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Ailing Bosnia and Ivo Andrić' Monomaniacs

*They say that 'time assuages,' –
Time never did assuage;
An actual suffering strengthens,
As sinews do, with age.*

*Time is a test of trouble,
But not a remedy.
If such it prove, it prove too
There was no malady.*

Emily Dickinson

Bosnian Chronotope

The plots and events in Ivo Andrić's (1892–1975) prose take place in the real and imaginary chronotope of Bosnia, a locus that breaks into many facets. It stands simultaneously for itself, for a small scale model of the Balkans, for a miniature copy of the Ottoman Empire, for a “mini Yugoslavia”, and as a result of mass Muslim's migration and refugee flows to Europe and Amerika in 21st century – why not for a multi-religious perspective of the world?

The duration of action in the novels of Andrić varies. In the novel *Bosnian Chronicle* (1945) the plot spans over a period of almost eight years; in *The Woman from Sarajevo* (1945) a few decades; in *The Bridge over the Drina* (1945) four centuries; in *Omer Pasha Latas* (postmortem edition) the course of events remains unfinished, like the novel itself; and in *The Damned Yard* (1954), thanks to the embedded narrative technique the plot is practically endless.

The closed circular composition of the novels attained through the unity of the initial and the final location where the events take place further emphasizes the feeling of temporal and spatial limitation, immutability and perennity of the local specifics. *The Bridge over the Drina* begins with the construction of the Višegrad ćuprija¹ [bridge] and ends with the bridge splitting

¹ Italics of the Turkish words quoted in the text are of the author.

in half. The beginning and the end of *Bosnian Chronicle* are marked by the conversations of the Begs of Travnik at Lutva's Café. *The Woman from Sarajevo* begins with a note in the newspaper informing of the death of Rajka Radaković and ends with a specification of the details surrounding her last hours. The narration in *The Damned Yard* is framed by the funeral of Fra Petar and finally, in the beginning of *Omer Pasha Latas* the army of the great commander enters Sarajevo and at its end retreats from the same resisting Bosnian city.

Ivo Andrić implies the enclosed nature of the Bosnian space through various techniques. The historical figures Mehmed Pasha Sokolović (1505–1579) and Omer Pasha Latas (1806–1871) transformed in the novels into fictional characters close the “triumphant cycle” of their lives by returning to the place where their voluntary or forced exile first started. The place where the French and Austrian Consuls from the novel *Bosnian Chronicle* came from is also the place to which they return. After their returning to West and Central Europe everything in Travnik remains as it was.

Although the novels-chronicles assume narration that is fixed in time, the 1961 Nobel Laureate, Andrić, uses a series of creative approaches to evoke the idea of the Oriental timelessness of Bosnia. There the characters “enjoyed their relaxed, victory-scented silence,”² suffer from its interruption and mourn its loss. The intentional use of Turkish words, the omnipresent illnesses and manias and the accompanying contagion, pain, grief, hatred, fear, and arrogance give substance to the immutable nature of Bosnia. They condition the unity of space and time (and sometimes action) into a “here and now” chronotope.

The Bosnian “Khazarian Pluralism” – a Pioneering Model for the World

The seemingly limited in the “here and now,” Bosnian chronotope acquires global meaning with time. Andrić’s revelations about Bosnia and its surroundings do not lose their relevance because they present a fictional rendition of history and simultaneously, a fulfillment of visions about the land that transcend the present. Bosnia as it is, and as a miniature of the Ottoman Empire, is a mixture of old and new realia: anachronisms and current status, stimulating analogies and a futuristic image coming from the past, all at the same time.

² The final words of the novel *Bosnian Chronicle*. All following quotations from *Bosnian Chronicle* are from: Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, translated from Serbo-Croatian by Joseph Hitrec (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1993).

From the epoch of Counter-Reformation to the Enlightenment the Ottoman Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were the only big European states in which religious and confessional pluralism (whether real or imaginary) existed. In Bosnia's history both as a sovereign political entity or a part of multinational states, for centuries a series generations are practicing different forms of Christianity, Islam or Judaism in a relatively small geographic area. The multi-confessionalism in Bosnia after 1463 precedes the formation of multinational and multi-religious states in North America after 1492. And now, at the beginning of the 21st century, it is not far-fetched to assume that the Bosnian multi-religious and multi-ethnic model can grow into Europe and even worldwide. An interesting contemporary analogy is that the army of mercenaries Muslims of the so-called Islamic State largely resembles the army of the Ottoman Empire in the late 19th century, described by Andrić in his novel *Omer Pasha Latas*.

Bosnia has a special geopolitical significance for Europe. It is the European westernmost point reached by both Christian Orthodoxy and Islam. Bosnia is the most western part of the vast homogeneous Orthodox area located between the Adriatic, Mediterranean and Black Seas in Southeastern Europe and the Arctic and Pacific Oceans in Northeastern Eurasia.³ Bosnia used to be the western borderline of the large Ottoman Empire during its political and territorial apogee. Nowadays, the arc of Islam (with some interruptions) connects Mecca and Medina through Damascus and Istanbul with Travnik and Sarajevo. Bosnia-Herzegovina is situated in a relative proximity to Rome and is the only country in the world neighboring with Catholic and Orthodox states in the vicinity of countries with predominantly Muslim populations as Albania, Kosovo, and Monte Negro. Not accidentally, during the Counter-Reformation the Vatican showed strong political and linguistic interest in this multi-religious region.

Bosnia's fate to accommodate opposites and to be characterized by duality was already established in the 4th century by the Roman Emperor Theodosius the Great (347–395) who at the end of his life split the Empire into an Eastern and a Western part, using the River Drina as a frontier between the domains of his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius. The notions of East and West came into use during the Early Medieval period and remain employable up to date, thus destining Bosnia to be the constant frontier between a multitude of political and ideological dichotomies and a focal point for the co-existence of such diversities. The Bosnian Kingdom was

³ This territory traditionally is settled by Orthodox population of Bosnia, Serbia, Monte Negro, Macedonia, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and partly Finland.

established as a political entity in the 12th century after the Great Schism of 1054 which divides the Christian denominations in the region to (Serbian) Orthodoxy and (Croatian-Hungarian) Catholicism. The confessional dualism was further deepened into a triadism/ ternary at the time of the reign of Ban Kulin (1180–1203) who gave asylum to the Bogomils expelled from Medieval Bulgaria. He allowed the constitution of a Bosnian church⁴ and thus raised the most powerful medieval heresy to the rank of a state religion. After the Seljuk Turks conquered Bosnia in 1463 part of the local Slavic population converted to Islam⁵ and this religious diversity was further increased after the Sephardic Jews⁶ settled in Bosnia following their expulsion from Spain after 1492. In this way, at the beginning of the 16th century the border Ottoman province of Bosnia⁷ echoed the religious pluralism of the Khazar Khaganate, where during the period between the 9th and 10th centuries the three major monotheistic religions cohabited peacefully with local shamanism. The importance of Bosnia for Istanbul was reflected in the considerable number of high Ottoman commanders and statesmen originating from this province, among whom were Admiral Matrakci Nasuh (1480–1564), the Grand Viziers Mehmed Pasha Sokolović and Damad Ibrahim Pasha (1517–1601).

Bosnian Henotheism and Conservatism

Unlike the Khazar prototype of religious tolerance, Bosnian confessional pluralism turned out to be rather illusionary and limited to the mere coexistence of different religious groups. Bosnian diversity of faith is reminiscent of the hierarchical Pagan henotheism because only the followers of Islam were allowed full social realization in the local and central

⁴ See: Malcom, Noel. *The Bosnian Church*. In: *The Jews and the Gypsies of Bosnia*. In: *Bosnia – A Short History*. (New York University Press/ Papermac: 1996) pp 27–43; Дуйчев, Иван. *Богомилството в България* (София: 1961); Obolensky, Dimitri. *The Bogomils: A Study in Balkan Neo-Manichaeism* (London: 1966).

⁵ See: Malcom, Noel. *The Islamicization of Bosnia*. In: *The Jews and the Gypsies of Bosnia*. In: *Bosnia – A Short History*. (New York University Press/ Papermac: 1996), 51–69.

⁶ See: Malcom, Noel. *The Jews and the Gypsies of Bosnia*. In: *Bosnia – A Short History*. (New York University Press/ Papermac: 1996), 107–118.

⁷ The Ottomans allowed for the preservation of Bosnia's identity by incorporating it as an integral province of the Ottoman Empire with its historical name and territorial integrity – a unique case among subjugated states in the Balkans; see Riedlmayer, Andras, *A Brief History of Bosnia-Herzegovina* (The Bosnian Manuscript Ingathering Project, 1993).

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina

institutions.⁸ The Hadith saying that “there are no nations in Islam” determines the centralizing role of religion in the multinational Ottoman Empire. No matter whether the Pashas and the Viziers governing or controlling Bosnia were locals (i.e. Muslims of Slavic origin), ethnic Turks, forcefully converted janissaries, or renegades who voluntarily accepted the Muslim religion, they all were subjected to the same theocratic Ottoman centralism. In many ways they were just like Catherine the Great, Stalin, Hitler and Tito who became proponents of imperial or ideological doctrines even though they did not originate from the dominant nation in their respective multinational states.

The specific geographical location of Bosnia and the intolerance of mountaineers for roads, bridges and foreigners described by Ivo Andrić, limit the genotypic variations and increase the risk for psychological and somatic anomalies and social conservatism. By the time of the Tanzimat⁹, the self-imposed isolation transforms the notorious passivity of this Ottoman province into stubborn resistance against the reforms introduced by Istanbul. The Bosnian inertness, fixed in the conservatism of their faith, customs and habits, and their long suppressed hatred did not change neither during the short period when Bosnia was part of the Austro-Hungary, nor during its long existence as a part of the different modifications of Yugoslavia.¹⁰

The eternal Bosnian time and its limited space in Andrić’s novels are inhabited by a great many peculiar individuals, most of whom come from mixed religious or ethnic marriages or have voluntarily or by force changed their faith, as well as having other odd personal characteristics like name and nationality. Many of them are marked by exceptional abilities and unusual attitudes; they possess magical powers and natural talents; they show unlimited grace or inhumane cruelty; they suffer from inherited or acquired illnesses and madness. In rare cases the health and behavioral anomalies of Andrić’s characters are diagnosed by physicians, but most

⁸ During the rule of Tito in Yugoslavia (1945–1980) Islam as an „attribute of power“ was replaced by membership in the Communist Party, but after the proclamation of the Bosnian people as a Muslim nation and the following short-lived symbiosis between religion and ideology, Islam is systematically regaining its position as a nationalist unifying factor.

⁹ Reforms promulgated in the Ottoman Empire between 1839 and 1876 intended to effectuate a fundamental change of the empire from the old system based on theocratic principles to that of a modern state; see Tanzimat, *Encyclopedia Britannica* at <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/582884/Tanzimat>.

¹⁰ In 1962 during an audience with Tito, Andrić tells him about his work on the novel *Omer Pasha Latas* and he says: „In 1852 [Omer Pasha] was sent to put an end to the feudal rebellion in Bosnia where the Begs revolted against the new reforms. They were more Catholic than the Pope“. And Tito adds: „There are many of them today. You will never see a fez in Turkey but in Bosnia many people still wear them“: cited after: Igov, Svetlozar. *Нобелови дни*. In: Андрич, Иво. *Исторически песимизъм и трансцендентални блянове* (Sofia, 2012), 158–9 (the translation into English here is mine).

often they are noted by other individuals suffering their own manias. The deviations from socially accepted norms is most often recognized by society because in Bosnia “everyone was responsible for everyone else, and all of them for everything.”¹¹ In this respect the psychical and somatic deviations described by Andrić are the symptoms of concrete individuals and at the same time a general diagnosis for “the sick man of Europe” – the Ottoman Empire, and for that matter Bosnia, which is incurably infected with the same disease. And while infections spread among individuals through communication and are therefore cured in isolation at hospital or at home, with social illnesses the diseases that infiltrate the society from the outside only aggravate and degenerate by the (self)isolation.

“Like the Name of a Mysterious Disease”

Death – the lethal end of illness – is thought of and used by Andrić as a means for achieving various aims of the narrative. In the novel *The Bridge over the Drina* the death of a series of characters marks the transition between the phases of the life cycle of the bridge.¹² In *The Woman from Sarajevo* and *The Damned Yard* the death frames the overall composition of the novels and in *Bosnian Chronicle* and *Omer Pasha Latas* it most often illustrates the Ottoman cruelty and governing methods. In the Muslim context “death in these parts was not anything to be talked about, and everything connected with it was disposed of swiftly, without many words or much ceremony,”¹³ so the unmemorable funerals are the logical end of a worthless life or the consequence of a disgraceful death. Omer Pasha's wife, Saida Hanim, thinks that in Sarajevo the evil constantly multiplies itself, because “in this town, in this house, people only talk about blood and murder all the time [...] everything is infected with godless, twisted debauchery [...] and debauchery kills [...] because it is identical to shameful unnatural death.”¹⁴

Death and funerals in Andrić's prose remain in the shadow of illnesses and manias, presented by the Nobel Laureate in personal and social aspect because “in societies that have for long been dominated by unrest, violence and abuse, such illnesses often plague the individuals

¹¹ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 119.

¹² Игов, Светлозар. *Иво Андрич* (София: БАН, 1992).

¹³ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 42.

¹⁴ All quotations are taken from Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, released posthumously in 1977 (Belgrade: Sezam Books, 2011) and are translated by myself. In: popara.mk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Omerpaša-Latas_Ivo-Andrić.pdf

and unnoticed develop into absolute ridiculousness and utter madness.”¹⁵ While writing his book on Bosnia, “made up almost entirely of ‘real reality,’”¹⁶ the young French Consul Amédée Chaumette Desfosses repeats the word “Travnik” sotto voce “like the name of a mysterious disease or magic formula that was hard to memorize and easy to forget.”¹⁷ The external contagion and the weak social “immunity” of Bosnia destine its population to collectively and chronically suffer from hatred, fear, arrogance, haughtiness, debauchery and many other sins and addictions. In the novel *Omer Pasha Latas* Andrić writes that “Sarajevo is not a crime town, at least not one of visible and bloody crime, rather [...] it is a town of hatred that easily finds more and more reasons for its existence and all of them confirm and justify it again and again,”¹⁸ and the wife of Omer Pasha finds the reasons for all misfortunes in the intertwining of the local hatred and the degenerated Ottoman power:

*What is this land, asks Saida, that ate us all? And what is this gang of scoundrels and criminals gathered in this konak? All of them are animals! They would corrupt even an angel, those lazy bastards. And since they came to this land they have been even worse. [...] Here even the air poisons the man and leads him to despair and madness.*¹⁹

Most often hatred is the result of the pretended acceptance and prejudicial lack of understanding for others, it stems from the lack of will to overcome differences in faith in the name of a common human nature. At the beginning of the 19th century Dr. Giovanni Cologna, the physician of the Austrian Consulate, in his retrospective narration of the architecture of the Jeni Mosque in Travnik, shows how, historically, from Pagan times up to the arrival of Islam in the region, cultural and religious differences were suppressed in order to transform the “foreign” into the “our own.” In *The Woman from Sarajevo* Andrić describes how at the beginning of the First World War, in Sarajevo, “this city which otherwise is well known for the polite friendliness of its social life and the honeyed words of its conversation,”²⁰ the representatives of the three major religions hate each other beyond reason and from the bottom of their hearts. This hatred is their constant companion from the moment of their birth to the day of their funeral, and the

¹⁵ Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 144.

¹⁶ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 128.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 152.

¹⁹ Ibid., 148.

²⁰ All quotes from *The Woman from Sarajevo* are from Andrić, Ivo. *The Woman from Sarajevo*, translated from the Serbo-Croatian by Joseph Hitrec (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

afterlife inhibits their imagination as their final and most decisive victory that brings eternal bliss to them and eternal damnation and humiliation to their heterodox neighbor:

*They were born, grew up and died in this hatred, this actual physical revulsion toward a neighbor of another faith, and often they spent their entire lives without finding an opportunity to express the hatred in all its intensity and horror; yet whenever due to some great or calamitous event the established order was shaken and law and reason were suspended for a few hours or for several days, this rabble, or some part of it, burns down.*²¹

In the short story *A letter from 1920* Dr. Max Levefeld dwells on the discordance in the beatings of the city clocks to show how time flows differently for the different religious groups,²² and how the people in Sarajevo “rejoice and mourn, feast and fast by four different and antagonistic calendars, and sent their prayers and wishes to one heaven in four different ecclesiastical languages.”²³ The graveyards in Bosnia are also religiously segregated, separating individuals even in their death. With time the graves gradually diminish and the gravestones, left uncared for, are slowly “preparing to join the dead body under them in its eternal rest.”²⁴ The murder and consequent suicide committed by Kostake Nenišanu from the novel *Omer Pasha Latas* receives differing interpretations in different religious and ethnic groups summarized in the words of Shakir Effendi Sofra: “Let God protect the one who runs as well as the one who persecutes.”²⁵ ‘The wandering Jew,’ Dr. Levenfeld, who says: “I am not running away from my

²¹ Andrić, Ivo. *The Woman from Sarajevo*, 93.

²² *Whoever lies awake at night in Sarajevo hears the voices of the Sarajevo night. The clock on the Catholic cathedral strikes the hour with weighty confidence: 2 am. More than a minute passes (to be exact, seventy-five seconds – I counted) and only then with a rather weaker, but piercing sound does the Orthodox church announce the hour, and chime its own 2 am. A moment after it the tower clock on the Bey’s mosque strikes the hour in a hoarse, faraway voice, and that strikes 11, the ghostly Turkish hour, by the strange calculation of distant and alien parts of the world. The Jews have no clock to sound their hour, so God alone knows what time it is for them by the Sephardic reckoning of the Ashkenazy. Thus at night while everyone is sleeping, division keeps vigil in the counting of the late small hours, and separates these sleeping people...* (Andrić, Ivo. *A Letter from 1920*, in *The Damned Yard and Other Stories* (London & Boston: Forest Books, 1992), 117–8.

²³ *A Letter from 1920*, p. 118 quoted from Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, translated by Celia Hawkesworth (London & Boston: Forest Books, 1992).

²⁴ All quotes from *On the Jewish Cemetery in Sarajevo* are from Андрич, Иво. *На еврејското гробиште в Сарајево*, translated L. Raynova. In: Андрич, Иво. *Мостове* (Varna: Georgi Bakalov, 1983); the translation into English here is mine.

²⁵ Andrić, Ivo. *Omerpaša Latas*, 152.

duty as a man, but only attempting to perform it more completely, without hindrance,”²⁶ identifies most accurately the incurable Bosnian disease – hatred:

*This uniquely Bosnian hatred should be studied and eradicated like some pernicious, deeply-rooted disease. Foreign scholars should come to Bosnia to study hatred, I do believe, just as scientists study leprosy, if hatred were only recognized as a separate, classified subject of study, as leprosy is.*²⁷

After many complaints that Bosnia is a country of hatred and fear, where everybody has to hate and be hated, in his letter from 1920 the Jewish doctor foresees the events from the end of the 20th century that affect Sarajevo, Srebrenica and other Bosnian cities for which, according to him, is valid the ancient Latin maxim “Escape is the only salvation.”

Fraught with conflict and hatred, Bosnia is an undesirable living place for the foreigners whose jobs take them there. The Consuls Daville and fon Paulic see it as a “barbarian state,” which does not belong to the European family. However Zoran Milutinović notes that, “the things that the consuls label as “barbaric” in Bosnia are those things that they can encounter in similar forms in their own countries, or even in their own homes [...] Bosnia is hated and misunderstood by those who want to rule and those who need to protect the interests of their empires in it – by the Ottoman viziers and the consuls.”²⁸

In Bosnia not only does everyone hate one another but also everyone is afraid of everyone else. The Bosnian Christians and Jews are more or less born scared²⁹; a Croatian artist, Vjekoslav Karas, looks at the passersby in Sarajevo with fear and the locals look at the Vizier’s servants walking in the streets with suspicion and dread. The whole *carsi* [bazaar] of Travnik is afraid of the Consuls and the Consuls are afraid of it. The Begs of Sarajevo are afraid of Omer Pasha, while he is afraid that people might link him to his own past. Both the innocent and the guilty at the Damned Yard suffer from extreme fear of the warden Karagöz. The traders and the seamen fear of the unnamed Vali from Izmir who ruthlessly demands bribes, but the Vali himself is in panic at the thought of intellectuals and he is “trembl[ing] even in his sleep lest he had

²⁶ *A Letter from 1920*, 119.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Milutinović, Zoran. *Getting Over Europe: The Construction of Europe in Serbian Culture* (Rodopi, Amsterdam –New York, NY, 2011) , 248.

²⁹ Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 22.

failed to notice some political irregularity, plot or the like.”³⁰ Every state official is afraid of the ones above him in the hierarchy, while the Sultan is afraid of the harmless historian Kamil, fixated on the fate of Cem-Sultan... At the end of *Bosnian Chronicle* fear reaches existential proportions:

*It was the kind of great fear, unseen, imponderable, but all-pervading, that comes over human communities from time to time, coiling itself around some heads and breaking others. At times like these many people, blinded and bedeviled, lose sight of reason and courage and of the fact that everything in life is fleeting, and that although human life, like every other thing, has its value is not unlimited. And so, cowed by the passing specter of fear, they pay a price for their bare life that is far in excess of its value, they do low and mean things, they humble and shame themselves...*³¹

Finally, the fear of fear itself develops unhealthy taste for scary folk tales: “It is curious how every single soul in Bosnia likes scary tales. They become the dearer and more cherished the less joy and excitement real life brings to the people.”³²

A sort of an antipode of the overwhelming terror is the notorious Bosnian arrogance which serves simultaneously as a source of fear and a shield against it. Andrić presents this trait through the eyes of Vjekoslav Karas, an observant painter. Being a Croatian and having lived in Italy for many years he (like the Travnik Consuls) is a distant observer of both the Occident and the Orient. Karas compares the haughtiness of the Western people, expressed as “an unbridgeable obstacle that divides caste from caste”³³ to its Bosnian variation:

*here [in Bosnia] this haughtiness, this contempt and disrespect for humans is visible everywhere, they walk toward you and hit you rudely and personally, with no shape or mercy, with no rules; the arrogance of those Turkish people represents a real force such as the force of muscles or of arms, and it openly serves them as a means [...] through which a man can suppress a man, subjugate him, use him and destroy him.*³⁴

The artist asks himself where this visible at all levels of the political and economic hierarchy haughtiness comes from and how this constant and soulless disrespect for others is

³⁰ Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, translated by Celia Hawkesworth (London & Boston: Forest Books, 1992), 179–180.

³¹ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 381.

³² Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 230.

³³ *Ibid.*, 78.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

possible. Andrić is not far from the idea of a Bosnian gene of arrogance, which is apparent on the “dark, stone-like faces” of the Begs as well as on the tiny faces of their children that already express “haughty arrogance giving them an air of grumpy old face.”³⁵ Fra Grga Martić claims that if arrogance and boldness were “goods wanted at the world market Bosnia with its Viziers and Begs would be a serious competition for all European countries.”³⁶ Haughtiness and other vices of the Bosnian elite are as much inherent as they are the product of their uncontrollable power.

The Illness and its Healers

If Bosnia is considered a small-scale model of the Balkans, Deposito, the prison in Istanbul, more better known as the ‘Damned Yard,’³⁷ is a transparent allegory of the despotic and sick Ottoman Empire. One of the governors of the Damned Yard thinks of the prison as “a quarantine and sees all its inhabitants as dangerous hard to cure patients, but who must be kept away, in physical and moral isolation, from so-called healthy, honest people.”³⁸

Although familiar with Bosnian peculiarities, foreign diplomats in Travnik are puzzled by the difference in the attitude towards illness and medicine in the West and in Bosnia: “The West too knows sickness in various forms, each with its terror, but they are something to be fought and alleviated, or at least kept out of sight of the healthy and cheerful workaday world,”³⁹ while in Bosnia “sickness is looked upon as something not in the least exceptional. It makes its appearance and runs its course alongside health, and takes turns with it; one can hear and feel it at every step.”⁴⁰ The diplomats come to conclusion that in Bosnia the treatment is not separated from the normal course of daily activities and that, despite of the differences in their philosophical and medical doctrines what is common for all of the healers there is that “the range

³⁵ Ibid., 77.

³⁶ Ibid., 79.

³⁷ *Deposito [...] better known as Damned Yard [...] is where all those arrested every day in this sprawling, crowded city are brought, either because they are guilty of crime or suspected of being guilty: there are plenty of guilt of all kinds here, and suspicion stretches far and wide;* quoted from Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, translated by Celia Hawkesworth (London & Boston: Forest Books, 1992), 149. All quotations from *The Damned Yard* are from this edition.

³⁸ Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, translated by Celia Hawkesworth (London & Boston: Forest Books, 1992), 157.

³⁹ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 208.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 208–9.

of their skill did not include, as it were, the two extreme ends of the human span.”⁴¹ In addition to the children and elderly people, excluded from the group of patients receiving treatment are also the ill women locked in their houses likened by Andrić to “a bundle of unknown pain and sickness.”⁴²

The entire 12th chapter of *Bosnian Chronicle* is devoted to Bosnian medicine men. Out of the five healers from Travnik, some of whom are in need of treatment themselves, only César D’Avenat and Fra Luka Dafinić have briefly attended medical schools in Montpellier and Padua. Bosnian “doctors” all employ the same treatment – kind words – but they differ in their perception of illnesses and suffering.

For the misanthropic D’Avenat, “who had no love for people and no confidence in nature”⁴³, the sick are doomed by heavens and their options are limited to simply positioning themselves between the world of the living and the world of the dead. In his view, “the healthy and sick halves of mankind [are] two worlds without any real connection”, and “recovery [is] as a temporary condition, not [...] a bridge from human sickness to human health.”⁴⁴

A Jewish medicine man Mordo Atias prepares and sells his cures while using every opportunity to spread the word of his faith and preach about God’s Chosen People, always ending his pharmaceutical guidance with the words: “The medicine is in my hand but health is in God’s.”⁴⁵

A Catholic monk Fra Luka Dafinić, spoke about growth and decay coexisting in life “and the whole art of healing consisted in recognizing, seizing, and using the forces that surged in the direction of growth.”⁴⁶ And “since the illness and its cure had a common beginning and lived side by side, though apart, often infinitely far apart from each other,”⁴⁷ if the healer succeeded in reconnecting them, the illness would recede.

The doctor at the Austrian consulate, Giovanni Mario Cologna, was entirely dedicated to studying the manifestations of the all-transcending human mind and, thus, “to him illness and changes in the human body were merely one more incentive to exercise his mind, a mind that

⁴¹ Ibid., 206.

⁴² Ibid., 209.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 209–10.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 212.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 216.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 217.

was condemned to perpetual ferment.”⁴⁸ According to Dr. Cologna, “death is the final resolution of the long illness which we call life.”⁴⁹

Eshref Effendi, who joins the Bosnian “medical” guild later, is not an exception among his colleagues and due to his lack of medical competence and absence of medicines, “he ‘cured’ more by means of his kindness and indestructible good will than with professional knowledge and medicines.”⁵⁰ In the end, the medicine men from Travnik who, “each in his own fashion, waged a hard and hopeless struggle against disease and death,”⁵¹ rarely manage to cure anybody. A hundred years later, Dr. Max Levenfeld from the Andrić’s story *A Letter from 1920*, prefers to leave Bosnia to avoid becoming a patient himself.

Although in Bosnia “epileptics, syphilitics, lepers, hysterics, morons, hunchbacks, lame ones, stammerers, blind men, cripples, all swarm in broad daylight, creep and crawl in broad flaunting their hideous deformities almost with pride,”⁵² the mentioned methods of medical treatment cause many Bosnians, like the self-treating Tahir Beg, to “suffer[ed] altogether quietly and in secret, never complaining or upsetting anyone.”⁵³ The neglect of the sick lead to a lack of empathy and pity for the neighbor that the French Consul-General expresses in the following way:

*‘Strange’, thought Daville, how no one here shows any pity or natural compassion which among us is a common and spontaneous reaction to another person’s suffering. Here one had to be a beggar or a cripple or have his home burned down from under him to arouse any pity at all. There is no pity here between men of the same rank and station.*⁵⁴

In Andrić’s prose the Oriental neglect of illness predestines the clinically sick characters to remain in the shadow of the weird and the freaks whose abnormalities are more mental than physical. The maniacs are naturally ignored by the Travnik’s doctors but are nevertheless used by the author to illustrate the social illnesses.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 231.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 232.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 160.

⁵¹ Ibid., 232.

⁵² Ibid., 209.

⁵³ Ibid., 160.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 331–2.

The Sick Viziers of Travnik and their Sick Entourage

Andrić pays special attention in his novels to the sick rulers. Following a saying that “the fish begins to stink at the head” Almost all top-drawer officers sent by Istanbul to rule and pacify (suffering from disobedience) Bosnia are ill, prone to illnesses or mad. The most “sane” of the three Viziers of Travnik is Husrev Mehmed Pasha, whose only disability is a limp leg but he manages to cover up this defect with clothes and skillful movement. His dynamic body and sharp wits are matched by ability to foresee the course of events. This helps him to “make ill” and eliminated the assassin sent by the Sultan. This unnamed negroid emissary-killer is described in the same words the Russian Emperor Nikolay I allegedly used in 1853 for the Ottoman Empire: “Very, very sick.” Later D’Avenat says the same about Tahir Beg: “the man is just barely this side of death, by the grace of drugs.”⁵⁵

While the Georgian Janissary Husref Mehmed Pasha demonstrates “his Oriental optimism that seemed to have no other foundation than his invisible inner self,”⁵⁶ his follower, the ethnic Turk Ibrahim Halimi Pasha, is an incurable pessimist. Even though both Viziers are protégées of dethroned and murdered reformist Sultan Selim III (1789–1807) they differ from each other. Ibrahim Pasha, who does not hide his pessimism and the trauma of his patron's death, is “physically weak a spiritual mummy.”⁵⁷ He is described as “a ruin on two feet [...] with a broad pale face” and “a sparse beard that was colorless in a way all its own, like grass that withered long ago,”⁵⁸ and the accessory on his turban sits “grotesquely on his head, as if a strange hand stuck it, in a hurry, in the dark, on a dead man who would never again adjust it or take it off but was destined to take it to his grave and rot with it.”⁵⁹

To the Consul Daville it is obvious that “the Vizier’s inner mind is even stranger and more deranged than his weird exterior.”⁶⁰ For the French diplomat is clear that the Vizier “was determined to relive the days of his own temporary insanity.”⁶¹ According to Ibrahim Pasha, after the cruel murder of the reformist Sultan, Selim III, “evil and madness had carried the day over good and reason, [...] vice remained on the throne, disorder in the government and the

⁵⁵ Ibid., 331.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 38.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 184.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 155–6.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 156.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 203.

⁶¹ Ibid.

state.”⁶² But Ibrahim Pasha treats his insanity with the same cruelty showing his own “Serbian collection.” The latter consists of “a great big heap of severed human ears and noses [...] an indescribable heap of wretched human flesh, salted and blackened in its own dried blood”⁶³ that the Pasha casually shows to the French Consul. Both of these methods prove unsuccessful.

The Consul himself describes Ibrahim Pasha in a short sentence “He is mad, there could be no doubt about it.”⁶⁴ All Daville’s experiences during his diplomatic mission in Travnik, lead him to the conclusion that the nature of the Ottoman Empire is the reason for the cruelty and ruthlessness of the Turkish leaders: “This was the kind of people they were. Such was their life. This was what the best of them did!”⁶⁵ At the end of *The Damned Yard*, Kamil-Cem Sultan figuratively shares with Fra Petar: “I can’t recover, you good man, for I am not ill, I am what I am, and one cannot recover from oneself.”⁶⁶ And after that confession the Croatian priest says to himself: “I was afraid of madness as of an infectious disease and of the thought that in this place [Istanbul prison] with time even the sanest man starts seeing things.”⁶⁷

In comparison to the athletic dozen mameluks of Mehmed Pasha, the entourage of Ibrahim Pasha, the one known as the “statue of grief,”⁶⁸ looks like a “museum of freaks.”⁶⁹ The central exhibit in this museum is the Treasurer Baki, a man “with a shallow, thin, and transparent skin that seemed to be filled, not with muscles and bones, but with a colorless liquid or with air.”⁷⁰ All of Baki “gave the impression of an oversized bagpipe that would collapse with a loud hiss if one pricked it with a needle.”⁷¹ His inherent ability to attract hatred and evil makes Baki a sort of talisman for the Vizier. The Vizier’s secretary Tahir Beg is his very opposite. Ibrahim Pasha’s delicate and quiet advisor is a poet born to a family of intellectuals. He is “already a chronic invalid”, though with the help of opiates he manages to appear “stronger than healthy men, cleverer than strong ones.”⁷² The Commander of the Vizier’s personal guards, Behdjet, is of

⁶² Ibid., 205.

⁶³ Ibid., 188.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 203.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 190.

⁶⁶ Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, 215.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 200.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 158.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 163.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 161.

“robust health,” but, at the same time, he is “an incorrigible dice player and lazybones,”⁷³ while the gaunt Deputy Secretary Ibrahim Effendi, with his crossed eyes, “sees two shelves simultaneously, on two opposite sides.”⁷⁴ In Vizier’s sick surroundings even his Doctor, Eshref Effendi, is obviously ill.

The third and last Vizier of Travnik – Siliktar Ali Pasha – is described upon his entry into the city as a “a strong and high-set man,” who “moved with a springy brisk step, with none of that ponderous dignity which so many high Turkish personages affected.”⁷⁵ However, soon the locals notice that the “Vizier’s pupils flickered every now and then restlessly [...] which once again gave an unpleasant and wary expression to his whole face.”⁷⁶ At the end of the novel Ali Pasha looks like a sick man. The Secretary of the Vizier, Asim Effendi, is in harmony with his master, being “pale and haggard, a shadow of the man [...] he had a look of being perpetually frightened to death and so infected every visitor in advance with the terror of the Vizier.”⁷⁷ According to Jean Daville, Siliktar Ali Pasha is “one of those unlearned, coarse, and bloody Turkish governors about whom he had so far known only from books and popular tales.”⁷⁸ His entourage appearance, intellect and morals all symbolize the duality and degeneration of the Ottoman Empire during a period between Sultan Selim’s III dethronement and the belated and hypocritical Tanzimat.

Sick Empire – Sick Army

Conceived as a panacea for the entire Empire, the reforms, became known as the Tanzimat, “had little or no effect in outlying areas of the Empire such as Bosnia, where they were simply ignored.”⁷⁹ The Tanzimat failed to heal Bosnia and as a result most of the Viziers and the soldiers who had been sent to implement it, ended up in need of medical attention.

Severe illnesses, manias and vices are also plaguing the foreign entourage of *serasker* [army’s commander] Omer Pasha Latas, who was sent by Sultan to bring the stubborn Bosnian Begs to their senses. A military investigator, Idris Effendi from Rusçuk, is a mentally ill,

⁷³ Ibid., 168.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 380.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 393.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 381.

⁷⁹ Malcom, Noel. *Bosnia – A Short History*. (New York University Press/ Papermac: 1996), 123

frustrated and plagued man. *Kafebadji* [steward] of the Vizier – the Macedonian Ahmed Aga – is a pimp and pathological glutton. A Polish artilleryman Sigizmund Ering, also known as Arif Beg, and the rest of the foreign officers and mercenaries are exposed to various seductions and plagued by multitudes of sins. Their everyday life cycle in times of peace consists of playing cards, bingeing, and drinking.

As Celia Hawkesworth mentions “the theme of drinking as a means of escape plays a prominent part in many of Andrić’s works, as one aspect of the broader theme of illusion.”⁸⁰ Ivo Andrić’s characters drink “to escape from their sense of isolation and absurdity”⁸¹ as well as to relieve their guilty consciences. Arif Beg, suffering like many of his companions from various diseases, is an altruist of sorts, comforting himself with alcohol and feasts in his forced exile and voluntary conversion from Catholicism to Islam. Although “both in the drunkenness and the hangover of Arif Beg there is a sense of consciousness and sobriety,”⁸² he is not very different from the rest of the officers and soldiers of Omer Pasha’s army who:

*drink anything that is not for drinking but would make them drunk; they drink without mercy, without regret and without satisfaction; they drink bottoms up or slowly cherishing the liquid; in a company of crazy orgies or each for himself, secretly and in silence.*⁸³

Alcohol serves as the painkiller drowning bad conscience of the European and the Asian mercenaries. Deprived of their homeland, family, religion by birth and name or having given them up voluntarily, the fugitives in Omer Pasha Latas' army share even the last drop of alcohol with their comrades “because passion is stronger when shared,”⁸⁴ just as personal guilt gets weaker when shared.

The misery of the foreign mercenaries from so-called *murtat tabor* [treacherous camp] drowned in alcohol, “frees them of inhibitions and bad consciences and the majority of them indulges in bodily pleasures, disorder and violence while only few of them manage to preserve some of their humanity and moral strength which they have used once to rebel in their own lands and protect their rights and sacred values.”⁸⁵ It is hard not to drink when the *rayah* deems

⁸⁰ Hawkesworth, Celia. *Ivo Andrić: Bridge between East and West*. (The Athlone Press Ltd, 1984, printed in Yugoslavia), 117.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 43.

⁸³ Ibid., 25.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 24.

foreigners in the Turkish army to be renegades and adventurers, while to the Muslim Bosnians they are “sneaky Christian spies who, under the mask of Islam and in a royal uniform have come to ruin from the inside the peace and orderly life of the faithful subjects of the Sultan and the real Muslims.”⁸⁶ The mercenaries of the renegade Mićo Latas (original pet and family name of Omer Pasha) carry their own misery, some consciously and others not, “like infection spreading from one Turkish quarter to the other”⁸⁷ and consoling their sorrow by causing pain to others:

*Being victims of despotism and violence in their own country, they became a weapon for the Sultan to put down all movements and revolts in Turkey, regardless of their goals, strivings, and reasons; they served and died in actions that in reality only helped accelerate the process of decay of this damned and rotten kingdom, for which there was no cure because both the remedy and the illness were equally lethal for it.*⁸⁸

The Megalomaniacs

Andrić’s expression “the unhappiness of the unhappy lies in the fact that the things that are otherwise impossible or forbidden to them [with the help of alcohol] would suddenly become achievable and easy,”⁸⁹ is even more valid for those in power, or who have been given the power to act out their manias. The difference between the former and the latter lies in the fact that while the former destroy themselves, by following their dreams and passions, the latter ruin everyone - both themselves and the people around them. Like Alija Đerzelez [from the novel *The Journey of Alija Đerzelez*] sitting on his magic horse, or like those who achieve spiritual elevation through the imagined power of art (Vjekoslav Karas), music (Ida Defilipis -Saida Hanim) and sweet storytelling (Zaim, Haim, Baron Dorn, Ibrahim Effendi Škaro), the mighty rulers in the works of Andrić sit on the throne of power. Examples of people ‘dressed’ in power of the state institutions demonstrate the transformation of good into evil and personal into public which inevitably converts power into violence. Characteristic for the megalomaniac personages in Andrić's works are Croatian renegade Omer Pasha Latas, and ethnic Turk Latif Aga-Karagöz, the first a balanced synthesis of historical and fictional characters. A kind of moral counterpoint to the

⁸⁶ Ibid., 22.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 24.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Omer Pasha in the history and in Andrić's fictional world is Bosnian Janissary Mehmed Pasha Sokolović.

Of the many Ottoman high officials, rulers, Viziers and Begs, the one presented in the most favorable light is Mehmed Pasha Sokolović. A Serbian from Herzegovina, Bajica Sokolović, he is forcibly recruited as a Janissary in 1516, with time becomes “young and brave *silahdar* [officer] at the Sultan's court, later Great Admiral of the Fleet, Sultan's son-in-law, a General and a world-reknowned statesman.”⁹⁰ Mehmed Pasha Sokolović served three Sultans for over sixty years and “waged wars that were for the most part victorious on three continents and extended the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, making it safe abroad and by good administration consolidated from within.”⁹¹ The construction of the Bridge over the river Drina (1577), initiated by him, “join[s] the two ends of the road which was broken by Drina and thus link safely and forever Bosnia and the East, the place of his origin and the places of his life.”⁹² Mehmed Pasha's public service is marked by growth, enlargement, and construction. A victim of religious segregation, he tries to compensate his inner duality by rationalizing and synthesizing those coexisting realities.

Unlike his predecessor, Mehmed Pasha Sokolović, who helped the territorial and political rise of the Empire, the Croatian renegade Mihailo Latas⁹³ becomes a weapon for pacifying the lands conquered by Mehmed Pasha. Latas carries out Sultan's orders in a manner that resembles the behavior of a gendarme more than the strategies of a military commander. Like Siliktar Ali Pasha from *Bosnian Chronicle*, who was sent to Bosnia to “introduce order to this land that has become notorious in Istanbul with its pride in its own disorder,”⁹⁴ Omer Pasha Latas goes back to the land of his childhood to force the politics of the Tanzimat. The renegades Bajica-Mehmed and Mihailo-Omer try to forget what they have left behind but they both feel of discomfort that never completely disappears, even when they return to the places of their birth. The first one

⁹⁰ Andrić, Ivo. *The Bridge over the Drina*, translated from Serbo-Croatian by Lovett F. Edwards (London: Harper Collins, 1994), 26.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Svetlozar Igov rightly supposes that the image of the *musir* [Marshal] Omer Pasha Latas combines features of the Ottoman Commander with those of Marshal Tito. Igov points to many similarities in the biographies and the ruling methods of the two marshals; see *Нобелови дни*. In: Андрић, Иво. *Исторически песимизъм и трансцендентални блянове* (Sofia, 2012), 158–9.

⁹⁴ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 380.

returned to build and help the people from his homeland,⁹⁵ the latter – to ruin and punish them. For hangdog Latas “the people who speak the language of his childhood seem to him even more grave and despicable and he looks upon them as some inferior beings – born to suffer, they live and die without growing and realizing the truth.”⁹⁶ His life away from his home village and countrymen, and his behavior transcending the social norms feed his inherent and systematically developed megalomania. Ivo Andrić, uses the self-creation of the character and the opinions of his closest companions, to present the rise and fall of Mihailo Latas from his early childhood as a shepherd in Croatia to his appointed position as a Sultan’s Marshal in Sarajevo.

The Vizier's arrogance and all his vices are as much inherent as they are the result of his acquired power. To be able to unite his own idea of grandeur with the Ottoman one, Mićo Latas consistently and unmercifully changes his whole identity, soul and self-consciousness, realizing that “in order to be a real Turk you have to be firm by nature, proud and extremely cold and decisive.”⁹⁷ “Having been himself an immigrant and *murtatin* [traitor] he cannot love his converted immigrant officers sincerely and simple-heartedly,”⁹⁸ because even when he sometimes says to himself “I could have been the same,” he promptly corrects himself: “no, I could never have been such and look like this because I am something else.”⁹⁹ Andrić objectively analyzes Omer Pasha's personality by juxtaposing his self-reflection to the subjective judgments of Vjekoslav Karas, Saida-Hanim, the Herzegovinian elder Bogdan Zimonić and, most of all to *kafebaji* Ahmed Aga’s judgment. This last insight into Omer Pasha's character is especially important because the author uses it to picture how, on one hand, power degenerates a personality, while at the same time, fragments of the public image can blur or diminish the real or imagined majesty of a man:

Out of the whole personality of the Royal mushir [Marshal], strategist and administrator Ahmed Aga could only see one single feature: his lust. The serasker earned positions and the highest prizes, he violently put down rebellions, lead politics, the state one and his own, he won big battles, he became famous all over the Empire and the world, but to the kafebaji all that was secondary and unimportant, almost unreal, he could only see his

⁹⁵ Historically, the Great Vizier Mehmed Pasha Sokolović lobbies with the Sultan to restore the Patriarchy in Peć and appoints his own brother as the first Peć Patriarch.

⁹⁶ Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 51.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

*master in relation to “that business” [as Ahmed Aga calls the sexual perversions of the Pasha].*¹⁰⁰

Ahmed Aga thinks of his master's pathological lust as a “particular curse” that always causes trouble and discomfort to those surrounding him. The Croatian artist Vjekoslav Karas with his “eye for the eyes”¹⁰¹ senses in the *serasker* an “arrogance elevated and sharpened to passion, experience and strength,”¹⁰² and his contempt for humans. From the pedestal of his power grounded in violence and convinced of his superiority and invincibility Omer Pasha kills the humanity in himself and does not see it in others:

*Because the serasker is so blind and insatiable, so whimsical and self-opinionated in his passion and lust, so overwhelmed by his desires and so drowned into them that he cannot imagine the women, girls, and boys that are the objects of his passions as living humans who have existed before he notices them and desires them and who will continue to exist after that.*¹⁰³

While his career takes him higher and higher Latas cannot recognize the humanity in himself any longer. In the words of Bogdan Zimonić's – a moral alternative to Omer Pashas, the Croatian renegade is “a villain and blood-sucker, with no heart or face, but intelligent, skillful and clever and crafty like a snake.”¹⁰⁴ Michailo-Omer puts himself above God, be it Christ or Muhammad. Even being a voluntary convert, he does not hesitate to show his superiority by taking off his fez when alone with Zimonić and make the sign of the cross. This gesture strips the double-apostate of his pretend appearance and shows his true, megalomaniacal face to his quiet companion: it reveals him as a megalomaniac who “wants everything that a man can become and that would make people think high of him,”¹⁰⁵ while his opponent, Zimonić, who symbolizes the unchangeability of Bosnia-Herzegovina, “does not want anything but to be and to remain as he is.”¹⁰⁶

One of the curious representatives of Andrić's violent men of power is the governor of the Damned Yard, Latif Aga, known as Karagöz. Unlike Mehmed Pasha Sokolović and Omer Pasha

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 70.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 77

¹⁰² Ibid., 78.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 71.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 51.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 55.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Latas, he comes from a wealthy influential Turkish family. His adolescent ‘appetite’ for the extreme and adventure later drives him to swap the role of an affiliate of conjurors, villains and gamblers with one of a persecutor of such rascals. Latif Aga, turned into an obsessed policeman, becomes the protector of the status-quo in the Ottoman Empire and rises to the rank Istanbul prison warden. Despite his Turkish origin, good family, and high position in the hierarchy,” there was nothing of the heavy dignity of an Ottoman high official in Karagöz, in his speech and movements.”¹⁰⁷ For the previous warden of the Damned Yard the important thing is not the guilt or the innocence of the unknown prisoners but “that the world of vice and lawlessness should be identified as such as clearly as possible and separated as far as possible from the world of order and law.”¹⁰⁸ Unlike him, Karagöz knows personally all ‘inhabitants’ in his domain “who passed through it like a murky, sluggish river” and “in each individual case, with each suspect, he would play a different game”¹⁰⁹ to reveal his guilt or innocence. While Omer Pasha Latas seeks recognition of his superiority in his “game” with the enemies, for Karagöz it is only a way to extract a confession:

*and he sought a confession, hunted it, squeezed it out of a man with a desperate effort, as though he were fighting for his own life, squaring his inextricable accounts with vice and crime, cunning and disorder.*¹¹⁰

Unlike Omer Pasha, whose “aristocratic” and demonstrative careerist goal is to secure his place in the book of history, Karagöz uses his tête-à-tête game with the prisoners to satisfy his adolescent urges to “associate with café musicians and conjurors [...], gamblers, drunks and opium smokers,”¹¹¹ without sharing their sins:

*Without himself having a real passion for gambling and drink, he was attracted to those people and everything connected with them, just as he was repelled by everything that belonged to the world of quiet, ordinary pursuits, steady habits and normal responsibilities.*¹¹²

Mihailo Latas, who is sent to the peripheries of the Empire, focuses his “exploits” on the center of the Ottoman Empire and its state elite (in a boomerang effect towards the Austrian

¹⁰⁷ Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, 159.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 158-9.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 156.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Empire), while the governor of the Damned Yard, based in the very heart of the Empire, becomes extremely popular with the criminal outcasts. Karagöz abuses his power mostly in the name of justice. His burning passion is to fight criminals and sinners but he tries to stay away from political detainees. Latif Aga is convinced that everybody in his prison is guilty, but not all the guilty people are inside. One of the innocent ‘guilty’ ones is the Jewish prisoner Haim, who, suffers from logorrhea and a phobia of spies, and sees the inhabitants of the Damned Yard from a different angle:

*Believe me! They're all crazy, the guards and the prisoners and the spies (and almost all of them are spies!), not to mention the greatest madman, Karagöz. In every other country in the world he'd have been locked up in a madhouse long ago.*¹¹³

But those who are crazy and those who pretend to be crazy have the advantage to stand up to power. Only the madman Osman from the novel *Omer Pasha Latas* dares to cross paths with the soldiers of Omer Pasha in Sarajevo and only deranged money-lender Rafo Konforti from *The Woman from Sarajevo* gives to poor food. It is not by accident that the imprisoned in Akra “mad” lookalike of Karagöz mocks the warden of the Damned Yard for being “the right man in the right place at this moment.”¹¹⁴ That seemingly crazy man gives the most accurate diagnosis of the Ottoman Empire:

*If you want to know what a state and its government are like, and what their future holds, just try to find out how many decent, innocent people there are in prison in that country, and how many criminals and villains go free.*¹¹⁵

The Maniacs¹¹⁶

The mental state of a number of the Ivo Andrić’s characters is on the invisible border separating excessive passion from illness. The Yugoslavian author depicts a multitude of individuals obsessed by noble dreams and (self-)destructive drives, semi-healthy in body and

¹¹³ Ibid., 216.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 218.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Under the terms maniac and monomaniacs I mean a person who is too obsessed with an idea, activity or objects and under mania or monomania – a form of partial insanity conceived as single pathological preoccupation in an otherwise sound mind. Some of the Andrić’s characters like Zaim, Baron Dorn and others are mythomanes – persons with strong or irresistible propensity for fantasizing, lying or exaggerating.

soul, possessed by more than one mania but the strongest of them takes over and turns the sufferer into a monomaniac.

Ivo Andrić's prose is full of people who are either sincerely in love or simply lusting, for whom love remains an unfulfilled dream. Among the ones suffering from unrequited love are: the folk character Alija Đerzelez [*The Journey of Alija Đerzelez*] who is unable to approach a woman; the barber apprentice Salko [*Bosnian Chronicle*] whose voyeurism for the Austrian Consul's young daughter ends in a comical fall into a sink-hole; the Frenchman Defose and the Bosnian Catholic Elka [*Bosnian Chronicle*], interrupted in "the middle" of their getting closer to each other; "mad Osman" from Sarajevo [*Omer Pasha Latas*] who falls in love at first sight with a "girl with unveiled head" and despite the hopelessness of his endeavor continues to search for the "eternal and never attainable smile of beauty"; the Romanian Kostake Nenišanu [*Omer Pahsa Latas*] who follows the beauty Anđa in order to kill her; the pathological liar Zaim [*Damned Yard*] with his never-ending stories about foreign women whom he only saw in his dreams; the mentally disturbed Turk Kamil [*Damned Yard*], who refused to marry a Greek Christian, and many more.

Of the many adolescents men and women, for whom unfulfilled love becomes a mania, Andrić focuses the most on the wife of the Austrian Consul, Anna-Maria Von Miterer, the wife of Omer Pasha Latas – Saida-Hanim, better known as Saida-Hanim, and the Croatian artist Vjekoslav Karas. The beautiful and well-educated Anna-Maria and Ida Defilipis are the typical Central-European representatives of mixed cultures and aristocratic sprouts, the result of many inter-ethnic and inter-confessional relationships. What is common for both of them is that they act as if everyone belongs to the same gender, which results in their multiple disappointments that "they were all after her/ them but no one really loved her/ them."¹¹⁷ The beautiful wife of the Consul, "this frigid woman of seething imagination,"¹¹⁸ amicably referred by her husband as his "ailing child," suffers from an excessively vivid imagination and insatiable need for excitement. Her mania for cleanliness is combined with her desire of younger men in whom she sees strong spirit, brave heart and pure feelings, although her periodical flings do not go beyond platonic love.

¹¹⁷ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 95.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

Unlike Anna-Maria, who in her search for unattainable perfection initiates relationships that are bound to fail, Ida Defilipis often happens to find herself “naked and vulnerable among people”¹¹⁹ against her will. Her traumas, inflicted by the lust of the elderly Italian maestro and an even older limp Romanian “Uncle’ Niki”, become the reason for her to realize that it is not enough to adore music and love all people, when most men want from you is not music but flesh. Anna-Maria arrives at the periphery of the Austrian Empire and dives into Oriental timelessness following her husband in his professional path while Ida-Saida voluntarily changes her name and faith and goes “where nobody goes or should go” in order to escape uncalled-for lust. In her attempt to run away from the pursuits of men, Ida-Saida hides in the chambers of Omer Pasha, submerging herself in music and alcohol, the effect of which, in Adnrić's words, is “neither unlimited, nor almighty.” Her transition into invisibility does not blind Saida-Hanim to the sexual quirks of her husband. She realizes that she has become the personification of Omer Pahsa’s unfulfilled Viennese dream and this turns her into a passive witness of the Oriental disregard for human dignity and freedom.

The mania of the Croatian painter Vjekoslav Karas are similar to those of Central-Europeans settled in Bosnia. Behind his tripod, he feels as mighty as Alia Đerzelez on the back of his magic horse-pedestal. When the painter comes out from behind the easel that separates him from his beautiful wealthy models, the artist becomes as helpless as the folk hero, Đerzelez, descending from his magical horse. When he takes the step from art to reality and attempts to follow his passions and approach his noble models, he ends up disappointed once again in his desire for a woman “who does not want him and who is more surprised and wowed than offended and bitter at his attempt to approach her.”¹²⁰ After each “dream and hard flight” beyond the magic of colors, he “finds himself on solid ground like a helpless insect that tries to climb up a straw.”¹²¹ The last romantic mirage of Karas – Saida-Hanim – rejects the portraitist with her elegant indifference, while she herself fails to escape the prison of her own lofty chimeras and to bring common sense and humanity to her arrogant husband. Possessed by jealousy “that comes not out of love but out of hatred and vanity,”¹²² Ida-Saida has only the strength to occasionally

¹¹⁹ Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 133.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 106.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*, 70

make an appearance before her husband, the Vizier, and to constantly curse the “fat villain” and “king of the pimps,”¹²³ Ahmed Aga, blaming him for the perversion of Omer Pasha.

While Saida-Hanim focuses on the procuring practices of Ahmed Aga, the *kafebaji* himself sees Omer Pasha's life entirely through the prism of the Vizier's insatiable lust. At the same time, serving his master's perverted desires with repulsion Ahmed Aga finds sublime satisfaction only in food consumption. Despite his position of *kafebaji* [implying caring for food and drinks of the Vizier], Ahmed Aga only deals with coffee and *odjak* [stove] for his own pleasure. When he is working, the Aga knows no “hunger, thirst, or sweetness of disgust”¹²⁴ but he substitutes the temporary lack of real consumption with its verbalization. Disgusted by the sexual perversions of the Vizier, he keeps his feelings to himself, while Ahmed Aga expresses his disdain for the ones lower or equal to him by using culinary metaphors: “Go away, you are tasteless and bitter to me!”, “Get lost, you stink!” Accusing someone of a weak mind, he often says that his head is *bayat* [stale], “uncooked” or “overcooked” and purses his lips and blows his cheeks as if he wants to spit out something bitter and horrible.”¹²⁵ Disgusted by the people, the *kafebaji* Ahmed Aga commits himself to flora and fauna, using cooking imagery and food consumption as his window to the world:

*He was silently enjoying the cooked cabbage with young lamb the way others enjoyed the idyllic sight of green foliage under the March sky. The oranges, the dates, and the pomegranates would arouse his imagination like tales of travels and foreign lands, two drops of lemon juice were sometimes and an experience that only he could understand. The smoked meats, dried fruit and mustard meant to him what to others were the warmth of home and family. The glass of ice cold water from Sarajevo, covered in dew, evoked the image of healthy, young people happily splashing water at the fountain early in the morning. But it is pointless to list all that because it is hard to even suppose what the real importance of all that could be skillfully cooked, eaten and drunk was to him...*¹²⁶

Unlike the glutton Ahmed Aga who lives to eat, the *haznadar* [treasurer] Baki [*Bosnian Chronicle*] eats to live and lives to save. He is the exact opposite of the *kafebaji*, who perceives life through food and drinks, through everything that can be tasted, smelled, savored with the mouth, tongue, and nose. To Baki, who “neither had teeth to chew nor a stomach that could

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 69.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 68.

digest,”¹²⁷ “the mouthful he saved was sweeter to him than the one he ate.”¹²⁸ The *haznadar* of Ibrahim Pasha dedicates his life to his fight against expenses and spenders, among whom he also lists seekers of pleasure and joy and even the talkative and entrepreneurial ones. He suffers from eczema and is always cold. He is “a fiend for thrift and bookkeeping,”¹²⁹ who, on one hand, “would have been happiest if he could have snuffed out the whole living world the way he snuffed out the needless candles in various rooms, with a moistened thumb and forefinger,”¹³⁰ while on the other “dreamed of a small unfurnished room that would be heated by an invisible fire from all sides, evenly and constantly, and would yet be light, clean, and full of fresh air. It would be a sort of temple to himself, a heated tomb, but a tomb from which one could exert a mighty, unceasing influence on the outside world, to one’s own satisfaction and the undoing of everyone else.”¹³¹ According to the “sick doctor,” Eshref Effendi, who knows Baki the best, the *haznadar* is not a real miser, since “a miser loves money, or at least the thrill of miserliness, and is willing to sacrifice a good deal for it,” while the treasurer “loves nothing and no one except himself.”¹³²

Idris Effendi who deals with the legal matters at Omer Pasha's *konak* combines Ahmed Aga’s gluttony with the miser's asceticism of Baki. On the one hand, to Idris the most tasty Ahmed Aga’ is the dish he does not pay for, “the found, the begged, even the stolen.”¹³³ On the other hand, he knows that “satiety is an extremely transitional condition in constant danger of being destroyed from its very beginning.”¹³⁴ His realization is that “the curse of a man lies not in the fact that he might sometimes remain with nothing and starve but in the fact that his very existence is related to eating and drinking.”¹³⁵ This logic leads him to the conviction that “only the one who can free himself of such dependencies can become a real man, a being that is not dependent on humiliating worries and fears.”¹³⁶ The inability to combine his gluttony with his

¹²⁷ Andrić, Ivo. *Bosnian Chronicle*, 163.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 164.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 165.

¹³¹ Ibid., 163.

¹³² Ibid., 167.

¹³³ Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 145.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 144.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 145.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

hatred for food leads to the situation where “the illness of the Ottoman attorney develops together with his rise in society.”¹³⁷ Later this conflict transforms into a “grave mania, a fear of starvation and poverty and a painful greed, greed whose hunger cannot be satisfied with all the world's wealth.”¹³⁸

From the perspective of self-sacrifice the miserly obsession of the treasurer Baki is “problematic” while Rayka Radaković from the novel *The Woman from Sarajevo* fulfills even the most demanding requirements to fit into the definition of a miser. Just like Idris Effendi who worries about the price of each item, “suffers because of their wearing out, gets worn out and dies with them,”¹³⁹ the miserly woman from Sarajevo loves her savings more than herself and at the end of the novel “sacrifices” her life for them. Rayka Radaković and Omer Pasha are the only monomaniacs in the works of Andrić to whom he devoted separate novels – *The Woman from Sarajevo* and *Omer Pasha Latas*. The hero of *The Woman from Sarajevo* is a consistent, planning, disciplined and uncompromising miser, leading the competition for a place in the fourth circle of Dante’s hell. Motivated by her urge to take revenge on the world for the death of her father, who, being too merciful failed to protect his property, Rayka reaches the ultimate level of stinginess and falls down into the abyss of human degradation. Her financial enrichment and moral bankruptcy start not with the inherited wealth but with the advice of her dying father, who tells her that while her income does not depend solely on her, it is within her power to save and she should save in a manner as ruthless as life itself.

Rayka multiplies her initially inherited capital. She adds her own revelations to the economics of saving, among which is the Balkan miser call for mending¹⁴⁰ and drudgery.¹⁴¹ Her conclusions stem from the bitter experience that while “objects were safely under lock and key in the various chests and closets, they became so to speak partners in her economy drive, while those that were left in use were bound to diminish a bit every day, since every touch and every gaze of strange eyes wore away another little particle.”¹⁴² Another her insight is a claim that

¹³⁷ Ibid., 143.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 146.

¹⁴⁰ *Mending! What a delight that is! True, it is also an endless and wearying struggle to outwit a powerful unseen enemy.* (Andrić, Ivo. *The Woman from Sarajevo*, 11).

¹⁴¹ *Drudgery! This, too, is a form of delight. She knows it very well, for she has endured many things in her life for its sake, and has got much satisfaction out of it.* (Andrić, Ivo. *The Woman from Sarajevo*, 13).

¹⁴² Andrić, Ivo. *The Woman from Sarajevo*, 45.

money is the only reason for arithmetic to exist. Her degradation shows that excessive parsimony is one of those obsessions that in time bring physical squalor in their wake and illness as well.

So every Andrić's miser is ill – Baki suffers from eczema and cold blood, Idris Efendi is a sick, upset and sad man, Jewish usurer Rafo becomes mad, and Rayka Radaković, who does not need a heart that costs money, dies, literally and metaphorically, of cardiac insufficiency.

On the margin between misers and spenders stands the Jewish woman Lotte from *The Bridge over the Drina*. The owner of the hotel that replaced the old *caravanserai* in Višegrad “behaves with most of her guests as if they were sick men who from time to time had passing crises and hallucinations.”¹⁴³ Although the beautiful Jewess drove her customers “all mad, for they were naturally mad, deceived them for they wanted to be deceived and, finally, took from them only what they had already been determined to throw away and lose,”¹⁴⁴ Lotte is the informal confessor for sinners of all Bosnian faiths. She realizes that it is not within her power to either redeem them from their passion for gambling and alcohol, or grant them forgiveness for their sins, but the beautiful hotel owner successfully leaves the impression that she fulfills all their dreams:

*She offered them everything, promised much and gave little, or rather nothing at all. For their desires were, of their very nature, such as never could be satisfied and in the end they had to content themselves with little.*¹⁴⁵

While the pitying Lotte absorbs like a sponge the sorrows of the broken-hearted, ruined gamblers and drunkards, her opposite, pseudo Samaritan, Yovanka, from *The Woman from Sarajevo*, thrives, feeds, and grows like a mushroom on the misfortunes of her neighbors. The pathological “helper” “inaudibly, inconspicuously, and selflessly, [...] would insinuate herself into the lives of the people she had taken under her wing, sharing in their successes, longings, and failures,”¹⁴⁶ and “existed only insofar as other people existed around her and to the extent to which she managed to batten on their lives.”¹⁴⁷ The manic gossip-do-gooder attaches herself like a leech to the lives of the people whom she “helps,” thus “the tangled affairs of unsuccessful and unfortunate people [becomes] her true element.”¹⁴⁸ In her fluctuations between adoration and

¹⁴³ Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge over the Drina*, 179.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Andrić, Ivo. *The Woman from Sarajevo*, 177.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 180.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

hate for those she aids, Yovanka's egotistical altruism unconsciously causes more harm than benefit.

The miser's opposite are the spendthrifts: gamblers and spenders, most of whom cannot be helped, neither by Yovanka nor by Lotte. To Andrić uncontrollable passions are illnesses (innate or contagious) that can infect those susceptible regardless of their religion and ethnicity. In this way, when the “devil’s ducat” moves from the Serb, Milan Glasićanin, who lost it imaginarily gambling with the Fiend at the Višegrad’s bridge, to the Jew, Bukus Gaon, who “found it on the *kapia* [gateway] and had pried it loose on the Sabbath Day,”¹⁴⁹ the passion for gambling is transferred with the gold coin from the Serb man to the Jew youngster.

On the list of Andrić’s spenders (Ratko Ratković, Nikolae Gika, Arif Beg) the unquestionable favorite of the author is uncle of Rayka Radaković, Vladimir Hadjisavić, for whom all of his possessions “attained full value in his eyes only when he gave them away and saw them in someone else’s hands.”¹⁵⁰ In contrast to his niece Rayka, Uncle Vlado “passionately loved to give presents and was so deft in choosing exactly the gift that best accorded with the wishes of the recipient, one that was bound to give him the most pleasure.”¹⁵¹ The charming young waster “happily” leaves his life before being able to give away everything he has because, “it was hard to imagine what his life would have been without the possibility of further spending and giving.”¹⁵² Close to the wasteful largesse of Uncle Vlado is “the addict to drinking and indifferent to promotions” Arif Beg who thinks “that the bite of food will poison him if he eats it on his own, without the greedy *bavadji* [freeloaders] around him” and he is “neither happy nor calm when there are no guests feasting in his house.”¹⁵³

The Mythomanes Liars and Storytellers

Story-telling, anecdotes, fables and even lies are an alternative to confined and hopeless life in Bosnia. Even though the passion for storytelling sometimes assumes pathological forms, it nevertheless serves as a safety vent for accumulated social maladies. In his prose Andrić presents a number mythomanes for whom a lie is more valuable than the truth fiction soars to

¹⁴⁹ Ivo Andrić, *The Bridge over the Drina*, 153.

¹⁵⁰ Andrić, Ivo. *The Woman from Sarajevo*, 27.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁵³ Andrić, Ivo. *Omer Paša Latas*, 42.

unprecedented heights, as noted Petar Cacic in the *Story of Mythomanes* , “heights no limit”.¹⁵⁴ In his essay *Signs by the Roadside* Ivo Andrić reflects on the relationship between a man and a lie from childhood to adulthood and presents various occasions and applications of lies and lying. For most of his characters a lie is a shield “in a war that they themselves have invented and leads only in their imagination.” The different purposes and uses of lying is the thin line between aggressive megalomaniacs such as Omer Pasha Latas and passive harmless mythomanes such as Zaim, Baron Dorn, Ibrahim-Effendi Škaro and others.¹⁵⁵ Baron Dorn from the story *A Baron*, on the one hand ranks among Andrić’s characters regarded by the society as abnormal¹⁵⁶ but on the other hand, he belongs to harmless maniacs like Kamil-Cem, Zaim, and Ibrahim-Effendi Škaro [A Story] who have different visions for the past, present and future of the Ottoman Empire. The Baron is the “improved” version of the sex maniac Zaim but while the Turkish “Don Juan” lies only about the women he never slept with and the crafts he never mastered, the Austrian Baron makes an ubiquitous habit of lying always and about everything. Unlike the ones who use lies at their public posts using the lie only as their last resort only as a means to an end, Baron Dorn (whose name, descent and post can be read as a reference to the Austro-Hungarian Empire) possesses “an inherent, childish but also monstrous and incorrigible inclination to lying,” which he practices disinterestedly “with the stubbornness of a gambler” and the “incorrigibility of a drunkard.” His unfulfilled dream is that at least once his lie could be the same as what truth is to other people and that his “savior” will be the one who believes him, even just for once.

Eloquent words, verbosity and silver-tongued story-telling are the only constructive mania in the works of Andrić. Words transcend the visible and the invisible fences of the Damned Yard, of Bosnia and the Ottoman Empire, and they create other, alternative worlds. For the pathological womanizer Zaim freedom as a counterpoint to the closed space of the Istanbul prison is related to the stories of many imaginary women from Greece to Egypt, “awaiting him.” Jew Haim, who suffers from spy mania, has the talent to reproduce a conversation that took place behind four walls; he expresses his strive for freedom through “his passion to say and explain everything, to reveal all the mistakes and all the crimes of humanity, to unmask the wrongdoers

¹⁵⁴ Цацић, Петар. In: *Приче о митоманима* (Београд, 1996, Књига-Комерц), 10.

¹⁵⁵ About the mythomanes in the short Andrić prose wrote Петар Цацић in his book *Приче о митоманима* (Београд, 1996, Књига-Комерц), 7–16.

¹⁵⁶ Hawkesworth, Celia. *Ivo Andrić: Bridge between East and West*. (The Athlone Press Ltd, 1984, printed in Yugoslavia), 116.

and give the good their due.”¹⁵⁷ A quiet and observant Croat, Fra Petar, from *The Damned Yard* pays homage not only to the story-tellers, whose “accounts are imperfect, colored with personal passion and needs,” but also to the listeners and readers “who listen or read patiently”¹⁵⁸ and sometimes add something to the story themselves.

One character on the list of silver-tongued storytellers that must not be overlooked is Ibrahim-Effendi Škaro, whose tales reveal “what might have been, but never was, which is often truer and lovelier than all that has been.”¹⁵⁹ The story about Ibrahim Effendi demonstrates the ambiguous attitude of those in power toward storytelling:

*Occasionally some leading citizens, civil servants and ‘men of business’ did not take kindly either to Ibrahim-Effendi or his stories, in which they saw cause for annoyance and criticism though they could not have said quite why. They often laughed at themselves, but they appeared to be offended by the number of other people who laughed, and it seemed to them that laughter itself had something destructive about it, which lessened citizens regard for order and obedience. They did not say so clearly or openly, but they often showed their disparagement of Ibrahim-Effendi as a crank and idler who turned everything into a story and made a joke of it, and they scoffed contemptuously at him, his stories, and the people who laughed at them.*¹⁶⁰

Even though the oral accounts of Ibrahim-Effendi “burnt away like the tobacco of a cigarette and had neither titles, nor beginnings, nor one firm final shape,” the listeners needed them. *A Story* is an apology of fiction: the gift of Ibrahim-Effendi, the Andrić’s alter-ego, lies in the “power of always astonishing the listeners with something familiar.”¹⁶¹ The stories of the honey-mouthed man and those of Andrić himself are threads of a narrative, which according to the Nobel Prize Speech of the writer, is spun by a countless number of storytellers in thousands of languages around the world.

Conclusions and Reservations

In most works by Ivo Andrić, physical and mental illness, whether harmless or dangerous to society, is not inherently Balkan but universal. When situated in the Bosnian chronotope,

¹⁵⁷ Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, 173.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 174.

¹⁵⁹ Andrić, Ivo. *A Story*, published in Andrić, Ivo. *The Damned Yard and Other Stories*, 141.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 139–40.

however, it is seen as an allusion to the decline of the multinational despotic Empires at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century and some of their successor states. Having outlived the medieval Balkan hegemonic states, the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and, last but not least, Tito's and Milošević's Yugoslavia, in the 21st century Bosnia remains "as it has always been." In 1992 the former Yugoslavian Republic proclaimed its independence and since December 1995, Bosnia-Herzegovina has been functioning as a fully sovereign state for the second time in its history. Bosnian language (together with the Croatian and Serbian) is an official state language in Bosnia. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia the song *You are the One and Only* became the state anthem of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which, despite its harmless content, was considered by the Serbs and the Croats as an attempt at domination by the Bosnian Muslims in the newly created country. Since 1999, the musical composition under the title *Intermezzo* has been used as an anthem, ten years later, after a lot of controversy, adding to it some lyrics focused on the common territory ("Our Mother, Land of Bosnia") and the goal of unity among all ethnic groups in the country ("Your generations/ will tell this:/ We go into the future/ Together!"). However, the internal tension in the country has not yet subsided.

In his Nobel Prize speech on the 10th of December 1961, Ivo Andrić asked: "do not the past and the present confront us with similar phenomena and with the same problems?" Half a century later, we still hope that Bosnian hatred, intolerance, and fear will miraculously disappear just as the plague, leprosy, and cholera have remained in the past. In the poem, cited at the beginning of this essay, Emily Dickenson (1830–1886) implies that "time is a test of trouble, but not a remedy" and that "time never did assuage." But, if time does not alleviate unrequited love, can it cure mutual hatred?

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