O. NOVA 546: THE UPPSALA MANUSCRIPT OF
MAḴBŪL-I ʿĀRĪF (1631)

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Introduction

This article is a short synopsis of parts of my monograph, Alvestad (2016), about the Uppsala manuscript, O. nova 546, of Muḥammed Ḥevāʾī Üskūfī Bosnevī’s literary work Makbūl-i ʿārif [Dear to the Wise] from 1631. Thus, in this article I first outline the motivation behind my monograph. Subsequently I present in more detail the author of Makbūl-i ʿārif—namely, Muḥammed Ḥevāʾī Üskūfī Bosnevī, before I turn to the work itself and the extant manuscripts thereof. Next I briefly outline some methodological issues before I provide a taste of some of the parts of Makbūl-i ʿārif. The final section is devoted to a summary and further outlook.

The motivation behind the monograph

Makbūl-i ʿārif is frequently referred to as the first known Bosnian-Turkish dictionary, but this label is misleading for several reasons. First, the work is composed of three parts: in addition to the dictionary part it has a long and sophisticated foreword and an afterword. Second, the dictionary part is not a ‘dictionary’ in the modern sense of the word. It is dialogue-oriented, written in verse, and split into chapters according to a hierarchically structured set of topics. Against this background a more suitable term than ‘dictionary’ is ‘versified glossary’.

The motivation behind my monograph was twofold. First, I wanted to examine Makbūl-i ʿārif from a turcological perspective, a perspective from which the work has received little attention. Makbūl-i ʿārif is a Turkish, or Ottoman Turkish literary work of art, yet the vast majority of researchers concerned with the work examine it from a Bosnian linguistic and/or cultural perspective. Üskūfī on a couple of occasions refers to ‘the Bosnian language’, as early as in 1631, so the widespread interest should perhaps be
viewed against the background of a larger Bosnian nation-building project after the breakup of Yugoslavia. All the same, of the three parts of the work the versified glossary is the only part where we find Bosnian words; approximately 650. Both the foreword and the afterword are written solely in Ottoman Turkish and even in the glossary Turkish words by far predominate.

The second part of my motivation was as follows. 2011 would be the 380th anniversary of the first edition of Ṣakbūl-i ārif and the 410th anniversary of the birth of its author. In 2010 the Uppsala manuscript was brought to the renewed attention of the scientific community of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Svein Mønnesland, Professor Emeritus of Slavic languages at the University of Oslo, and the next year the manuscript was reprinted and published as a little book by the municipality of Tuzla, Bosnia (Kasumović & Mønnesland 2011). One would expect that the transcription provided in the book would be based on the Uppsala manuscript, but instead it is largely based on works by previous scholars who had access to several manuscripts of Ṣakbūl-i ārif, but not the Uppsala manuscript. Therefore, there are several divergences between the transcription given in Kasumović & Mønnesland (2011) and the Upppsala manuscript.

Muḥammed Hevāʾī Ūskūfī Bosnevī

In Bosnia Muḥammed Hevāʾī Ūskūfī Bosnevī is known for his many poems in addition to his main work, Ṣakbūl-i ārif. He is also known as ‘Muḥamed Hevai Uskuﬁ’ (see, e.g., Kasumović & Mønnesland 2011) rather than Muḥammed Hevāʾī Ūskūfī Bosnevī. In modern Turkish scholarly works, his name is sometimes spelled ‘Mehmet Hevayi Üsküfi’ (see, e.g., Taşçıoğlu 2006: 430). However, the spelling ‘Muḥammed Hevāʾī Ūskūfī Bosnevī’ is the correct representation of how he presents himself in the foreword of Ṣakbūl-i ārif. As far as meaning is concerned, ‘Bosnevī’, of course, means ‘(the) Bosnian’, while ‘Űskufı’, also an (Arabic) adjective, probably derives from the village name Uskopje, cf. Mønnesland (2011: 29). The village Uskopje lies in the municipality of Gornji Vakuf in central Bosnia and Herzegovina. ‘Hevāʾī’ is a Persian adjective meaning ‘idle’ or ‘vain’ (cf. Redhouse 2011) and was a not infrequent pen name taken by Ottoman poets at the time (see, e.g., Andrews & Kalpaklı 2005).

We do not know much about Muḥammed Hevāʾī Ūskūfī except for what he writes about himself in some of his poems. The lines in (1) below from Risāle-i tefsiretül-ʿārifīn [A Wise Man’s Letter of Explaining], for example, have been interpreted to the effect that he was born in 1010 AH (1601-1602
AD) and that his parents died when he was little. He writes that he comes from the sandžak of Zvornik in Bosnia and that he stems from a noble family.1 (In the (then) sandžak of Zvornik lies Tuzla, where the 2011 book version of Makbûl-I ‘ârif was published and launched.)

(1) irişmiş idi biñ on mâh u sâle / muhaçkâk ʰîcret-i faḫrî’-r-risâle
‘the glorious emigration of the prophethood had certainly reached a thousand and ten years’
tüfeyl iken atam anam bu dârî / koyup dûtû vaṭan dârû’l-ğarârî
‘when I was a small child, my father and mother left this world and chose as motherland the realm of stability’
benîm sancağ-i ızvornik diyûrûm / beğ oglûyûm velî şîdî ehli yûrûm
‘my land is the sancak of icopter, I am a bey’s son and the men of truth are my friends’

At the time of Muḥammed Hevâ’î Üskûfî’s birth, Bosnia had been part of the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic world for almost 150 years. It had seen a significant share of its population convert to Islam. Specifically, at the beginning of the 17th century, almost 70% of Bosnia’s inhabitants were Muslims (Zlatar 1990: 60). These circumstances clearly influenced Üskûfî and his work. For instance, he wrote even his Bosnian poems in Arabic script, or, to be more precise, a version of the Perso-Arabic and Ottoman scripts adapted to the Bosnian phonetic system. This version of the Perso-Arabic and Ottoman scripts is called Arebica (or Arabica) (with the e being pronounced [-ts-]).2 Thus, Üskûfî’s works are part of the Bosnian Aljamiado literature.3 In the Bosnian tradition, Aljamiado, or ‘alhamijado’ literature is typically defined as texts written in Arebica by Bosniaks4 between 1463, when Bosnia became part of the Ottoman Empire, and the beginning of the

1 I have not had access to any manuscript of this poem, so the transcription in (1) is based on Korkut’s (1942: 377-378). The English translation is mine.
2 For more on Arebica, see Alvestad (2014).
3 Aljamiado literature is a cover term for texts written in some variety of the Arabic script, but in a language other than Arabic. The word ‘aljamiado’ is a Spanish passive participle that ultimately derives from the Arabic al-‘aggûmi ‘foreign, strange, non-Arab’ (Vajzović 2005: 175).
4 ‘Bosniak’ is a relatively recent term used to refer to a Bosnian Muslim (see, e.g., Vajzović 2005). The term is also somewhat disputed.
20th century. Muḥammed Hevāʾī Üskūfī is considered to be the most important Bosnian Aljamiado writer and was also one of the earliest (see, e.g. Vajzović 2005: 190-191).

Maḳbūl-ī ʿārif, but also the poems, suggest that Üskūfī was in command of Arabic and Persian in addition to Turkish. Since he came from a good family he was probably well educated, cf. (Mønnesland 2011: 22), but if his parents died while he was still a child, someone other than them must have sought for his education. I have not succeeded in finding out what was likely to happen to orphaned boys in Bosnia at the beginning of the 17th century, so I have to hypothesize. I assume that Muḥammed Hevāʾī Üskūfī’s parents were Christians and that he, consequently, was born a Christian. We know that he travelled to Istanbul (cf., e.g., Kasumović 1990: 80-81). I assume that he was taken there as a result of the devşirme system, the boy-tribute system by which Christian boys were taken to Istanbul, converted to Islam, and trained according to their abilities to serve the Sultan or one of the departments of state (cf. Malcolm 1996: 46). Line 29-33 from the foreword of Maḳbūl-ī ʿārif, given in (2) below, have indeed been interpreted to the effect that Üskūfī served at the sultan’s court in Istanbul for twenty years (see, e.g. Filan 2013: 50). Specifically, Üskūfī writes that he came from bīrūn ‘out; outer; exterior’ but now finds himself in cennet ‘paradise’. In Ottoman history, bīrūn was also used to refer to the “central public administration with offices outside the Palace” (Redhouse 2011, my emphasis), as opposed to enderūn.

(2) Ḥücecden hem füzūn oldız ze ḍiṣrūn
‘More than twenty years have passed’
Ki ʿuṭūḍm der in cennet ze bīrūn
‘Since I came from outside into this paradise’
Bi-ḥamdillāh ki bir sultaṇa irdūk
‘Praise be to God that we lived to see a sultan’
Murād Ḥān ibn Ahmed Ḥāna irdūk
‘We lived to see Khan Murad, son of Khan Ahmed’
Vücūdın şaklasun Allāh ḥaṭādan
‘May Allah save him from sin’

5 Both the transliteration and the translation of the word given as hüce in this line are unclear, see Alvestad (2016: 36, footnote 21) for details. I have followed previous researchers, such as Filan (2013: 50) and Kadrić (2011: 64) and translated the word as ‘year’ and the line as ‘More than twenty years have passed’. 
Sultan Murat IV, who was the son of Sultan Ahmet I (r. 1603-1617), reigned from 1623 to 1640. Hevâ’î Üsküff finished Maḳbūl-ı ‘ārif in 1631 (1041 AH), cf. (3) below from the afterword.6

(3) oldı biñ kirk birde bu nüşha tamām
‘this manuscript was completed in one thousand and forty one’

We do not know when Üsküff died, but the following lines from Poziv na viru [A Call to Faith] suggest that he was still alive in 1651 (1061 AH) (see, e.g., Kasumović 1990: 78, 194).

(4) Kad hiljadu i šezdeset i još jedan god bi uzet
‘When a thousand and sixty and one more year have passed’
pisimo ovo dade pamet, hod’te nami vi na viru!
‘this writing has given you wisdom: you come to us in faith!’

Maḳbūl-ı ‘ārif, the Uppsala manuscript, and some methodological issues

In Bosnia Maḳbūl-ı ‘ārif is more widely known as Potur Šahidiya, or Potur Šahidi [Potur Şahidi],7 but Maḳbūl-ı ‘ārif [Dear to the Wise] is the name that Üsküff himself gives to his work: in line 92 of the foreword he writes ‘I gave it (i.e., the “dictionary”) the name Maḳbūl-ı ‘ārif’.

As mentioned, Maḳbūl-ı ‘ārif consists of three parts; a foreword, a versified glossary, and an afterword. All three parts are written in verse and, to a certain degree, according to sophisticated metrics known from Ottoman, Persian, and Arabic lyric poetry. The foreword, for example, consists of 102 lines, 51 couplets, and largely follows the pattern

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6 The afterword of Maḳbūl-ı ‘ārif is missing from the Uppsala manuscript, so this line is from Kadić (2011: 135).
7 ‘Şahidi’ refers to Şahidi Ibrahim Dede (1470-1550 AD), an Ottoman poet and lexicographer who compiled a Persian-Turkish versified glossary that he called Tevhfe-i Şahidi [Şahidi’s Gift]. The word ‘potur’ was probably used to refer to Bosnian Muslims; see Alvestad (2016: 21-25) for an excursus on, i.a., this word.
The versified glossary is composed of 350 couplets spread across 13 chapters. The chapters, or ḳıṭʿās, vary in length and metrical pattern. Chapter 13 is the longest, consisting of 30 distiches, and chapter 3 is the shortest, consisting of six distiches. When it comes to metrical pattern, chapter 13, for instance, is, to a large extent, of the form

\[ \text{fā īlātūn, fā īlātūn, fā īlāt and follows the rhythm} \]

\[ -\ U\ -\ ] -\ U\ -\ [-\ U\ -\ ] \]

(see, e.g., Smailović 1990: 127).

In some presentations of Makhbūl-i ārif (see, e.g., Huković et al. 1990), each chapter of the versified glossary is taken to be devoted to one or more specific topics. Chapter 1 is, arguably, about God and man; 2 about colors, agriculture, and the days of the week; 3 about the elements of the nature; 4 about village life; 5 about the courtyard, including domestic animals and metals; 6 about love and marriage, and so forth, but at best this holds only as a general tendency. Rather, it appears that Üskūfī to a large extent was guided by his associations, and perhaps other factors, as it is very hard to determine what exact topic a given chapter is devoted to.

In the afterword of Makhbūl-i ārif, which consists of 14 lines, or miṣrāʾs, Üskūfī praises the sultan and prays to God for protection.

As far as manuscripts of Makhbūl-i ārif are concerned, there are more than twenty extant ones, cf. Kadić (2011b: 180-182). Most of them can be found in libraries or archives in Bosnia but there are also some in Turkey. Only a few manuscripts are complete—for example, only one of the 16 manuscripts in Bosnia contains the afterword—and the manuscripts vary in quality. The oldest known manuscript of Makhbūl-i ārif can be found in Erzurum, Turkey. It is decorated and dates from 1046 AH (1635 AD).

The Uppsala manuscript of Makhbūl-i ārif, O. nova 546, reached the University Library in Uppsala from Cairo in 1924. The manuscript is handwritten in Ottoman script and consists of 15 sheets of paper. It is easy to read and well kept. The title page, page 1a, reads Bosnali ıl săni üzere lığat-ı

\[ 8 \text{ ‘U’ and ‘-’ stand for short and long syllables, respectively (see, e.g., Smailović 1990: 126).} \]
manzūme ‘A dictionary in verse in the Bosnian language’. The Uppsala manuscript unfortunately lacks the afterword of Makbūl-i ārif.

A taste of Makbūl-i ārif

In my monograph I transliterate and transcribe the Uppsala manuscript and translate the whole text into English. When transliterating I converted each Ottoman, or Perso-Arabic, grapheme into a Latin character in line with the İslam Ansiklopedisi (IA) transliteration system for Ottoman Turkish texts. When transcribing the manuscript I sought to make the final text more in tune with the spoken language of the source text, for example, by including the vowels, but also by taking into account the Ottoman Turkish orthography. This holds for the transcription of the Bosnian words as well. Translating the foreword and the afterword of Makbūl-i ārif into English I benefited from the Bosnian translation given by Kadrić in Kasumović & Mønnesland (2011). As far as the versified glossary is concerned, no Bosnian translation is given in the mentioned work, so in that case I did not have any other works to consult.

Translating Makbūl-i ārif into English I concentrated on conveying the meaning of the verses. Unfortunately, I had to sacrifice rhyme and rhythm, for, in order to do justice to Muḥammed Ḥāʾī Üskūfī’s poetry I would have had to be a poet myself and I am afraid I am not. My hope, though, was that the translation would give the reader a glimpse into a universe about which we do not nearly know enough. Thus, below is a taste of Makbūl-i ārif—specifically, the first ten lines of page 1b from the foreword, and page 4b from the versified glossary. For each set of lines in my presentation below the first line shows the transliteration, while the second (italicized) shows the transcription. The third line is my English translation. The two pages as they look in the Uppsala manuscript, O. nova 546, are shown in Appendix 1 and 2, respectively.

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9 See http://www.islamansiklopedisi.info and the representations therein.
10 For comments regarding details of the transliteration, transcription, and translation of the parts presented here I refer the reader to Alvestad (2016: 30-32, 60-63).
bsm allh alrḥmn alrḥim
*bism Allāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm*
‘In the name of Allāh, the most gracious, the most merciful’

1 ḫda asmn hr ascus aydhlm yạd
*Ḥodā ismin her içe edelīm yād*
‘Let us mention the Lord’s name in every work’

2 kh ta aydh bzy avl dhy dlṣad
*Ki tā ide bizi Ol dahi dilṣād!*
‘So that He will make us happy!’

3 dyvb allh aydn ayṣyŋn ağaz
*Diyūb Allāh iden içine ağāz*
‘He who starts having uttered the Lord’s name’

4 ānŋ ayṣy avlv rḥr sr frätz
*Anuŋ içi olur dāhir ser-firāz,*
‘His work will be excellent in the end’

5 hmyṣḥ ḫmd avlň avl ẓvalclalh
*Heṃṣe hamd ola Ol Žū’l-Celāle*
‘Praise be forever to The Exalted One’

6 kh ansany arṣdrdy kmalh
*Ki insānı eriṣṭirdi kemāle,*
‘Who lets man reach perfection’

7 trab aykn aña vyrdy hyaty
*Tūrāb iken aña vėrdi ḥayātī,*
‘He was dust, but He gave him life’

8 ‘ta klĎy kmv asmv alǵaty
*Atā klĎdı kamu ism ii-lliğātí,*
‘He gave all names and the languages’
9  
ध्य अवलवन श्यत्यल्ह श्यत्य।
Daḥi olsun şalât ile selâmî
‘And let it be a prayer and a greeting’

10  
हिब्न्ह व अशाहि डवाम्य
Habîbîne wâ ašâhâ devâmî
‘For His Beloved and His friends forever’

…

[Page 4b]

19a  
फ़ा लत्न फ़ा लत्न फ़ा लत्न फ़ा लत्न
Fā ‘ilātūn, fā ‘ilātūn, fā ‘ilātūn, fā ‘ilātūn
‘Fā ‘ilātūn fā ‘ilātūn fā ‘ilātūn fā ‘ilātūn’

19b  
साह क्खर हव्भ यवक्ख नह नक्ख कान्त त्व
Saḥa beṣzer ḫāb yokdur. Niye nɪko kano tī
‘There is no one as beautiful as you – nje nɪko kano tī’

ालक्ष अत अलसः
El-kṣ atū s-sānī
‘Chapter the second’

1a  
यस़ झऱ झऱ रौँ झर्र झर झर झर झर झर झर
Yesil zelen, kžîl tsîrlyen, modro ne mor, juto sarx.
‘Green [is] zelen, red [is] crljen, what is modro? – purple, juto [is] yellow’

1b  
चाला अदी ग्य नवल खार्न नरव ब्यवक वायर्य
Çakaluń âdî go neval, kârîcâ mirav, büyük ve irî.
‘The name of a jackal is go nevalj, ant [is] mrav, big and large’

2a  
थढ़ तब अस्तन्च क्व्खन नदी गार्च
Tahtā biti istenitsa, gûgênîn âdî gâgarîtsa
‘Bug is stenica, the name for a beetle is gagrîca’

2b  
हम बज अयल्ह क्विञ्ह ध्य क्व्रक व ब्वीक क्वजा डॉरी
Hem puj ile ķøjuh daḥi kûrk ü böcek, ķoja deri.
And puž and kožuh are as well fur and bug, skin is koža.

3a arph yacam jteva bçm asnvb dhy avldy dmd
Arpa yeçam, jetva biçim, isnop dañlı oldı demed.
‘Barley is jeçam, zêta is harvest, and snop became a stack’

3b hm cfeyh dyrlı tjåc cft svr dymk avry
Hem çiftçiye dërler tejak, çift sûr démek ori.
‘And to farmer they say teçak, plow! means ori!’

4a ḥrınn vvrşay tarla nva ‘rabıh dyrlı kyła
Ḥarman vṛṣay, tarla nyiva, ‘arabaya dërler köla
‘Threshing is vṛśaj, field is njiva, to cart they say kola’

4b dkran aylh dḥy ṭraq ḡrablıy vlh hm ḡay ḡvry
Diğreñ ile dañlı tałarq ḡrablye, vıle, hem ḡay ḡori.
‘And rake and harrow are ḡрабле, vıle, and ḡaj is wood’

5a avldy ṭrpan dḥy byç dymk avldy ḡvṣy
Oldı ṭırpan dañlı kosa, hem biç démek oldı kosi
‘And scythe became kosa, and cut! came to mean kosi!’

5b dy saqrlh dḥy ḡvṣ lyba jna kvzl ḡr
Dｅ saçlara dañlı kosa, lipa jena güzel kıar.
‘And to hair say kosa, lipa Žena [is] a beautiful woman’

6a ḃvnyca hm ḋynanhdr ḃvña dḥy ḍynathdr
Panısta hem kaynanadur, punats dañlı kaynatadur.
‘And punica is mother-in-law, and punac is father-in-law’

6b nvysth avldy hm kln kyvrva jna kḥbb kır
Nevyesta oldı hem gelin, kurva jena kahpe kıar.
‘And nevısta became bride, kurva Žena [is] a sinful woman’

7a ḳv avldy kl maṣa avĳg hm aksyŋ glavna dnvr
Łuḡ oldı kül, maṣa ojeğ, hem eksiye galavnya dinür.
‘Łuḡ became ash, fire tongs [is] ožeg, and to a half’
burned piece of wood is said *glavnja*

At the bottom of this page we find a representation of the first word on the next page—namely *dy*, transcribed *Dē*.

**Summary and outlook**

Summing up this article about the Uppsala manuscript of *Makbūl-i ārif*, I first outlined the motivation behind the monograph. Subsequently, I presented the author, Muḥammad Ḥevāʾī Üskūfī Bosnevī, before I turned to the work itself and some of the extant manuscripts thereof. Then I briefly addressed some methodological issues before I gave the reader a little taste of the foreword and the versified glossary part of *Makbūl-i ārif*.

I hope that the turcological perspective taken in the monograph has brought some new insights and that the English translation has drawn *Makbūl-i ārif* and its author to the attention of a wider audience. However, several puzzles still remain when it comes to both Muḥammad Ḥevāʾī Üskūfī Bosnevī and his *magnum opus*. One of the puzzles I already addressed—namely, whether Üskūfī was a devširme boy. Another question is what audience Üskūfī had in mind when writing *Makbūl-i ārif*—Bosnians who wanted to learn Turkish, or non-Slavs who might be interested in learning about the third language of the Ottoman Empire, the sultan himself, for example. Another issue that needs to be resolved is what the exact literary and artistic quality of *Makbūl-i ārif* is. I discuss these and more questions in detail in my monograph and hypothesize with respect to most of them, but the final answers will ultimately have to be left for future research.
References


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