

Orientalist discourse in Ivo Andrić's "Bosnian Chronicle" *

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The chronotope of Ivo Andrić's novel *Travnička hronika* (1945, *Bosnian Chronicle*, Eng. trans. 1963/1992), the city of Travnik at the beginning of the 19th century, shows us a miniature image of the entire Bosnia, of those turbulent times and life on the frontiers of great empires. Bosnia is represented as a place of fusion and clash of cultures, civilizations, religions (Orthodox Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Catholicism), and nations that were diverse and often hostile, forced to coexist in constant fear of each other. At the beginning of the novel, Andrić represents Travnik as a city on the frontier, the city in a fissure, "a half-open book" (1992, 5) which through the novel turns into a symbol of mutual illegibility of the characters. Each one of them remains in a way shut into their own ideas of the other one standing against them, so it becomes clear that this novel writes out the discourse of difference through the image of the city lying in a crevice, between the steep hills which both collapse and meet at a sharp angle.

In this paper, we shall analyze the examples of Orientalist discourse which Andrić incorporated into the novel through the characters that represent the European deputies (Austro-Hungarian and French) in Travnik and through their often stereotypical attitudes towards the country to which they were sent to office. Edward Said expresses the idea of a European (Western) discourse which forms an illusory and in many aspects phantasmagorical image of societies and cultures outside Europe. This is an imposition of a constructed identity, usually schematized and full of stereotypes, which is supported with the attitude of the colonizer's superiority that manages to justify and rationalize the hegemonic role of the West. Considering the inadequate representations of the West, he points out that the Orient, as the object of research for historians, linguists, writers, archaeologists, and politicians, is actually a "European invention" and not an objectively existing reality. For centuries the European culture gained its strength and built its own identity as an image that contrasts the Orient (2003, 1–28).

Andre Gingrich partly starts from Said's concept of Orientalism in an attempt to revise it, develop it and consider it in the context of Central and Southeastern Europe.

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He points out that Said's concept of Orientalism primarily refers to the French and English colonial presence in distant territories (as well as the postcolonial politics of the USA), but it does not take into consideration the Habsburg, Russian, and Spanish treatments and representations of the Orient (1996, 118).¹ Therefore, Gingrich concludes that "there is not just one form of orientalism, but there are several" (2010, 78). Unlike the classical form of Orientalism, frontier Orientalism does not necessarily imply the experience of a remote, subjugated colony overseas, but it rather refers to nearby intruders on "our" frontier which do not necessarily have to be exotic, subaltern subjects, servants or slaves (Gingrich 2015, 62).

Gingrich elaborates on the term of frontier Orientalism in several works. This term is always connected to our image or representation of the Other as something that is different but not geographically remote. Instead, it usually represents a dangerous threat that is constantly lurking from the frontier areas. Therefore, frontier Orientalism always constructs and maintains the binary opposition which points to the existence of "us" and "others" – "the Orientals", which (if we consider the frontier of Central Europe) are always represented by the Turks or Muslims in general. However, Gingrich points out that the other side of the described opposition fluctuates and that the Islamic Oriental Other can be transformed if need be, so that it can also represent the Jewish or Slavic (Serbian or Russian) Oriental Other. Frontier Orientalism represents a specific form of Orientalist discourse which dominated the peripheral areas of Europe that were exposed to the longer experiences and interactions with the Muslim societies by the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern era (2015, 61–63).

In the analysis of certain aspects of Andrić's novel we shall focus on the Orientalist discourse advocated by the Western representatives, relying also on Gingrich's variant of frontier Orientalism, in particular because this is a narrower term (compared to Said's term of colonial Orientalism) which is primarily related to the frontier areas of Central and Southeastern Europe. Just like the entire Bosnia as an Ottoman province and future Austro-Hungarian border colony, Travnik is also represented in the novel as the liminal, in itself insecure, heterogeneous area within Europe. Apart from the fact that Gingrich's term is more appropriate and accurate in the geographical, spatial sense, it is additionally convenient because the stereotypical impressions and belittling attitudes of the Western representatives often refer equally to all subjected inhabitants of Travnik, the Bosnians, regardless of their religion and cultural identity. The geographic position itself of a frontier area as an interest zone of various empires makes them suitable for negative stereotyping by the Western representatives. We also notice that the mechanism of stereotyping, traditionally reserved for the Ottomans, is often transferred to the Bosnians as a whole. Gingrich's term of frontier Orientalism highlights the other side of the opposition as fluid, as it does not have to be linked exclusively to the Islamic Oriental Other, but it can also refer to the Jews or Slavs (61), the subjected population of Travnik as a whole, as is the case with Andrić's novel.

By describing the state of affairs in Travnik, Andrić actually points to the position of the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was at the time under the rule of the Ottoman Empire and gravely threatened by French and Austro-Hungarian interests.

Beginning in the 17th century, Travnik was the residence of the Bosnian vizier, and in 1806 France opened its consulate there. A year later, the Austro-Hungarian Empire did the same in order to prepare the ground for the later occupation and annexation of the mentioned territory and the creation of a specific border colony.² By narrating about the so-called consular times, Andrić leads us into a world of deep conflicts and irreconcilable differences. As Zoran Milutinović notices:

For page after page, *Bosnian Chronicle* describes people's attempts to understand one another, and their failure to do so. [...] There is no privileged image of Bosnia in *Bosnian Chronicle*, there are only different voices which try to impose and justify their images. The very dynamics of creating and exchanging images, the dynamics of people's attempts to understand each other and of their inability to step out of their own perspectives is the true theme of *Bosnian Chronicle* (2008, 446).

We get the impression that, despite the vast gallery of the most diverse characters, the real protagonist of the novel is the city of Travnik itself, as the geographical and political center of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the place of interest, which links the representatives of the three great powers (Ottoman Empire, France, and Austria).

What is initially imposed in the novel is the situation in which the image of Travnik is presented to us in a mediated form, as we learn about the city, its inhabitants, everyday life, and customs from the point of view of the newcomers (French and Austrian diplomats, the Levantine D'Avenat, the vizier). What they all have in common is the troubling feeling of being abroad in an inaccessible and cruel area, the basin of Travnik, which they perceive as a dungeon, a sort of much-needed limbo, a place where they will get toughened for future undertakings. Therefore, Jean Daville sees his position of general consul as a punishment, a conviction to service in a godforsaken land, and a sort of exile from Europe into an isolated Ottoman border province. We get the impression that the European diplomats Daville and von Mitterer think and talk about the Ottoman Empire and its representatives in Bosnia with sympathy, which they do not show towards the citizens of Travnik, as they perceive and describe them as barbarians – “wild people, uncouth rabble” (19). This is supported by Daville's description of the local orchestra that he has hired for a celebration organized in honor of Napoleon's birthday: “He immediately saw before his eyes the Travnik musicians, three ragged gypsies, two drummers and the third with the pipe whose ‘music’ grated on the ears of the European condemned to live here during Ramadan and Bairam” (30).

What is particularly interesting is that the attitudes of the Ottoman representatives do not offer a view that opposes the vision of the European governors. Instead, we notice the identical belittling relationship towards the Travnik Muslims, or “Turks”,³ in the descriptions provided by the vizier Husref Mehmed Pasha:

In the course of the conversation, the Vizier made a point of stressing the savagery of this country, the crudity and backwardness of the people. The land was wild, the people impossible. What could be expected of women and children, creatures whom God had not endowed with reason, in a country where even the men were violent and uncouth? Nothing this people did or said had any significance, nor could it affect the affairs of serious, cultivated man (25).

For the representatives of Europe in the novel, Travnik, although geographically part of the Old Continent, still remains a place on the frontier, somewhere in between, neither sufficiently European nor completely Oriental.⁴ The local respectable Muslims also talk about Travnik and Bosnia as a border area that is exposed to constant attacks of foreign imperial powers:

They had long been troubled by the knowledge that the Imperial defences along the frontiers had collapsed and that Bosnia was becoming an unguarded country, trampled over not only by Ottomans but by infidels from the four corners of the earth, a country where even the rayah was beginning to raise its head more insolently than ever before. And now some faithless consuls and spies were supposed to be thrusting their way in, freely proclaiming their authority and the power of their emperors at every step. So, little by little, an end would come to the good order and “blessed silence” of Turkish Bosnia, which for some time now had in any case become increasingly difficult to protect and preserve. Divine Will had ordained that the Turks should rule as far as the Sava River and the Austrians from the Sava on. But everything Christian was working against that clear Divine Order, shaking the frontier fence and undermining it by day and night, both openly and in secret (11).

Clemens Ruthner points out that Bosnia and Herzegovina has for long been perceived as a periphery of Europe, ever since it was initially known as the rebellious frontier of the Ottoman Empire, then as a territory occupied by Austria-Hungary (1878–1918) and finally as part of Yugoslavia. In those periods, this region was treated as the economic and cultural margin of various political centers (Istanbul, Vienna/Budapest, Belgrade/Zagreb), and it also takes the specific symbolical position of “the European Other” within Western hegemonic discourse (2008, 1). With regards to this, Enver Kazaz concludes the following:

It is particularly because of its marginality that BiH is presented in Andrić's novels as the topos of a permeable borderline, a border place of the encounter of the One and the Other, both the identity and the alterity, but also as the topos of their differences. Border, periphery, and difference create Andrić's BiH as a symbolic bridge between two centres, but also as a topos at which each of these centres, both the Orient and the Occident, meets its periphery (2006, 270).

It is interesting to note that Andrić also accentuates several times in his novel that the Bosnian (local) Muslims were perceived as outcasts, converts who are equally despised by the representatives of Istanbul and the European deputies. This indicates their double marginalization and liminal position. For example, the beys of Travnik are represented as completely independent, largely alienated from the Istanbul authorities, as they often did not execute the commands of vizier Husref Mehmed Pasha, who declared himself a supporter of the reforms by Sultan Selim III and who openly favored France. Paradoxically, the vizier himself was also a convert and foreigner, not just in Travnik but also in Ottoman Empire, the country whose interests he represented. The narrator reminds us that Husref Mehmed Pasha, also known as the Limping Pasha, was a Georgian brought as a slave to Istanbul when he was a child, who became a vizier in Egypt at the age of thirty-one thanks to his cunning, abilities, and talent. After the great uprising of the Mamelukes, the vizier is first transferred to

Thessaloniki and then to Travnik. He perceives his stay in Bosnia as a kind of exile and punishment, especially because the winters, which the natives are used to, are particularly harsh and in every aspect torturous to everyone else: "It was different for the foreigners whom fate had cast into the narrow valley which, at this time of year, was gloomy, damp and draughty as a prison corridor" (109). The Mamelukes yearn for their homeland, and the vizier remembers Egypt and dreams of the distant sea. They wonder in unison how they wronged God and fate to deserve to end up here:

"A dog's land!" said the Secretary. "It's enough to make bears weep!" complained the Vizier's countryman and armorer Younuz Bey. "Now I see that we've been sent here to perish", maintained Ibrahim Hodja, a personal friend of the Vizier's, screwing his yellow face up into long creases as though he really were preparing to die (110).

During the visits to the Konak and conversations with the vizier, the French consul Jean Daville recognizes his own unenviable position in Mehmed Pasha's exile. He ascribes the anxiety, confusion, lack of will, and the rushes of pessimism overcoming him to the environment in which he resides – "Oriental poison" (56). It is prominent that for the entire course of the novel he blames the lethal impact of the Orient for everything negative in him. In his spare time, he writes an epic on Alexander the Great as a sort of his own "disguised intellectual diary" (69) in which he vents his feelings and in which the imaginary Bosnia, "a barren land with a harsh climate and savage inhabitants" (69) has its own place hidden under the name Tauris. Daville's Alexander romance, as a specific narrative phantasmagoria, stores his frustrations, caused by the Bosnian area and the people which he loathed. As the protagonist, through his battle against Asia, Alexander reflected "all the revulsion Daville felt for the Asiatic spirit and the East as a whole" (69).

The situation in Travnik is additionally complicated by the arrival of a new threat, the Austrian general consul. The local Muslims resent Istanbul because of the "foreign invasion" (81), the French consulate anxiously await their opponent, and the Orthodox locals are hoping for a Russian consulate as well. Joseph von Mitterer, frontier guard officer from the periphery of the Empire who has proved himself in war against the Ottomans and the Serbian rebels, to a certain extent shares with the French consul the mutual fate of a man condemned to live in an environment "which first exhausts a Westerner, then makes him chronically irritable, a burden to himself and others, and finally, with the years, completely alters and breaks him, burying him in dull indifference long before his death" (89). Mrs. von Mitterer expresses her own dissatisfaction with Travnik and its inhabitants, possibly in the most tumultuous fashion in the entire novel. She builds a tall wall around the house, "a new Schönbrunn" (95), in order to protect herself from the "dirt of this oriental land" (96). This grows into an obsessive fear of dirt, rust, mud, and mould which she notices everywhere around her. She perceives staying here as a curse and a transfer from "one half-Turkish provincial town into a real Turkish graveyard [...] into Asia" (94), as she puts it. Therefore, she persistently asks her husband, whom she declares to be "more heartless than any Turk" (131), to save her and take her away from this "filthy, wretched country" (98) and "terrible wilderness" (128). Her notion of Bosnia is comprised in a metaphor of a retarded ailing beggar and his repulsive feet:

For just one moment her field of vision was filled with trampled clay and the huge, filthy, bare feet of a disabled labourer, aged before his time. She glimpsed them for just one moment, but for a long time afterwards she could not rid herself of the sight of those inhuman feet, square, shapeless, gnarled, unspeakably deformed by long trudging and a hard life, cracked like the bark of a pine tree, yellow and black; enormous, crooked peasant's feet which could scarcely bear their own weight and shuffled, limping awkwardly, as they took perhaps their last steps. Hundreds of suns and thousands of springs could not help those feet, thought Anna Maria in that instant. No care, food or medicine could put them right or alter them. Whatever was born and bloomed on the earth, those feet could only be yellower, more monstrous and more horrible (97).

Similar to her representation of the irreparable state of the beggar is Daville's conviction that it is impossible for the entire place to change, to "recover" – in other words, to adjust itself to his norms and become like France. Although Des Fossés is the most inclined to Bosnia out of all foreigners, the manner in which he pronounced the name of the city is represented by the narrator as follows: "He repeated this word to himself, half aloud, like the name of some mysterious disease, like a magic formula it is hard to remember and easy to forget" (127). In this description we also recognize the metaphor of disease as the incurability of a "backward" society, which as such belongs to the corpus of frontier Orientalism. However, unlike Daville, the young consul is willing to get to know the country – he tours the city, meets people, notes his impressions about dispositions, makes an effort to fit into the new environment and feel the town's pulse. He stays in the houses of the Jews, meets religious representatives (Friar Janković and Abbot Pahomije), examines old settlements and graveyards, and his curiosity and interest results in his writing a book on Bosnia. Although the local commander in Split warns him on the eve of his transfer to Travnik that he was headed to an "infernal country" (74), he is not discouraged. His case shows that it is possible to break the strong barriers of prejudices and stereotypes which the foreigners adopt so easily and grudgingly give up on. Renate Hansen-Kokoruš also notices that Des Fossé "plays one of the more important roles in the process of understanding the country and its inhabitants on one hand and in the cultural criticism of the West on the other" (2009, 91).

In the novel, Andrić juxtaposes the two representatives of France, Daville and Des Fossés. While the first one is reserved, serious, occupied with prejudices about the natives which he calls "wild Scythians" (79), and describes Travnik as a "muddy desert, inhabited by two kinds of wretch: tortures and tortured" (113), Des Fossés endeavors to prove that this area can by no means be a desert, as he points to the spiritual and cultural heritage, traces of Neolithic settlements, bizarre customs, diverse interesting personalities, the remains of the epochs which replaced each other. In their mutual discussions, Daville advocates the familiar imperialist-colonial discourse on the need to civilize the "backward" nations, lamenting on the utopian vision in which the entire Europe becomes like the "harmonious" and "perfect" France.

Here it is important to point out that Daville's and Des Fossés' attitudes are not just a figment of the author's fiction, but they are supported by historical models. The prototype of the character of Daville was Pierre David, consul in Travnik and Napoleon's representative in Bosnia from 1807 to 1814. It is known that in 1924 Andrić

read a book written by historian Mihailo Gavrilović which contains the reports of the abovementioned consul. The same year, magazine *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* publishes excerpts from David's diary, so it is assumed that Andrić had access to this source. As a diplomat in European cities, he later had the opportunity to consult the original reports of the Travnik consuls (Gorup 2001, 218). In Vienna, Andrić examined the notes of Austrian consuls Paul von Mittesser and Jakob von Paulich. On the relationship of Pierre David towards Bosnia, Mihailo Gavrilović states the following, based on the meticulous analysis of his reports: "We should note, which is obvious from this collection, that David deeply despised Bosnians and that he perceived his life among them as imprisonment" (1904, XVI). The character of Des Fossés partly corresponds to the French diplomat and geographer Amédée Chaumette des Fossés who, just like Andrić's hero, left a travel account on Bosnia from 1822 as his legacy (*Voyages en Bosnie dans les années 1807–1808*). More thorough data on Andrić's use of historical sources for constructing *Bosnian Chronicle* are put forward in a study by Midhat Šamić, where he particularly stresses Andrić's remaining true to the original documents (1962, 43).⁵ As Milutinović explains: "Through their writings, these foreigners produced images of Bosnia which contemporary French and Austrian readers then used to build up their knowledge of Bosnia and make judgements about this isolated and little known part of Europe. [...] They represent what we might name the European view of Bosnia of the time" (2008, 445).

Andrić utilizes the abovementioned attitudes by Daville to point to the types of ethnocentrism and universalism which are theoretically criticized by Tzvetan Todorov starting from the analysis of examples of ethnocentrism in the history of French thought, with the emphasis on philosophical currents of the 17th and 18th centuries. Todorov discusses the Universalist ideology of colonialization, which we can find among the authors belonging to the philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment, such as Condorcet or De Gérando, who believe that progress is seen through a gradual liberation from prejudices, and their nation has went the farthest on that path. Condorcet is convinced that there is a civilizational ladder at whose top are the so-called most enlightened nations, those that have completely eliminated prejudices – the French and Anglo-Americans. The French theoretician recognizes the same rhetoric in De Gérando, who also highlights the idea of various degrees of being civilized by making a division into higher and lower races based on their degree of development, and the criteria for ranking them are rationality and level of socialization. Such attitudes of certain European intellectuals encouraged and justified the practice of colonialism as a project in which the so-called backwater nations were to be subjected to "the accelerated progress of enlightenment" (1993, 253–254). Dealing with cultural identities in *Bosnian Chronicle*, Krešimir Nemeč concludes that the foreign Western consuls "perceive themselves as superior: as the bearers of civilization and progress in barbarian and narrow-minded surroundings. Everything they see is measured by the value criteria and samples of their own culture and social customs, and they notice a *specific difference* everywhere which makes them feel insecure, distrustful, and afraid" (2004, 86).⁶

During one of the conversations with Des Fossés, Daville highlights underdevel-

opment as one of the features of the barbaric nature of this area, which is characterized by absence of roads:

Unlike all the other nations of the world, this people has some kind of incomprehensible, perverse hatred of roads, which are actually a sign of progress and prosperity. In this wretched country roads aren't maintained and they don't last, it's as though they destroyed themselves somehow. You see, the fact that General Marmont is building a highway through Dalmatia does as more damage in the eyes of the local Turks and the Vizier, than those enterprising, boastful gentlemen in Split can begin to imagine. These people don't like roads anywhere near them. But who could explain that to our people in Split? They brag to all and sundry that they are building roads which will ease the flow of traffic between Bosnia and Dalmatia, but they have no idea how the Turkish mistrust them (65).

Unlike him, Des Fossés will discover the partial reasons behind such state of roads in a conversation with friar Ivan, who reveals the cunning and strategy lying behind this "neglect". Both Muslims and Christians resist the building and maintenance of roads, but with different motives. Christians do so because they believe that lack of roads averts the unwanted visitors, those being the Ottomans, while Muslims believe that developing roads means endangering their predominance as it allows a connection with Christian neighbors. Des Fossés reminds Daville of the imperial policy which their homeland has been implementing at the time: "After all, Monsieur Daville, we French have swallowed half of Europe and we shouldn't be surprised that those countries we haven't yet occupied look with mistrust at the roads our armies construct on their borders" (66). It is quite clear to him that there is no merciful intention hidden behind the mission of road construction, but the interest of the empire which it represents. With regard to this, it is important to mention Aimé Césaire's endeavor to draw a clearer line between colonization and civilization and to reveal the perfidious politics which often represents colonizers as bearers of progress, those who cure diseases, build roads, and improve the standard of living in the so-called developing countries (1996, 34).⁷

As Božidar Jezernik points out, "After the Age of Enlightenment, the Balkans were perceived as at once near (geographically) and far (culturally)" (2004, 25). The Balkans have never represented a geographically neutral term, but it has always implied a certain ideological omen and negative connotation – European Turkey or Turkey in Europe, the East, the Middle Ages, filth, passivity, unreliability, disrespect for women, unscrupulousness, opportunism, lack of civilization, backwardness, laziness, superstition, sluggishness, and so on (22–23). This corpus of metaphors belonging to frontier Orientalism is noted in different variations in almost all foreign representatives in Travnik. Daville, just like the vizier, explains the "backwardness" of the people with their alleged "innate ill-will" (67); for him, they are irreparably "malicious, wild and idle" (64). He met everything that came from the Bosnians with disgust and mistrust, and the same applied to the Oriental music which particularly irritated him, just like it irritated the Austrian consul von Mitterer. Daville was brought to despair by "Bosnian singing" (116). In the first days of his stay in Travnik, he was already awakened by the unbearable "sound of the Bairam drums and pipes" (16), "gipsy music which grated on the ears" (14). Musa the Singer is the symbol and true reflection of the

environment which is dominated by brandy, idleness, coarseness, and vulgarity, as Daville puts it:

I have heard these people singing and I have seen that they put into their songs the same savagery and unhealthy frenzy they put into every other aspect of their material and mental existence. I once read the travel notes of a Frenchman, who had journeyed through these parts more than 100 years ago and heard these people, he wrote that their song was more like the whining of dogs than singing. [...] I have seen them rolling their eyes as they sang, grinding their teeth and beating their fist against the wall, either because they were drunk on brandy or simply driven by an inner need to wail, draw attention to themselves and destroy things. And I have come to the conclusion that none of this has anything to do with the music and singing one hears among other peoples. It is simply a way for them to express their hidden passions and base desires to which, for all their lack of restraint, they could not otherwise give rein – for nature itself would prevent it (122).

Daville will even say that there is far less “spite and insensitivity” in the howling of dogs (122), and the Austrian consul agrees, as he also suffered at the hand of that “wailing and shrieking” (122) which echoed from the gardens, taverns, and streets. Von Mitterer outlined the Oriental, Bosnian music as a reflection of ancient, primeval pain and misery (“Urjammer”), while the French consul claims that those horrendous melodies are still only “the fury of savages who have lost their simplicity” (122). Not only music but also the silence of this area is represented in the novel as ominous and disturbing – “insidious, seductive, eastern silence” (126). Not even Des Fossés is immune to the sounds of Travnik and its surroundings – on one occasion, the melody and song from the Catholic church remind him of the bleating of sheep, “peasant wail” (295), in which he recognizes the same “Urjammer” which von Mitterer discusses regarding Musa’s song. On the other hand, the music produced by Anna Maria’s harp is “the music of the spheres” to Des Fossés (238). Analyzing travel accounts, Bülent Aksoy writes how Europeans perceived the Ottoman/Turkish music starting from the 15th century. Initially, they were mistrustful, as they considered it to be aggressive and inappropriate, while the European melodies were incomparable to the Ottoman ones: “Almost all the observers complained about the ‘noisy’ performance of the mehter, and expressed that Ottoman music, which was in fact the music they heard on the streets, grated on the nerves” (2010, 167). Later on, during the 17th and 18th centuries, Europeans start an intense, serious, and meticulous study of the Ottoman music (168–172). Analyzing the Austrian mythological-historical narrative, Gingrich notes the tendency of neglect, negation or even distortion of the complex interactions between the Turks and Central Europe. Thus the Oriental influence on the local languages, clothing, music, food, furniture, architecture, and flora is either completely ignored or considered a war trophy, which only strengthens the existing “violent opposition between an illusory, coherent ‘us’ and a dangerous or humiliated Turkish ‘them’ on the other side of the frontier” (1996, 111).

The paper uses several key examples from Andrić’s novel to illustrate a variant of frontier Orientalism, within which the Bosnian, local Muslims and the rest of the inhabitants of Travnik (whether they are Orthodox Christians, Catholics or Jews) are doubly Orientalized and marginalized, both by the European representatives

and by the Ottoman authorities. From the point of view of the European representatives, although territorially part of the Old Continent, Travnik is perceived as still not quite European and not European enough, unenlightened and barbaric, ruinously “infected” by the Oriental influences. The negative images constructed by the Western consuls, who are primarily guided by the imperial pretensions towards this area, are a product of endeavors to justify the occupation of this frontier territory by portraying its population as backward, unenlightened, and so in dire need of being elevated to a certain civilizational level. Furthermore, the desire for dominance often contains fear of the different and unknown, as well as deep anxiety due to one’s own identity being threatened, which requires a confirmation at the expense of the Other, who is then represented as inferior and subjugated. The consequence of the entire process is the inability to empathetically approach the other with an open desire to recognize similarities as well as differences and then to establish an authentic communication.

NOTES

- ¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak points out that we are yet to talk and write about the “European envisioning of the Balkans” in the future: “The relationship of postcolonial theory towards the Balkans as a metaphor represents the key task of our world” (2003, 7).
- ² Aleksandar Palavestra, in his work “Archaeological Excursion into Proximal Colony”, writes about the Austro-Hungarian government in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the end of the 19th century and its specific “long-term project of ‘civilising’ Bosnia and Herzegovina” (2014, 669), in order to “pacify the backwater Turkey, a barbaric province full of bandits and convert it into a civilised European country” (688). He also points out that after the Austro-Hungarian annexation the described area became “the first Austro-Hungarian colony, the only one on the European soil ” (670), referring to the researches and papers by Robert Donia and Clemens Ruthner, who share the same attitude and provide solid arguments in favor of the thesis that after 1908 Bosnia and Herzegovina became an Austro-Hungarian proximate colony, a colony within Europe (internal colony) (Donia 2006; 2008; Ruthner 2002, 2003, 2008). Gingrich also supports the view of the colonial presence of the Austrian monarchy in the area of Bosnia from 1878 to 1918 (1996, 106).
- ³ In the novel, Andrić uses the term “Turks” to refer to one’s religious denomination, not to ethnicity. Therefore, the Muslim inhabitants of Bosnia are not Turks, but ethnic Slavs of Muslim faith. The same goes for the term “Serbs”. Andrić’s Serbs in the novel are the members of the Orthodox Church, rather than an ethnic group.
- ⁴ The aspects of space in the novel are elaborated on by Renate Hansen-Kokoruš in the paper “Space and Perspective in *Bosnian Chronicle* by Ivo Andrić” (2009, 77–91).
- ⁵ Andrić testifies several times about the painstaking gathering of the material in conversations with his contemporaries (Dimitrijević 1991, 30–32; Jandrić 1977, 309).
- ⁶ Enver Kazaz deals with the imperial ideology in the novel *Bosnian Chronicle* in his paper “The third world and its wisdom of exclusion” (2006, 267–283).
- ⁷ The mentioned problem is also discussed in the present author’s study *Terra Amata vs. Terra Nullius* within the chapter “The critics of the concept of colonialization as civilization by Aimé Césaire and Edward Said” (Arsenijević Mitrić 2016, 31–73).

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Orientalist Discourse in Ivo Andrić's "Bosnian Chronicle"

Frontier Orientalism. Ivo Andrić. Orientalist discourse. Bosnia and Herzegovina. Balkans in literature.

Ivo Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle* represents Travnik as a city on the frontier, the city in a fissure, "a half-open book" which through the novel turns into a symbol of mutual illegibility of the characters. Each one of them remains in a way shut into their own ideas of the other one standing against them, so it becomes clear that this novel writes out the discourse of difference. In this paper, we shall analyze the examples of Orientalist discourse which Andrić incorporated into the novel through the characters that represent the European deputies (Austro-Hungarian and French) in Travnik and through their often stereotypical attitudes towards the country to which they were sent to office.

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