

THE FIRST BOSNIAN-TURKISH/TURKISH BOSNIAN LEXICOGRAPHIC WORK

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ABSTRACT

In this work, the authoress interprets the first Bosnian-Turkish/Turkish-Bosnian dictionary Maqbul-i 'Arif, or better known as Potur Shahidi written by Muhammed Hevai Uskufi, a Bosnian Muslim, born in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1631 (Hevaji, 1724).

Key words: *Shahids, Hevai, dictionary, the Bosnian language, the Turkish language, metrics*

INTRODUCTION

The First Bosnian-Turkish/Turkish Bosnian lexicographic work is Maqbul-i 'Arif or Potur Shahidi of Muhammed Hevai Uskufi, the dictionary written in 1631. The author was born in Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and besides lexicography he was known as an avid poet. The creator of this Dictionary is known as the greatest Bosnian-Herzegovinian alhamiado poet (Bosnian language, Arabic alphabet/letters).

The dictionary itself is an interesting subject matter for several reasons. Even though its autograph has not been preserved, there are many copies kept in the libraries across Bosnia and Hercegovina and outside her borders (for example, in Upsala, Sweden), and in the private libraries of linguists, writers, archivists, and admirers of Bosnian culture (Huković et al. 1990).

Dictionary is cursive, in verses, bilingual, and it is important to emphasize that the law of poetic metrics (versification) do not originate neither from Bosnian, nor Turkish, but from the Arabic language. It is extremely difficult to even imagine, let alone accomplish, such composition of linguistic knowledge and poetic craft. Nevertheless, Hevai managed to write this Dictionary.

All listed is the reason why the linguistics, besides the piece of writing earlier mentioned, has not yet recorded such extraordinary work that deals with the Bosnian language.

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Besides this, the Dictionary can be seen as the first dictionary in Europe, which has all the features earlier mentioned. Also, this Dictionary is written in Standard Bosnian of the time, which is, to a large extent, similar to the contemporary Bosnian language. It was written in the Kajkavian dialect (ikavica/ijekavica: local dialects).

Dictionary comprises of three major parts: Introduction, Dictionary and Epilogue, and all three parts Hevai wrote in the same manner (Bosnian and Turkish, Turkish and Bosnian, and combined according to the rules of metric of the Arabic language, and all in order to accomplish the form of verse and rhyme). This Dictionary contains circa a thousand of Bosnian words, which are in use today (even 380 years after being recorded). Nouns and verbs are predominant if compared to adjectives. Dictionary is filled with phytonemes, colloquial expressions from the country, words related to agriculture, etc (Korkut, 1942).

Besides its lexicographic qualities, Hevai's Dictionary is above all beautiful literary piece of work, since Hevai uses a number of figures of speech, allegories above all, allusions, compressions, metaphors and adjectives. That indicates on the fact that while writing this piece of work, the writer wanted to express his literary talents, and evidently succeeded in it. Allusions are numerous and a large quantity of them are not decoded; in other words literary – historical theoreticians and literary theory failed to decipher their true meaning and point. Considering the fact that the author himself mentioned in this work some of his personal interests, his wealth and assets, the Sultan's name and the excessive work and knowledge contributed in creating this Dictionary it can, be concluded that he was not only a good lexicographer, but also a successful

stylist with ability to write one thing while that, at the same time, refers to something completely different, coveting realization of something he would be satisfied with.

The Introduction to Dictionary has one hundred and two verses, and Epilogue has only fourteen verses, and the rest of it is the Dictionary comprised of thirteen chapters. Regarding the quality of the text and the paper, the "Introduction" is in the worst condition. Even though the shortest, there are that missing verses in certain copies, even a couple of words, and it can be concluded that only a few copies contain the complete "Introduction" part.

A major characteristic of this first Bosnian lexicographic work is that a story is told through the three parts of the dictionary.

In the beginning, the author speaks about the reasons for writing the dictionary, about the advantages and richness of the Bosnian language, and about those nations with many pieces of work on their culture and language, but his contemporaries had none. Further, he speaks about the beauty of living, how idyllic the country life is, and how a hearth and woman in a house are the true blessings for a man, etc. However, it is interesting to notice that in the chapter where he lists the number in both languages, he actually very crafty and calculating comes to a number, a figure, a price that the Sultan will pay him for all his effort, and he uses a list of allusions and metaphors in order to cover the literal meaning of his words. In that story, wish, wisdom, the author writes the dictionary, writes it in verses that rhyme, etc. Hence, the whole piece of work is complex on many levels and from many aspects – be it lexicographic or literary. Stories in other chapters also have their topic, and problematize a human and life. However, without any doubt, the author acknowledges that there are many mistakes

in his work, and hopes that the educated people would forgive him, and for those who know not – he does not hold much hope. The large portion of the Dictionary is the author's story about himself, and we get to know his birth place, under which Sultan he served and for how long, we even get to know that his pension is small, and that he expects a reward for his writing, because he considers his Dictionary an act of celebrating the Sultan's Empire and his reign. All those stories and little tales, the author molded into a bilingual dictionary, which in some chapters is not even bilingual, but mixed (in the same verse there are Bosnian and Turkish words, or they are placed one next to each other, etc). There is a vast number of words that are misplaced in this Dictionary written in verse; even though this collides with any of the existing lexicographic rules, the author uses them to accomplish the perfect verse metric system, and besides logics and emotions, other things should be taken into consideration such as suspicion, incidence, poetic feel, metric necessity, stylistic wittiness, etc (Blau, 1868).

This literary piece of work is saturated with allusions; still, regardless of these and similar words and their expected and unexpected usage in the main part, this work is not only read with care and delight, but also we can, in the same manner, approach each word that the author translates from one into the second language, with versification and the metric system of the third one.

It is interesting to notice that one man in the time of fear, famine, conquests, and numerous unfavorable circumstances, did not come up with an idea to write anything, and let alone a dictionary in verses. All indicates on the fact that Hevai was well-educated polyglot, sophisticated and future oriented, and he used the time he spent at the Court

educating himself, broadening his knowledge in all spheres. Also, Hevai quickly noticed the lexical and semantic potential of his mother tongue. Without a doubt, he calls his mother tongue Bosnian and there is not a single reference in this Dictionary or his poetry that would suggest otherwise.

During the Ottoman reign in Bosnia and Hercegovina, it was noted more than four hundreds indigenous writers, and a large number of them wrote poetry in Arabic – exclusively, Hevai's Dictionary was not a big of surprise, but the peak of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian striving of the time, and even today. Writing any kind of lexicographic piece of work is very demanding and time consuming. All indicates that Hevai dedicated more than ten years writing his Dictionary, while the very idea of writing was maturing for about ten years, or even more. Hence, the end of the 16th century is seen as the period of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian very own Renaissance, the awakening of patriotic, creative and other virtues. Such wave of creativity hit many other nations.

It is evident that Hevai had several ideas even before writing this Dictionary. He wanted to leave something valuable, something that he would be remembered by. He expected that his work would get a reward from Sultan, being unsatisfied with his income. He wanted to show to the whole world to what extent Bosnian is rich and allows expression of complex thoughts and feelings. Maybe he did not have such intentions, however, he appeared as an extraordinary writer, poet, the creator of metric system, rhyme and verse, and his unique use of allusions – something that many literary theoreticians or philosophers did not succeeded in decoding his verses.

Still, the most intriguing question is how the Dictionary was written, in what form and why. The dictionary was written in the manner of the Turkish writer and lexicographer, Ibrahim Dede Sahidi (1470 – 1550) and his literary work also written in verses, but in Persian and Turkish language, titled Tuhva and Sahidi. Science has a great task to determine to what extent Hevai looked up on Sahidi, and the reasons why he chose this particular metric versification, difficult form for writing a dictionary. The question whether Sahidi celebrated certain Sultan, or got paid for his work, or whether the beauty of the Persian and Turkish seduced Sahidi, or maybe, just maybe, both lexicographers appreciated writing in the manner of poetry. It would be interesting to compare and contrast their dictionaries, versifications (metric), as well as their rhyme and complexity. Considering the fact that the prior science has not do it, not even partially, leaves a task for the new generations of researches to interpret and publish their findings.

Before publishing this Dictionary Bosnian-Herzegovinian lexicography did not have a work of such fittings, and Hevai's Dictionary is considered the first Bosnian Language Dictionary of all time. Being cursive, written in verses, bilingual and metrically composed according to the rules of the third language, this Dictionary is considered to be the first even in the European lexicography. Thanks to many scribes the Dictionary is transcribed, and it can be read in contemporary Latin alphabet, as well as in Arabic, the way the original was written in, and the alphabet used by Hevai and his contemporaries. In modern libraries, the Dictionary can be found in both versions, and there are evidence that the first studies on Muhammad Hevai Uskufi and his alhamiado poetry has already published, and partially studies on Maqbul-i 'Arif (Potur Shahidi).

CONCLUSION

Muhammed Hevai Uskufi wrote Maqbul-i 'Arif (Potur Shahidi) in 1631. The author was Bosnian, born in Tuzla City, a clerk in the Sultan's Court, where he earned the pension. The Dictionary is bilingual: Bosnian-Turkish, Turkish-Bosnian, but the languages are in a way melted. The Dictionary is cursive, written in rhyme with the Arabic language metric system.

There are over one thousand Bosnian words, written in the Kajkavian dialect. In both poetry and dictionary, he calls his language Bosnian and his wish was to show the educated people the richness and possibilities their mother tongue offers. His Dictionary comprises of: the Introduction, Dictionary and Epilogue; thirteen chapters in total. The Introduction has one hundred and two verses; Dictionary has three hundred and forty verses, and Epilogue fourteen verses.

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