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*Culture, Architecture and art in the Balkans  
(September 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Istanbul/Türkiye)*

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# SUFI LITERATURE IN THE OTTOMAN BOSNIA

## *Osmanlı Bosna'da Tasavvuf Edebiyatı*

Slobodan ILIĆ\*

**Abstract:** In the second half of the 15th century the lands belonging to the medieval Bosnian kingdom were attached to the expanding Ottoman Empire. Since the very beginning of the Ottoman rule, sometimes even preceding it, convents of different branches of, mostly orthodox, mystical congregations were founded, firstly by the advancing Turkish ghazis, later also by the local dervishes. The first documented Sufi activities were related to the Mawlawi order and the foundation of Isa-Beg's mevlevihane in Sarajevo 1462. Shortly followed Khalwatis, later also Qadiris and Bayramis, toward the end of the Ottoman rule also Naqshbandi and Bektashi orders, the last one even after the official ban of 1826. During the four hundred years of the Ottoman rule Bosnian adherents of different mystic orders have left a lasting impact on the Ottoman literary tradition, and some of them, like the famous commentator of Persian classics Sudi, the celebrated poet Sabit, both being Mevlevi, or Şârihu'l-Fusûs Abdullah Bosnevi, a Malami-Bayrami, produced works being highly esteemed and included among the Ottoman literary classics. The paper aims to offer a survey of the literary tradition in the Ottoman Bosnia written in Turkish, Arabic and Persian, as well as local Slavic vernacular.

**Key words:** Ottoman, Bosnia, Sufism, Literature

**Öz:** 15'inci yüzyılın ikinci yarısında, ortaçağ Bosna kiralıyetine ait topraklar ilerleyen Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na ilhak edildi. Osmanlı idaresinin başından beri, bazan hatta fetihten önce, çoğunlukta Sünni derviş tarikatlarının farklı kollarının tekkeleri, ilk önce fethe katılan

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Türk gaziler, sonra da yerli muridler tarafından Bosna'da kuruldu. İlk belgelenmiş tasavvuf faaliyetleri Mevlevî tarikatına ve Saraybosna'da 1462 senesinde 'İsâ Bey Mevlevîhânesi kurulmasına bağlanıyor. Az zaman sonra Halvetîler, sonra Kâdirîler ve Bayrâmîler, Osmanlı idaresinin sonlarına doğru Nakşibendî ve Bektaşîler de takip etmişler, Bektaşîler hatta 1826'daki resmi yasağında sonra. Dört yüz sene süren Osmanlı idaresinin esnasında, farklı tarikatların Bosnalı muridleri Osmanlı edebi mirasına kalıcı tesir bırakmışlar, Mevlevîler, meşhur Fars klasiklerin şârihi Sûdi ve ün kazanan şair Sabit gibi, veya Melâmî-Bayrâmî Şârihu 'I-Fusûs 'Abdullâh Bosnevî gibi son derece takdire layık görülmüş ve Osmanlı edebi klasikleri arasında girmiş eserleri bıraktılar. Bildirinin amacı, Osmanlı Bosna'sında Türkçe, Arapça, Farsça ve İslav konuşma dilinde yazılmış edebi geleneğini tanıtmaktır.

**Anahtar kelimeleri:** Osmanlı, Bosna, Tasavvuf, Edebiyat

Following the final conquest of the medieval Bosnian kingdom in 1463, its lands were attached to the expanding Ottoman Empire. Since the very beginning of the Ottoman rule, sometimes even preceding it, convents of different branches of, mostly orthodox, mystical congregations were founded, firstly by the advancing Turkish ghazis, later also by the local dervishes. The first documented Sufi activities were related to the Mawlawi order and the foundation of Isa-Beg convent in Sarajevo 1462. Shortly followed Khalwatis, later also Qadiris and Bayramis, toward the end of the Ottoman rule also Naqshbandî and Bektashi orders, the last one even after the official ban of 1826. During the four hundred years of the Ottoman rule Bosnian adherents of different mystic orders have left a lasting impact on the Ottoman literary tradition, and some of them, like the famous commentator of Persian classics Sudi, the celebrated poet Sabit, both being Mawlawi, or *şârihu 'I-Fusûs* Abdullah Bosnevi, a Malami-Bayrami, produced works being highly esteemed and included among the Ottoman literary classics.

The first dervish convent in Bosnia whose existence is clearly documented is the *zaviye* of Isa Beg, which was founded in the

second half of the fifteenth century by İsa Beg b. İshak, the governor (*sancak begi*) of the *sancak* of Skopje/Üsküb from 1454 to 1463, in Sarajevo. The *vakfiyye* (foundation deed) is dated to Jumad al-ula 866 (February–March 1462) and does not refer to any particular dervish order.<sup>1</sup> Bearing in mind that Islamicization among the indigenous population was still insignificant in the first decades of the Ottoman occupation, we can assume that the primary function of the *zaviye* was that of *misafirhane* (public guesthouse) or *imaret* (public kitchen), especially as it was built in a rural area and before the final conquest. The first archival source linking the structure with the Mevlevi order was written in 1650. In the document, a certain Hacı Mahmud was mentioned as the founder of the Mawlawi lodge attached to the İsa Beg *misafirhane* in Sarajevo. In 1569, the famous Ottoman traveler Evliya Çelebi passed through Sarajevo on his journey from Serbia to Dalmatia, wrote a description of it, and referred to it as *tekyegah-i mevleviyan* (Mawlawi *tekke*).<sup>2</sup> When Prince Eugene of Savoy attacked Sarajevo after crushing an Ottoman army at Zenta in 1697, the *zaviye* was badly damaged. After this temporary interruption, the *zaviye* resumed its activities under Austro-Hungarian rule from 1878 to 1918 as well as under the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that was established in 1918. It was active until 1924, at least officially, and its last shaykh was evidently named Ruhi Dede. The building was destroyed in 1958. Apart from the *mevlevihane* of Sarajevo, a *daru 'l-Mesnevi* was active in Mostar as part of the endowment of Derviş Paşa Bayezid-zade, who served as Bosnian governor between 1599 and 1600, and who was himself a Mawlawi dervish and a gifted poet. According to some sources, a Mawlawi *zaviye* was also active, at least for a short time, in Konjic.

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1 Hazim Šabanović, “Dvije najstarije vakufname u Bosni,” *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju i istoriju jugoslovenskih naroda pod turskom vlašću*, Volume 2, 1951, pp. 5–38.

2 Evliya Çelebi, *Seyâhatnâme*, MS Topkapı Sarayı, Bağdat Köşkü 307, f. 129a.

The first Bosnian Mawlawi who left a mark upon Ottoman literature significant enough to ensure that his name was included in Ottoman *tezakir* (biographical dictionaries) was *Ahmed Sudi* (d. ca. 1598), the celebrated commentator on Persian poetry. He took his nom de plume from his birthplace, Sudići, near Čajniče in Eastern Bosnia. The education that he received in Bosnia, probably at Sarajevo, continued at Istanbul and Diyarbekir, where he attended the lessons of the renowned scholar and *müfti* Muslihuddin Lari (d. 1569), a noted authority on classical Persian poetry. After a short sojourn in Damascus and Baghdad, Sudi returned to Istanbul and obtained a position as *müderris* (professor) at the Atmeydan Sarayı. Shortly afterward, he retired, lived in seclusion, and devoted himself to writing. A prolific author, he left thirteen works that addressed a variety of topics from Islamic law to Arabic syntax. The most acclaimed among them are his commentaries on Persian poetry: the Divan of Hafiz-i Shirazi, the Bustan and Gulistan of Sa'di, and the Mathnawi of Jalal al-Din Rumi. The last commentary is generally thought to be lost. Abdülbâkî Gölpınarlı, however, claimed to have made use of the work when he prepared his commentary on Veled İzbudak's Turkish translation of the Mathnawi in the 1940s, and some of my recent researches and findings in Turkish manuscript collections give some hope that the work has not been entirely lost.

*Derviş Paşa Bayezid-zade Mostari* (d. 1603) was born in Mostar and brought to Istanbul as *devşirme*, probably in 1573. During his school years, he developed a particular interest in classical Persian poetry and began to write Persian and Ottoman ghazals himself. At the order of Murad III (r. 1546–1595), whom he served at court as *doğancı başı* (chief falconer), he composed a verse translation in Ottoman of the Sehaname of Banna'i, naming it Muradname after his patron. He left behind two divans, one in Ottoman and the other in Persian. Unfortunately, both have been lost. Derviş Paşa may already have joined the Mawlawi during his education at the Atmeydan. He even set about writing a *nazire* on the Mathnawi,

but finished only the first two volumes. Unfortunately, this work is also lost. In later years, he founded a *daru 'l-Mesnevi* at Mostar. When Murad III died in 1595, Derviş Paşa lost his position at the imperial court. A year later, however, he was appointed *begler begi* (governor general) of Bosnia. He participated in the expedition to Hungary, where died in 1603 during the siege of Budim.

*Ahmed Vahdeti* (d. ca. 1603), who is also known in some sources by the derogatory name Mülhid Vahdeti, or Vahdeti the Heretic, was born in Dobrun near Višegrad in Eastern Bosnia. He belonged to the more heterodox Shamsi branch of the Mawlawi. The little information that we possess about his life is found in a marginal note that was written in a manuscript of the *Gülşen-i Şu'ara'* of Ahdi now preserved in the library of Istanbul University. After visiting the tombs of the Shia Imams in 1578–1579, Vahdeti settled in Basra, where he became the *katib* (secretary) of Mehmed Paşa, the governor of the city. According to a *tezkira* by Riyazi entitled *Riyazu' ş-şu'ara'*, and to the authors who followed him, Vahdeti died in 1598–1599. However, I found chronograms by Vahdeti that were written after this date in several different manuscript collections.<sup>3</sup> As the latest among them honors the accession of Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617), it could be assumed that the poet was still alive at the time. Contemporary sources agree that Vahdeti died at Ereğli, a name that is shared by at least three localities in modern Turkey, one of them in the district of Konya. Most of Vahdeti's verses convey respect and admiration for the *ehl-i beyt* (Muhammad's family and spiritual successors) and for the hurufi prophet Fazlullah Astarabadi, combined with esoteric hurufi cosmogony and cabalistic speculation.

On his way from Belgrade to Herzegovina, Evliya Çelebi stopped briefly at Čajniče. In his description of the town and its inhabitants, he boasted about being honored to spend a night in

3 Slobodan Ilić, "Mülhid Vahdati, ein bosnischer Ketzer des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Volume 151/2, 2001, p. 267.

the house of *Mezaki*, who was *tezkereci* (secretary) of the grand vizier Köprülü Mehmed Paşa.<sup>4</sup> The name of Evliya's host was Derviş Süleyman, a poet widely known in the literary circles of the capital by the *mahlas* *Mezaki* (d. 1676–1677). Raised in Istanbul as an *acemi oğlan*, he was trained in virtually all the sciences of his time. According to some sources, he would also have been familiar with chemistry and alchemy. After the death of his patron Köprülü Mehmed Paşa in 1661, he entered the service of Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Paşa, his son, whom he joined on the campaign in Hungary. After the death of Ahmed Paşa in 1676, *Mezaki* returned and finally settled in Istanbul, where he finished his *Divan*. It was highly esteemed in his time. He died in 1676–1677 at the *mevlevihane* in Galata, where he was also buried.<sup>5</sup> *Mezaki's* *Divan*, most of whose contents were written in praise of the Mawlawi order, was published in Turkey in 1991.<sup>6</sup>

*Sabit* (d. 1712) was born at Užice in Serbia, and educated in Istanbul. In 1678, due to the patronage of Seyyid-zade Mehmed Paşa, he was offered the position of *mülazim* to *şeyhülislam* Feyzullah Efendi. He rose very quickly, becoming *müderris* at the *medrese* of Üsküdarlı Rüstem Paşa in 1690–1691. In 1700, he became *qadi* in Bosnia and moved after four years to Konya and then to Diyarbakir, where he died from diabetes on 4 September 1712. He left behind two *divans* and two long *mesnevis* entitled *Zafername* and *Edhem ve Hüma*. His Ottoman *divan* was published in 1991.<sup>7</sup> *Sabit* was the only Bosnian Mawlawi poet whose work attracted a considerable attention of the Western scholarship. The poetry of *Sabit* was the subject of a study written by Jan Rypka, and published in 1924 at

4 Evliya Çelebi, *ibid.* f. 129a.

5 Mustafa Safâyî Efendi, *Tezkire-i Safâyî* (Edited by Pervin Çapan), Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, Ankara 2005, p. 125.

6 Ahmet Mermer, *Mezâkî. Hayatı, Edebî Kişiliği ve Divan'ının Tenkidli Metni*, Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, Ankara 1991.

7 Bosnalı Alaeddin Sabit, *Divan* (Edited by Turgut Karacan), Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi, Sivas 1991.

Prague.<sup>8</sup> The Scottish orientalist E. J. W. Gibb included in the fourth book of his voluminous *History of Ottoman Poetry* three ghazals of Sabit, together with excerpts from *Zafername*, *Edhem ü Hüma*, and *Mi'raciyye*.<sup>9</sup> Gibb likes Sabit less for his literary skill, more for his originality and versatility.<sup>10</sup>

*Fevzi Mostari* (d. ca. 1747), who is also known in manuscript sources as *Fevzi Blagayi*, was born at Blagaj in Herzegovina ca. 1670. He spent his youth in Mostar and then left for Istanbul where he entered the Mawlawi order in the Galata Mevlevihanesi. In 1707, it seems, *Fevzi* returned to Bosnia as a Mawlawi shaykh serving in the *daru'l-Mesnevi* of Mostar, which had been founded by *Derviş Paşa*. *Fevzi* succeeded a shaykh named *Yusuf*, to whom he dedicated a subtle *mersiyye* (elegy). He joined the Ottoman army in the battle of Banja Luka in 1737 and wrote chronograms that celebrated the Ottoman victory over Austrians. *Fevzi* died at Mostar in 1747. His most important work, a mystical didactical poem in Persian entitled *Bülbülistan*, was completed in 1739–1740, as a *nazire* to *Sa'di's Gulistan* and *Jami's Baharistan*. The work was printed at Sarajevo in 2003.<sup>11</sup>

While Ottoman literature became increasingly influenced by Western models during the period of political and social reform known as *Tanzimat* (reorganization), a gifted but nevertheless unfashionable poet appeared whose name was *Muhammed Fazıl Paşa Şerif-zâde* (d. 1882). A descendant of the Prophet, he was born in 1802 at Sarajevo and completed his studies at Sarajevo and Istanbul. After the death of his father in 1827, he inherited the position of *nakibü'l-eşraf*, which made him responsible for

8 Jan Rypka, *Beiträge zur Biographie Charakteristik und Interpretation des Türkischen Dichters Sabit*, Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis, Prague 1924.

9 Elias John Wilkinson Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, Luzac & Co, London 1900–1909, IV, pp. 14–29.

10 E. J. W. Gibb, *ibid.* p. 14.

11 *Fevzi Mostarac, Bulbulistan* (Edited by Džemal Čehajić), Kulturni Centar I. R. Iran u Bosni i Hercegovini, Sarajevo 2003.

families in Bosnia who claimed descent from the Prophet. In 1832, he became qadi of Sarajevo, pursuing at the same time a brilliant military career that culminated in 1863 with his appointment to the rank of *mir-i liva* (major general). During these years, he entered the Mawlawi order at the Galata Mevlevihane, despite his family's involvement with the Naqshbandi. After a notorious insurrection of Bosnian notables against the central government in 1850, he was exiled to Istanbul. However, he soon returned to Sarajevo and remained there until the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia in 1878. Fazıl Paşa died at Istanbul on 25 October 1882. He left behind a *divan* in Ottoman, which was published in 1981.<sup>12</sup> Another work in prose, *Sharh al-awrad al-musamma bi-haqa'iq adhkar Mawlana*, was highly esteemed in Mevlevi circles. It contains a description and commentary upon Mawlawi litanies and an account of the Mawlawi *silsile* (chain of spiritual transmission), alongside valuable information about mevlevihanes at the time, especially in the Ottoman Balkans. The book was printed at Istanbul in 1866.<sup>13</sup> Fazıl Paşa was also skilled in the art of *hüsn-i hatt* (calligraphy). Some of his calligraphy can still be seen on the walls of mosques in Sarajevo.

Next to Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, the most lasting impact to the religious thought and written culture in the Ottoman Bosnia left the great Andalusian mystic Ibn al-Arabi. The most enthusiastic upholders of Ibn al-Arabi's intellectual heritage and doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* were members of Khalwati and Malami-Bayrami orders.

The existence of the Khalwati order in the Ottoman Bosnia is closely connected with the endeavor of the Bosnian governor Ghazi Husrev Beg (d. 1541), whose endowment of 1531 presented a strong

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12 Fehim Nametak, *Fadil-paşa Šerifović, pjesnik i epigrafičar Bosne*, Orijentalni Institut, Sarajevo 1980.

13 The first edition was published at Istanbul by Bosnalı Muharrem Matba'ası. A new edition, entitled *Şerh-i Evrad-ı Mevleviyye* was published at Konya in 2010.

impetus for the urban development of the city of Sarajevo. As a part of his *külliyye* was built also a Khalwati *hanegah*. Later, Khalwati order spread to Mostar, Travnik, Konjic, Blagaj, Prusac, and other places. In 19<sup>th</sup> century the convent was administered by Naqshbandi shaykhs, in discord with the stipulations of the *vakfname*, later became a classical *medrese* without any particular Sufi affiliation.<sup>14</sup>

*Ala'u d-din Ali Dede b. Mustafa el-Bosnevi* (d. 1598), born probably in Mostar or Nevesinje in Herzegovina, was the most prominent Bosnian member of the Khalwati order in 16<sup>th</sup> century. After completing his studies in Mostar and Istanbul, he entered the Khalwati order. On return from pilgrimage he settled as shaykh of the convent erected by mausoleum of Süleyman Kanuni in Szigetvar, hence his pseudonym Şeyh-i Türbe or el-Sigetvari. In the same city he died. Ali Dede wrote more than 10 mystical treatises, the most important being *Muhazaratu'l-Eva'il Ve Musameratu 'l-Evahir*, a work of historiographic and astrological character. Another work, *Havatimu'l-Hikem*, is composed of 360 questions and answers, for every day in year, in the field of tasawwuf, Islamic law and dogma. The work was printed in Cairo in 1896. On the Ibn al-Arabi's concept of *insan al-kamil* is based his treatise *Risale fi Beyani Ricali 'l-Gayb*.<sup>15</sup> A PhD thesis on his mystical work was defended at Sarajevo University.<sup>16</sup>

The supporters of *wahdat al-wujud* par excellence were also the members of Malami branch of the Bayrami dervish order which owes its existence due to the split made by a group related to Ömer Dede Sikkini (d. 1475) which seceded from the main orthodox stream of Ak Şemsuddin (d. 1459), after the death of Hajj Bayram-i Veli in 1430. The beginning of the 17th century and the dispute

14 Džemal Čehajić, *Derviški redovi u jugoslovenskim zemljama*, Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, Sarajevo 1986, p. 87.

15 Ismet Kasumović, "Traktat o transcendentnom ljudstvu Ali-dede Bošnjaka", *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju*, Volume 31, Sarajevo 1981, pp. 99-110.

16 Rešid Hafizović, *Ali dede Bošnjak i njegova filozofsko-sufijska učenja*, PhD Thesis, University of Sarajevo 1987.

between the Kadizade and Sivasi factions coincides with the time when Malami-Bayrami order made efforts to be reconciled with the state authorities and the orthodox *ülema* and to try to regain its prestige seriously imperilled by a chain of trials and eventual persecutions of its heterodox protagonists Ismail-i Ma'şuki (d. 1538), Hüsamuddin Ankaravi (d. 1557), and most recently Malami qutb Hamza Bali (d. 1573) and his Bosnian followers. It was particularly true for the time of Hasan Kabaduz from Bursa, another halifa of Hüsamuddin Ankaravi who inherited the honour of qutb after Bosnalı Hamza Bali and before Idris-i Muhtefi (d. 1615). He had raised two important disciples who were also on the line of shari'a and regained respect to the order. The first one, Lamekani, among his *murids* had very important personalities like grand vizier Ferhad Paşa (d. 1595) or Bosnian governor Kurşuncızade Mustafa Paşa (d. 1636). The second one was Abdullah Bosnevi (d. 1644), known also as *şârihu'l-Fusus*.

We do not possess too much information regarding *Hüseyn Lamekani*, except his birthplace, Budapest, and that after completing his studies, probably in Istanbul, he entered the Bayrami order and has spent almost whole life in Istanbul, as shaykh of the *tekke* in the courtyard of Şah Sultan Mosque in Davud Paşa, Istanbul. *Wahdat al-wujud* is the central theme both of his *Divan*, published in 1999,<sup>17</sup> and of his 5 short treatises and a long poem. It is visible also from the titles: *Insan-i Kamil*, *Risale-i Vahdet*, *Etvar-i Seb'a* etc. *Hüseyn Lamekani* was famous for his 'wise letters' (*mekatib-i arifane*) addressed to other shaykhs or some of his *murids*.

The most fervent defender of Ibn al-Arabi and justicator of *wahdat al-wujud* among his Ottoman contemporaries was Abdullah b. Muhammed el-Bosnevi, born in 992 (1584). *Safvet-beg* Bašagić knows that his birthplace was Livno in Herzegovina, but he does not cite the source. He also wrongly identifies Abdullah Bosnevi

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17 Slobodan Ilić, *Hüseyn Lamekânî. Ein osmanischer Dichter und Mystiker und sein literarisches Werk*, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1999.

as a mystical poet called Gaibi.<sup>18</sup> After finishing his studies in Bosnia and Istanbul, Abdullah moved to Bursa where entered the Bayrami-Malami order and became *murid* of Hasan Kabaduz. Later traveled to Egypt and Mecca, where contributed to the expansion of the order in the East. On return from the pilgrimage he has spent a period by the grave of Ibn al-Arabi in Damascus. Later he settled in Konya where died in 1644 and was buried next to Sadruddin Kunavi (d. 1274), Ibn al-Arabi's stepson. Abdullah Bosnevi was a prolific writer. According to Mehmed Tahir<sup>19</sup> he left behind more than 60 titles, mostly short treatises on different mystical issues, commentaries on Koranic verses, or citations from Islamic tradition, even some verses. However, the work which acquired him an outstanding reputation was his commentary on the Ibn al-Arabi's magnum opus *Fusus al-Hikam*, named *Tajalliyat 'Ara'is al-Nusus fi Manassat Hikam al-Fusus* (Lifting the Veil from the Brides of the Divine revelation on the Sublime Thrones of Wisdom) written in Turkish and later translated by the author himself in Arabic. The Turkish version has been translated in English 1991 by Bülent Rauf, but wrongly ascribed to Ismail Haqqi al-Bursavi.<sup>20</sup> The Arabic version was recently translated in Bosnian by Rešid Hafizović.<sup>21</sup>

At least as part of oral tradition of Bosnian Muslims, the presence of the Naqshbandi order could be traced as early as to days of the Ottoman conquest. Indeed, among the oldest Muslim gravestones belonging to the fallen soldiers of Fatih, later venerated as ghazi martyrs and saints were certain Ayni Dede and Şemsi Dede, both members of Naqshbandi order, who died in 1461.<sup>22</sup> However,

18 Safvet-beg Bašagić, *Bošnjaci i Hercegovci u islamskoj književnosti*, Zemaljska štamparija, Sarajevo 1912.

19 Mehmet Tahir, *Osmanlı Müellifleri*, Vol. 1, *Matba'a-yı 'Âmire*, İstanbul 1333 H.

20 Isma'il Haqqi Bursevi, *Commentary on Fusus al- Hikam by Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi* (Ed. Bulent Rauf et al., 4 vols). Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society, Oxford 2021.

21 Abdulah-efendija Bošnjak, *Tumačenje dragulja poslaničke mudrosti* (Translated by Rešid Hafizović), Ibn Sina, Sarajevo 2011.

22 Mehmed Mujezinović, *Islamska epigrafika Bosne i Hercegovine*, I, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo 1974, pp. 404-407.

the earliest documented presence of the order is dated with 1467 and building of İskenderiyye convent in Sarajevo. The convent was badly destroyed in 1697, but continued with activities until the WWII. Another Naqshbandi convent was active in Mostar, as part of endowment of Köske Mehmed Paşa (d. 1611), closed in 1924, and destroyed in 1950. However, a real revival of the Naqshbandi teachings in Bosnia happened in 18<sup>th</sup> century with spreading of the Müceddidi branch of the order and building of convents in Fojnica and surroundings. However, the order has not left important literary traces. The most important Naqshbandi poet of Bosnian origin were *Abdurrahman Sirri* (d. 1846-7), and *Abdulvehab İlhami* (d. 1821), the second one executed by the Ottoman authorities, according to some, because of being hidden Malami-Hamzawi, but more probably because of criticizing corruption of religious and state authorities of his time. Both wrote didactical verses in Turkish, as well as in Slavic vernicular.<sup>23</sup>

The Qadiri order was considerably less represented in the Ottoman Bosnia, having its stronghold in the southern parts of the Balkans, however convents existed in Sarajevo, Travnik, Jajce, and Zvornik. The most important Qadiri tekke was Hacı Sinan Tekke in Sarajevo, founded in 17<sup>th</sup> century, active also today. The most prominent Bosnian Qadiri poet was *Hasan Kaimi* (d. 1691). Banned from Sarajevo to Zvornik for participation in a rebellion, where he lived until his death. He wrote a divan in Turkish, as well as some verses in Slavic vernicular.<sup>24</sup>

The mystical congregations with Shi'i bias like Bektashi and Rufa'i have never won legitimacy in Bosnia, as a stronghold of Islamic orthodoxy, and made their most northern establishment in the area of Kosovo and Vardar Macedonia. However, I have discovered two Bektashi poets from late 19<sup>th</sup> century Bosnia, very

23 Dž. Čehajić, *ibid.* pp. 73-79.

24 Fehim Nametak, *Pregled književnog stvaranja bosanskohercegovačkih muslimana na turskom jeziku*, El-Kalem, Sarajevo 1989, pp. 119-124.

probably being of Albanian origin, and very probably related to Durbali Dede convent in Farsala (Greece), who escaped to Bosnia after 1826 and the official ban on Bektashi order in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>25</sup> The first one, *Bosnevi Baba*, whose poetical pseudonym does not allow any suspicion about his descent, the second *Abdullah Fahri Baba*, left some poems in Turkish language, in which, among others, praise their shaykh Yusuf Nadi Baba, about whom at the moment I have no information.

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25 Slobodan Ilić, “Some new facts on the existence and literary activities of the Bektashi order in 19<sup>th</sup> century Bosnia,” Društvena istraživanja, Volume 12/3-4, 2001, pp. 581-587.

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