1998: 398–399).

Place and status of the Persian classics and their famous texts in Bosnian cultural tradition

The classical period of the Persian literature, known as the “golden age,” witnessed an impressive number of famous writers and poets such as Sadi, Rumi, Jami, and others, who have authored numerous works that represented a model and ideal for many writers of later times. Many Persian writers and poets created works emulating their models, not only in terms of genre, but also thematically and stylistically. They strove to achieve their ideals rather than originality.

This chapter will discuss the Persian classics and their works that were widespread and popular in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the rule of the Ottoman Empire and the huge impact of their famous texts on the literary work of Bosniaks in Oriental languages. In Ottoman Bosnia, classical master-pieces of Persian literature with mystical coloring, especially Rumi’s *Masnavi*, *Pandnama* related to Fariduddin Attar Neishaburi, Sadi’s *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Hafiz’s *Divan*, Jami’s *Baharistan*, as well as works by some other authors, were read and interpreted in Tekkes, at the dervish gatherings, as well as in mosques and *madrasas* for wider audience.⁴ This prompted the followers of Sufi poetry to imitate their role models and write works in these languages aiming at presenting their views and teachings. Many of these Persian classical texts in the catalogues of manuscripts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and region testify about how popular and widespread these works were and about the value of these works in the Bosnian cultural tradition.

Jalaluddin Rumi has a special place and status in Bosnia and Herzegovina and his most famous work *Masnavi* has been holding a special status and reputation in the cultural tradition of Bosniaks for centuries. The impact of the *Masnavi* in this region is primarily reflected in the appearance of a certain number of Bosniak poets, who wrote poetry under the influence of the *Masnavi*, and they wrote not only in Persian but also in Turkish, and its impact can be seen in the poetry of some poets in Arabic. However, Rumi’s influence did not

⁴ It’s worth mentioning that most famous classical texts like Rumi’s *Masnavi*, *Pandnama* related to Fariduddin Attar Neishaburi, Sadi’s *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Hafiz’s *Divan*, Jami’s *Baharistan* and many other masterpieces of classical Persian literature have been translated into Bosnian language, see: ‘Attar 1990; Hayyam 1964; Rumi 1983; Shirazi 1989; Shirazi 2009; Jami 2008 and others.

have the same intensity in all poets, and it was recognizable most at Dervish-pasha Bajezidagic, Fadil Pasha Sherifovic and Fewzi Mostari. In addition, Bosnian authors wrote commentaries on the *Masnavi*, out of which the most notable were Ahmad Sudi and Abdullah Bosnawi. Their commentaries are: *Sharh-e Sudi bar Masnavi* (Ahmad Sudi's Commentary of the *Masnavi*) and *Sharh-e beit-e Masnavi* (Commentary of a Verse from the *Masnavi*) authored by Abdullah Bosnawi. Rumi's influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina was mainly reflected on interpretation of the *Masnavi* and in practicing specific rituals attributable to Mevlevi tariqa. Namely, a rich tradition of public reading and verbal interpretation of *Masnavi* was common practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina since its conquest by the Ottomans, and lasts up to this day in some areas, especially in Sarajevo and Mostar (See: Drkić 2013: 128–129).

The work that has been well-known and widespread in the Ottoman Bosnia was *Pandnama*, that was believed to be authored by Fariduddin Attar Neishaburi.⁵ For this work in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a common name *Pendi Attār* because “in many manuscript copies of the *Pandnama* used by the Bosnian copyists listed Atar's name as author” (Moker 2010: 279). *Pandnama* is also the first Persian text integrally translated from Persian to Bosnian in 1905, in Arabic script.⁶ The popularity of this work is evidenced by the fact that the largest number of manuscripts of all Persian works in the libraries of Bosnia is associated to this work.

Apart from this, it is important to mention that Persian was taught in local *madrasas*. For that reason, various literary works written by Persian authors were used as textbooks, like Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Pandnama*. These works were used as textbooks for teaching Islamic ethics in *madrasas* before the Austro-Hungarian period. Also, they were used as a textbook for teaching Persian. It's important to mention the institution *Dar al-mu'allimin*, which was established by governor Safvet-pasha in Sarajevo in 1869, based on the model from Istanbul. 20 students were enrolled admitted to the school, and one of the admission requirements was for the candidates to know at least *Metni Izhar* from Arabic language and *Pendi Attār* from Persian language, or that they could read and understand this book correctly (Ćurić 1983: 159). *Divan* of Hafiz Shirazi was used in Persian language learning, so commentaries of this work written in Persian and Turkish can be found in Bosnian manuscript collections.

Literary heritage of the Bosniaks in Persian language

Based on the above, it is therefore understandable that Bosnian writers imitated the prominent writers and poets of Persian literature, authoring relatively numerous works in Arabic, Turkish and Persian language. More than 200 writers from our region who have written in Oriental languages have been registered so far. It is very difficult to divide writers

⁵ Contemporary research shows that *Pandnama* (Pandnāme) is not a work of Attar but attributed to him (Kadkanī 1380/2001: 42–43).

⁶ See: ‘Attar 1990.

by the languages in which they wrote, because at that time it was common for a writer to write in at least two, and very often in all three Oriental languages.⁷

This chapter following the most important writers and poets whose works were written under a powerful influence of Persian classics and represent priceless cultural heritage of Bosniacs in Persian language. Many Bosnian authors tried to compose at least few verses in Persian. So far nearly thirty of them have been registered but most probably there were more authors who need to be discovered.

Mahmud Pasha Andjelovic Adni

Mahmud-pasha Andjelovic, who used sobriquet Adni in his literary works, lived and wrote in the 15th century and he is known as one of the oldest Ottoman divan poets (d. 879/1474). It is important to mention that he is the first South Slav who wrote in Persian. He was born around 1420 in Kruševac or Novo Brdo in Serbia. Some sources state that he was of Croatian origin (Bašagić 2007: 76; Malić 2016: 167), and some that he was of Greek origin (Šabanović 1973: 39). He started his education in Edirne and continued in Istanbul. He was vizier to Sultan Mehmed Fatih, the Conqueror of Bosnia who executed him in 1474, when he came to Istanbul for a funeral of Prince Mustafa. His enemies betrayed him and put him in the *Yedikule* prison. Sixteen days later he was executed.⁸ He was buried in a special mausoleum near his mosque in Istanbul. Adni has begun his career during the second appointment of Sultan Mehmed Fatih. During that period, he held different positions, first he was the *ocak aga*, then the *janissary aga*, *Rumeli kazasker*, *Rumeli beylerbey* and finally he became vizier. He was such a popular vizier that his contemporaries nicknamed him *Veli* (*saint*). He participated in all major battles of the time while serving at the court. He was a first poet among the grand viziers of the Ottoman Empire. He was highly educated; he spoke and wrote in Arabic, Turkish and Persian. In Ottoman literature, he was known as a successful poet and stylist who wrote under the alias Adni, which means *edenic*. According to hagiographers and historians of Ottoman literature, his poems in Turkish are considered more beautiful than the poems of his contemporaries and poems in Persian more perfect than poems in Turkish. Educated people and scholars of the Ottoman Empire appreciated him as a scholar, vizier, maecena, poet, statesman and general. Adni's *Divan* contains forty-five Persian *ghazals*, some written as *naziras* to poems by Zahir Faryabi and Hafiz Shirazi. It also contains 21 *mufrads*, 3 *qasidas*, 16 *mu'ammās* and 7 *rubais*. Adni's *Divan* was not put in alphabetical order. His poetry in Persian deserves special scholarly attention. (See: Bašagić 2007: 71–93; Šabanović 1973: 39–43; Malić 2016: 167–170).

Hasan Ziyayi Mostari

There lived several famous Bosnian poets in Persian and Turkish language who were born in Mostar, a cultural center in Ottoman Bosnia. First of them is Hasan Ziyayi Mostari or Hasan Ziyayi Chelebi, a poet from the 16th century. He died of plague in 993/1584 in Mostar. Hasan Ziyayi Mostari was a very talented calligrapher and poet. He wrote in all three Oriental

⁷ About the life and literary work of Bosniak writers who wrote in oriental languages see: Bašagić 2007, Handžić 1934, Šabanović 1973, Malić 2016, Algar 2003.

⁸ Some sources state that Adni cut his own veins a few minutes before the Emperor's pardon arrived (Šabanović 2007: 82; Malić 2016: 169)

languages. He was the first Bosniak poet who wrote a complete *Divan* (collection) of poetry in Ottoman Turkish and Persian languages. Ziyayi's *Divan* is one of the biggest Bosniak Divans and it contains 641 poems in Ottoman Turkish.⁹ There is one qasida in Persian language consisting of 27 couplets, 14 ghazals and a qit'a in Persian in this *Divan*.¹⁰ Apart from his poetry collection, Ziyayi Mostari wrote a well-known poem entitled *The Story of Sheikh Abdurrezzak* (Kissa-i Şeyh Abdürrezzâk) in Ottoman Turkish. This is a narrative poem, written in the *masnavi* form, and it is based on ancient tale of Sheikh San'an (Abdurrezzak), widely spread in both oral and written Oriental-Islamic literary tradition. The first written record of the story appeared as a chapter of *The Conference of the Birds* (Manteq al-teyr) by Fariduddin Attar Neishaburi. What distinguishes Hasan Ziyayi Mostari from other previously mentioned authors is that his poem about Sheikh San'an is the first to appear as a separate poem, meaning that it was not included as a chapter or a part of a larger book. He is also the first Bosnian author of a mystic-love poem in the *masnavi* form (See: Haverić 2017: 86–87). Here we must mention that Ziyayi composed a ghazal developed based on the first and most famous ghazal of the *Divan* of Hafiz.

Dervish-pasha Bajezidagic

Dervish-pasha Bayezidagic from Mostar, Governor of Bosnia, considered as the greatest Bosniak poet in the Ottoman-Turkish literature at the end of the 16th century. As a child he went to Istanbul, where, after completing his education at *Atmeydan-saray*, he reached the court. At that time, he was a main falconer and sang songs in honor of Sultan Murat III. He held a great esteem and reputation in the court and gained the confidence of the Sultan, so he became his personal advisor (1592). His official career included two terms of office as the governor of Bosnia (1599 and 1602). He participated in many battles in Hungary and in one of them he was killed in 1011/1602, fighting to defend the Ottoman garrison on the island of Csepel at the Danube (Hungary). Dervish-pasha Bajezidagic established several endowments in Mostar. His teacher was the famous Ahmed Sudi, who helped him to learn Persian language and introduced him with the Persian poetry. He endowed a lot of valuable manuscripts to the waqf of his *madrassa* library which he built in Mostar, such as Rumi's *Masnavi*, Sadi's *Gulistan*, Hafiz's *Divan* and a Commentary of Sadi's *Gulistan* by Sudi Bosnawi. In Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as in other parts of Ottoman Empire, Mevlevis recited the *Masnavi* in its original. So, Dervish-pasha established a chair for the interpretation of Rumi's *Masnavi* (*Dar al-Masnavi*), where this masterpiece of the Persian literature was recited in Persian among the educated elite as well as ordinary people. A valuable data on his poetry was given by Fewzi Mostari in *Bulbulistan*, where Fewzi stated that Dervish-pasha, apart from a *Divan* in Turkish, wrote a complete *Divan* in Persian, and tried to compose a parallel poem to Rumi's *Masnavi*, but after two volumes he gave up. Actually, one night he had a vision of Rumi who told him: "O dervish, this book of mine is beyond imitation (*tanzir*); abandon that romance". He did, however, write a complete *Divan* of poetry in Persian, which, unfortunately has been lost. Also, Fewzi considered this poetry as "full of

⁹ More about Hasan Ziyayi and his *Divan* see: Mostarac 2010

¹⁰ Müberra Gürgendereli, who prepared the Latin edition of Ziyayi's *Divan*, notes in the introduction that poems in Persian were scattered in *Divan* and she combined them in the chapter *Poetry in Persian* (Hasan Ziyâ'î 2002: X, prema: Mostarac 2010: 27).

sense and beauty”.¹¹ This quote represents a praise and honor to the *Masnavi* but is also a sign of the high esteem that the book enjoyed among the Bosnian people. Dervish-pasha Bajezidagic translated from Persian into Turkish the ethical-mystic epic *Sehā-nāme* by the poet Binnā’ī and entitled it *Murād-nāme* in honour of the Sultan Murat III whose prologue (*moqadimma*) is the main source of information about his life and work. At the end of his waqfname, he wrote two rubais in Persian that characterize the beauty of the language and writing style. Just like Ziyayi composed a parallel poem to the first ghazal of the *Divan* of Hafiz, Dervish-pasha Bajezidagic wrote a very beautiful poem based on the third ghazal of the *Divan* (See: Handžić 1934: 164–165; Bašagić 2007: 132–155; Šabanović 1973: 116–129; Malić 2016: 155–159; Algar 2003).

Ahmed-bey Dervish-pasha zade Sabuhi

Ahmed-bey Dervish-pasha zade, the son of Dervish-pasha Bajezidagic, used sobriquet Sabuhi in his literary works. He wrote poetry in Turkish and Persian. Not much is known about this poetry and life except for that he came to occupy a high administrative position in Hungary, and that he died in Budapest in 1051/1641, where he was buried in the harem of the *Saray mosque*. The few lines that have reached us of the Persian and Turkish verse are remarkable mostly for their use of ambiguous expressions from Arabic vocabulary (See: Handžić 1934: 88–89; Šabanović 1973: 242–43; Bašagić 2007: 219–22; Malić 2016: 159–161). We only know about him and his poetry what Fewzi told us in his *Bulbulistan: He was more insightful and refined than his father in writing poetry and prose. All his poems in Turkish and Persian have multiple meanings and they are powerful and beautiful. Undoubtedly, secrets of the proverb "The child is the secret of his father" they appeared in it.*¹²

Ahmed Mostari Rushdi Sahhaf

Another Mevlevi affiliate from Mostar who wrote writing in Persian was Ahmed Mostari Rushdi. Rushdi was born in 1047/1637 in Mostar and, at early age, he migrated to Istanbul where became one of the *acemi oghlan* in *Galata saray*. After a while, he left his position at the court and devoted his work to Islamic law. Rushdi performed a number of medium-grade positions, but primarily he was a bookbinder, and therefore he was known as Sahhaf. When Rushdi’s only son died, he had him buried next to the *Yenikapı Mevlevi* hospice and then dug himself a tomb next to his son’s. Rushdi put a tombstone for himself and visited it every morning, reading Fatiha for himself as a dead man, and then he went to a dervish tekke where taught dervish ceremonies. Therefore, it is not surprising that his poetry, written in the “Indian style” as exemplified by Urfi of Shiraz, is marked by a profound melancholy.

9 نکات درویش پاشا رحمه الله علیه از گزیده ی ارباب لبابت وزبده ی اصحاب بصالت است و همه اشعار وی نکته آمیز و رشحات کلکش ایهام ریز است و دو دیوان دارد یکی فارسی و یکی ترکی است. هر دو لطیف و معنی دار و نظیف نکته شعار است. دو بار به بوسنه والی شده و سالی چند نیز دراکره محافظ بوده. وچنین مشهور است که از گزیده ی اولیا الله بود و یادگار حضرت مولانا مثنوی را آغاز تنظیر کرد و جزی دو ساخت، شبی در خواب مولانا را دیده، و وی را گفته ای درویش کتاب من هرگز تنظیر نپذیرد. ازین سودا باز شو! وانگه فارغ شد و آن دو جزکه نوشته، من آن را دیدم. بسیار معنی دار و لطیف بود. فقیر چنین پندارم که از وزرا آن چنان کامل و دانا نیامده است، واین از جمله ی اشعار وی است (Bolbolēstān: 38 a-b)

¹² نکات درویش پاشا رحمه الله علیهما در رسوم نظم و نثر از پدرش بیشتر نکته دان و خرده سنجان است. همه اشعار وی در ترکی و فارسی ایهام دار و متین و خوب است. بی ریب و گمان اسرار الولد ستر ایبه در وی ظاهر شده (Bolbolēstān: 38b)

Rushdi Sahhaf died in 1699 and he was buried in the grave which has been already prepared a few years ago. He wrote a *Divan* in Turkish, in which there are three ghazals and a qit'a in Persian among other poetical forms. In his ghazals Rushdi is presented as a lyrical poet *par excellence*. Fewzi in *Bulbulistan* spoke about Rushdi's Persian poems saying that they are perfect and that he imitated Urfi in them.¹³ In addition, he was outstanding in the writing of the chronograms (See: Bašagić 2007: 277–283; Šabanović 1973: 385–389; Malić 2016: 161–163; Algar 2003).

Fewzi Mostari

Fewzi Mostari, a prose writer and a poet in Turkish and Persian, takes a prominent place among the artists who have apparently contributed to cultural heritage of Bosniaks in Oriental languages. He was born in Blagaj, near Mostar between 1670 and 1677. He was Sheikh of the Mevlevi Tekke and the chair of the *Dar al-Masnavi*. Fewzi Mostari died in Mostar around 1747. *Bulbulistan*, translated in English as *The Garden of Nightingale*, represents a treasure trove of the Bosniak heritage and possesses an unrivaled value because it is the only prose work in Persian written by a Bosniak author. *Bulbulistan* belongs to the classical oriental form of didactic prose richly illustrated with verses, where the message dominates, and the main task is to educate and entertain, or to teach with joy. In the introduction of *Bulbulistan*, Fewzi notes that he wrote it using the works of famous Persian classics, primarily Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Jami's *Baharistan*, as well as *Sunbulistan* by an Ottoman poet named Shujauddin Gurani and *Nigaristan* by Kemal-pasha-zade. However, the model for the writing of his *Bulbulistan* was primarily Sadi's *Gulistan* and Jami's *Baharistan*. It could be said that Fewzi imitated Sadi's *Gulistan* through the medium of Jami's *Baharistan* (Haverić 2014: 31).

Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was a home to several poets who wrote in Persian, mostly in the 17th century, a century of Persian language. Here I will mention some of them:

Muhammed Karamusa-zade Nihadi was born in Sarajevo, lived and died in 1587. He was educated and worked as mudarris. Although he was a significant poet who wrote a complete *Divan* of ghazals, he has not been mentioned by any contemporary biographer or by other sources in Ottoman literature. The only exception is the famous Evliya Chelebi, who in his *Seyahatname* mentioned this poet as the author of the two tarikh inscriptions on the Mehmed-pasha Sokolovic Bridge (1571 and 1577/8). Nihadi was known by European Orientalists since 1837, owing to the famous Viennese Orientalist Hammer-Purgstall, who in his book *Geschichte der Osmanischen Dichtkuns* pointed to Nihadi's *Divan*. Only manuscript of *Divan* was kept in Berlin and belonged to a collection of a well-known collector of manuscripts, Von Ditz, who was also an orientalist. Nihadi's *Divan* contains 94 ghazals, eight

¹³ نکات رشدی رحمه الله علیه بس کامل ودانا وعافل نظم آرا در هر فنی استاد یکتا وبزرگوار بی همتا- ست ودر صنایع اشعارماهرتر در فارسی همه شعرش نظیره ی عرفیست و در ترکی نظیره ی باقی (Bolbolestan: 40 a)

of which are in Persian. He died in his hometown (996/1587) that can be seen from the elegy written by poet Kemteri on his death (See: Šabanović 1973: 77–81)

Zekeriyya Abdullah Sukkeri was born in Sarajevo, and as a young man he went to Istanbul, where he found the support of his countryman, the poet Mezaki. He became secretary of the *Royal Divan* and remained in that position until his death in 1097/1686. He was a great scholar and calligrapher. Sukkeri left a complete *Divan* (See: Šabanović 1973: 367; Bašagić 2007: 254–255).

Tevekkuli-dede was born in Sarajevo. He was an affiliate of the Mevlevi order and he studied the Sufism before the Mevlevi sheikh Atik-dede. After Atik-dede's death, he took his place in the Mevlevi tekke in Sarajevo, where he lectured on *Masnavi* for years. It seems that he owed his competence in Persian primarily to his Mevlevi affiliation. Tevekkuli-dede composed a lot of poems, among others one in Persian and value of that poem can be measured with the whole *Divan* of some dervish. He died in 1625 in Sarajevo and was buried next to the Emperor's Mosque (See: Bašagić 2007: 200–201; Šabanović 1973: 711; Malić 2016: 171–173).

Muhammed Nerkesi Sarayi was born in Sarajevo around 1592. He was a *qadi* in Mostar, Banja Luka, Gabela, Bitolj and other towns. He represents one of the greatest poets in Turkish literature and one of the most significant Bosnian writers in that literature. He wrote under the literary name Nerkesi. His most famous work is a poem modeled after Nizami's *Khamisa* in Turkish, which consists of five books where he added his text to the original version and dedicated the translation to the Sultan Murat IV. His poems in Persian are more understandable than those written in Turkish, which he wrote in very sophisticated style that often make the text incomprehensible. In fact, Nerkesi paid more attention to the form and style, which often went to the detriment of the content itself. He is the author of the dictionary *Subha-i sibyan*. Nerkesi died in 1635 and he was buried in Istanbul (See: Bašagić 2007: 172–197; Šabanović 1973: 226–240; Malić 2016: 163–165).

Mehmed Reshid Bosnawi - based on his poems, it can be concluded that he was born in Sarajevo in the middle of the 17th century. All the poems in his *Divan* were written in Turkish, except two in Persian. His knowledge of Turkish, Arabic and Persian was outstanding. In the next verse he boasts of his skill to write a bilingual poetry:

*Sometimes Persian (Dari) I speak, sometimes Turkish (Rumi)
And sometimes I am a warbling nightingale, singing different melodies.*

He wrote in Persian chronograms for several public buildings and *qhasidas* praising various Ottoman officials (See: Šabanović 1973: 423–429; Algar 2003)

Apart from the poets who were born in Mostar and Sarajevo, which were the main cultural and educational centers of Bosnia-Herzegovina, we will also mention some poets who were born in other cities in Bosnia.

Ahmed Bosnawi Talib finished the elementary school in Bosnia and after that continued his education in Istanbul. His literary alias is Talib which, in the language of mysticism, means *the one who seeks the Invisible*. Given that he lived close to the Suleymaniye Mosque, he was also known as Suleymaniyeli Ahmed-efendi. After holding higher administrative position, he was promoted to a position of the *Divan secretary* (reisul-kuttab efendi). It is interesting that he died while working. Ahmed Bosnawi wrote *Divan*, where in addition to the poems in Arabic and Turkish, there are 5 *ghazals* and 6 *qita's* in Persian. As for his poetry in Persian, it is written in a simple and understandable language. He died in 1674 and he was buried in the cemetery at the Sheyh Ebul-Vefa mosque in Istanbul (See: Bašagić 2007: 237–238; Šabanović 1973: 340–341).

Haji Mustafa Bosnawi Mukhlisi is the last poet of the Ottoman period known to have written poetry in Persian. He was born at the end of the 17th century in Gornji Vakuf in central Bosnia. This author was very well-educated. He was a poet, travel writer, diplomat and *qadi*. He served as a *qadi* in many places, including Sarajevo, Foča, Travnik, Duvno, Bulgaria and in Agriboz (Eubeja in Greece). Mukhlisi wrote in all three Oriental languages, so he produced *mulamma'* poetry, in which the lines alternate between Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. It is important to mention his travelogue *Dalil al-Manāhil va Muršid al-Marāhil*, description of the *hajj* from 1161/1748 in Turkish language which was adorned with occasional Persian verses describing the sacred sites of Mecca and Medina. In addition to the *Travelogue to the Hajj*, Mukhlisi wrote a few poems in Turkish, Persian and Arabic, but only fragments of his poetry have been preserved and are scattered in various manuscripts. He died at his hometown a few years after 1162/1749 (See: Šabanović 1973: 453–461; Algar 2003).

The birthplaces of other poets from Bosnia-Herzegovina who wrote partly in Persian are unknown, such as:

Ahmed Akovalizade Khatem was highly educated in Islamic disciplines. It is not known where he was born but he was educated in Istanbul, Cairo and Mecca. After mastering Arabic language and Sufi teachings, he served as a *qadi* in several Ottoman cities, so when he served as a *qadi* in 1754 in Yenişehir (Larissa, Greece) he died there the same year. He spent some time in Egypt and Hijaz, where he became associated with the nakshibandi tarikat. Khatem was a very productive poet and he wrote *Divan* in Arabic, Turkish and Persian which consists of 271 poems. He also composed a very long Sufi qasida accompanied by his explanation. He was also an excellent calligrapher, faqih, philologist, mathematician and musicologist (See: Šabanović 1973: 467–469).

Ahmad Yusri was born in 1636. He went to Istanbul where received education before the greatest scholars of the time. Ahmed Yusri held teaching posts in various cities until his death in Damascus in 1106/1694, where he served as a *qadi*. He was an excellent scholar, a good poet and an extremely good educator. He composed poetry in Arabic and Turkish as well as Persian (See: Šabanović 1973: 381–382).

‘**Ali Zaki-efendi “Kimyagar”**’ (d. 1711) was born in Bosnia, where he completed his education. Since he was not appreciated in his homeland, he went to Istanbul, where established contacts with the higher circles of the scholars. He held a number of administrative posts in Istanbul and Hijaz. At his house on *Kozka-Burumu* practised alchemy and because of that he was called Kimyagar (Alchemist). Kimyagar was well-known poet in Turkish language and in writing riddles and chronograms in both Persian and Arabic. He wrote a well-regarded commentary on the *Tuhfa-i Shahidi*, a versified Turkish-Persian glossary (See: Bašagić 2007: 298–299; Šabanović 1973: 413–414).

Apart from the mentioned poets, there were several poets who wrote poetry in Persian, but to this date only some fragments of their poetic opus were found in various poetry collections.¹⁴

Commentators of Persian classics

It is important to mention Bosnian authors who wrote commentaries on the most relevant works of Persian classical literature out of which the most famous were Ahmad Sudi and Abdullah Bosnawi and they represent important segment of the Bosnian cultural heritage in oriental languages.

Ahmed Sudi

Ahmed Sudi (16th century) was considered as the most prominent of all Ottoman Persianists. He was born in the village of Sudići near Čajniče in eastern Bosnia. He was educated in Bosnia and then in Istanbul and Diyarbakir where he met Muslihuddin Lari and studied Persian with him. Ahmed Sudi is one of the greatest commentators of Persian classics and he wrote commentaries on Hafiz’s famous *Divan*, Sadi’s *Gulistan* and *Bustan* in Turkish language. His confident and original commentaries on Hafiz’s *Divan* and Sadi’s *Gulistan* have been translated into Persian and had a good reception by Iranologists. In addition to these commentaries Ahmed Sudi wrote a commentary on Rumi’s *Masnavi* (*Sharh-e Sudi bar Masnavi*), but a manuscript of it has not been preserved. He also translated some Arabic grammar works and glossed one philosophy work.

These famous classics also were interpreted by other Ottoman scientists, such as Lami’i, Sururi, Kafi, Ibn Seyyid Ali and especially Shem’i Mustafa of Prizren, but Sudi did not follow them, but rather he denied them, and even vehemently attacked them and entered into controversial discussion with them. Because of his independent understanding Sudi enjoys a remarkable reputation in the eyes of European Orientalists. Sudi’s originality was particularly prominent in the interpretation of Hafiz’s *Divan* where he boldly argued that

¹⁴ Muhammed Chaki Arshi (died 1571), Vahdeti from Dobrun near Vishegrad (died 1571), sheik Huseyn Lamekani (died 1625), Hasan Kafi Aqhisari (died 1615), Husrev-pasha (died 1630), Ali-beg Pasha-zade Wusleti (died 1688), Mustafa Eyyubi or Sheik Yuyo (died 1707), Mostafa Ladunni (died 1715), Nabi Tuzlewi from Tuzla (the 17th century), Ahmed Osman Shehdi (died 1769), Abdullah Salahuddin Bosnawi (died 1782), Muhammed Shakir Muid-zade (died 1858), Salih Sidqi Muvekkat (died 1888) and others.

Hafiz's words did not always have a mystical sense, but that they often needed to be taken literally and realistically (Šabanović 1973: 91).

In the Ottoman Empire, the most valuable sources for the study of Persian grammar were commentaries of classical Persian texts and a special place belongs to the commentaries of Sadi's *Gulistan* as a textbook of Persian language. Ahmed Sudi was best acquainted with the grammar of the Persian language among all commentators of Sadi's *Gulistan* in the Ottoman Empire, the fact that his commentary offers the most detailed and the most consistent grammatical description, and that is mainly limited to philological description unlike other authors of the same work, confirms this statement (Karahalilović–Drkić 2014: 60–61). Actually, all of Sudi's commentaries were mostly philological in nature and grammatical analysis of texts takes the central place in his commentaries. In the Ottoman Bosnia and actually in the whole Ottoman Empire Sudi's commentaries were mostly used as textbooks of Persian language rather than Islamic ethics.

Abdullah Bosnawi

The name of famous Abdullah Bosnawi (died 1644) can be connected with the commentary of one verse from the *Masnawi* (Sharh-e beit-e Masnawī) and a commentary of the selection 360 couplets from the *Masnawi* called *Jazīre-ye Masnawī*, excerpted by Jusuf Sinechak. Thanks to his good knowledge of the *Masnawi*, it is assumed that Sinechak knew it by heart, he could make a valuable choice of all six volumes, and so the text of more than twenty-five thousand couplets was accurately presented in only three hundred and sixty couplets. Abdullah Bosnawi wrote a commentary of this work (Sharh-e Manzūme-ye Ġazīre-ye Masnawī) in which a few lyrics is added to verses from Rumi's *Masnawi*, he comments them and explains to a wider readership. In 8673 couplets Abdullah Bosnawi comments 360 couplets of Rumi's *Masnawi*. On each line of the original text written in Persian Bosnawi wrote fifteen to twenty verses in Turkish. In fact, in verses that interpret *Masnawi* verses he gives the best possible explanation for not only the verses but also several complex concepts from Sufi terms from *Masnawi* (Drkić 2013: 131–132).

Valuable Persian manuscripts in Bosnia and Herzegovina's public and private libraries

The great interest for the classical Persian works in this area is reflected in the significant number of valuable manuscripts of these works, which have been preserved in libraries in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most important libraries that will be discussed below are the Gazi Husrev Bey's library, The Library of the Bosniak Institute in Sarajevo and the Library of the Institute for Oriental Studies in Sarajevo.¹⁵

¹⁵ Apart from the above mentioned libraries collection of valuable manuscripts in oriental languages are preserved in the following institutions: The National and University Library of BiH, The Archive of Sarajevo, The Historical Archive Sarajevo, The Archive of Herzegovina in Mostar, The Archive of Travnik, The Franciscan Monastery in Fojnica and Livno, The Museum and The University Library in Banja Luka.

Gazi Husrev Bey's Library

The biggest and the oldest library is Gazi Husrev-bey, that was founded in 1537 as a waqf of Gazi Husrev-bey, the sultan's governor in Bosnia. In the manuscript fund of this library, there are a total of 10.561 manuscripts in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Bosnian languages. Out of them, 60 percent are in Arabic, around 30 percent in Turkish, and the rest in Persian and Bosnian (written in Arebica).¹⁶ All manuscripts in the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library have been catalogued into nineteen volumes of the *Catalogue of the Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Bosnian manuscripts* (10190 cataloged manuscripts) and copied on micro films.¹⁷ A majority of these manuscripts were copied mainly by Bosnians in the Ottomans European provinces, regardless of the language in which they were written. Among these manuscripts are those that can be considered as masterpieces because of their decorations, ornaments, artistic impressions and unique works of oriental calligraphy. In the first place, those are the *Ajza* of Mehmed-pasha Sokolović, *Mushaf* of Fadil-pasha Sherifovic, Jami's collection of songs *Tuhfa al-ahrar*, and dozens of luxuriously decorated manuscripts of the Qur'an, collections of prayers, and poetry works in Turkish and Persian languages. Here I will mention the fourth volume of the catalogue that contains the largest number of manuscripts in the Persian language (nearly 500), mainly works of classical Persian literature like *Pandnama*, Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Hafiz's *Divan*. But the purest manuscript of this volume is undoubtedly *Sunbulistan* by Shujjaudin Gurani. In addition to this manuscript, there are only two other manuscripts of this work, one in the library of the University of Bratislava and the other in the Asher Efendi Library in Istanbul (See: Karahalilović 2017: 231–232).¹⁸

It's important to mention the manuscript of *Divan* of Hafez (inv. no. R-I-1366) which is the only illustrated Persian manuscript found in Bosnia and Herzegovina today. Although the manuscript is neither dated nor signed, four paintings indicate that it might be from early 16th century. These four illustrations follow the contents of the two couplets above and below each respective painting.

The first miniature depicts a young man and a girl sitting in a garden, and around them are servants and maids who serve and entertain them with music and singing. The second miniature is a scene with a bearded camel devil, who on his way encounters a black-skinned man surrounded by gazelles and rabbits. This scene is being watched from behind a hill by two men. The third miniature boldly presents an erotic-poetic motif. A girl naked to the waist with combed hair bathes in a stream in the shade of a blossoming tree and in the immediate vicinity of her crow. A young man on a horse, dressed in gold-trimmed clothing, watches this scene from behind the hill. The fourth miniature represents Hafiz's favorite atmosphere. People drink wine and servants bring those jugs. The expressions on their faces are restrained and there is no trace of joy in them (Rizvić 1972: 87).

¹⁶ In Ottoman Bosnia Arabic script was used for writing in the Bosnian language.

¹⁷ See: *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa*, Vol. I –XIX, The Islamic Heritage Foundation al-Furqan; Rijaset Islamske zajednice u BiH, Gazi Husrev-begova biblioteka, London-Sarajevo.

¹⁸ See: Nametak, Fehim *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa*, Vol. IV, The Islamic Heritage Foundation al-Furqan; Rijaset Islamske zajednice u BiH, Gazi Husrev-begova biblioteka, London-Sarajevo, pp. 373–446.

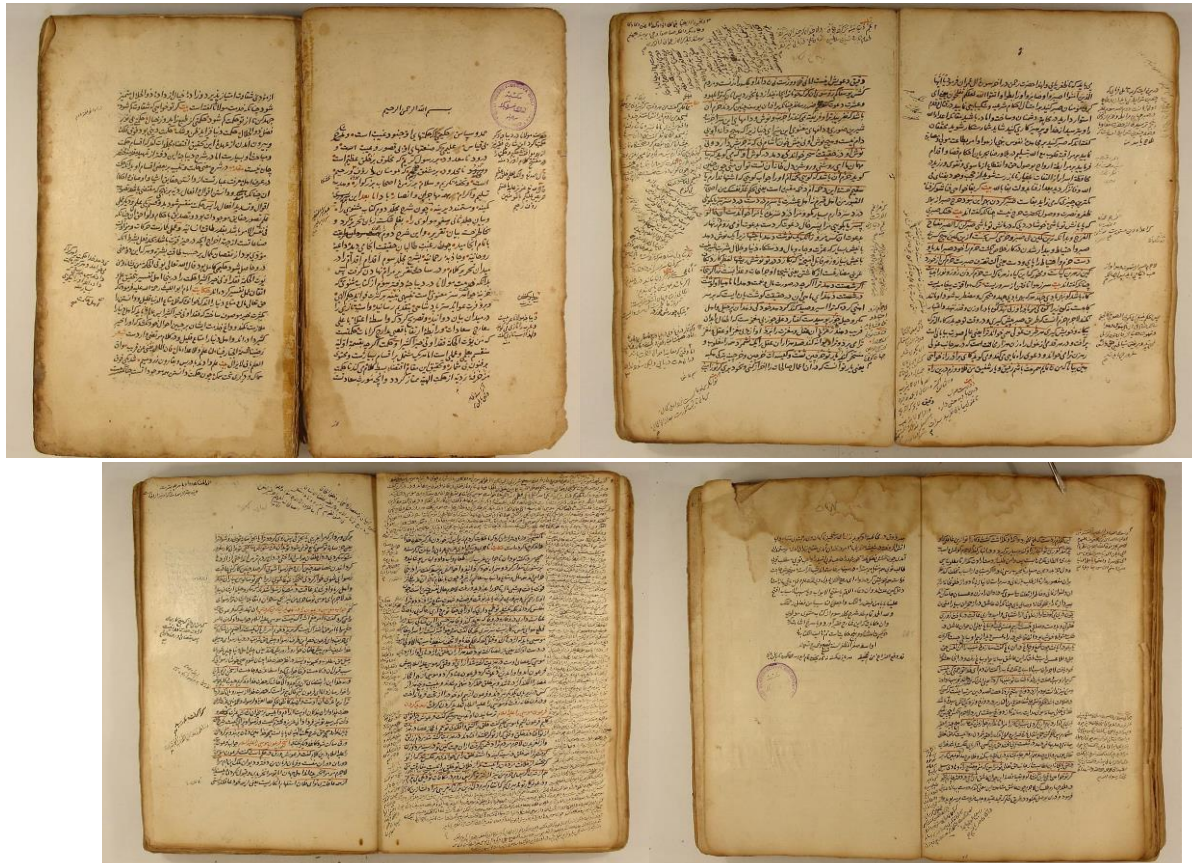


A manuscript of *Divan of Hafez* (inv. no. R-I-1366)
from the Gazi Husrev Bey's
Library oriental manuscript collection¹⁹

Great value and importance for the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library manuscript collection represents Mustafa Sururi's *Commentary of the Masnavi* which is one of the oldest comentaries (composed in 1552) of this famous work and also it is the first complete commentary of the *Masnavi* written in Persian. It is impotrant to mention that Mustafa Sururi entrusted his *Commentary of the Masnavi* to Dervish Pasha Bajezidagic who brought it to Mostar for the purpose of interpreting the *Masnavi* in the *Dar al-Masnavi*. Today, autographs

¹⁹ On this occasion, I express my great gratitude to Osman Lavić, Director of the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library, who kindly provided me with Persian manuscripts for the purposes of this paper.

of the third, fourth and fifth volume of Sururi's *Commentary of the Masnavi*, are kept in Gazi Husrev Bey's Library (R-3769, R-3770 i R- 3780). The third volume of this commentary has 494 pages, the fourth has 386, and the fifth has 558 pages. The first, second and sixth volume of this Commentary are kept in the Suleimaniye Library in Istanbul.

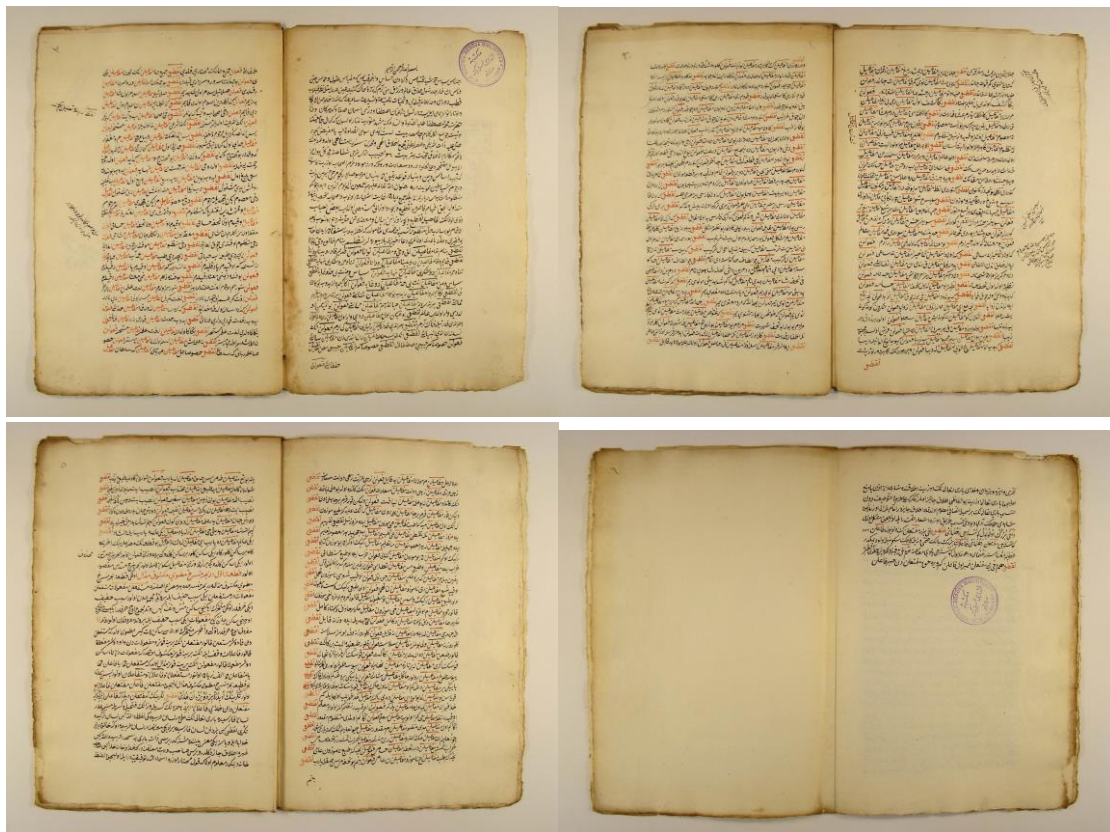


A manuscript of Sururi's *Commentary of the Masnavi* (R-3770) from the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library oriental manuscript collection

We can note that the most numerous manuscripts of Persian texts in the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library are those of *Pandnama*, over sixty manuscripts, then manuscripts of Sadi's *Golestan*, more than fifty manuscripts and then twenty-nine manuscripts of the *Masnavi* which are approximately equal in number to the manuscripts of the Sadi's *Bustan*. The reason is quite simple: *Pandnama* and *Golestan* were textbooks of Islamic ethics in numerous *madrasas* during the Ottoman rule in Bosnia and they are smaller in volume compared to the six-volume *Masnavi*. Also, the content of their texts is simpler and therefore more suitable for a wider readership (Drkić 2013: 130).

In Persian collections of manuscripts, apart from the manuscripts of classical Persian literary works that take a central position in the libraries of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a special place also belongs to a number of Persian dictionaries used in Ottoman Bosnia. Here I will mention the most famous verse dictionaries of the Persian *Tuhfa-i Shahidi*, authored by Ibrahim-dede Šahidi. This Persian-Turkish dictionary is composed in the 16th century, in the *masnavi* form. Since this dictionary was in verse, it could be more easily remembered and

soon became popular as a textbook of Persian. The popularity of this manuscript is indicated by the fact that seventy copies of this work are kept in the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library.²⁰



A manuscript of *Tuhfa-i Shahidi*, (R8311) from the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library oriental manuscript collection

High demand for this dictionary in the Ottoman Empire is confirmed by many commentaries written in Persian, Turkish and Arabic, including commentaries in Turkish by five Bosnian authors, namely Ahmed Sudi Bosnawi, Atfi Ahmed Bosnawi, Mustafa Ejubović Sheikh Jujo, Ahmed Hatem Aqovalizade, and Ali Zaki-efendi “Kimyagar”.

Such popularity of Shahidi's Persian-Turkish dictionary may have been a reason as to why this work became a model to other writers of dictionaries in verse. Indeed, in introductions to some of the dictionaries written in verse after *Tuhfa-i Shahidi*, Shahidi is mentioned as a poet exceptionally skilled at the art of compiling a dictionary in verse. (Filan 2015: 191). Turkish-Bosnian dictionary in verse *Makbul-i Arif* (17th century) – also known as

²⁰ See: Nametak, Fehim *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa*, Vol. IV, The Islamic Heritage Foundation al-Furqan; Rijaset Islamske zajednice u BiH, Gazi Husrev-begova biblioteka, London-Sarajevo, 1998, pp. 414–419; Popara, Haso; Fajić, Zejnil *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa*, Vol. VII, The Islamic Heritage Foundation al-Furqan; Rijaset Islamske zajednice u BiH, Gazi Husrev-begova biblioteka, London-Sarajevo, 2000, pp. 423–448; Popara, Haso *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa*, Vol. XIII, The Islamic Heritage Foundation al-Furqan; Rijaset Islamske zajednice u BiH, Gazi Husrev-begova biblioteka, London-Sarajevo, 2004, pp. 556, 558, 559, 560, 565; Popara, Haso *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa*, Vol. XVI, The Islamic Heritage Foundation al-Furqan; Rijaset Islamske zajednice u BiH, Gazi Husrev-begova biblioteka, London-Sarajevo, 2008, pp. 313–314.

Potur Shahidi – by Muhammad Hevai Uskufi (from the vicinity of Tuzla) is one of those compiled based on the model of *Tuhfa-i Shahidi*.

The Library of the Bosniak Institute

The Bosniak Institute – Adil Zulfikarpašić's Foundation is established to promote the development and preservation of the cultural wealth, history and identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Institute's library now holds over 150,000 works dating from the sixteenth century to the present day. In the Library of the Bosniak Institute a special place belongs to the priceless collection of Oriental manuscripts in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Bosnian²¹ languages which consists of 743 codices of the 1125 works. The manuscripts pertain to a wide array of subjects such as theology, law, ethics, mysticism, philosophy, logic, lexicography, grammar, rhetoric, beautiful literature, medicine, calendrography, astronomy, astrology, history. The collection contains some very old manuscripts, dating back to the 14th century, which were brought down from the oriental countries in the period of accepting and spreading Islam and Islamic culture in Bosnia. There is also a certain number of works written down by their authors themselves. Many of these manuscripts are especially valuable because they originated from Bosnia and were donations from the private collections of noble families. These works have been catalogued into three volumes of *Catalogues of the Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Bosnian manuscripts in the collection of the Bosniak Institute* and they are available to scholars.²²

When about it comes to the Persian manuscripts in the collection of the Bosniak Institute is important to mention that in the first volume of the catalogue there are twenty Persian manuscripts (See: Nametak, Fehim; Trako, Salih 1997: 239–251). Among them there are mainly works of classical Persian literature like Sadi's *Gulistan* (4 manuscripts) and *Bustan* (1 manuscripts), Atar's *Pandnama* (2 manuscripts), Rumi's *Masnavi* (2 manuscripts). In addition to literary works, a number of dictionaries are also noted, with *Tuhfa-i Shahidi* (4 manuscripts) being the most represented. In this volume the manuscripts of Hafiz's *Divan* (Ms 141 cat. no. 412) and Rumi's *Masnavi* (Ms 16 cat. no. 404) stand out for its beauty of the manuscript.

The manuscript of Hafiz's *Divan* (Ms 141 cat. no. 412) was copied in 1561 by an unknown calligrapher. It is a very nice and comprehensive copy made according to the highest aesthetic aspirations and achievements. The manuscript is decorated with gold titles and a beautiful cover (See: Nametak, Fehim; Trako, Salih 1997: 247).

²¹ This refers to the Bosnian language with Arabic script.

²² See: Nametak, Fehim; Trako, Salih *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa iz Bošnjačkog instituta*, Vol. I, Zürich, 1997; Nametak, Fehim; Trako, Salih, *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa iz Bošnjačkog instituta*, Vol. II, Zürich-Sarajevo, 2003; Jahić, Mustafa *Katalog arapskih, turskih, perzijskih i bosanskih rukopisa iz Bošnjačkog instituta*, Vol. III, Zürich-Sarajevo, 2019.



A manuscript of *Divan* of Hafez (Ms 141 cat. no. 412) from the oriental manuscripts collection of the Bosniak Institute – Adil Zulfikarpašić's Foundation²³

In addition to its extraordinary calligraphic beauty the manuscript of Rumi's *Masnavi* (Ms 16 cat. no. 404) has an additional cultural value. The manuscript was copied by a dervish Muhammad Bosnawi in the Mevlevi tekke at Bendbasa in Sarajevo in 1646, for the dervishes. Damaged by the fire, the tekke was reconstructed for use by Sarajevo dervishes. The calligraphic beauty of this manuscript, in which one volume transcribes this Rumi's work, written in six books, speaks of the artistic talent of this Sarajevo dervish, who has remained unknown so far. (See: Nametak, Fehim; Trako, Salih 2003: 243)

²³ On this occasion, I express my great gratitude to Amina Rizvanbegović Džuvic, Director of the Bosniak Institute, who kindly provided me with Persian manuscripts for the purposes of this paper.

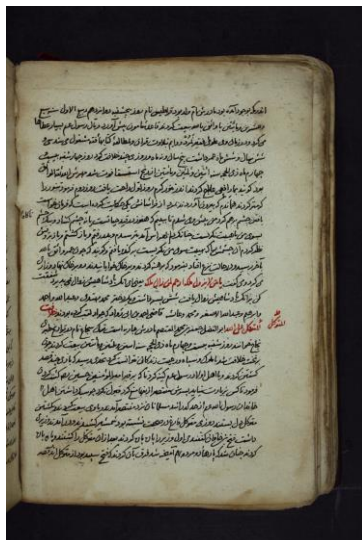


A manuscript of Rumi's *Masnavi* (Ms 16 cat. no. 404) from the oriental manuscripts collection of the Bosniak Institute – Adil Zulfikarpašić' Foundation

In the second volume of the *Catalogue* there are eighteen Persian manuscripts. As in the first volume of the *Catalogue*, among Persian manuscripts there are mainly works of classical literature like Jami's *Tuhfa al-ahrar* (3 manuscripts), Sadi's *Gulistan* (2 manuscripts) and *Bustan* (1 manuscripts), *Pandnama* (2 manuscripts), Rumi's *Masnavi* (1 manuscripts) and the others. In addition to literary works, a number of dictionaries is also catalogued, with *Tuhfa-i Shahidi* (3 manuscripts) being the most represented (See: Nametak, Fehim; Trako, Salih 1997: 219–232).

The manuscript of the historical work of *Bahjat al-tawarikh* (*The Joy of Chronicles*) should be particularly emphasized. The author, Shukrullah son of Shihabuddin Ahmed al-Zakki, wrote this work in 861/1456. This book is a history of the world of Islam from the beginning to Sultan Mehmed Fatih, more precisely, until his accession to the throne. (See: Nametak, Fehim; Trako, Salih 1997: 226–227). About twenty manuscript copies of the *Bahjat al-tawarikh* have been registered so far in the world and the manuscript of the Bosniak Institute is the only copy of this manuscript in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It can be concluded based on

the paper and script that the manuscript most probably originates from the 18th century. (Al-Zakki 2018: ix).



A manuscript of *Bahjat al-tawarikh* (Ms 739 cat. no. 958) from the oriental manuscripts collection of the Bosniak Institute – Adil Zulfikarpašić Foundation

Library of the Institute for Oriental Studies

Institute for Oriental Studies in Sarajevo is a public research institution dedicated to the study of the Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages and literature, both in general and, more specifically, for Bosnia's Ottoman past. The Institute at its peak contained 5,263 manuscript codices covering fields from astrology and theology to epistolography and poetry, and the oldest manuscript in the collection was from the eleventh century. However, in May 1992, the Institute was hit by incendiary shells coming from the Serb positions and most of the manuscript collection and archives were burnt and lost forever. Today, the Institute's manuscript collection contains 53 preserved codices from the former collection of the

Institute, 34 newly bought codices, and 21 codices received as gifts from individuals or institutions. The manuscripts in the new collection are interesting not only for their calligraphic value, but also for the fact that a certain number of them are autographic works of Bosnian authors in Arabic, Turkish and Persian. Researchers of Bosnian history and culture will also note the significant number of manuscripts by local copyists.²⁴

Public and private libraries in Mostar, Travnik and Gračanica

In addition to Sarajevo, various public and private libraries in other cities, such as Mostar, Travnik and Gračanica are known. Mostar was one of the most important centers of Islamic learning in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is proved by more than 300 registered Oriental public and private libraries. The most important library that existed in Mostar during the Ottoman period was Karadjoz-bey's library, founded in 1570. In its collection there were many manuscripts written by local authors. This library was closed in 1934 and the rest of its collections were transferred to Gazi Husrev Bey's Library in Sarajevo. Apart from this library, very significant libraries existed at that time in Mostar, namely Dervish-pasha Bajezidagić's library which was endowed by Dervish-pasha in 1593 and which was transferred to Kardjoz-bey's library in 1890, Čejvan Čehaja's library, Ali-pasha Rizvanbegović's library, Mustafa Ejubović's library, Ibrahim Opijač's library and others (See: Hasandedić 1972: 107–112).

The most important private library in Gračanica was Halil-effendi's library, situated in the *madrasa* of Osman-captain Gradašćević, and to which many other libraries and collections from that region were transferred. Books in this library were mostly religious and philosophical, and there were also linguistic texts. It is interesting to mention that every book from this library had a seal with the name of endower and the year 1737. In 1939, Halil-efendi's library, along with the library of the Gradašćević's *madrasa*, was transferred to the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library. (Hadžiosmanović 1980: 75)

Elči Ibrahim-pasha, the vizier in Travnik in the period 1704–1705, built a *madrasa* with a library for which he endowed 103 manuscripts in Oriental languages. The fact that he furnished the library at that time was confirmed by the text of a specially made seal imprinted on every endowed manuscript: *This was endowed by Elči Ibrahim-pasha, saying that goods deeds eliminate bad one*. Many rich families in Travnik had their own collections that were donated to the library. So, a large collection of books that belonged to Mehmed pasha Kukavica, the Bosnian vizier, became part of this library. Later the manuscripts from this library were transferred to the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library (Hadžiosmanović, 1980: 75–76).

Private libraries

Numerous private and family libraries had an important role in Ottoman Bosnia. As in other parts of the Ottoman Empire, not only members of the educated elite owned manuscripts but also merchants, artisans, members of Sufi orders and the military.

²⁴ More about Institute for Oriental Studies see: *The Institute for Oriental studies in Sarajevo 1950–2000*, Sarajevo: Published by: Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, 2000.

Today, most of the private libraries of Oriental manuscripts from Ottoman Bosnia are housed in public archives and national libraries in Bosnia and Herzegovina and abroad. For example, the Gazi Husrev Bey's Library keeps manuscripts from a number of old endowed and private libraries, which were gradually transferred from Sarajevo, Mostar, Travnik, Foča and other towns since 1867.²⁵ In Sarajevo, parts of some private libraries are also kept in the Oriental Collection of the Bosniak Institute, for example, manuscripts that belonged to the renowned Sikirić family. Also, among the more than 5,000 codices that were destroyed when the building of the Oriental Institute was shelled and burned down in 1992, there were substantial parts of private libraries (See: Paić-Vukić 2012: 145–148).

The collection of Safvet-beg Bashagic's manuscripts in Persian

Safvet-beg Bashagic (1870-1934) is a remarkable scholar, a productive and exceptional translator from Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages, an expert in the field of Oriental-Islamic diplomatic and paleography. In 1910 he defended his doctoral thesis entitled *Die Bosniaken und Hercegovcen auf dem Gebiete der islamischen Literatur* at the University of Vienna. Later, he translated his doctoral thesis and published it with some corrections and additions under title *Bošnjaci i Hercegovci u islamskoj književnosti (Bosniaks and Herzegovinians in Islamic Literature)*. His research in the fields of literary, historical and cultural heritage of Bosnia-Herzegovina makes him one of the pioneers of the oriental studies in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He wrote separate studies, papers, essays, reviews in the field of the Oriental studies in the widest sense of that word. In his initial translations, he pays attention to the personality and works of Omar Khayyam so in 1920 he translated his famous Rubaiyat. University Library in Bratislava houses the greatest part of the collection that belonged to Safvet-beg Bashagic. This collection consists of 598 works, out of which 398 are in Arabic, 117 in Turkish, and 88 in Persian. Moreover, about thirty of his manuscripts are kept at the Oriental Collection of the Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb.

The collection of Safvet-beg Bashagic's manuscripts in Persian mainly includes works of classical Persian literature such as Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, Nezami's *Khamasa*, *Pandnama*, Rumi's *Masnavi*, Sadi's *Bustan* and *Golestan*, Hafiz's *Divan* and Jami's *Selselat az-zahab* and *Baharistan*. Among other manuscripts, the manuscript of *Khamasa* by Nezami dated 893 stands out for its beauty. This collection also contains the manuscripts of two works as an imitation of the Sadi's *Golestan*, which contain special value according to the date of their origin. Namely those are the works of *Negarestan* by Kemal Pasha-zade whose manuscript was completed in 964/1556 and *Sunbulistan* by Shujjaudin Gurani whose manuscript was written in 986/1578. Among the Persian manuscripts of the Safvet-beg Bashagic's collection is the manuscript of *Bulbulistan* by Fewzi Mostari (Karahalilović 2003: 102).

Although the collection of Safvet-beg Bashagic's manuscripts is located outside Bosnia, at the University Library in Bratislava and in Oriental Collection of the Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb, we consider it as part of the Bosnian cultural tradition.

²⁵ Among the former owners are the Sarajevan mufti from the first half of the 19th century, Mehmed Šakir Muidović, the renowned families of Džinić, Muzaferija, Hromić and Saračević; the bibliophile and researcher Osman Asaf Sokolović (1882-1972), the chronicler Muhamed Enveri Kadić (1855-1931), and many other individuals and families from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Paić-Vukić 2012: 147).

Conclusion

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the Persian literature heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina is highly valuable and it represents an important part of Bosnian cultural heritage in Oriental languages. Persian classics and their works like Rumi's *Masnavi*, *Pandnama* ascribed to Fariduddin Attar Neishaburi, Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Hafiz's *Divan*, Jami's *Baharistan* were widespread and popular in this territory during the rule of the Ottoman Empire. Their famous texts extended a huge influence on the literary work of Bosniaks in Oriental languages. Although the literature of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Persian in terms of quantity did not catch up with literature in the two other oriental languages, Turkish and Arabic, when it comes to content and influence of Persian culture and the literary tradition, one could say it exceeded them by far. Nearly thirty Bosnian authors who tried to compose at least few verses in Persian have been registered, but there are probably more authors who should be discovered.

The significant number of valuable manuscripts of these Persian classical texts in the catalogues of manuscripts in libraries in Bosnia and Herzegovina witness about how popular and widespread these works were and about the value of these works in the Bosnian cultural tradition. One can observe that most manuscripts of Persian texts in the local public and private libraries are those of *Pandnama* by Fariduddin Attar, then manuscripts of Sadi's *Golestan*. The reason for this is because *Pandnama* and *Golestan* were textbooks of Islamic ethics in numerous *madrasas* during the Ottoman rule in Bosnia and they were very popular and widespread. In addition to *Pandnama* and *Golestan* very significant are the manuscripts of Rumi's *Masnavi*, Hafiz's *Divan* and Sadi's *Bustan*. In Persian collections of manuscripts, a special place also belongs to a number of Persian dictionaries used in Ottoman Bosnia like famous verse dictionaries of the Persian *Tuhfa-i Shahidi*.

Unfortunately, during the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995), multiple valuable manuscripts and books were destroyed. We must mention here in particular 5263 codices from the Oriental Institute which were burnt down in the fire during just one day. Thanks to the numerous manuscripts in Persian and other oriental languages that are preserved in oriental manuscripts collection in Gazi Husrev Bey's Library, library of the Bosniak Institute, Safvet-beg Bashagic's private library and other public and private libraries in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we can valorize our cultural and historical traditions.

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