

## Persian language and literature at Serbian universities and faculties<sup>۱</sup>

Marko Jovanović

Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia, Associate  
marko-jovanovic@live.com

### Abstract

*This paper will give an overview of teaching of the Persian language and literature at universities and faculties in Serbia. History of Persian literature course was introduced at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy more than ninety years ago, thus paving the way for the opening of the Department of Oriental Philology at this faculty. Despite these merits, philological Iranian studies did not develop further in Serbia but stagnated. This state of affairs has led to the fact that at one time, Iranian studies were completely absent from academic life for more than a decade. Primarily thanks to the efforts of the Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Persian language was re-introduced at the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade in ۱۹۹۹, although only as an elective course. In the past several years, the Persian language was also introduced at some other institutions of higher education in Serbia, mostly as an elective course. However, there are some indications that in the future, the Persian language could become a major course of study at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philology. So far, the University of Prishtina, Faculty of Philology has implemented these intentions the furthest and the Persian language is taught in addition to the Persian literature as an obligatory course for all the students of the Department of Oriental Studies.*

**Key words:** *Persian language and literature, Serbia, Iranian Studies, faculty, university*

---

<sup>۱</sup>This paper is a part of the project “Social Transformations in the European Integration Process: A Multidisciplinary Approach” (No. ۴۷۰۱۰), which is funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

Institutionalization of Oriental studies in Serbia (than a part of Yugoslavia) and therefore Iranian Studies, began with the foundation of the Department of Oriental Philology in July ۱۹۲۶ at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy. However, Persian literature was studied at the Faculty of Philosophy even before this. (Djukanović, ۱۹۹۷: ۱۵) Namely, Bogdan Popović (۱۸۶۴-۱۹۴۴), the professor for the course World Literature, prominent literary theorist and literary critic, dedicated particular attention to oriental literature in his lectures as well, especially to Persian classics such as Khayyam, Hafez and Saadi. (Redžepagić, ۲۰۰۱: ۷۷) Realizing the importance of Persian literature as well as the numerous mutual literary influences between the East and the West, Popović advocated that Persian literature should be studied as a separate course. Therefore, the pioneer of Yugoslav scientific Oriental studies Fehim Bajraktarević arrived at the Department of Comparative Literature at his invitation in ۱۹۲۵ and he was elected to the position of assistant professor for the History of Persian Literature. He also began teaching Turkish language at that time. (Djukanović, ۱۹۹۷: ۱۵) As it turned out, this was the key moment for the further development of Oriental studies in Yugoslavia.

Fehim Bajraktarević (۱۸۸۹-۱۹۷۰) was created by the unique combination of classic Muslim education and theoretical and methodological principles of European Oriental studies. (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۷b: ۲۱-۲۲) After getting an education at the Classical Grammar School in Sarajevo, he began the studies of Oriental languages with Slavic philology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Vienna (۱۹۱۱-۱۹۱۳), where he attended lectures in Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages and literature (Islamische Sprachen und Litteraturen). He acquired his PhD at the same faculty in ۱۹۱۷ when he defended his thesis in the field of Arabic literature. Professor Bajraktarević continued his education at the King's College in London where he spent the school year ۱۹۱۹/۲۰ at academic specialization. After a short return to Sarajevo where he worked as a high school teacher for two years, he went to Algeria, Faculté des Lettres, (۱۹۲۲ -۱۹۲۴) in the search of new scientific knowledge (Djukanović, ۱۹۹۷: ۱۵-۱۶) where he specialized under the direction of a prominent expert on Iranian studies H. Massé and particularly dedicated himself to the study of Persian literature. (Djukanović et al, ۱۹۷۹: ۵)

Upon his return from Algeria, as we already mentioned, he received a call from Bogdan Popović and in ۱۹۲۵ Professor Fehim Bajraktarević came to the Department of Comparative Literature of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. The very next year, he decided to establish a separate Department of Oriental Philology at the same faculty.

It should be noted that at the time, true scientific Oriental studies practically did not exist in the whole Balkan Peninsula. Therefore, it can be said that the Belgrade department was the “only lighthouse of this science in the Balkans” at the time, (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۷b: ۲۱-۲۲) while Fehim Bajraktarević was “the only real expert on Oriental studies in Yugoslavia”. (Tanasković, ۱۹۷۷: ۱۳)

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

Plan of the Department “was not made according to the models of some other foreign department, but rather to our (A/N Yugoslavian) scientific needs and possibilities. Since our country had had direct relations with Turks for centuries who left their mark not only in material but also in its spiritual culture, this fact was taken as a starting point for creating a plan of study at this department: to better study our history, language, folklore and literature, where Turkish influences were the strongest, it is necessary to study the Turkish language and literature. But as the Turks were often only mediators of a broader Islamic influence which lasted until the Balkan Wars at least in some of our areas, it is also necessary to know the Arabic language for a better understanding of the Turkish language itself and the Turkish culture in general, which wore a distinctive Islamic seal. And finally, as the Persian literature had a decisive influence on the development of the Turkish literature, it cannot be understood without a basic knowledge of Persian literature. And when it comes to the Persian language, which would certainly bring greater load as a third language in this group, it would be taught with Turkish language as a separate course, Persian elements in the Turkish language. This is how, in this context, the study group of Oriental philology in a narrow sense was created, including the languages and literature of nations in the sphere of Islamic influence.” (Djukanović, ۱۹۹۷: ۱۶)

It can be said that the plan of the Department was based on the concept of Islamic Oriental philology which was the dominant model in the European Oriental studies at the time. It was and it still remains “the only concept that objectively corresponds to our (A/N Yugoslavian) both Eastern and Western, but primarily Balkan cultural tradition”. (Tanasković, ۱۹۷۷: ۱۳)

Therefore, both Arabic language and Turkish language were taught at the Department of Oriental Philology for eight semesters, lectures on three literatures – Arabic, Turkish and Persian, were held for two semesters, while the Introduction to Oriental Philology course was held for one semester. Also, Bajraktarević occasionally held lectures on two one-semester courses in agreement with the students: Turkish historical documents, course that provided additional knowledge to the students interested in studying Turkish documents related to our history; and Arab Metrics course, where the interested students improved their previously acquired knowledge on Arabic literature.

Even though this plan unjustly neglected the Persian language, this solution was the result of the fact that at the time the curriculum was written and in the next two and a half decades, all until the school year ۱۹۵۰/۵۱, Professor Fehim Bajraktarević was the only employee at the Department of Oriental Philology and he taught all the courses as an assistant professor until ۱۹۳۰ and then as an associate professor, and finally as a full professor from the year ۱۹۳۹. (Djukanović, ۱۹۹۷: ۱۶) In such circumstances, the

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

introduction of a third language would have been a real burden for the lecturer and his students.

In the early ۱۹۵۰s, the teaching staff of the Department was expanded for the first time. The first post-war graduate student at the Department (۱۹۴۹) Marija Djukanović was appointed teaching assistant during school year ۱۹۵۰/۵۱ and she held Turkish language exercises. Alumnus of the Department Hasan Kaleshi (graduated in ۱۹۵۲) took over exercises in Arabic language.

However, these expansions of the staff did not create conditions for the introduction of Persian language. The reason lies in the fact that the number of students of Oriental philology grew dramatically in just several years. Namely, there were only six enrolled students during school year ۱۹۴۷/۴۸, while there were around sixty students during school year ۱۹۵۱/۵۲.<sup>۳</sup> In addition to that, while most students who were enrolled at the Department before the Second World War came from madrassas or Sharia Gymnasiums and brought with them certain prior knowledge useful for the studies of Oriental philology, which made Bajrakterević's work much easier, the situation with the students enrolled after ۱۹۴۵ was diametrically different and as many as nine tenths of them came without any knowledge of oriental languages. (Djukanović, ۱۹۹۷: ۱۶-۱۷)

In the following years, the number of employees grew, but the number of new students also grew and it sometimes surpassed ۵۰ or ۶۰ students per year, which is why enrolment quotas were introduced. Prerequisites for the introduction of Persian language were not created because of these tendencies. The Persian Literature still remained the only Iranian course in the Department, while linguistic Persian studies continued to be neglected.

The year ۱۹۶۰ brought certain changes to the Department of Oriental Studies. During this year, the Faculty of Philology was separated from the Faculty of Philosophy and it was established as an independent scientific and educational institution. Thus, the Department joined the newly founded Faculty of Philology from the academic year ۱۹۶۰/۶۱. On that occasion, the new study program was adopted according to which lectures as part of the Department of Oriental Studies would be held in three separate study groups: Group for Oriental Philology, Group for Arabic Language and Literature and Group for Turkish Language and Literature. This new program was adopted with a tendency to modernize the Islamist Oriental philology (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۷b: ۲۵) and most likely to meet the current social needs that required a greater number of translators, primarily for Arabic language. As a result, students of the Group for Arabic Language and Literature were exempt from learning Turkish language and Persian literature, so that they could dedicate more attention to Arabic language, the central course of this group. On the other hand, Arabic language was taught for four semesters at the Group of Turkish

---

<sup>۳</sup> Such a large influx of students is explained by close political, economic and cultural ties between Yugoslavia and countries of the Middle East from ۱۹۵۰s up to present

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

Language and Literature. In addition to that, Persian literature was also included in the curriculum and it was taught for two semesters. The plan of the Group for Oriental Philology, which had a more comprehensive character, was in many ways similar to the curriculum that was adopted when the Department was founded in ۱۹۲۶, but Arabic literature and Turkish literature were taught for four semesters instead of two. History of Persian Literature was still taught at this Group for two semesters. These changes have for the first time led to the fact that the Department of Oriental Studies, specifically the Group for Arabic Language and Literature, educated experts on Oriental studies that did not have the opportunity during their studies to learn about the rich literary tradition of Persia. The third change which occurred in the year ۱۹۶۰ was the retirement of the Department's founder, Fehim Bajraktarević. However, he continued to work as a part-time teacher and held six lectures per week, therefore the Department was not deprived of its most deserving member. (Djukanović, ۱۹۹۷: ۱۹) He continued to teach History of Persian Literature, his favourite course, until his death in ۱۹۷۰. (Tanasković, ۱۹۷۷: ۱۳)

Fehim Bajraktarević was extremely respected in European Orientalist circles. His bibliography includes nearly ۳۵۰ scientific and expert papers in the field of Iranian studies, Arabic studies, Turkology, Islamology and comparative literature. (Mitrović, ۲۰۱۵: ۲۱۸) He participated in the International Congress of Orientalists four times, from the seventeenth to the twenty-first. The first one was in ۱۹۲۸ in Oxford, however he did not present his work because of a delay. In the next three Congresses, ۱۹۳۱ in Leiden, ۱۹۳۵ in Rome and ۱۹۳۸ in Brussels, he participated with papers that resented the development of Oriental studies and aljamiado literature in Yugoslavia. Professor Bajraktarević was also a contributor to the first edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam for which he also wrote numerous geographical, historical, biographical and ethnographic guidelines related to the Balkan region. (Mitrović, ۲۰۰۴: ۳۲)

Even though he was mostly known in the international academic community for the Turkish-Ottoman contributions mainly related to the Yugoslav and Balkan cultural and historical area, he left the biggest mark in Yugoslav science and culture in the field of Persian literature. (Tanasković, ۲۰۰۰: ۴۸۵) The key moment in his shift to this area was definitely the specialization in Algeria (۱۹۲۲-۱۹۲۴) and cooperation with a prominent expert on Iranian studies H. Massé. At that time he began to devotedly study the classic works of Persian literary heritage. (Djukanović et al, ۱۹۷۹: ۵)

During his long and rich academic career, Bajraktarević dealt with Persian literature most intensely, for the longest period, and certainly with the most success. He left numerous essays, studies and reviews in this field, but what is even more important, a series of very successful translations as well, which brought this Oriental literature closer to Yugoslavian readers. (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۷a: ۷۶)

The central position in the translations and scientific opus of Bajraktarević is dedicated to the great Persian poet Omer Khayyam he dealt with almost all his life.

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

Fehim Bajraktarević published the first translation of Khayyam's Rubaiyat, nine of them, as early as ۱۹۲۳. The number of rubaiyats that he translated grew to three hundred by ۱۹۶۴ when it was finally published in its entirety (Hajjam, ۱۹۶۴). This collection is "a culmination of his work on Khayyam", and its value is proven by several new editions. It should be noted that in addition to the translation of rubaiyats, Fehim Bajraktarević also published several studies that deal with different questions related to Khayyam and his poetry, including the problem of authenticity of Khayyam's corpus, the analysis of earlier translations of rubaiyats, etc. We will only mention a few: *Fitzgerald and Omer Khayyam* (Bajraktarević, ۱۹۲۷), the work which analysed the famous English translation of rubaiyats thanks to which Khayyam's poetry gained great popularity in the West; *Khayyam in Our Country* (Bajraktarević, ۱۹۶۳), a review and analysis of all the translations of Khayyam's verses in Serbo-Croatian language; *Omer Khayyam – the world's greatest poet of quatrains* (Bajraktarević, ۱۹۶۵), a kind of Khayyam's biography; etc. (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۹: ۳۷-۴۰)

Among other works of Fehim Bajraktarević, translation of *Rostam and Sohrab* (Firdusi, ۱۹۲۸) from Firdawsi's *Shahnama* should be pointed out. The best evidence for its quality is the fact that the great Russian orientalist I.Y. Krachkovsky described it as "the best verse translation of the original" in general. (Tanasković, ۲۰۰۰: ۴۸۶) This also includes two posthumously published works: poetry anthology *From Persian Poetry* (Bajraktarević, ۱۹۷۱), translation which includes the poetry of forty-five Persian poets; (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۹: ۳۷-۴۰) and *Overview of History of Persian Literature* (Bajraktarević, ۱۹۷۹) that we must dedicate additional attention to.

Namely, these are the collected and published lectures given by Professor Bajraktarević from the course History of Persian Literature that he dedicatedly taught for over four decades. Even though this is a course that occupies a central position in the Professor's teaching, due to various circumstances he never managed to give his lectures a final form in writing. However, his students Marija Djukanović and Darko Tanasković took this responsibility. "Based on the notes from lectures that were written over the period of three decades from immediately after the Second World War (notes of Marija Djukanović) to the Professor's final lectures during school year ۱۹۶۶/۶۷ (notes of Darko Tanasković)," they managed to faithfully reconstruct the course both in content and form. (Djukanović et al, ۱۹۷۹: ۵) This work, primarily conceived as a textbook for students of Oriental studies, met positive reviews in the academic community, especially because of rich content and abundance of information it provides. (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۹: ۴۷)

As for the compilers of the *Overview of History of Persian Literature*, they are professors at the Department of Oriental Studies who continued the tradition of teaching the History of Persian Literature after the Professor's death.

In fact, Marija Djukanović (۱۹۲۳-۱۹۸۳) who inherited Professor at the head of the Department after he officially retired, (Tanasković, ۱۹۷۷: ۱۳) also began teaching the

### International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History

aforementioned course after his death. She also taught Persian Literature during school year ۱۹۵۵/۵۶ due to Professor's illness. Djukanović, the first librarian (۱۹۴۹), later the first teaching assistant (۱۹۵۰/۵۱) is also the first person to defend a doctoral thesis (۱۹۵۶) at the Department of Oriental Studies. (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۷b: ۲۵) She was a renowned Turkologist and folklorist and she was also successfully engaged in other disciplines related to Oriental studies, including studies of Persian literature. (Mitrović, ۲۰۱۵: ۲۲۶) The knowledge forged by many years of teaching History of Persian Literature was shaped by a number of scientific contributions, of which it is important to mention *Iranian Literature: Avestan, Old and Middle Persia* (Djukanović, ۱۹۸۲a) and *Persian Literature* (Djukanović, ۱۹۸۲b).

After the untimely death of Marija Djukanović, the second contributor to the aforementioned *Overview of History of Persian Literature*, prominent Orientalist with various interests Darko Tanasković, (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۹: ۳۳) began teaching this course. However, he taught this course for a relatively short amount of time. Namely, the Group of Oriental Philology was closed in ۱۹۸۷ as part "consolidation of educational profiles" of the school system reform, while some courses were removed from the curriculum of the other two groups. Thus, as a victim of bureaucratic insensitivity, the History of Persian Literature course, which was older than the Department itself and which inaugurated Oriental studies at universities not only in Serbia but in the entire Balkans, was suspended. Even though the closed Group of Oriental Philology was returned to the Department in ۱۹۹۳, the Persian Literature was not that fortunate.

It is interesting to mention that only two years before the slashing of educational profiles, the Department of Oriental Studies was expanded by two new educational groups: Group for Chinese Language and Literature and Group for Japanese Language and Literature, which grew from lectureships that were opened a decade earlier. (Mitrović, ۱۹۹۷b: ۲۵-۲۶)

### Persian Language at University of Belgrade

Lectureship for Persian language was opened as part of the Department during school year ۱۹۹۹/۲۰۰۰ and the Persian language was introduced as elective course available for all Faculty students. This was done in cooperation with the Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran which provided, and still continues to do so, the necessary conditions for quality teaching, primarily language teachers and textbooks. Lectures at the Lectureship for Persian Language last four semesters.

According to the Cultural Centre, there have been four language teachers from Iran so far: Mahmud Fazilat (۱۹۹۹-۲۰۰۱), Mahmud Fotuhi (۲۰۰۲-۲۰۰۴), Hamid Nozarian (۲۰۰۹-۲۰۱۱) and Saeed Safari (since ۲۰۱۲). The first two were sent by the Iranian Ministry of Science, Nozarian was sent by the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, while Safari came from the Saadi Foundation. There were no Persian

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

language lectures in the breaks between their engagement at the Faculty of Philology. In the beginning they used *Persian Language Teaching*, textbook authored by Yadollah Samare which was translated from English into Serbian (Samare, ۱۹۹۹). Since ۲۰۰۹, textbooks *Persian Language* authored by Ahmad Saffar Moqaddam have been in use (Saffar Moqaddam, ۲۰۰۷a and ۲۰۰۷b).

The arrival of Saeed Safari at the Lectureship for Persian Language marks the beginning of a new phase in the development of learning the Persian language, not only at the Faculty of Philology, but in the whole country. Namely, immediately upon his arrival, Safari began preparing a textbook intended particularly for the needs of the Serbian students. Thus *Salam Farsi*, the first textbook of its kind not just in Serbia but also in the entire former Yugoslavia, was published in ۲۰۱۵ in cooperation with the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade and the Saadi Foundation from Iran. In words of the author of *Salam Farsi*, “the textbook is based on theories of language acquisition and curriculum development. The most prevalent teaching strategies of this textbook are “conceptual-functional” and “situational” strategies, which are suitable for complete beginners, but the strategy based on tasks is also slowly introduced later. The textbook is based on the linguistic theory which is part of functional linguistics, because the focus of teaching topics is on concepts and functions of language. On the other hand, communicative learning is the basis of all teaching activities of this textbook which leads to the strengthening of communication skills. For this reason, the focus is on the living speech and learning of spoken and literary Persian language at the same time, so that a student would be able to understand and produce both registers at the end of the course; attention was paid to this in dialogues and parts dedicated to speaking and listening”. (Safari, ۲۰۱۵: ۲۱۷) In addition to the part of the textbook that contains lessons, *Salam Farsi* and some general information on Persian language that should be used to familiarize students with the language that they plan to learn.

Even before the textbook was released, Safari held lectures using the plan in accordance with the textbook. Innovative methods that he introduced in the classroom significantly influenced the increase in the number of students of Persian language that followed. While there were just no more than twenty students on both years during the school year ۲۰۱۱/۱۲, the number of students grew the following year to seventy-five, while there are approximately one hundred and fifty students at the moment.

Also, Saeed Safari has greatly contributed to the expansion of the Persian language in Serbia. Safari and Director of the Cultural Centre of Iran Mahmud Shalui deserve praise for the fact that Persian language courses were introduced at College of Tourism in Belgrade, the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Novi Sad, the private university John Nesbitt, while it is planned to introduce the Persian language courses at the Teachers’ Training Faculty in Užice.



**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

**Expanding Persian**

Hence, Persian language lectures are also organized at the College of Tourism in Belgrade. In October ۲۰۱۳, the Persian language was introduced for the first time at this higher education institution, in cooperation with the Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Belgrade. This was done in the form of a two-semester optional course entitled Persian Language in Tourism which was designed to “respond to the demands and needs of staff in modern tourism”. The lectures were held twice a week for ۹۰ minutes and the lecturer was the previously mentioned Saeed Safari. The following school year, this course was replaced with a more general course of Persian language, without emphasis on the terminology necessary in tourism. The class load remained the same, and calligraphy lessons were also included in the course. The lectures were given by Miloš Delić, one of the Serbian lecturers from the Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The following school year ۲۰۱۵/۱۶, the lectures were not held during the winter semester but they began in February ۲۰۱۶ and they were given by Mokhtar Shekuhi from the Cultural Centre of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Also, Saeed Safari used the manuscript of the textbook *Salam Farsi*, while the other two lecturers used textbooks by Ahmad Saffar Moqaddam.

The lectures of Persian language in Belgrade are also held at the private University John Nesbitt. Namely, agreement on cooperation between the Cultural Centre of Iran and this university (Megatrend University at the time) was signed in November ۲۰۱۴. On that occasion, it was agreed to introduce the Persian language as a two-semester elective course, and the possibility of introducing the Persian language in the regular curriculum of the Faculty of International Economics of this university was also discussed. Saeed Safari was chosen to be the lecturer and the curriculum is analogous to the one provided in his textbook. The lectures of Persian language at the University John Nesbitt are also held during school year ۲۰۱۵/۱۶ in two, slightly shortened semesters (from November to January and from April to June). In late April ۲۰۱۶, a Persian centre entitled Persian Spot was opened at this university that should contribute to the intensification of mutual cooperation through organized student and teaching staff exchange as part of study and specialist visits, as well as through organizing thematic conferences that have the aim to promote Iranian art, literature, culture and economy. Also, in order to improve the quality of teaching and facilitate the learning of Persian language, An Iranian library was established as part of the Centre.

In addition to Belgrade, Persian language courses are also organized at the University of Novi Sad which is the second largest university in the Republic of Serbia. Namely, a four-semester Persian language elective course was introduced from school year ۲۰۱۳/۱۴ after the protocol on cooperation between the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad and the Cultural Centre of Iran was signed. The lectures are held at the Faculty of Philosophy, while the Cultural Centre of Iran provided a lecturer, free textbooks and

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

additional learning materials for all students of the course. Since the course was introduced three years ago, lectures have been held by Miloš Delić who uses the textbook written by Ahmad Saffar Moqaddam. Even though the early interest was truly great which the number of ۵۲ enrolled students confirms, there were only ten enrolled students during school year ۲۰۱۵/۱۶ – three of them for the beginner level A<sup>۱</sup> and seven for the more advanced A<sup>۲</sup> level. It is important to emphasize that the Persian course at this faculty is only as a extracurricular and not an official academic course. However, during the opening ceremony of the first Persian language course in November ۲۰۱۳, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy Ivana Živančević Sekeruš suggested the possibility that Persian language studies could become a permanent course at this faculty in the future.

Teachers' Training Faculty in Užice of the University in Kragujevac and the Cultural Centre of the IR Iran in Belgrade signed an agreement on cooperation in March ۲۰۱۶. It was thus agreed to introduce the Persian language lectures as elective course at this faculty from school year ۲۰۱۶/۱۷. (*Iran*)

It is worth noting that Persian language and literature has been taught since ۲۰۱۴ in the southern Serbian province of Kosovo and Metohia (de facto independent Republic of Kosovo). Namely, in ۲۰۱۰ Persian Language and Persian Literature courses were included in the study plan of the Department of Oriental Studies of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Prishtina. However, the lectures began later during school year ۲۰۱۴/۱۵. The course teacher is Abdula Rejepi, who acquired his PhD in ۲۰۱۲ at the Tarbiat Modares University in Teheran by defending a thesis in which he analysed the influence of the Persian language and literature on the Albanian language and literature. Both of the mentioned courses, Persian Language and Persian Literature, are mandatory for undergraduate students of the Department of Oriental Studies. The Persian Language is taught for four semesters, during the third and the fourth year of studies and students use textbooks authored by Ahmad Saffar Moqaddam. When it comes to Persian Literature, the course lasts two semesters during the fourth year of studies and students use the *History of Persian Literature* authored by Ahmad Tamimdari (Tamimdari, ۲۰۰۸). Since these courses were introduced into the curriculum relatively recently, it was not possible to find any written sources available to general public. Therefore, we had to turn to the course teacher, Professor Rejepi who gave us all the necessary information for this paper. It should be noted that Rejepi has been teaching Persian Language and Literature since ۲۰۱۳ at the Department of Oriental Philology of the State University of Tetovo, Macedonia.

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, Persian language or literature have been studied at the academic level in Serbia for more than ninety years, although with a discontinuity that lasted a little more than a decade. For all that time, literary and linguistic Iranian studies did not manage to fight for the position they deserve and they continue to be studied only as a supplementary or auxiliary discipline. Certain progress has been made in the recent years in the advancement of this science. The Persian language and literature were introduced at several higher education institutions. Currently, certain efforts are being made so that the Lectureship for the Persian Language of the Faculty of Philology in Belgrade could grow into the Group for Persian Language and Literature. Meetings between Iranian officials and Rector of the University of Belgrade and the Minister of Education in the Government of Serbia also prove this. (Iran) The first doctoral student from Serbia was also recently sent by Cultural Centre of Iran to Iran in order to provide professional staff for this purpose. Since the very opening, numerous officials of the Faculty of Philology pointed out the importance that the Lectureship would have if it was transformed into an independent study group which would “establish multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary concept of Oriental philology which is significant in many ways to our (A/N Serbian) scientific community”. (Mitrović, ۲۰۱۵: ۲۲۶) This has not occurred yet and Iranian studies remain unjustly neglected, but hopefully not for long.

**International Conference On Oriental Studies, Persian Literature And History**

**References:**

- Bajraktarević, Fehim . (۱۹۲۷). Firdžerald i Omer Hajam. Strani pregled. Vol. ۱. No. ۲. ۱۰۱-۱۱۴
- Bajraktarević, Fehim. (۱۹۶۳). Hajjâm kod nas. Anali Filološkog fakulteta. Vol. ۳. No. ۱. ۷-۲۲
- Bajraktarević, Fehim. (۱۹۶۵). Omer Hajjam – najveći svetski pesnik katrena. Filološki pregled. Vol. ۳. No. ۱-۲. ۱۱-۳۱
- Bajraktarević, Fehim. (۱۹۷۱). Iz persijske poezije. Beograd: Jugoslavija.
- Bajraktarević, Fehim. (۱۹۷۹). Pregled istorije persijske književnosti. Beograd: Naučna knjiga.
- Djukanović, Marija. (۱۹۸۲). Iranska književnost: avestinska, stara i srednja Persija. In Petrović, Svetozar. (Ed). Povijest svijetske književnosti. Zagreb: Mladost. ۸۹-۹۷
- Djukanović, Marija. (۱۹۸۲). Persijska književnost. In Petrović, Svetozar. (Ed). Povijest svijetske književnosti. Zagreb: Mladost. ۱۵۳-۱۸۵
- Djukanović, Marija. (۱۹۹۷). Katedra za orijentalnu filologiju. In Grubačić, Slobodan. (Ed). Orijentalistika ۷۰. Belgrade: Filološki fakultet Univerzitet u Beogradu. ۱۵-۲۰
- Djukanović, Marija and Tanasković, Darko. (۱۹۷۹). Predgovor priređivača. In Bajraktarević, Fehim. Pregled istorije persijske književnosti. Beograd: Naučna knjiga. ۵-۸
- Firdusi, Abul Qasim Mansur. (۱۹۲۸). Rustem i Suhrab - Epizoda iz Šahname - u ۲۴ pevanja. Beograd: Srpska književna zadruka.
- Hajjam, Omer. (۱۹۶۴). Beograd: Rad.
- Iran. Retrieved March ۷, ۲۰۱۶, from <<http://www.iran.rs>>.
- Mitrović, Andjelka. (۱۹۹۷). Fehim Bajraktarević i Omar Hajjam. In Grubačić, Slobodan. (Ed). Orijentalistika ۷۰. Belgrade: Filološki fakultet Univerzitet u Beogradu. ۷۵-۸۴
- Mitrović, Andjelka. (۱۹۹۷). Sedamdeset godina Katedre za orijentalistiku. In Grubačić, Slobodan. (Ed). Orijentalistika ۷۰. Belgrade: Filološki fakultet Univerzitet u Beogradu. ۲۱-۲۸
- Mitrović, Andjelka. (۱۹۹۹). Iranistički opus Fehima Bajraktarevića. In Marojević, Radmilo. (Ed). O persijskoj književnosti. Beograd: Filološki fakultet Beogradskog univerziteta – Kulturni centar Islamske Republike Iran u Beogradu. ۳۱-۵۶
- Mitrović, Andjelka. (۲۰۰۴). Nauka o Orijentu – neodvojivi deo Evropske naučne i kulturne tradicije. In Pušić, Radosav. (Ed). Tragovi. Beograd: Filološki fakultet u Beogradu. ۷-۴۵
- Mitrović, Andjelka. (۲۰۱۵). Devedeseti rodjendan Katedre za orijentalistiku. Reči. Vol. ۷. No. ۱. ۲۱۶-۲۳۰
- Redžepagić, Jašar. (۲۰۰۱). Iranološka istraživanja i najistaknutiji iranolozi na teritoriji prethodne Jugoslavije. Beograd: Kulturni centar Islamske Republike Iran u Beogradu.
- Samare, Jadollah. (۱۹۹۹). Udžbenik persijskog jezika : početni kurs. Beograd : Kulturni centar pri ambasadi Islamske Republike Irana.
- Safari, Saeed. (۲۰۱۵). Salam Farsi. Beograd: Filološki Fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu i Fondacija "Sadi".
- Saffar Moqaddam, Ahmad. (۲۰۰۷). Persian language – Book one: Basic lessons. Tehran: Council for Promotion of Persian Language and Literature.
- Saffar Moqaddam, Ahmad. (۲۰۰۷). Persian language – Book two: The capital of Iran. Tehran: Council for Promotion of Persian Language and Literature.
- Tamimdari, Ahmed. (۲۰۰۸). Historia e letërsisë perse. Tirana: Fondacionit Kulturor "Sadi Shirazi".
- Tanasković, Darko. (۱۹۷۷). Prema daljim uspjesima: Pola vijeka orijentalistike u Beogradu. Odjek. Vol. ۳۰. No. ۱. ۱۳
- Tanasković, Darko. (۲۰۰۰). Iranistički doprinos prof. dr Fehima Bajraktarevića. Anali Filološkog fakulteta. Vol. ۲۰. No. ۱. ۴۸۵-۴۸۸