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THE ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS IN ALBANIA *

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Abstract: Albanian archives and libraries have preserved a great number of Oriental manuscripts. Until today, research has shown that these manuscripts, starting from Hicri 704/ the year 1304-1305 to 1952, are written in Arabic, Persian and Turkish by Albanian and foreign writers. Their number amounts to 873, but it is estimated that the number of Oriental manuscripts in Albania is more than 2000. The first manuscript is preserved in the National Library (Tirana) and the last manuscript is preserved in the Central Archive of the State of Albania. Although a part of the collection was lost, due to human and natural factors during the centuries, in different cities from the North to the South of this country, this collection is an important treasure of the culture of the Albanian nation. The people have preserved and inherited them from generation to generation as sacred books for their lives and families. Researchers will find in this collection of manuscripts an insightful resource about the history, literature and culture of Islamic religion in Albanian territories during the Ottoman Administration. Part of the collection is comprised of rare manuscripts, which exist only in the aforementioned institutions. Their value lies not only in their number, but also in their writing, art and content, originality, how they are transcribed, translated or copied. They influenced a highly intellectual Albanian elite and in so doing resulted in the development of the Islamic culture in Albania. These manuscripts also played an important role in the spiritual daily life of the population.

Keywords: Albania, Ottoman Empire, Islamic culture, Arabic, Persian and Turkish manuscripts

Albania was part of the Ottoman Empire for a period of nearly 500 years, from the beginning of the XVth century to the beginning of the XXth century, when it would proclaim its independence on the 28th of November in 1912. The settlement of the Ottoman Administration after invading Albanian territories, brought changes to all aspects of life including political, economic and social. Particularly, the Oriental culture had a great influence, which was widely spread from the XVIth century to beginning of the XIXth century. The result of this impact was the construction of a significant number of religious and educational institutions such as mosques, tekke, schools, libraries, etc., in the provinces of Ioannina, Kosova, Manastir and Shkoder; in their districts, sub-districts, cities, communes and villages. Also, with the growth of these institutions, the number of intellectuals increased, who not only learned the Oriental languages, but also became well-versed contributors to this wealthy culture. The Turkish language, during this period in Albania, was not only the official language, but it was also the main language in the writing of creative works by Albanian authors.

The Turkish language, along with the Arabic and Persian languages, was absorbed by Albanian students who continued their education in Ottoman schools in Turkey, or who were sent to schools abroad, such as in Egypt, Iran, etc. Furthermore, many Albanian families taught their children the above-mentioned languages at home through private mentors, before sending their children to Ottoman schools. Sami Frasherî, commonly known in Turkish historiography as Shemseddin Sami, who made a great contribution with his works to the Turkish, Albanian

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and global culture, has written that "the rich people of Frasher (Albania) held in their houses, until the period of Ali Pasha Tepelena, private teachers who taught their children fluent Arabic and Persian (included the Turkish-Z.B).¹ Even the scholar and historian Syrja Vlora, one of the members of the Vlora family, who published many works and produced a series of manuscripts with historical studies in the Turkish language, brought special teachers from to city of Vlora to teach Oriental languages to his children. His son, Eqerem Vlora, wrote in his autobiography that, "my father (Syrja Vlora-K.N) had invited prof. Yusuf Riza efendi from Istanbul to teach us Oriental languages (Turkish, Arabic, and Persian)"² as well as prof. Feigenwinter from Swaziland to teach them German and French and other primary school subjects according to the Swaziland programme.³ After receiving their education in the Oriental schools, some students returned to Albania, and some were appointed to the administration of the Ottoman Empire in other countries, which were under its jurisdiction. Those students who returned to Albania, brought with them not only their knowledge gained, but also the resources they received from the schools, which were the manuscripts at the time because there were no printing houses for publishing books. These manuscripts acted as a guide for the official duties that they would later perform. At the same time, these manuscripts, were their source of spiritual enrichment in daily life and the inspiration of their creativity. The manuscripts were written by perfect calligraphers, who used the Arabic alphabet, and a special ink to that resisted through the centuries. They were often written with gold letters, equipped with different miniatures, and their rare existence made them sacred. As such, they were preserved and passed on from generation to generation as an irreplaceable will from their predecessors. Because these manuscripts were stored in safe places in the houses of those who preserved them, they have been protected from natural or social disasters.

I. A brief overview of the preservation of oriental manuscripts in Albania from the earliest period to our days

Some of the most well-known Albanian families, such as the family of Vlora, Bushati in Shkoder, Vrioni in Berat, Toptani in Tirana and others, have played a significant role in the preservation of Oriental manuscripts in their personal libraries. Additionally, important centers for the preservation of Oriental manuscripts in Albania, consist of libraries in mosques, schools, and tekkes. Among these preservation sites we can distinguish:

1. The library of the Vlora family, one of the earliest and richest Albanian family libraries with Oriental manuscripts in Albania, because its descendants always loved and appreciated the knowledge, art and culture of Islamic religion. In the year 1678, it was discovered that this library had more than 3000 volumes⁴, whereas in the year 1764, it was written that there were about 8000 manuscripts.⁵ In July of 1914, Eqerem Vlora, the son of Syrja Vlora, traveled to Vlora to save the collections, because he saw the risk of potential damage in the beginnings of World War I. In his memoirs, he emphasized, "I asked for permission to go to Vlora to assure in any way the safety of our precious collections. Several hundred packages were available. I secured the books, about 30,000 volumes, and the jewellerys in the house's backyard, now well-dried, beautifully worn with a tarpaulin and I closed the entrance with a wall. After that, I rented a 300 tonnes Italian ship with sails "San Giorgan", for three months, and I loaded all of them in its barn. I placed there two servicemen and I left it anchored in the Vlora harbour. I, myself, took a ship off the post and returned to Durres to participate in the meeting of all Albanian leaders summoned by the prince (Vilhelm

¹ Sami Frasheri: Shqiperia dhe Shqiptaret. Translated from the original Zyber Hasan Bakiu , according to the encyclopedia with title "Kamus-ul -alam", "Dajti", Tirane, 2002, p. 62.

² Eqerem Bey Vlora, *Kujtime (1885-1925)*, Translated from German language: Afrim Koci, " Shtepia e Librit&Komunikimit", Tirane, 2003, p. 41.

³ Eqerem Bey Vlora, *Kujtime (1885-1925)* ... p. 41.

⁴ Eqerem Bey Vlora, *Kujtime (1885-1925)*... p. 574.

⁵ Eqerem Bey Vlora, *Kujtime (1885-1925)*... p. 575.

Vidi - KN) on July 11 (1914-)"⁶ Additionally, in his notes he mentioned with sorrow that, "a part of the manuscripts were damaged when mother removed them in 1916 and placed them on the library shelves; among them some very rare and valuable works".⁷ With the coming to power of the communist dictatorship, in December of 1944, the books and manuscripts, along with other archeological and ethnographic collections, furniture, carpets, and silverware that were in the house of the Vlora family, worth millions in cost, were confiscated.⁸ Proof of this confiscation can be found in a note left by Turkish translator Jonus Tafilaj, who held in his possession the manuscript of Syrja Vlorë titled "History of Albania 1400-1920", and wrote, "this work was given to me by Eqerem bey Vlora, to translate. After the liberation of Albania (from the German army on November 29, 1944 - K.N.) Sejfulla Maleshova, Minister of Culture, sent me to the city of Vlora to gather all of the books of Syrja Vlora, which I brought to the Institute of History".⁹ The Albanian Muslim Community, in remembrance of the reverence of the life of Syrja Vlora, highlighted in the article titled, "The Death of a Patriot", that, "The Library of the deceased Syrja Vlora is a treasure with special value, because it contains a variety of esteemed and useful works about Albania".¹⁰

2) Families of the Province of Shkodra. One of the main centers for the location of manuscripts in Albania was the province of Shkodra. During the Ottoman administration, this province included the cities: Shkoder, Tirane, Krujë, Lezhe, Peklin and Durres. A detailed description of the Oriental manuscripts in the chambers of families of these province is provided by Ali Emir, who moved to the city Shkoder in 1896 as a finance inspector.¹¹ Ali Emiri, before going to Shkoder, was not aware that Oriental literature existed in Albania. He discovered this by coincidence while visiting a few scholars and communicating with them in the Arabic language. He was surprised when he heard and learned the fact that these people spoke both Turkish and Persian languages.¹² With astonishment for his new discovery, he became more interested in Oriental literature. People from the city of Shkoder informed him that there were many popular poets among their fathers, and some of them had their own writings and divan. Ali Emiri, was also surprised when people started reciting poems and translating them. He had read many books and until then had never met an individual who could recite poems in Old Turkish (Ottoman Turkish) without having ever traveled outside the vilayet of Shkodra. Ali Emiri noted the names of Albanian poets and began looking for their poetry and their translations. After that, people began to bring him their divan and written books, transforming his room into a library. Since he had not planned to stay for more than a month, he started working with these manuscripts and books day and night. Ali Emiri wrote that the people of Shkoder who brought him books were very generous. Despite his insistence on buying them, they would not accept. He pointed out that it was impossible to force them to accept money. While thinking about his studies on the poets of Shkodra, he received interesting information that Albanian poets of Oriental literature could be found in other Albanian territories as well, such as Kruja, Pelkin, and Tirane.¹³ During a three-month research effort, he found many manuscripts, poems, divan, and other texts. Ali Emiri was astonished that Albanians had advanced so well in Oriental literature displaying no differences from other Ottoman Empire countries. He found it sensible to title his study, "A new treasure in the world of Ottoman literature and the Ottoman poets of Shkoder".¹⁴

⁶ Eqerem Bey Vlora, *Kujtime (1885-1925)*...p. 392.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 392.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 575.

⁹ *Arkivi Qendror I Shtetit te Republikes se Shqiperise(The Central Archive of the State of Albania- AQSH)*, Fondi Nr(F.) 56, Dossier (D) 11, p. 20.

¹⁰ *Kultura Islame*, Tirane, Prill-Maj, 1941, p. 207, V. II, XIX.

¹¹ *Ishkodra Şairleri ve Ali Emiri'nin Diğer Eserleri*, Hazırlayan Hakan T. Karateke, 1995, p. 14.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 70.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 71.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 72.

3) The Library of Jusuf Tabak's family. A rich library with oriental handwritings was also created by one of the muftis of the town of Shkodra, Jusuf Tabaku, who was known to the people of the city of Shkoder by the name "Mufti Elder".¹⁵ In his home, there was a separate room for the library, which members of family called "Kitablari odasi" (the chamber of the books- K.N). The library contained more than 2000 volumes, which were written in Arabic, Persian and Albanian. Everything was tied with cardboard, arranged in order and kept well. Each book had its own label which was sealed and signed by him. As noted by Hamdi Bushati, a scholar or an orientalist could find in this library theological, philosophical, juridical, and scientific books: history, geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy, etc.¹⁶

4) The Library of the Bushati family. Another great contribution to the preservation of Oriental manuscripts in the city of Shkodra was given by the members of the Bushati family. This family administered this province from the year 1757 to 1831. Their library was one of the richest libraries with oriental handwritings in Northern Albania. It was constantly enriched by their successors, turning it into a well-known library for the population of this area. This enrichment was influenced by the tradition held in this family for the collection and preservation of Oriental manuscripts, as well as due in part by the members of the family who were themselves poets. Among them was Ibrahim Halil Pasha, whose father, Mehmet Pasha, also built the mosque in Shkoder during the years 1773-1774.¹⁷ Ibrahim Pasha had also left a manuscript book with his poems, most of which were gazels, written in Turkish, but Ali Emiri, despite his efforts, could not find it, because more than 90 years had passed.¹⁸ An important role in the creation of this library with Oriental manuscripts had been played by Mehmet Pasha Plaku (Mehmet Pasha Elder –K.N), Kara Mahmut Pasha, and Mustafa Pasha, who in the end donated it to the temple of the city of Shkoder. Around the year 1840, the Bushati family established the building of the library in the city of Shkodra, which held nearly 3000 volumes at the time.¹⁹ Mustafa Pasha, after the falling of their dynasty in the province of Shkoder, even though he fled in the year 1831, was still concerned about their rich library. In the year 1834, he sent a special stamp to be placed in all the manuscripts and books that the library contained. Several German orientalists would eventually come in the year 1929 to the city of Shkoder to see from up close the manuscripts of this library. They showed great interest and were amazed that in the midst of this abundance of works, accumulated over the centuries, there were also rare manuscripts written in Oriental languages, which belonged to different fields of science and which they had not seen in any other country where they had researched. They offered very high prices to buy these books, but the successor and guardian of this library, Hamdi Bushati, was not enticed by their offers. Instead, he cared for and maintained the library following the regulations outlined in the waqfiya (deed) that Mustafa Pasha left in the year 1848. Although Mustafa Pasha was far from the province of Shkoder, performing his work as a governor in Edrene, in the waqfiya written by him, he included the regulations that the library should follow. Mustafa Pasha stated, "I wish to donate all of the books in my library, which I left in Shkoder of Albania, and that are stamped with my stamp, registered and stored in a special warehouse."²⁰ Additionally, he outlined that for each book, a price in gold was to be written down by a group of Muslim scholars. If anyone wished to borrow the book to study it at home, that person would have to prepay at least a third of the price as a guarantee, and without paying this amount the book was not to be loaned out. Secondly, the city's ulema was to elect two caretakers, a primary and a secondary, for the library books. The custodians would be paid by the muteveli from the income of his waqfs. If the guardians of the library were to abuse or

¹⁵ Hamdi Bushati, *Shkodra dhe motet*, V. I, 2005, p. 450.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 451.

¹⁷ *Iskodra Şairleri...*, p. 15.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 80.

¹⁹ www.Arkivlajme.com Nexhmi Bushati, 18.03.2010.

²⁰ Hamdi Bushati, "Shkodra dhe Motet", Vol.II, Shkoder, 1999. According to website: [www. Shkodra online](http://www.Shkodraonline.com) – *Biblioteka e Bushatllinjeve*.

neglect their duty they would be fired and replaced by two other people, elected by a group of ulemas, who would determine their salaries. If the library were to be damaged due to fire or any other catastrophe, everything would be replaced with one year worth of income from his waqf or with a secured loan or via a guarantor according the law.²¹ The implementation of these rules ensured the preservation of the manuscripts in the subsequent years until they were collected and arranged in the National Library of Tirana. The descendant of this family, Hamdi Bushati, despite the difficulties that he experienced during the dictatorship of the communist regime in Albania, he sought, gathered, and took care of the manuscripts. They became the most expensive assets inherited from his descendants until they were passed on to historical and cultural institutions for preservation.

5) The library of the Vrioni family. Oriental manuscripts were also preserved in the library of the Vrioni family in the city of Berat, a city which was the district center of the province of Ioannina during the administration of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the city of Berat had an early and continuous tradition of preserving manuscripts not only for the Ottoman administration, but also for other religious institutions, regardless of the faith they represented. The library of the Vrioni family, as part of its heritage, had a large number of manuscripts in Oriental languages written by local and foreign authors. Specifically, this library held the works of Albanian authors written with Arabic alphabets, which belonged to this province during the XVIIth-XIXth centuries. Some of these works were burned or destroyed during the First World War in years 1914-1918. Mit'hat Frasheri, one of the researchers and tracers of the Oriental manuscripts, wanted to place them in his library in Tirana in the year 1926, under the name "Lumo Skendo", his pseudonym. He had seen the manuscripts of Hafiz Ali Ulqinakut from Shkoder, of Sulejman Ramadani, Hasan Zyko Kamberi, and Nezim Frakulles, in the house of Sulo Resuli in 1913 in the city of Berat.²² But, during the Balkan Wars (1912- 1914), he had seen burned paper piles with his own eyes on the sea side in the city of Durres, in front of government buildings.²³

6) The library of the Toptani family. Another rich library with Oriental manuscripts belonged to the Toptani family, which played a major role in the economic and cultural development of the city of Tirana. A distinguished member of this family is Abdurrahman Toptani, who administered the city of Tirana during the years 20-30 of the XIXth century. During this time, he founded the medrese together with its library. A series of oriental manuscripts kept today in the National Library of Tirana including, "Kitab ab Bidayeh" H. 741/1340, "Serh-i Akaid", "Serh-i shafije (1568), etc." hold the seal of Abdurrahman Bey Toptani. These manuscripts were either donated to the madrasa (medrese) by him or later by his descendants.

7) The Bektashi Tekkes. Alongside the mosques, madrasas and their libraries, the Bektashi tekkes also played an important role in the preservation of the Oriental manuscripts. They were founded in Albania during the XVth-XIXth centuries. Their leaders (Baba and dervish) were not just simple readers of these works, but they were also authors, especially in the writing of gazels, kasidas and divans. Mit'hat Frasheri, one of Albania's scholars, saw the great attention paid by the Bektashi tekkes toward the Oriental manuscripts, and reached out to them as he researched historical resources regarding the history and culture of Albania.²⁴ Among the tekkes, which became centers of the preservation of Oriental manuscripts, we can mention: The tekke of the city of Leskovik, Haxhi Baba in the Qesarake village (Kolonje), Frashër (Permet), Shemberdhenj (Skrapar), Turan (Tepelene), Fakri and Xhefai Baba (Elbasan), Zall (Gjirokaster), Velabisht(Berat), Kuzum Baba (Vlore), Fushe - Krujes, Dollma and Sari

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Lumo Skendo, Revista "Dituria", V. 3, Tirane, Tetor, 1928, nr. 12, p. 366.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 366.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

Salltik (Kruje), Kasem Ali Sultan (Shkoder) etc. Proof for the care given to the Oriental manuscripts by the tekkes is a handwritten catalogue, which includes the list of books that were stored in the Albanian Bektashi tekkes. In the year 1967, during the atheist movement, all the mosques, churches and tekkes were closed and some of them demolished. This movement affected the Oriental manuscripts as well. Some of them were damaged and a considerable number were confiscated by the government who stored them in the Central State Archive and the National Library. To this day, most of the Oriental manuscripts are kept in the Central State Archive and in the National Library (Tirana). There are many reports from the General Directory of Archives addressed to the Prime Minister of Albania, where information is provided regarding the location of documents with many historical values, which belonged to the aforementioned religious institutions during the Ottoman period. A number of manuscripts, however, were protected in secrecy by individuals who considered them to be sacred books and did not want them to be confiscated during the termination of religious institutions.

II. Time limits and the content of the Oriental manuscripts

The number of Oriental manuscripts preserved in the Central State Archive and the National Library in Tirana, as of today is 873. However, it is estimated that there more than 2000 Oriental manuscripts in all of Albania. In the catalogue mentioned above, under the title "Ottoman Manuscripts Catalog of Albanian State Archives", there are only 495 manuscripts found in the archival fund with number 725. This catalogue does not include the Oriental manuscripts which exist in other archival funds. In addition to the ones in the National Library of Tirana, other Oriental manuscripts are also held by individuals, families, and public libraries in Elbasan, Berat, Shkoder, and elsewhere, which are not accounted for. The Oriental manuscripts were created and preserved in Albania for a long period of time, almost six centuries, from the XIVth-XXth century. The earliest manuscript stored in the National Library (Tirana), titled "Muhammad bin-i Ishak - Sirat-un Nabi" (The Life of Prophet Muhammedd), was written in H.704 / 1304-1305, in the Persian language and contains 248 pages.²⁵ The next oldest manuscript, written in H.730 / 1329 by Hasan al Sagani in the Arabic Language, is titled, "Mesharik - with Envar" (The birth of lights).²⁶ This manuscript was copied in later centuries, particularly in the XVIIIth century. A copy of this manuscript was copied from Dervish Hasan Demiri, the neighborhood "Parruce" of Shkodra in H.1189 / 1775-1776.²⁷ One of the rarest manuscripts is titled, "Bidayat al Muftadi", which holds the copy date H. 741/1340- 1341. This manuscript was used as a guide by Ottoman administration lawyers as well as a textbook in the madrasa of the time. The number of Oriental manuscripts in Albania increased in the e 18th and XIXth centuries, a period during which Albanian cities saw development trends in all aspects of economic, cultural and religious life. The tradition of writing Oriental manuscripts continued even after November 28 in 1912, when Albania was declared independent from the Ottoman Empire and the Albanian language became the official language of writing documents. Many of these manuscripts were written in the 20-50s of the twentieth century. Among them, worth mentioning are several Bektashi poems written in Turkish script by an author named Hamid, during the years 1933-1937. The last manuscript, which is preserved in the Central State Archive, is an advisory book of Haxhi Bektash Veli, and it was transcribed in 1952 from Ali Riza in the city of Shkoder.²⁸

1) The Kur'an-ı Kerim and comments about it. Of noteworthy significance among the abovementioned manuscripts are the Kur'an's manuscripts and detailed comments about them. The existence of a large number of these manuscripts, which amounts to 80, is explained by the fact that the Kur'an was a foundational book. It was sacred not only for the Muslim population,

²⁵ *Biblioteka Kombetare, Tirana(Albania)* –Indeksi: Dr.5/42E.

²⁶ *Ibid, Indeksi: Dr 3/7D.*

²⁷ *Ibid, Indeksi: Dr 6/4F.*

²⁸ *Ottoman Manuscripts....*, p. 62.

but also served as a guide for daily life and the official duties of the employees of the central and local administration of the Ottoman Empire, the intellectual elite of the Muslim religion, and as a main textbook used by students and teachers of the madrasas. Also, the Kur'an served as one of the finest gifts of the period, although its replication and that of other Oriental manuscripts was very expensive. The manuscripts of the Kur'an are written in Arabic, Persian and Turkish. One of these copies belongs to the year H. 888/1483 year.²⁹ Some of them are written in gold letters, with a perfect calligraphy and are hard to find in other places. Some of these manuscripts contain the seal of Kara Mahmud Pasha and Mustafa Pashe Bushati, the governor of the province of Shkodra at the time. Most Oriental manuscripts were fitted with leather covers, in order to protect them from potential damage.

2) Biography. Among the Oriental manuscripts, one can find several written about the life of the Prophet Muhammed, Haxhi Bektash Veli, Imam Ali and his sons, of their descendants etc. In this group we can include manuscripts such as erkaname, icazetname, mevlud, vakefname, velayetname etc. Among them, distinguished ones are "Velayetname-I Haci Bektas Veli", "Erkaname-I Bektasi" H. 1320/1902³⁰, mevlud written in H. 1251/1835 for the saints by Sulejman Celebi, bin-i Ivaz Ahmed Pasha Bursevi, velayetname of Hacim Sultan³¹ etc.

3) Muslim religion. This group consists of works focused on the thoughts, beliefs, and practical applications of Islamic faith. These manuscripts make up the largest number in comparison to other types of Oriental manuscripts. Among them, worth mentioning are the manuscripts related to tasavvuf, such as "Viran-i Risalesi", written by Virani Baba and copied by Seyyid Nazif (H 1259/1843)³², and the manuscript titled, "Kitab-ı fi'l Akaid"³³ (The application of Islamic faith and rules).

4) Tarikat: Among these manuscripts researchers will find many resources related to the different tarikat in the Islamic religion such as tarikat-i Bektasi³⁴, Nakshbendi³⁵, Halveti³⁶, Kadiri³⁷ etc.

5) Textbooks. A special group of manuscripts are textbooks which were used for teaching of Oriental languages. Additionally, there are textbooks related to mathematics, geometry and calculus. One of these manuscripts belongs to the year H. 1117/1701.³⁸

6) Justice

a. Ottoman laws (Kanunname)

An essential portion of the Oriental manuscripts are those relating to the Ottoman laws (Kanunname) during the XVIth-XVIIIth centuries. These manuscripts belong to Bosnia (1512, 1604), Sarajevo (1584), Vlore (1719), Skopje, Thessaloniki and Budin (1568)³⁹, etc.

b. Fatwa. In the Central State of Archives and in the National Library, another group of Oriental manuscripts are manuscripts about the Fetwas, which shed light upon different issues of the jurisprudence of the Ottoman Empire. These manuscripts, which reach a number of 58,

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 164.

³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 22.

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 34.

³² *Ibid*, p. 32.

³³ *Ibid*, p. 158.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 72.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 74.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 82.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 261.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 108.

³⁹ *AQSH I RSH*, F.143, d. 127.

can be found under titles such as, "Hazine-ul Fetava", "Hulusat-ul Fetava", "Mecmu-ul Fetava", "Fetava-yi sagir", etc.

7. History. Researchers of these manuscripts can find valuable information about the history of the Ottoman Empire, memoirs of the wars, the history of Islamic religion, writing, schools, mosques, libraries, personalities of different fields etc.

8. Science. There are also manuscripts related to various fields of science⁴⁰, such as works in the field of philosophy: "Risale-i Munazara (1139/1726 and " Risale-i Felsefe "(1730)⁴¹

Of great interest are manuscripts on the topic of the creation of the Earth, the creation of human beings, pathways to progression, the spiritual sciences, astronomy, geography, seasons and their features, extraordinary events, etc.

9. Medicine. With great scientific values are the manuscripts related to the field of medicine, especially in their descriptions of different medications and the manner in which they were prepared.

10.Linguistics. A considerable number of manuscripts contain dictionaries of two languages, such as Persian - Turkish (1697, 1742)⁴², Turkish - Persian (H 1171/1757), Arabic – Turkish, 1219/1804⁴³, Turkish – Arabic, French-Turkish⁴⁴, etc.

11.Arabic, Persian and Turkish literature. This group includes manuscripts of works such as "Bostan" and "Gulistan", written by Sadi Shirazi, poems and narrations in Arabic and Turkish, such as Usul- I Yahya⁴⁵, Hikayet (1908)⁴⁶, Hikaye-i Sultan Ahmed "(1708), which describe stories about the Sultan Ahmed's children during their wedding ceremonies⁴⁷, the manuscript "Tercume-i Hal-i Hazret-i Ali⁴⁸", "Mecmu'l-Es'ar (H. 1323 / 1905)⁴⁹ etc. A special group is comprised of manuscripts related to Bektashi literature. Among them, one can find the original manuscripts created by Albanian Bektashis in different time periods. Based on their type, we can categorize them as divan, conk, nefes, gazell, gulbank and so on. This group includes the "Gulistan" of Sa'di Shirazi, copied by Ahmed Hilmi (H.1271/1854), and "Conk", written by Dervish Yakupi in the year H. 1194/1790.⁵⁰ A great number in this group are the Divan manuscripts. Among them we can distinguish the divan written by the author Shevket (H. 1192/177, the Divan of Sheh Galip (H. 1214/1799)⁵¹, Hacı Ali Turabi⁵², Baba Hyso⁵³, which was donated to tekke of Konice(Greece), Imam Ali bin-i Abi Talib, who donated it to Sali Njazi Dede⁵⁴, and the divan of Dervish Huseyn Shehid of Edirne. Included in this collection are also the poems written in the form of nefes, gazel, and manuscripts known as "Conk".⁵⁵ In the Central Archive of the State and in the National Library there are also Oriental manuscripts, which, according to editions to date, have not been mentioned in published descriptions by Albanian and foreign scholars. The number of manuscripts that appear as original copies located

⁴⁰ *Ottoman Manuscripts*..., p. 20.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 110.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 104, 296.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 86.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 30.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 130.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 134.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 178.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 495.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 94.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 62.

⁵² *Ottoman Manuscripts*..., p. 164.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 4.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 196.

⁵⁵ The magazine with leather lid which contains the models of the selected poems from people, written with hand.

only in the Central State reaches to 38.⁵⁶ The largest number of these manuscripts are original and most of them are written by Albanian authors. We can mention such authors as Ahmet Muhtar Dedei with his manuscripts "Risale- i Vehbi Baba"⁵⁷, H. 1290/1873, and "Erkanname-I Bektasiyan", H. 1323/1907⁵⁸, Bektas Hasan effendi from Kruja, who copied in the year H.1219 / 1904 the manuscript titled, "Kutbu'l Beyan Nutku Hazret-i Sahi Merdan"⁵⁹, Dervish Abidin with the work "Es'ar" (H.1194 / 1797)⁶⁰, etc.

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