

The Importance of the Mevlevi Order in the development of Islamic culture and literature in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Summary

The spreading of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina is closely related to Diwan literature and Islamic culture in the country. On the other hand, to be able to fully understand the process of spreading Islamic culture in B&H, it is necessary to understand the development of Diwan literature and the factors that gave rise to it in B&H. According to numerous classical hagiographic and anthological works, it can be stated that members of the Mevlevi Order made more than half of all distinguished writers, intellectuals, artists and nobility in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the whole of Ottoman Empire. Their direct influence on the Ottoman court and a majority of Ottoman sultans, and their connection to ordinary people, especially up to the 16th century, represents a key factor that enabled faster permeation of Islamic culture, and with it Diwan literature in B&H. The Mevlevi impact on Diwan literature and Islamic culture in B&H was not solely limited to members of the Mevlevi Order, but also encompassed everybody who favored beautiful words, art, science, and spirituality.

Key words: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Islamic culture, Diwan literature, spreading of Islam, Mevlevi Order

Introduction

DISCUSSING THE PHENOMENON of the spreading of Islam, Islamic culture and Diwan literature as one of the brightest manifestations of Islam through history necessarily includes the discussion about the importance and role of numerous Sufi orders and individuals in that field. Certainly was Diwan literature founded and developed to the fullest by Sufi writers, so that none of its types, forms or manifestations can be comprehended without the understanding of the ideas, principles, and teachings of Sufism.

It is clear that some Sufi orders and leading figures in the field functioned more effectively and more successfully than others, among them most distinguished were members of the Mevlevi Order. Their impact on the Ottoman and Bosniak Diwan literature was that huge that Abdulbaki Golpinarli, one of the most renowned Turkish Orientalists and Islamologists, without any restraining talks about the special course of Mevlevi literature within Diwan literature.¹ Rumi's Masnavi had great cultural impact so that it kept on inspiring, guiding, and enriching the most renowned figures of Diwan literature through the history of Ottoman Empire. In doing so, the Masnavi defined the way and scope of the Muslim literary and poetic genius in the Ottoman Empire through many centuries.

One fact most significantly proves the great impact of the Mevlevi Order in the Ottoman Empire and Bosnia and Herzegovina i.e. about two thirds of all renowned Diwan writers and poets were members of this Order whereas many others, not directly connected to the Order, were inspired by the ideas and insights of The Masnavi, and other works of Mevlevi writers.

The Mevlevi Order through history

The Mevlevi Order was not established by Rumi himself, since he had never thought about something like that. The Order was established by his son Sultan Walad who, after the death of Rumi's close friend Husamuddin Celebi, took on the obligation of protecting and spreading his father's ideas. Sultan Walad, unlike his father, was not a

¹ Abdolbāqī, Golpīnārī (2002). *Molāwiye pas az Moulānā*. Translation by Teufik Subhani. Teheran: Našr-e elmī. pg. 559.

distinguished poet and mystic, but showed great success in the field of organization and governance. He lay the foundations of a new Tariqa, and owing to his father's impact and reputation made connections with the rulers of the time, benefited from their financial and spiritual support, thus spreading the influence of the Mevlevi Tariqa outside the boundaries of Konya, and even farther.²

The Mevlevi Tariqa had many ups and downs through its seven hundred year long history. However, the Tariqa and its members have always been favored by rulers, the rich, educated, and sophisticated classes of society. Due to its cosmopolitanism, tolerance, and pan-religious approach, the Mevlevi Tariqa represented no threat for authorities, since the Tariqa, owing to its conformist and cosmopolitan nature, did neither interfere with governance, nor showed tendencies to do so, as was the case with some other orders.

The role of the Mevlevi Tariqa was mainly one of proselyte-enlightening, which enabled this Tariqa to operate without hindrance throughout the whole of Ottoman Era, and on the entire area of the Ottoman Empire.

It is known that Mevlevi and Bektashi Tariqas were the most influential Sufi Orders on the territory of the Ottoman Empire. However, the influence of the Bektashi Tariqa was mainly limited to lower social classes such as the Janissary and in rural regions. On the other hand, the Mevlevi Tariqa won recognition in bigger and more sophisticated regions such as the Aristocracy and educated social classes, and on the Court itself.³

This is supported by the fact that out of 320 registered Sufi Diwan poets mentioned in Ottoman Tazikras and historical records, 220 i.e. about two thirds belonged to the Mevlevi Tariqa.⁴

The Mevlevi Tariqa had a favorable position during the Seljuk rule, because their spiritual leader Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi had very

² Franklin, Lewis (2002). *Moulāwī dīrūz o emrūz, sharq o ġarb*. Translation by Farhād Farohmandfar. Teheran: Salis. Pg. 377-381.

³ Ismail Haqi Arzan, Čaršili (1975). *Tārix-e osmānī* Vol. 1. Translation by 'Ireĝ Noubaxt. Teheran: Kejhan. Pg. 625-659 and Bernard, Lewis (1981). *Estānbūl wa tārīx-e emperātūrī-ye osmānī*. Translation by Māhmalak Bāhār. Teheran: Šerkat-e entešārāt-e elmī we farhangī. Pg. 223-228.

⁴ Fehim, Nametak (1997). *Divanska književnost*. Sarajevo: Oriental Institute. Pg. 116.

close relationships with a majority of the Seljuk Court in Konya. Their position did not significantly change by the arrival of the Ottomans by the end of the thirteenth century, since they followed the tradition and customs of their predecessors. During the 15th and 16th century, the Mevlevi still do not lose connection with the people, so that many villages during that time join the Mevlevi Tariqa.⁵ The members of this Order showed a great degree of tolerance, openness, and unfettered spirit, all owing to the fact that the Mevlevi Tariqa by that time still had not taken its final form by which they have been known during recent centuries. Not even the now legendary Mevlevi dance called Sema, by which they are known in the Western world, was fully developed and defined during that time.⁶

That was the time when there was no strict separation between women and men so that women often were leading figures of some of the numerous Mevlevi tekkes.⁷

It should be noted that Sultan Bayezid I (1389-1403) married Devlet Hatun, one of the descendants of Sultan Walad, and that their son Mehmed I (1413-1421) becomes sultan and bears the grand title of Mevlevi Celebis. Even the Mevlevi Tariqa established direct connection to the ruling court in this way, the Tariqa was still markedly a national movement tightly connected to lower social groups.

However, the Mevlevi Tariqa gradually distances itself from ordinary people and largely falls into the arms of upper social classes and the imperial rule. Thus, the state had more influence upon the Tariqa, gets the opportunity to affect of khalifas and sheikhs whereas the Tariqa in return receives material and financial support in terms of waqfs, building and renovating of tekkes, and donations.

That was the period when sultans like Murat II (1421-1444 and 1446-1451), Bayezid II (1481-1512), Selim I (1512-1520) and Murat III (1574-1595) offer the Mevlevi Tariqa full support, and with it the spreading of the Persian language and the Iranian culture on the territory of the Ottoman Empire. The rulers mentioned saw the Mevlevi Tariqa as counterbalance to radical and heterodox Sufi orders, who support the Safavid and

⁵ Abdolbāqī, Golpīnārī. *Moulāwiye pas az Moulānā*, Ibid. Pg. 325.

⁶ Ibid. Pg. 365-366.

⁷ Džemal, Čehajić (1986). *Derviški redovi u jugoslavenskim zemljama sa posebnim osvrtom na Bosnu i Hercegovinu*. Sarajevo: Oriental Institute. Pg. 25.

regularly instigate riots throughout the Empire.⁸

This situation negatively reflects within the Mevlevi Tariqa itself, because it becomes a weapon in the hands of the Ottoman Empire, which helps them neutralize negative influence of heterodox tariqas such as the Bektashi, Hurufi etc.

The seventeenth century represents a dark period of the Ottoman Empire, and a period when all tariqas and freedom-loving ideas were persecuted. That was also the time when the reductionist-extremist sect under the name of Kadizadeli gained momentum, which can be seen as forerunners of contemporary radical movements. The founder of this sect was a certain Vaiz Vali, who spreads extremist ideas. Moreover, this causes extermination of numerous tekkes, and even a ban on certain Sufi rituals, such as the Sema dance.⁹

Luckily, this period did not last long so that by the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century the situation in the Ottoman Empire normalizes again and Sufi tariqas gain freedom of practice.

During the 18th and 19th century, the Mevlevi Tariqa once more earned the sympathy of Ottoman rulers such as Selim III, Abdul Madjid, Abdulaziz, and Abdul Hamid. The Sultan's positive attitude towards this Tariqa was strongly emphasized during Sultan Selim III's rule and Sultan Abdulaziz's rule, especially owing to the fact that Sultan Abdulaziz was spiritually connected to this Tariqa as he was member of the Mevlevi Tariqa.¹⁰ At that time substantial reforms i.e. "Tanzimats" were carried out in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman rule decided to settle a score with everybody obstructing the transformation of the Ottoman society. Since the Janissary lost most with the newly introduced reforms, and owing to the fact that they were spiritually tied to the Bektashi Order, the sultans of the time preferred and supported orders loyal to the authorities, such as the Mevlevi Tariqa. As a consequence of the Court's great sympathies towards the Mevlevi Tariqa, a broad range of intellectuals, nobility, and people with reputation join the ones who support the Tariqa, or even join it.

⁸ Abdolbāqī, Golpīnārī. *Moulāwiye pas az Moulānā*, Ibid. Pg. 352.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid. Pg. 329-335 and 575-580.

However, this peaceful period of Mevlevi Tariqa members did not last long. By the time Kemal Atatürk took over in 1923, the situation in religion and with Sufi orders becomes more complicate so that in 1925 Sufi orders were officially banned in Turkey. Numerous Mevlevi tekkes throughout Turkey and Rumi's monument in Konya became historical and folklore monuments, and the Tariqa gradually starts disappearing throughout the Islamic world.

Muhammed Bakir Celebi, one of the last remaining Rumi's descendants, makes the Syrian town of Halep the new centre of the Mevlevi Tariqa. After his death, even this center ends its activities.

The Mevlevi Tariqa and its rituals, first of all the spiritual Sema dance, afterwards became a form of national folklore whereas Hanikah in Konya became a museum. However, after the UNESCO declared 1973 "The International Rumi Year", huge changes in the relationship to Rumi and his heritage were seen worldwide.¹¹ The situation significantly improved when UNESCO declared 2007 as "The International Rumi Year".

After that, the center of the Mevlevi is moved partly onto the West i.e. The United States, whereas it partly stayed on the territory that had once been ruled by the Ottoman Empire, in the form of commenting The Masnevi and commemorating the anniversary of Rumi's death, a ceremony called "shebi arus".

The role and significance of Rumi and the Mevlevi Tariqa in B&H

Even Rumi and the Mevlevi Tariqa did not have direct connections to Bosnia, as was the case with Iran, Turkey, and even Pakistan, their influence in B&H was no less significant than the influence Rumi and the Mevlevi Tariqa had in the aforementioned countries. Rumi influenced directly or indirectly all Sufis and Diwan poets in B&H with his paramount work "The Masnevi". Sometimes it is hard to distinguish if a certain poet belongs to the Mevlevi Tariqa or simply shows sympathies towards Rumi and his works. The interpretation of "The Masnevi" used to be common practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina starting with the arrival the Ottoman Empire. One of the most renowned commentators

¹¹ Franklin, Lewis, Ibid. Pg. 605.

of The Masnevi, holding the title honorable “Mesnevihana”, was Sheikh Fevzija Blagajac. He was active in the center called “Darul-Mesnevi”, founded by great poet and statesman Deviš-pasha Bajezidagić. Other towns in Bosnia had similar institutions. On the other hand, lectures were held on “The Masnevi” in Mevlevi tekkes such as the ones in Sarajevo and Mostar, and also in mosques, houses and schools as was the case in Livno, Visoko, and Travnik.¹²

Distinguished Bosniak poets and scholars some of which were Šam'i, Sudi, Habibi dede, Derviš-pasha Bajezidagić, Abdullah Bošnjak, Muhtešim Šabanović, Ali dede Bošnjak, Leduni and others commented Rumi and his works.¹³

Certainly was the Mevlevi Tariqa along with the Naqshbandi, Halveti, and Qadiriyya, the most prevailing order in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Ottoman rule. However, there is very little data on the activities of the Naqshbandi order in the first epochs of the Ottoman rule in our country.¹⁴ Same is the case with other orders. On the other hand, as already noted, the Mevlevi and the Bektashi orders were very active and influential orders on the territory of the Ottoman Empire at that time. Meanwhile, Mevlevi tekkes had the role of cultural centers in towns whereas in Sarajevo the Mevlevi had a distinguished role among writers and artists.¹⁵ Late Ćehajić showed in his research that the Bektashi had no considerable and lasting influence on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina as opposed to Kosovo, Albania, South Serbia, and Macedonia, where they had a significant role.¹⁶ Accordingly, the Mevlevi Tariqa had the most important role during the whole of Ottoman period in B&H. Some historical data show that the Mevlevi Order played the key role in the spreading of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the formation of Islamic culture. Isa-bey Ishaković, the first governor of

¹² Salih, Trako (1978). *Predavanje Mesnevije i Mesnevihani u Sarajevu*, Anali Gazi Husrevbegove biblioteke, knjiga V-VI. Pg. 221-226.

¹³ Mehmed, Handžić (1933). *Književni rad bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana*. Sarajevo: Državna štamparija. Pg. 60-64.

¹⁴ Džemal, Ćehajić, *Derviški redovi u jugoslovenskim zemljama sa posebnim osvrtom na Bosnu i Hercegovinu*, Ibid. Pg. 35.

¹⁵ Behija, Zlatar, *Tekije u Sarajevu u XVI i XVII stoljeću* (2001). Beharistan No. 3/4. Pg. 150.

¹⁶ Džemal, Ćehajić, *Derviški redovi u jugoslovenskim zemljama sa posebnim osvrtom na Bosnu i Hercegovinu*, Ibid. Pg. 167-170.

the Bosnian Sanjak in 1462 i.e. a year before the fall of the Bosnian Kingdom, built the first tekke in Sarajevo. This tekke becomes known by the name *Dergjah* or *Astane*.¹⁷ It is well-known that only central tekkes and the ones of most importance in the Ottoman Empire went by that name. Moreover, this tekke was also the headquarters of the prime Ehi, who would come from Istanbul to collect the earnings from European parts of the Empire.¹⁸

On the other hand, it known through oral tradition that the last Bogomil *Did* (elder) gave his holy stick to the Mevlevi *Djed* (elder). It is believed that this stick was kept in the Mevlevi tekke on Bendbaša until it the tekke was destroyed, after which all traces of the stick disappeared.¹⁹ This oral tradition, true or not, witnesses the great importance of the Mevlevi Tariqa and its central role on in spreading Islam and Islamic culture in B&H.

A third historical record shows the great importance of the Mevlevi Tariqa in B&H i.e. a majority of the saddlers' guild members were also members of the Mevlevi Tariqa. That is to say, the saddlers' guild was the second most numerous in Bosnia, after the tanners' guild.²⁰ It is worth mentioning that members of this guild were the most influential social classes in the Abbasid, Iranian, and Turkish empires. Moreover, in the Abbasid Caliphate, mainly Iranians practiced this craft, and after them members of tariqas originating from Iran, or who were spiritually connected to Iran.²¹

Another proof for the connectedness between the Mevlevi Tariqa and the tanner's guild is recorded in history i.e. the prime Ehi of the tanners' guild became Sheikh of a Mevlevi Tekke in Bosnia in the 16th century.²²

¹⁷ Azra, Gadžo-Kasumović (2001). *Mevlevijska tekija Isa-bega kao koordinator humanitarnih, kulturnih i privrednih aktivnosti*, Beharistan No.2. Pg. 25-38.

¹⁸ Ehi was the name for the head or sheikh of craft guilds which were influenced by the Sufi orders.

¹⁹ Rusmir, Mahmutćehajić. (1997). *Zagreb: Dobra Bosna*. Pg. 80-89.

²⁰ Džemal, Ćehajić (1978). *Bektašije i islam u BiH*. Sarajevo: Anali GHB biblioteke, Vol.V-VI. Pg.94.

²¹ Abdolhosejn, Zarīnkūb (2001). *Arzeš-e mīrās-e sūfī-ye*. Teheran: Emir Kebir. Pg. 170.

²² Džemal, Ćehajić, *Bektašije i islam u BiH*, Ibid, Pg.9; Zehra, Alispahić (2001). *Mjesto divno kao rajska bašča*, Beharistan, No. 1. Pg. 168.

However, the most interesting information is that among 320 registered Ottoman Sufi Diwan poets, 220 were members of the Mevlevi Tariqa.²³ From 320 Sufi Diwan poets, some fifty were from Bosnia, out of which 25 were members of the Tariqa. All of this bears witness to the importance and role of the Mevlevi Tariqa in B&H, which fostered Rumi's ideas and tradition through history.

The influence of the Mevlevi Tariqa on the culture and literature in Bosnia

Dervishes of the Mevlevi order organized Dhikrs (“remembrance of God”) and interpretations of The Masnevi in their tekkes in Sarajevo, Mostar, Belgrade, and throughout the Balkans. Interpretation of The Masnevi was common practice in all Mevlevi tekkes, and in many schools and private houses.²⁴ “Mevlevi tekkes, with its sheikhs represented places where philosophy, religious and other intellectual topics were discussed.”²⁵ Even the Mevlevi Tariqa was in oncoming centuries tightly connected to nobility and educated social classes, it should not be forgotten that it emerged out of the working class, and that its original founder Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi appreciated ordinary people more than the elite. Rumi himself and first Mevlevi sheikhs were people of humble origins, and never lost contact with the working class and the craftsmen. Rumi's closest and dearest friends Salahuddin Zarkub and Husamuddin Celebi belong to these social classes. Moreover, Rumi had good relationships with the ruling class, and even had correspondence with one of them. Even the Mevlevi Tariqa was reputed as a Sufi order of a higher class by the 15th century, it still had good connections with lower social classes. It has already been mentioned that members of the tanners' guild were tightly connected to the Mevlevi Tariqa in B&H. However, the Mevlevi Tariqa did not just leave an impact on craftsmen or ordinary people, or the elite, but it also greatly influenced members of other orders. Numerous sheikhs and members of other orders were

²³ Fehim, Nemetak, Ibid. Pg. 116.

²⁴ Džemal, Čehajić (1985). *Društveno-politički, religiozni, književni i drugi aspekti derviških redova u jugoslovenskim zemljama*, POF 34/1984. Pg. 110.

²⁵ Jašar, Redžepagić. *Tesavvuf na Balkanu*. Translation by Ćamšid Moazzamī Godarzi. Pg. 67.

amazed by Rumi, his works and the Mevlevi Tariqa itself. Some of the most renowned “Mesnevihs” and interpreters of The Masnevi belonged to other orders. Sheikh Fejzullah Hadžibajrić, sheikh of the Qadiriyya Order, was during a long period in the twentieth century the only “Mesnevihs” in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, he is known to be the first translator of The Masnevi into the Bosnian language.

Mevlevi poets and writers in Bosnia

This part will concisely cover basic data on Diwan writers and poets who belonged to the Mevlevi Tariqa. During that time, scholars, writer, and poets in B&H usually wrote in Arabic and Persian, besides the Ottoman language.²⁶ The Ottoman Tazikras recorded about 320 Ottoman poets and writers who were connected to some Sufi order, out of which 220 were Mevlevi. It was a common practice of that time that scholars, poets or distinguished people chooses a certain order, thus securing certain protection and position for themselves.²⁷ Out of 220 Ottoman Mevlevi writers and poets, 25 were originally from Bosnia, which represents ten per cent of the total. This percentage is by no means proportional to the total population of Bosnia, since B&H made up less than one per cent of the total Ottoman population. Here we list names of Mevlevi writers and poets; resources where they were mentioned as members of the Mevlevi Tariqa are bracketed.

1 Ahmed Sudi²⁸

2 Vahdeti Ahmed Bošnjak²⁹

3 Derviš-pasha Bajezidagić³⁰

4 Sulejman Mevlevi³¹

²⁶ Mehmed, Mujezinović (1975). *Neki naši književnici Mevlevije*. Preporod, VI, No.1. Pg. 5.

²⁷ Fehim, Nametak. *Divanska književnost*, Ibid. Pg.116.

²⁸ Hazim, Šabanović, Ibid. Pg. 89-95.

²⁹ Fehim, Nametak. *Pregled književnog stvaranja muslimana BiH na turskom jeziku*, Ibid. Pg. 57-61; Smail, Balić, Ibid. Pg. 124.

³⁰ Hazim, Šabanović, Ibid. Pg. 116-129; Fehim, Nametak, Ibid. Pg. 61-67; Mehmed, Handžić, Ibid. Pg. 120-121.

³¹ Fehim, Nametak, Ibid. Pg. 89.

- 5 Habibi dede³²
- 6 Tevekkuli dede³³
- 7 Sulejman Mezaki³⁴
- 8 Zekerija Sukkeri³⁵
- 9 Mustafa Bošnjak Katib³⁶
- 10 Ahmed Rušdi³⁷
- 11 Sabit Užičanin³⁸
- 12 Nutki Ali dede³⁹
- 13 Mejli Gurani⁴⁰
- 14 Fadil-pasha Šerifović⁴¹
- 15 Nazmi dede⁴²
- 16 Servi dede⁴³
- 17 Sabuhi⁴⁴
- 18 Mehmed Rešid⁴⁵
- 19 Fevzija Mostarac⁴⁶
- 20 Husam Bošnjak⁴⁷

³² Fehim, Nametak, Ibid. Pg. 106; Mehmed, Handžić, Ibid. Pg. 97.

³³ Hazim, Šabanović, Ibid. Pg.711; Mehmed, Handžić, Ibid. Pg. 85-86.

³⁴ Fehim, Nametak, Ibid. Pg. 59.

³⁵ Ibid. Pg.59.

³⁶ Hazim, Šabanović, Ibid. Pg. 327-328; Mehmed, Handžić, Ibid. Pg. 122.

³⁷ Fehim, Nametak, Ibid. Pg.128.

³⁸ Ibid. Pg.156.

³⁹ Hazim, Šabanović, Ibid. Pg. 447.

⁴⁰ Fehim, Nametak (1991). Društveno historijski uslovi divanske književnosti u BiH, POF 41/1991, Sarajevo. Pg. 313-318.

⁴¹ Hazim, Šabanović, Ibid. Pg. 643-644.

⁴² Ibid. Pg. 644-643.

⁴³ Ibid. Pg. 83-85.

⁴⁴ Ibid. Pg. 242-243.

⁴⁵ Ibid. Pg. 423-428.

⁴⁶ Ibid. Pg. 444-452.

⁴⁷ Ibid. Pg.662; Smail, Balić, Ibid. Pg. 115.

- 21 Habiba Rizvanbegović⁴⁸
- 22 Redžib dede⁴⁹
- 23 Mehmed Muhtešim Velagić⁵⁰
- 24 Šejh Vedždi⁵¹
- 25 Mahmud Atik⁵²
- 26 Habib Busnevi⁵³
- 27 Husejn dede Busnevi⁵⁴
- 28 Hajdar dede Busnevi Sarajevo⁵⁵
- 29 Sulejman dede Mostari⁵⁶
- 30 Mahmud dede Mostari⁵⁷
- 31 Derviš Džafer Fesene Sene Busnevi⁵⁸
- 32 Derviš Osman Asiri Busnevi⁵⁹
- 33 Derviš Hasan Mostari⁶⁰

The first 25 were distinguished poets and writers i.e. representatives of Diwan literature from B&H where as the others are known to be distinguished scholars and heads of Mevlevi tekkes in Istanbul and Konya. This data witnesses the significance and role of Bosniaks within the Mevlevi Tariqa. If we compare this number with the total number of Ottoman Mevlevi poets, which numbered about 220, we can conclude that Bosniaks were represented with ten per cent in this Tariqa.

⁴⁸ Smail, Balić, Ibid. Pg. 115

⁴⁹ Ibid. Pg. 123.

⁵⁰ Hazim, Šabanović, Ibid. Pg. 672-674.

⁵¹ Smail, Balić, Ibid. Pg. 124; Safvet-bey, Bašagić, Ibid. Pg. 74-75.

⁵² Šebi arus, Sarajevo, 1986. Pg. 41.

⁵³ Mehmed, Handžić, Ibid. Pg. 96.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Pg. 235.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Pg. 235.

⁵⁶ Ibid. Pg. 235.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Pg. 235.

⁵⁸ Ibid. Pg. ...235

⁵⁹ Ibid. Pg..236

⁶⁰ Ibid. Pg. 236.

On the other hand, out of some 60 scholars and writers who worked in Bosnia or were originally from Bosnia, more than 30 were Mevlevi.⁶¹

Conclusion

On the basis of what we have seen, we can conclude that the process of spreading Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as in the whole territory of the Ottoman Empire, was synchronous with the emergence and development of Diwan literature. The success and rapidness of this process is also confirmed with the fact that in the first decades of the Ottoman rule in B&H, some of the most distinguished Diwan poets came from the territory of our country. However, the development of Diwan literature was greatly determined by the spreading of Sufi orders and their practice, so that with emergence of the first tekkes in B&H, first significant Diwan poets also emerge. Our thesis about the key role of the Mevlevi in the spreading of Diwan literature in B&H is also supported by the following:

1. During the 15th and the 16th century, the time when Islam and Islamic culture permeated and took roots throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mevlevi Tariqa had the status of the most established and most influential order in the Ottoman Empire so that it constantly received support from Sultans such as Murat II, Bajezid II, Selim I, and Murat III, and most probably Mehmed Fatih also.
2. Out of 320 Ottoman Diwan poets in total, who are known to certainly belong to a given Sufi order, 220 were members of the Mevlevi Tariqa.
3. Out of 60 Sufi writers and poets in B&H, who are known to certainly belong to a given order, more than 30 were members of the Mevlevi Tariqa.
4. The first governor of Bosnia and founder of Sarajevo belonged to the Mevlevi Tariqa. According to many opinions, he built the first tekke on the territory of B&H, which is known to have had the role of cultural and scientific center.

⁶¹ Šebi Arus, *Ibid.* Pg. 15; Mehmed, Handžić, *Ibid.* Pg. 136-138.

5. The legendary commanders of the conquest of Sarajevo, whose monuments are known as “the monument of seven elders”, most certainly belonged to the Mevlevi Tariqa.
6. According to a legend, the Bosnian *Did* (elder) gave his holy stick to the Mevlevi *Djed* (elder), which meant the symbolical transfer of spiritual leadership onto him.
7. The Mevlevi Tekke on Bendbaša was known as *Dergjah* or *Astane* i.e. played a role in the functioning of the tekke on the territory of B&H and surrounding territories.
8. The Mevlevi Tekke was a center out of which the prime Ehi from all guilds annually collected taxes.
9. One of the numerous guilds in B&H, the saddlers’ guild, was spiritually connected to the Mevlevi Tariqa, which made possible the influence on lower social classes.
10. The most distinguished Diwan poets and writers in B&H, such as Derviš-pasha Bajezidagić, Ahmed Sudija, Sabit Užičanin, Tevekkuli Dede, and Fadil-pasha Šerifović were members of the Mevlevi Tariqa.
11. The Masnevi represented a “spiritual Bible” for all orders, after the Ottoman rule, whereas Rumi was the central figure and inspiration for members of all orders.

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