TELLING MEN IN THE YUGOSLAV HISTORICAL NOVEL:

MALE HOMOSOCIALITY AND QUEERNESS IN IVO ANDRIĆ AND MEŠA SELIMOVIĆ

By

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Slaven Crnić

Abstract

This dissertation explores the poetic construction and narrative significance of normative and non-normative masculinity in four canonical male-authored Yugoslav historical novels: Ivo Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle* (*Travnička hronika*, 1945) and *Omer Pasha Latas* (*Omerpaša Latas*, 1977) and Meša Selimović's *Death and the Dervish* (*Derviš i smrt*, 1966) and *The Fortress* (*Tvrđava*, 1970). Through the combined theoretical frameworks of masculinity studies, queer and literary theory, the thesis examines the ways in which novelistic depiction of social, political and historical change is hinged upon a variegated portrayal of masculinity. The project draws out the poetic usages of masculine gender and sexuality in each novel and rereads these canonical texts from the vantage point of the dynamics between male homosociality and queerness. It is from this perspective, I argue, that specifically gendered and sexualized modalities of masculine (non)normativity can be seen as the indispensable stage upon which the novel's central themes unfold. By employing literary methods of close and surface reading, each chapter reconstructs and analyzes the creative processes and sources behind Andrić's and Selimović's particular portrayal of masculinity. More specifically, the thesis follows the ways in which Andrić's drama of advancing modernity and Selimović's tragedy of individuals opposing autocratic rule ultimately depend on the poetic utilization of hegemonic masculinity, inviolate manhood, homosexuality, friendship and camaraderie.

From a broader theoretical perspective, this project sets off from the recent critical reassessment of the conceptual limits that the overreliance on antinormativity imposes on the fields of queer theory and masculinity studies. While acknowledging the political and theoretical contributions that critical approaches to normativity have made in both fields, this thesis argues in favor of preserving and reframing the notion of "normativity" when it comes

to male-authored literature. On the one hand, this dissertation points out the dynamic and mutable aspects of normativity when applied to both the authorial figure and to literary portrayals of masculinity. On the other hand, it makes the case for the relevance of what we can call *anti-antinormative* or *post-antinormative* queer approaches to canonical male-authored literature.

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as always, as everything,

for Franko Dota.

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Introduction

In the early days of my research, I presented at several venues what will eventually become a chapter of this thesis. This was a preliminary analysis of the Austrian consul von Paulich, a character from Ivo Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle*. The captivating, puzzling story of the beautiful and magnetic bachelor who avoids befriending men and deflects women's sexual advances has proven to be somewhat of an academic crowd-pleaser. My own reading of von Paulich aimed at reconstructing his gendered and sexual aspects, his impact on the novel's plot, and Andrić's creative strategies in creating this character, including intertextual references and possible influences. I argued that this was a queered character, although neither predictably nor monolithically so, which only made him all the more interesting. I used the example of von Paulich to illustrate my project's larger point, namely that the dynamics between male homosociality and queerness were much more important for the novel than it was previously recognized. What was interesting to me was a telling moment that occurred several times. Upon hearing the story and the analysis, several scholars who were specialists in queer studies, but were not acquainted with Yugoslav literature, reacted with some surprise at something I would mention in passing, something that, in my mind at the time, felt unrelated to my presentation: "Wait, what? The author was straight?"

On another occasion, while reading Robyn Wiegman's (2015) article about the merits and pitfalls of queer theory's "antinormativity", or its characteristic oppositional stance against normativity, I have encountered a scene that strangely reminded me of the anecdote I have just recounted. During a late 1980s academic conference on queer theory, Wiegman recounts, Eve Sedgwick's session "erupted in a contested shout-out about her identity. *Are you a lesbian?* Audience members demanded to know" (48). What struck me reading this scene was the way

in which an author's persona was not only publicly contested, but also, in this very act of contestation, revealed as having been owned by the public all along. Sedgwick being a non-homosexual woman was turned into grounds for questioning her involvement with an academic field concerning homosexual men. As Wiegman notes about Sedgwick, the "authority of her person was being called to question for the very authority she was taken to exert over a field" (ibid.). The phrase "the authority of one's person" stuck with me ever since. It seemed to have been referring to the same bundle of assumptions about gender, sexuality and authorship that have repeatedly made some people startled by the fact that the canonical author I worked on, the author who has created a complex queered character crucial for one of his plotlines, was himself not queer. Although completely different, these two examples share something that functions almost as a plot twist. Despite having written proficiently about male homosociality and queerness, the authors themselves were recognized as *not* queer themselves, or, in other words, they were suddenly recast as *normative*.

Sedgwick and Andrić are, of course, profoundly dissimilar authorial figures, most likely incomparable in any other context apart from the one I have now placed them in, the context in which their authorial persona gets explicitly invoked in terms of its gender and sexual normativity. The phrase "the authority of one's person", or, we should add, "the authority of one's normative person", applies differently in each case. In case of Sedgwick, her marriage to a man was used, at least in the above example, to destabilize her legitimacy as a queer theorist[1]. In case of Andrić, the unexpected mention of his heterosexuality provoked a surprise among queer theorists that signaled a more fundamental change in the way in which his work had been viewed up until that point. In other words, I realized that once the author had been framed as

[1] As Wiegman (2015) clarifies: "Eve's triangulated identification as a married woman who loved and studied gay male life in the context of Western cultural organization was taken as a political as well as a professional threat to feminist and lesbian feminist audiences" (57). A counterexample to Sedgwick's would be, Wiegman argues, that of Judith Butler whose work or authority had never been critically unpicked from a similar perspective.

normative, my presentation about his poetic usage of *non*-normative masculinity seemed to have attained a new interpretative valence. But what was this additional interpretative valence? What were the ways in which it could be theoretically approached? What did all this mean in light of my interpretative work focusing on novels that had never before been approached from a queer-inflected theoretical perspective? Finally, it was not because I had presumed that everybody would have known who Andrić was or anything about his personal life that I had not considered the question of his authorial persona in the context of gendered and sexual normativity. I had never considered it because, at a deeper level, I initially just did not think that a sexual and gendered normativity tacitly attached to his authorial figure mattered at all. What I came to realize was that my dissertation's effort at rereading Andrić's novels from a queer theoretical perspective was inseparable from a broader theoretical issue of the way in which normativity was conceptualized and contested in queer theory itself. The issue, then, was not a biographical one; it was epistemological. As Eve Sedgwick asks in *Tendencies* (2003): "What does knowledge *do* – the pursuit of it, the having and exposing of it, the receiving again of knowledge of what one already knows? *How*, in short, is knowledge performative, and how best does one move among its causes and effects?" (124; original emphasis). In the context of my dissertation, this general epistemological query translates into three overarching interconnected questions: How does an analysis of the poetic role of male homosociality and queerness change the dominant theoretical perspectives on the relationship between normative masculinity and literature? How do we frame an author's normativity in a way that neither essentializes it nor undermines it? And finally, what are the ways in which the collective consensus around the sexualized and gendered facets of the male author regulates gender- and sexuality-inflected literary criticism of his work?

My project investigates the poetic construction and semantic capabilities of masculine gender and sexuality in canonical Yugoslav male-authored historical novels. The thesis focuses

on gendered poetics in two authors and four novels: Ivo Andrić's (1892-1975) *Bosnian Chronicle* (*Travnička hronika*) and *Omer Pasha Latas* (*Omerpaša Latas*) and Meša Selimović's (1910-1982) *Death and the Derviš* (*Derviš i smrt*) and *The Fortress* (*Tvrđava*). Hailed as pinnacles of Yugoslav literature both during and after their lifetimes, Ivo Andrić, the winner of the 1961 Nobel Prize in Literature, and Meša Selimović are now pillars of several national literary canons in the wake of the Yugoslav state. Although my thesis dips into various aspects of Andrić's and Selimović's *oeuvres*, such as their short stories and life writings, each of my analytical chapters is centrally dedicated to a single novel. The four novels I have chosen as this thesis' backbone share a number of similarities and continuities. All of them are works of historical fiction set in Ottoman-ruled Bosnia, although their approaches to the genre vary. In *Bosnian Chronicle* (1945) and *Omer Pasha Latas* (1977), Andrić mainly focuses on the perspective of the foreign agents executing their empires' missions in Bosnia. Whether focusing on Western Europeans' conflicting efforts at carving out spheres of political influence at the borderline between East and West, as he does in the *Chronicle*, or on the catastrophic Ottoman retaliation against local insurgents, as he does in *Latas*, Andrić continually thematizes the far reaching political and social ramifications of colonialism, imperialism, Eurocentrism and Balkanism. Selimović, on the other hand, uses historical fiction in order to critically address the political shortcomings of Socialist Yugoslavia's state apparatus. Echoing his own World War 2 personal biography, in *Death and the Dervish* (1966), Selimović stages a conflict between an intellectual's failed effort to save his brother from the grip of autocratic State power. And in *The Fortress* (1970), he depicts a disillusioned young war veteran's struggle to survive in an unjust, corrupted world. Combining parts of his own biography with historical events, in both novels Selimović remains centrally preoccupied with issues such as wartime trauma and healing, political corruption and social justice. All of my analytical chapters provide

relevant biographical, contextual and historical information about the novel at hand. And all of them enter into a dialogue with extant critical reception.

The particular reason the four novels are isolated as this thesis' primary objects of research is because they are markedly male-oriented. What I mean by this is that, for one, the predominance of male characters and their mutual interactions is inextricably linked to the main plotlines. For instance, the diplomatic tensions in Andrić's *Chronicle* or the conflict between the corrupt powerholders and war veterans in Selimović's *The Fortress* are almost completely devoid of female impact and agency. Set mostly in male-dominated arenas such as military and high politics, these novels' dramatic plots are thus predominantly (or, at times, exclusively) unfolding among and because of men. Andrić's and Selimović's novels are populated by men who differ greatly in terms of their sexual proclivities, age, marital status, patriarchal attitudes, and antagonistic or solidarity-driven approaches towards other men. Indeed, these plots are so heavily dependent upon male characters that there would not be a lot of story left to tell if one were to cut them out of the novels. By shifting the perspective to the male author's interest in masculine normativity and queerness, I aim to refocus the novels I analyze as not only preoccupied with, but also centrally shaped by their poetic utilization of masculinity. This means positing gendered aspects of the novel as demonstrably partaking in constructing themes that are seemingly unmarked by issues of gender and sexuality. Whether focusing on the internal strife governing hegemonic masculinity or queer disentangling of normative male bonds, my thesis continually points towards the crucial theoretical importance in attending to masculine normativity and queerness simultaneously and in equal measure. I have tried to capture the scope and stakes of my thesis with the conceptual title of *Telling Men.* My project at one and the same time attends to various "telling men": men who tell stories; men about whom stories are told; and men that are "telling" by virtue of being indicative and spurious, men who raise eyebrows and incite gossip, or, as Foucault (1978) had famously put

it, have their queerness "written immodestly on [their] face and body because it was a secret that always gave itself away" (43).

My thesis zeros in from different angles at the cusp of male homosociality and queerness and the ways in which they are poetically used to stage, dramatize, undo or redo such novelistic themes as modernity and social justice. No matter how subtle or heavy-handed, homophobically off-putting or lyrically enchanting, what all of these men have in common is that they not only represent various types of masculinities, but also poetically construct the novels' overarching themes. The main endeavor this thesis sets before itself is to make this gendered poetics visible and available for theorization. As such, my project continually combines insights and concepts from conventionally separated lines of inquiry: masculinity studies and queer theory. Chapter 1 serves as this project's detailed theoretical elaboration in which I build my overall theoretical framework, address the three research questions formulated above and delve deeper into the notions I have brushed upon in this Introduction, including masculinity studies' and queer theory's approaches to "normativity" and "antinormativity". What I want to expand upon in the remainder of these introductory notes are the two concepts grounding my literary analyses: male homosociality and queerness.

On the Cusp of Male Homosociality and Queerness

I use "male homosociality" and "queerness" as umbrella terms that cover and jointly produce a series of other mutually imbricated concepts that I explore in detail in Chapter 1 and the rest of my thesis. I now wish to briefly introduce "male homosociality" and "queerness", their theoretical origins and usages, and the relationship between the two. This will not only serve as a general conceptual and theoretical roadmap for the following theoretical chapter (and the

rest of the thesis) but will also introduce the project's overarching problematics of the poetic usages of male (non)normativity and gendered (un)belonging.

The relationship between "homosociality" and "queerness" remains a theoretically murky terrain. Originating in social sciences, the concept of "homosociality" refers to social relations and practices between persons of the same sex (Sedgwick 1985; Haywood et al. 2018). Yet, although the concept could in principle denote homosexual or otherwise non-normative relations, it has mostly been used in research focusing on predominantly or exclusively normative male-dominated social arenas:

> A popular use of the concept is found in studies on male friendship, male bonding and fraternity orders. It is also frequently applied to explain how men, through their friendships and intimate collaborations with other men, maintain and defend the gender order and patriarchy. (Haywood et al. 2018, 56)

As a consequence, "male homosociality" has been conceptually mostly tied to the notion of heterosexual masculinity and its inner social dynamics, one of which is the constitutive patriarchal exclusion of women and homosexuality (ibid.).

A radical understanding of male homosociality can be found in the work of the feminist theorist Luce Irigaray. In her influential text *This Sex Which Is Not One* (1985), Irigaray coined the neologism "hom(m)o-sexuality" to describe the masculinist bonds that structure patriarchal societies. Drawing from Claude Lévi-Strauss' influential idea of traffic in women (i.e. an exchange of women via marriage that establishes and maintains power relations between men), Irigaray viewed *all* bonds between *all* men as invariably implicated in the subordination of women. Patriarchal hom(m)o-sexuality, Irigaray argued, established a culture in which men exchanged women, signs, commodities and currency:

> The use of and traffic in women subtend and uphold the reign of masculine hom(m)o-sexuality, even while they maintain that hom(m)o-sexuality in speculations, mirror games, identifications, and more or less rivalrous appropriations, which defer its real practice. Reigning everywhere, although prohibited in practice, hom(m)o-sexuality is

> played out through the bodies of women, matter, or sign, and heterosexuality has been up to now just an alibi for the smooth workings of man's relations with himself, of relations among men. (Irigaray 1985, 172)

Judith Butler (1995) subsequently expanded Irigaray's concept of hom(m)o-sexuality into the realm of literary theory. In her discussion on Plato's dialogue *Phaedrus* and Thomas Mann's novella *Death in Venice,* Butler analyzed how certain scenes of homoerotic desire indicate not a homosexuality, but homophobic hommosexuality: a desexualized, spiritualized desire that tries to completely circumvent women in establishing bonds between men, and culminates in a scene of women-less reproduction that Butler terms "a fantasy of masculine autogenesis" (375).

However, to this day, the most influential take on male homosociality was Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's seminal 1985 book *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. With a focus on the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth-century English literature, and especially the novel, Sedgwick retraced the various ways in which historical forms of male homosociality, homosexuality and homophobia entered and shaped canonical works. Indeed, sexuality and literature in general, and male homosociality and literary representation in particular were so mutually imbricated that there was no need to "delineate a separate male-homosocial literary canon … [because] the European canon as it exists is already such a canon, and most so when it is most heterosexual" (Sedgwick 2016, 17). Sedgwick's predecessor in this type of analysis was Réne Girard who was the first to interpret heterosexual romantic plots in canonical European novels as representations of a triangulated homosocial desire. Girard (1965) demonstrated how classical plots of male rivals competing for a beloved woman were not actually structured around the central female character, but were in fact set in motion by the fascination and emotional investment the two male rivals hold for each other: "The hero sees himself in the rival he loathes" (300). Sedgwick calibrated the scope of Girard's schematization in order to accommodate Foucault's historicizing of the phenomenon of

sexuality. This allowed her to recognize fundamental changes in representations of male homosocial bonds in the 19th century, especially the emergence of the paranoid Gothic novel that thematizes (in Sedgwick's reading) homophobia and, later on, a specific body of literature that explicitly addresses male homosexuality understood in modern terms.

Sedgwick's *Between Men* was an attempt to theorize the male homosocial spectrum with homosexuality *included*, rather than using the concept of homosociality as it was devised in social sciences, namely, to exclude homosexuality from consideration from the start and focus exclusively on supposedly heterosexual practices, such as male bonding. Drawing from Lévi-Strauss' theory on traffic in women, yet in a stark contrast to Irigaray's concept of hom(m)o-sexuality, Sedgwick's concept of "male homosocial desire" emphasized the ways in which the subordination of women in heterosexist patriarchal societies shared similarities with the oppression of homosexual men. The concept of male homosocial desire, furthermore, postulated an existence of a continuum of male homosocial relations fractured by the modern invention of the category of the "homosexual" and new forms of homophobia. What emerged with the homosexual, Sedgwick argued, was a terrorist homophobia, and not a genocidal one, because it did not aim at eradicating a minority of homosexual men, but to manipulate "the whole range of male bonds that shape the social constitution" (Sedgwick 2016, 86). Sedgwick thus showed the damaging partiality of an analysis based in a strict delineation of homosociality from homosexuality. By introducing "desire" to the concept of male homosociality, Sedgwick did not mean to implicitly postulate an underlying or latent homosexuality as a cause or an effect of homosocial patriarchy. The point was rather to emphasize the *structural* nature of male homosocial bonds by introducing the notion of "desire" in a way that was "analogous to the psychoanalytic use of 'libido' — not for a particular affective state or emotion, but for the affective or social force" (ibid., 2).

My dissertation purposefully does not use Sedgwick's notion of "male homosocial desire", but rather upholds the normativity-centered definitional line of "homosociality" separate from the non-normativity-centered "queerness", while looking at zones of their productive interaction. This is because the maintenance of the distinction between the two concepts enables a parallel theoretical reliance on conventionally separated research approaches of masculinity studies and queer theory that have developed since the time of *Between Men*. Although one is mostly associated with male normativity, while the other refers to non-normativity, both homosociality and queerness share certain conceptual similarities. In particular, both point towards an open-ended, processual understanding of gender-based practices. By focusing on the literary coexistence of masculine normativity and non-normativity, my thesis analyzes the specific poetic ways in which male homosociality and queerness are utilized to poetically structure and elaborate the novels' central themes. Crucially, the literary representations of masculinities I analyze are quite distinct from each other. Regardless of the particular concept I use to analytically grasp them, my entire project argues that all of them emerge precisely from distinct dynamics between homosociality and queerness. These two foundational theoretical concepts are thus meant to facilitate analysis across the continuum of male bonds, without the interpretative exhaustion in relations either devoid of sexual desire or ones that explicitly address homosexuality. And most importantly, while upholding the conceptual singularity of each, my dissertation continually traces, delineates and analyzes the semantic machinery which operates at the telling terrain upon which male homosociality and queerness coexist in productive uneasiness and give rise to all the other concepts my project crucially revolves around and the phenomena they relate to: "hegemonic masculinity" (Chapter 2), "inviolate manhood" (Chapter 3), "pervert" and "eunuch" (Chapter 4), "friendship" (Chapter 5) and "camaraderie" (Chapter 6).

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1 is the thesis' theoretical chapter. It is divided into two main parts, each centered on one of the two main fields this dissertation engages with: masculinity studies and queer theory, respectively. The red thread connecting the two parts is the question of how these two fields conceptualize, contest and negotiate normativity and antinormativity. In the first part of Chapter 1, I first look at masculinity studies' field-defining problematics of normative masculinity's invisibility as a particular gender. Through an overview of foundational, contemporary and more specific scholarship emerging at the intersection of masculinity and literary studies, I follow several ways the field has approached normative masculinity's conceptual invisibility and its role in allowing masculinity to function as proxy for a universal notion of humanity. In this regard, I focus on the analytical framework of the "social document" in literary masculinity studies and the concept of "hegemonic masculinity", both equally invested with undoing the gendered un-markedness of masculinity by bringing into the limelight its historicity, fractures and heterogeneity. Through an overview of critical accounts of masculinity studies' overemphasis on masculine subjectivity as always in a state of crisis, I broach the question of how masculine normativity can be framed outside the framework of antinormativity. It is here that I define my own notion of "the normative male author" as this dissertation's proposed solution to the question of how normativity can be thought of without resorting to, on the one hand, essentialism and, on the other hand, antinormativity.

The second part of chapter 1 follows the recent critical turn towards antinormativity in queer theory. More specifically, I first summarize some of the recently proposed theoretical and historical genealogies of antinormativity, and then follow the ways in which an uncritical adoption of antinormative presuppositions in queer literary studies has been shown to result in a reductive understanding of normativity as necessarily static and backward-looking. Taking cue from these studies, and further complicating habitual antinormativity, I argue that Andrić

and Selimović cast both normative and non-normative masculinity as dynamic and future-oriented. Finally, I end the chapter by discussing the two methods of reading I employ, namely close and surface reading, and their pertinence for centralizing and reconstructing the poetic importance that male homosociality and queerness assume in the context of "the normative male author".

With a shared central focus on Ivo Andrić's 1945 novel *Bosnian Chronicle* (*Travnička hronika*), Chapters 2 and 3 work in close conjunction. Chapter 2 is focused on the *Bosnian Chronicle's* depiction of the internal incongruities and competitiveness, but also the deep sense of belonging among its normative male characters. This chapter relies on and further elaborates upon the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" (as discussed in Chapter 1) in order to map out the ways in which male sexuality and gender normativity poetically stage the novel's general theme of Western European and Ottoman geopolitical conflicts in 18th century Bosnia. Crucially, the chapter hinges the depicted political conflicts and solidarities between normative male characters upon the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity. Thus, the chapter takes a closer look at generational differences between men, their clashing approaches to literary poetics, their shared patriarchal control over women and an expulsion of male homosexuality.

Chapter 3 builds directly upon the preceding one, but introduces a change of perspective. In this chapter, I mainly focus on the singular character of von Paulich, the mesmerizingly beautiful and distanced military man freshly dispatched from Vienna to Bosnia where he is to serve as the new consul. Theoretically, this chapter will frame von Paulich as Andrić's special take on the literary trope of "inviolate manhood", that is, the ranks of magnetic male characters determinedly uncoupling themselves from the prospects of heterosexual love and homosocial friendship. Von Paulich, I argue, is a figure whose sexuality and gender are intrinsically connected to his political aims, yet in ways contrasting those analyzed in Chapter 2. In particular, I analyze von Paulich's gender- and sexuality-related aspects such as his

volitional bachelorhood and appreciation of art and artifice, his coldness and beauty, his disinterestedness to romance with women and friendship with men, and his conflict with a subordinate that functions as his complete antipode. Alongside an analysis of Andrić's creative choices and strategies in the creation of von Paulich, and the character's embeddedness within a wider intertextual tradition of depicting male non-normativity and inviolability, Chapter 2 also posits these gendered and sexualized aspects of von Paulich as being intrinsically interwoven with another theme. Namely, the chapter argues that von Paulich's inviolability and ensuing conflicts caused by it are connected to his political mission of ushering in modernizing processes to Bosnia. Thus, von Paulich not only reveals himself as a figure that necessitates an in-depth look from the angle of queer literary theory, but also enables a different reading of *Bosnian Chronicle* as a whole by opening up the theme of the approaching era of modernity and its destructiveness.

Chapter 4 is invested in the connections between male sexuality of modernity as well, but from a completely reversed angle. In this chapter, I focus on Andrić's novel *Omer Pasha Latas* (*Omerpaša Latas*) published posthumously in 1977. The backbone of this chapter is an analysis of the story of Kostake Nenišanu, a femicidal *maître d'* in the household of the Ottoman field marshal Omer Pasha Latas. Building upon, but also departing from extant scholarly reception of Kostake Nenišanu's narrative that focuses on his dark psychological profile and homicidal madness, my reading brings at the forefront another aspect to this story. In particular, I map out and theorize the novel's larger discursive matrices that overlap and subsequently pull apart the sexual and gendered aspects of Kostake. Starting with a discussion of the notion of sexual "ambiguity" and its specific connection to the character of Kostake, the chapter analyzes the ways in which the novel stages and bifurcates larger social interpretations of Kostake's oddities. These oddities, as the chapter reconstructs from the novel, have to do with Kostake's upbringing, social relations, professional choices and appearance. I argue that

Kostake's unusual sexual and gendered profile ultimately crystalizes into two culturally specific figures of the male deviant: on the one hand, the heavily sexualized Western notion of a dangerous individual, and on the other hand, the figure of the eunuch as framed by Orientalizing, anxiety-ridden cultural fantasies. Again, as was the case with masculine figures in previous chapters, one of the aims of my analysis is to show Kostake's poetic connection to the novel's larger theme. In this case, my chapter proposes that it is precisely through an analysis of the dual social sexual discourses overwriting Kostake that we can also tackle the novel's additional broader themes. Namely, I argue that Kostake's plight dramatizes the geopolitical conflict between Ottoman modernity and local Bosnian population and, by the same token, expands the novel's purview from Omer's localized military campaign onto a global power struggle.

Chapters 5 and 6, comprising the second part of my thesis, are dedicated to Meša Selimović's two most important novels, *Death and the Dervish* (*Derviš i smrt*) and *The Fortress* (*Tvrđava*) respectively. While the first part of the thesis, focusing on Ivo Andrić, mainly revolved around conflictual and destructive aspects of hegemonic masculinity, inviolate manhood and queerness, in the second part I look more closely at the more prospectively utopian capacities of male friendship, mutual nurture and elective kinship. The final two chapters are thus thematically and theoretically closely linked, with both focusing on Selimović's poetic usage of male homosociality and queerness to stage the broader concerns of war and war veterans, postwar societies and social justice. I begin Chapter 5 with an overview of Jacques Derrida's analysis of the Western concepts of brotherhood and masculine friendship. I then analyze how an idealized form of male friendship appears in and poetically structures Selimović's *Death and the Dervish*. More specifically, by looking primarily at the two main characters, the chapter analyzes Selimović's depiction of potential social change as dependent upon wielding male friendship against corrupted State power. I trace the political

significance of male friendship by looking at the ways in which the novel thematizes its capacities to heal trauma, subvert structural inequalities and resist state violence. I close the chapter by looking at the final downfall of male friendship as depicted in the *Dervish*, including the thus far mostly overlooked theme of male queerness.

Chapter 6 continues to look at the political aspects of male friendship in Selimović's next novel, *The Fortress*. Instead of using a ruminating intellectual as its narrator, as was the case in the *Dervish*, here Selimović introduces a much cruder voice of a young, very poor war veteran. With this in mind, I analyze the shift in the theme of male friendship. I propose the notion of "camaraderie" as a specific form of horizontal homosociality as the most useful concept to describe the novel's idealization of political utopianism of male bonds. Simultaneously, I also analyze Selimović's explicitly queer male characters and their complicity with the corrupt State apparatus. I close the chapter by critically approaching the tacit, yet firm patriarchal normativity arising from male camaraderie that ultimately overpowers and subdues women and queer men.

And finally, in my concluding remarks, I recap the most salient points of the whole project, tackle possible directions for future research and map out the thesis' overall contributions.

Chapter 1. Dialing Back Antinormativity and Framing the Normative Male Author

An apt title for an imagined book about the reception of Eve Sedgwick's field-defining *Between Men* could be *Between Disciplines*. Todd Reeser (2015) noted that the status of *Between Men* is indicative of a broader divide between social sciences' and humanities' approaches to masculinity. Despite the influence Sedgwick's theory of homosociality exerted on both fields, in social-science-based research on masculinities, in contrast to literary studies, *Between Men* is "rarely cited or discussed" (Reeser 2015, 29-30). And although *Between Men* was initially "often, if hyperbolically, described as the point of origin for queer studies" (Jagose 1996, 119), it since seems to have been more or less eclipsed in its significance by Sedgwick's next book, the 1990 *Epistemology of the Closet.* The year of *Epistemology's* publication has since attained the status of an *annus mirabilis* for queer theory. In just three months' time, the readers were introduced to Sedwick's *Epistemology* and Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble,* two texts subsequently often lumped together as the "ur-texts of queer theory" (Jagose 2015, 35). Somewhat ironically, given Sedgwick's emphatic argument in *Between Men* about the necessity to overcome the separation of homosocial- and homosexuality-focused scholarship, it seems that the book itself came to exemplify the very bifurcation that increasingly separated the nascent fields of masculinity studies and queer theory.

A sketched out conventional history of queer theory would go something like this. Queer theory emerged within the US academia during the 1990s, with the term itself first used in 1991 by Teresa De Lauretis (Hall 2003, 55). Up until then, the word "queer[2]" was used,

[2] As Sedgwick (1994) explains in *Tendencies,* "queer" etymological roots connote transversality: "it comes from the Indo-European root -*twerkw,* which also yields the German *quer* (transverse), Latin *torquere* (to twist), English *athwart*" (viii).

among other ways, as a term of insult, thus its theoretical uptake marked a "reappropriation of the homophobic slur" (Cusset 2008, 152). Heavily influenced by feminism and French poststructuralism, queer theory sought out to challenge the perceived shortcomings of gay and lesbian studies "which were often essentialist and oppositional (with gay and straight clearly differentiated)" (ibid.). Queer theory adopted and methodologically employed a key poststructuralist strategy of treating every notion of stable identity as "a cultural fantasy rather than a demonstrable fact" (Jagose 1996, 82). The re-appropriated homophobic slur came to signify an intellectual movement, artistic practices, and forms of activism that defy normative categories of stable identities (even though it is sometimes used solely as a synonym for "gay" or "lesbian") (Jagose 1996; Benstock, Ferris and Woods 2002; Sullivan 2003). The intellectual history of the concept of "queer" can thus be summed up in the following way: "'Queer' has been deployed as an affirmative and performative term which resists becoming a fixed category" (Wolfreys, Robbins and Womack 2006, 82).

As we can see, there is a discourse of resistance and opposition to stability and identity flagging each aspect of queer theory's developmental narrative. This discourse of "antinormativity" crucially informs a central feature of queer theory, namely the oppositional grounds in which queer theory sets up the relationship between normativity and queerness. As Robyn Wiegman and Elizabeth A. Wilson (2015) explain, "antinormativity reflects a broad understanding that the critical force of queer inquiry lies in its capacity to undermine norms, challenge normativity, and interrupt the processes of normalization—including the norms and normativities that have been produced by queer inquiry itself" (4). Antinormativity was shown to have provided queer theory with a field-consolidating impetus, a distinct theoretical profile, and a political purpose built upon casting "antinormative subjects or practices as potent figures for some alternate horizon of political possibility" (Jagose 2015, 27). As Wiegman and Wilson (2015) further point out

> the history of queer theorizing has been shaped by an antinormative sensibility, one that unites the multiple and at times discordant analyses that comprise the queer theoretical archive into a field-forming synthesis. We call this synthesis *queer studies*, and we read its interdisciplinary consolidation around antinormativity as its most productive field-defining rule. (2)

Antinormativity has also, as we will see in this chapter, extended its influence on the neighboring field of masculinity studies. However, despite its consolidating effects and insights generated, antinormativity as such became a "rhetorical and structural 'tic' that repeats and repeats like a mantra of authentication in queer theory, and critical analysis more generally, … itself prescribed, 'expected' – a norm in its own right" (Kirby 2015, 98). Consequently, antinormativity has undergone a series of criticisms within both masculinity studies and queer theory. Queer theory in particular has been of late quite vocal about the need to rethink or abandon altogether the antinormative injunction (Jagose 2015; Wiegman 2015; Kirby 2015; Amin 2017; Nichols 2020). Most importantly for my project, antinormativity has been shown to have reduced the theoretical scope of how we think about normativity *within* queer theory. While queerness has been conceptually aligned with resistance and political change, normativity was cast as something restrictive and exclusionary, leading some queer theorists to call for an anti-antinormative reassessment of "the political common sense that claims that norms ostracize, or that some of us are more intimate with their operations than others, or that 'normative' is a synonym for what is constricting or controlling or tyrannical" (Wiegman and Wilson 2015, 12). Of course, this renewed interest in thinking about normativity outside the framework of antinormativity should not mean a return to essentialisms or identiterianisms of any sort. Rather, it signifies the need for an exploratory reframing of anti-essentialist epistemology that Vicki Kirby (2015) outlined with the following questions: "How should we circumscribe an entity or behavior as an appropriate starting point, one that is analytically separate from another? How, for example, can we identify or foreclose what is normative if

our departure point is one that already contradicts itself, one whose identity meanders all over the place and won't 'sit still'?" (99)

In this chapter, through a crisscrossed reading of the ways in which normativity has been theorized, conceptualized, contested and reaffirmed in masculinity studies and queer theory, I will explore the shortcomings of antinormativity and propose a new direction of thinking about normativity in the context of literary studies focused on male-authored fiction. My aim here is to provide *anti-antinormative* or *post-antinormative* theoretical answers to the following questions: How do we proceed with a literary analysis that centers on masculine homosociality and queerness in novels written by male authors who have exemplified paradigmatic gendered and sexual normativity? How do we define "masculine normativity" in a way that does not ascribe to it an immutable essence, yet also does not collapse it into "non-normativity"? How does an author's normative gendered and sexualized image regulate our critical apparatus? And finally, what would a queer method of reading literary texts without the antinormative injunction look like?

My aim here is not to suggest that abandoning antinormativity goes hand in hand with an abandonment of masculinity studies' and queer theory's critical legacy. To the contrary, the following chapter and my thesis as a whole aim to show that dialing back on antinormativity does not hinder gender-inflected research. By the end of this chapter, it should be clear that any attempt to think of male normativity as a mutable, dynamic and productive gendered and sexualized social phenomenon can only appear within the combined frameworks of masculinity studies and queer theory. Going back to the example of *Between Men* and its shifting importance in masculinity studies and queer theory, this chapter, then, is an exercise in

traversing the very space that is not only carved out, but also shared *between* these two fields of knowledge.

1.1. Masculinity Studies and the Problematics of the Normative Gender Invisibility

Inspired by feminist and gay and lesbian scholarship of the second half of the 20th century, critical approaches to masculinity, known today mostly as "masculinity studies", emerged in the late 1980s academic circles as a response to a lack of in-depth, specialized, and pro-feminist/anti-homophobic research on male life experiences and modes of socializing, cultural and artistic representations, and history. In particular, masculinity studies have focused on the ways in which the very notion of masculinity varies between and within cultures and across history, thus supplanting earlier ideas of monolithic or universal masculinity and patriarchy with a more nuanced understanding of the power dynamics and performativity inherent to both phenomena (Brod 1987; Kimmel 1994; Traister 2000; Horlacher 2015; Reeser 2015; Pellerin 2016; Gottzén, Mellström and Shefer 2020). Despite ongoing efforts to homogenize different approaches, methods and objects of study into a veritable interdisciplinary research field, masculinity studies have largely yielded a disparate body of work, rather than a unified discipline in and of itself (Reeser 2015; Pellerin 2016). However, this diverse field of research and theory shares a common focus in which my project partakes as well. Namely, masculinity studies have remained predominantly focused on *normative* masculinities, differing in this regard from other approaches to masculinity that focus on *non-normativity*, most notably queer theory, with which it remains in dialogue (Traister 2000; Kimmel 2002; Allan 2020).

In the following section, I will explore four important theoretical problems addressed and approaches developed in masculinity studies as means to conceptualize *normative*

masculinity. Namely, I will focus on the overarching issue of the "invisibility of masculinity", the subfield of "literary masculinity studies", the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" and the narrative of "masculinity-as-crisis". Through an overview of these four routes taken in framing normative masculinity, I will position my own take on what I call "the normative male author" at the end of this section. All four of these masculinity studies' conceptualizations of normative masculinity have grown out of a constant dialogue with feminist and queer theory and have mirrored many of the developments and challenges associated with the general post-structuralist understanding of gender. Post-structuralist and queer critical approaches to masculinity in the last three decades have collapsed implicit and explicit biological essentialisms that have established relations of causality or equivalence between masculinity-related social phenomena and cisgendered male bodies. By pulling focus towards masculinity as a performative social construct, rather than a manifestation of one's biological "factuality", the scope of what could be understood as masculinity broadened, increasingly encompassing forms of masculinity that need not be, and indeed often are not, related to cisgendered male bodies. As a consequence, masculinity studies have aimed to account for the internal heterogeneity, historical relativity and cultural arbitrariness of the phenomena the very term of "masculinity" might refer to (Adams and Savran 2002; Gardiner 2002; Reeser 2015; Pellerin 2016).

In this regard, a key theoretical axiom grounding much of masculinity studies' research has been the causal connection between masculine normativity, gender-based domination and conceptual *invisibility*. From their outset, critical approaches to normative masculinity have dealt with the effects of social, political and historical invisibility of masculinity as a particular *gender*. In the words of Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (1994): "new studies we were producing and looking for were about men *as men,* rather than as generic human beings whose gender went unnoticed and untheorized or at least undertheorized" (4). At stake here was the

un-markedness of normative masculinity's specific and quite particular genderness, an invisibility that allowed it to self-appoint itself as the "transcendental anchor and guarantor of cultural authority" (Traister 2000, 281).

Masculinity studies have thus been and still are critically disassembling the very mechanisms that have conceptually transcendentalized men into *universal* human beings, while relegating all the Others into manifestations of hierarchically demoted *particular*, gendered entities. Unlike categories marked by gender, such as "woman" or "homosexuality", normative masculinity's power was theorized as having been enabled by its invisibility: "by denying implicitly or explicitly that men were gendered, they could escape close scrutiny and resist critique or the need to change" (Reeser 2015, 16). The ideological ramification of masculinity's invisibility as a particular gender is the seeming neutrality of social gender-based domination: "As it had been the center, the norm from which all other gender identities had been defined, masculinity had always remained invisible as such, an invisibility that had been central to its successfully maintaining a hegemonic and privileged position" (Pellerin 2016, 1). Pierre Bourdieu (2002) theorized this system as "the masculine order" that represented itself as beyond discursive legitimation: "The strength of the masculine order is seen in the fact that it dispenses with justification: the androcentric vision imposes itself as neutral and has no need to spell itself out in discourses aimed at legitimating it" (9). Finally, serving as a proxy for universal humanity meant that masculinity "remained something of an unmarked (and therefore invisible) gender in political, social, and cultural contexts" (Horlacher 2015, 2).

1.1.1. Masculinity Literary Studies and the Framework of "Social Document"

With regards to fictional texts specifically, literature was rediscovered as a privileged depository of masculinity's representations, values, ideals, shortcomings and crises of legitimacy, as well as potential subversions (Hobbs 2013; Horlacher 2015; Pellerin 2016;

Armengol 2020). As is the case with masculinity studies' disciplinary heterogeneity described above, the field of masculinity studies' inquiries into literature is also still "largely unexplored in academia, especially in comparison to literary studies on women … the analysis of literary masculinities remains largely unpracticed and unknown" (Armengol 2020, 427). To this conclusion I must also add that what counts as "literary masculinity studies" is not necessarily determined solely by its thematic focus on masculinity in literature. As Alex Hobbs (2013) explained, "[l]iterary masculinity studies, like other gender studies approaches to literature before it, stems from sociological concepts. In this case, the critical framework employed by masculinity studies scholars originates in men's studies" (383). In other words, research that analyzes masculinities, but uses feminist or queer theory's apparatuses, would not, strictly speaking, be considered "masculinity studies". My research, however, combines queer theory and masculinity studies. Because half of my focus is on normative masculine homosocial ties, my theoretical framework necessarily draws from masculinity studies and its overall conceptual and theoretical apparatus, as I will further elaborate in this section. However, when it comes to literature specifically, there are some crucial differences between contemporary literary masculinity studies' and my thesis' approaches. For one, since its very beginnings[3], literary masculinity studies tend to overwhelmingly focus on literary works as "social documents" that "reflect different cultural conceptions of masculinity" (Armengol 2020, 428). In particular, literature is mostly conceived of as "a privileged space and epistemological medium where the manifold mechanisms of configuring ever different and divergent masculinities in the discursive condition becomes readable, knowable, and thereby also rewriteable" (Horlacher 2015, 5-6). In practical terms, this means that research applying

[3] For instance, James Riemer (1987) concluded: "One major implication of rereading American literature from a men's studies perspective … is the important role literary works can play in enlarging the base of men's studies knowledge through the possibility of viewing a significant portion of American literature, both popular and 'mainstream' works as social documents reflecting our society's ideals of masculinity" (289-290).

masculinity studies to literature most often aims to elucidate representations of masculinity that can be used as explanatory or even transformative frameworks for non-fictional masculinities. As Hobbs (2013) points out, "there are two linked applications of masculinity studies to literature: to consider the more private realms in which masculine identity may be formed and performed; and to isolate and examine positive examples of male protagonists who do not conform to masculine stereotypes" (391).

The idea that literary studies can both contribute to understanding real-life masculinities and potentially transform male readers is shared among the fields' formative inquiries into literary studies, such as Peter F. Murphy's *Fictions of Masculinity: Crossing Cultures, Crossing Sexualities* (1994), Ben Knights' *Writing Masculinities: Male Narratives in Twentieth-Century Fiction* (1999) and Berthold Schoene Harwood's *Writing Men: Literary Masculinities from Frankenstein to the New Man* (2000). Contemporary masculinity studies' inquiries into literature are still often aiming to uncover "alternative ways of being man" (Armengol 2020, 425).

Although my thesis partakes in masculinity studies' thematic focus on normative masculinity and adopts some of its terminology, it also diverges from most research combining masculinities and literary studies in its overall focus, the queer component of its theoretical framework and final argument. First, with regards to the focus and scope, my thesis is, as elaborated in the Introduction, premised upon the inextricability and continuity of male homosociality and queerness in the corpus. In that regard, it builds upon queer theory as much as – or even more – than it does on masculinity studies. Rather than focusing on literature as a "social document" that can serve as the basis for interrogating real-life men, my thesis is primarily interested in the ways in which male homosociality and queerness are *poetically* used to construct themes and meanings that are not connected to gender at first glance.

There is, however, an important point in which my thesis intersects with and draws from masculinity studies in general. My main aim is to explore how male authors construct and utilize dynamics both within and between male homosociality and queerness to poetic purposes. Given that most of extant scholarly reception of Andrić and Selimović has not theorized their male characters' gendered nature, all of my readings represent an effort to make visible the textual multiplicity and heterogeneity of normative and non-normative masculinities. Alongside elevating their visibility as specifically *gendered* characters in various ways, my thesis also argues that these men's gendered and sexual aspects have a broader poetic purpose. That is, I read the gendered aspects of their poetic construction as being intrinsically connected to the novels' larger themes such as the pitfalls of modernity in Andrić, or horizons of justice-driven social transformation in Selimović. Such themes, I argue, although seemingly unconnected to issues of masculine gender and sexuality, are in fact poetically constructed by and through the literary dynamics between male normativity and non-normativity. Finally, as each of my analytical chapters makes the case, it is through this focus on masculinity that the novels themselves become visible in a new light. By making masculinity visible and analyzable, my thesis also accesses previously overlooked topics in the corpus, such as the question of destructive modernity in Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle* or the politically healing nature of war veterans' storytelling in Selimović's *Death and the Dervish*.

There are, of course, complex and subtle ways in which literary masculinity studies' axiomatics of invisibility has had to account for instances in which masculinity is quite visible. For one, normativity can be intentionally visible precisely to reinforce its own status. In *Marked Men: White Masculinity in Crisis* (2000), Sally Robinson combined critical approaches to masculinity and whiteness in order to analyze male-authored literary representations of men's bodily suffering. Building upon the notion that social normativity of both whiteness and masculinity rests upon their invisibility or un-markedness, Robinson also argued that normative

masculinity, experiencing a crisis in the aftermath of post-1960s liberationist movements, produced a quite visible literary spectacle of auto-victimization through the pervasive figure of the wounded white man that displayed the normative majority's adoption of the minority's "politics of visibility" (20).

My project also follows instances in my corpus where normative masculinity appears self-consciously visible at the level of fiction, yet remains invisible at the level of scholarly reception. What I mean by "self-consciously visible" is that a lot of authorly attention was paid in creating these gendered representations and, furthermore, that they function as a powerful poetic device. My thesis aims to reconstruct both of these aspects. In the following chapters, there are important instances where normative masculinity grounds a strong sense of belonging among men that survives even when they are pitted against each other (as is the case with Andrić's depiction of European consuls in *Bosnian Chronicle*) or promulgates normative homosociality as a social and political remedy (as is the case with Selimović's depiction of male friendship). In order to account for the specificities of these gendered representations, I frame my findings within the novels' broader sociohistorical context and their authors' creative strategies. For instance, I look closely at the ways in which Andrić modified the specific gender- and sexuality-related aspects of the historical figures he reconstructed in his fiction. And I contextualize the centrality of male friendship and camaraderie in Selimović's novels by turning to extant scholarship on his experiences of and attitudes toward (post)war politics and personal loss. However, tying together all my analyses of the visibility, poetic construction and uses of normative masculinity is the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" to which I now turn.

1.1.2. Hegemonic Masculinity

The conceptual innovation of "hegemonic masculinity" was an especially influential masculinity studies' way to tackle the "invisibility and taken-for-grantedness" of normative masculinity (Howson and Hearn 2020, 43). From the late 1980s onwards, the concept has been used in everything from education studies and media studies to criminology and sports sociology, becoming arguably the most popular and influential concept to have originated within masculinity studies (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, 833). The concept of "hegemonic masculinity" was developed in order to account for the historical and cultural contingency, relativity, relationality and performativity intrinsic to gender-based systems of oppression. As Raewyn Connell (1995) originally formulated: "Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (77). Importantly, hegemonic masculinity "was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, 832). However, since it concretized "the currently most honored way of being a man" and subordinated other forms of masculinities, hegemonic masculinity "was certainly normative[4]" (ibid.).

I rely on the concept of hegemonic masculinity to frame two key aspects of my thesis. In both cases, I use the concept to point out the internal hierarches and conflicts *within* male normativity. In this I follow Demetrakis Demetriou (2001) who has usefully pointed out that Connell's original formulation comprises two distinct modalities of hegemony: external and internal hegemonic masculinity. While the former refers to male subordination of women, the

[4] Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) also noted that the very "idea of a hierarchy of masculinities grew directly out of homosexual men's experience with violence and prejudice from straight men" (831).

second refers to domination of some men over other men, "best exemplified by the hegemony of heterosexual over gay men" (Demetriou 2001, 341). Given my project's focus on specifically male homosociality and queerness, when writing about hegemonic masculinity, I am predominantly referring to its internal variant.

The first key way in which I use hegemonic masculinity is to map out and analyze the hierarchies among the variety of masculinities represented in my corpus. It has been suggested that one way in which literary studies could benefit from masculinity studies in general and the concept of hegemonic masculinity in particular was the perspective they shed on alternative, *non-hegemonic* models of masculinity in fiction and their potential effect on readers (Hobbs 2013). However, I use the concept of hegemonic masculinity precisely to zero in on and make visible the dominant normative homosocial bonds. In particular, I analyze their inner conflicts and exclusionary practices, but also practices of mutual help and belonging they often entail and the political importance they carry and represent. At the same time, my analyses explore the poetic function of these relations between men, tracing the various ways in which they poetically structure the novels' overarching themes. For instance, in the first three chapters, I will be analyzing how Ivo Andrić uses individual claims to hegemonic masculinity to stage a broader internal and external geopolitical conflict between the competing European and Ottoman Empires. An especially interesting example of such a dramatization of hegemonic masculinity will be the dyadic relationship between two opposing models of normative masculinity as embodied by the younger and older French consuls in chapter 2. And in the second half of my thesis, and especially the final chapter, I will be looking at the ways in which Meša Selimović uses rifts within hegemonic masculinity to stage a conflict between a corrupt circle of deviant powerholders and an oppressed community of disempowered men.

1.1.3. Theoretical Pitfalls of Antinormativity in Masculinity Studies

One almost paradigmatic route taken by both early and contemporary masculinity studies in its theoretical endeavor to make masculinity visible and analyzable as a particular gender has been to focus on moments of individual, collective or historical crises (Traister 2000; Gardiner 2002; Edwards 2006; Reeser 2015). On the one hand, given the field's emphasis on the importance of historical change in researching masculinities, as evident, for example, in the concept of hegemonic masculinity, masculinity studies have yielded a considerable research output focusing on historical moments of crisis: "While some took certain historical moments as more crisis-filled than other ones, other scholars viewed masculinity as always, in a certain sense, in a state of crisis" (Reeser 2015, 20). A corollary to this idea was the poststructuralism-inspired understanding of the unstable normative male subject. As mentioned earlier, masculinity studies have remained in close contact with queer theory, and this emphasis on critical ruptures within masculinities at an individual and collective level has formed mainly in response to the field's adoption of queer theory's presuppositions about the instability of the normative subject. This theoretical development has been aptly summarized by Todd Reeser (2015):

> If one of the presuppositions of queer theory is that male homophobia is attempting to expel the abject queer from within, then there is necessarily something queer about or within masculinity in the first place. Or, alternately, excessive forms of masculinity may point to an instability of masculinity that contains something queer. An anti-normative gender presentation, the hypersexual man, for instance, may act the way he does because he is attempting to expel, or is responding to, an anxiety of queerness within. (30)

In his oft quoted and provocatively titled article "Academic Viagra: The Rise of American Masculinity Studies" (2000), Bryce Traister offered a critical reading of masculinity studies' practical application of the notion of the "crisis" and its ramifications for conceptualizing normative masculinity. Although he does not use the term "antinormativity" specifically, Traister's text was evidently and unequivocally addressing *avant la lettre* the issue of

masculinity studies' adoption and application of queer theory's antinormative conceptual apparatus and orientation. Traister traced the effects of masculinity studies' dependance upon and usage of poststructuralist feminist and queer scholarship. In particular, focusing mainly on masculinity studies' adoption of Sedgwick's notion of male homosocial desire and Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, Traister's central argument was that masculinity studies have become overwhelmingly preoccupied with an idea of the masculine subject that was centrally marked by an internal crisis. In Traister's own words:

> A shared feature of these and other theoretical treatments of male identity formation and representation is that of the incoherent or paradoxical male whose fractured self is a function of identity formation. That is, such accounts proceed from a theoretical deconstruction of masculine subjectivity whose exposition is prior to the male self's emergence within history. In other words, it does not really matter in the theoretical account which historical pressure the American male faces. Identity after Butler ultimately performs independently and in fact prior to its historical manifestation. (295)

Alongside this internal crisis of subject-formation, there was also a focus on the historical development of feminism and gay rights activism that presumably causes a crisis of its own, one that received not only scholarly attention, but also widespread popular media coverage (ibid., 281). Expanding upon Traister's criticism, Judith Kegan Gardiner (2002) noted that the discourse of "masculinity crises" rested upon a falsified image of a historical moment of gender stability "when men were men, women were women, and everyone was happy with their social roles" (14).

Returning to Traister's critical reading of American masculinity studies specifically, the bulk of his argument rests upon the effects that the narrative of the crisis ultimately has on the masculinity studies' overall project of undoing the masculine gender's invisibility. The purported attempt to undo the tacit, invisible domination of the masculine subject is, according to Traister, that very subject's reinstitution by other means. Specifically, the overreliance on the narrative of "masculinity-as-crisis" becomes a regulatory script of its own that blurs the

politically coherent and dominant aspects of the masculine subject, while overemphasizing its allegedly deep-seated anxieties. There are several consequences to the "masculinity-as-crisis" explanatory framework. On the one hand, gay masculinity, within the narrative of crisis, remains firmly "other" to normative masculinity and is seen as one of the key triggers to the crisis itself. This means that within masculinity studies, gay masculinity is precluded from being considered on equal footing as normative masculinity, which makes Traister designate the field as "heteromasculine studies". On the other hand, the narrative of the crisis brings normative masculinity conceptually into close proximity to queerness:

> That the men formerly (and still) regarded paragons of normative masculinity stand revealed as anxious failures by the crisis theory of heteromasculine historiography may provide some comfort to the less successful, the less normative, the less erect – that is, the less "masculine" – among us. (Traister, 2000, 292)

Crucially, however, the narrative of normative masculinity makes it almost paradoxically impossible to address this "normativity" as anything other than "non-normativity":

> While historically and politically "queer" identities and practices have never enjoyed the privileges conferred on what has passed for the normative, masculinity-at/as-crisis organizes a rubric for articulating the masculine in which the contingent, the incomplete, and the unsure achieves something like a template for the expected, the predictable, the regular – indeed, the normal. To hold that all masculine genders are performative, incoherent, and anxious is to hold that incoherent and anxious gender performativity is normative; the incoherence of gender becomes its own kind of "regulatory fiction" to the degree that all claims to the contrary are treated as the kinds of defensive self-naturalizing gestures exposed by deconstructive gender theory as such. (Ibid., 296-297)

To simplify Traister's point here, the narrative of crisis in masculinity studies does precisely what it wants to undo: it makes normative masculinity once again invisible since it reframes the issue of "normativity" within a discourse that emerges out of an attempt to demonstrate the ultimate impossibility of any "normativity" as such. As Traister points out with regards to literary studies:

> Hawthorne, Poe, Melville, Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Howells, James, London, Norris, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Eliot: these former bastions of masculinist canonicity and vessels though which the patriarchal institutions of Americanist literary and cultural analysis assert themselves, are now "monumental anxieties", queer, non-normative, tentative, unsure, and very interesting *as men*. (Ibid., 297-298)

Although Traister's critical account of masculinity studies' crisis narrative tackles only American and America-focused texts published by 2000, the tendency to focus on masculine crises triggered by radical moments of historical change or a general incoherence of the masculine subject (or both simultaneously) can be seen in literary studies on masculinity focusing on literature beyond the United States and published after Traister's article. For instance, Michael Kane's (1999) *Mapping Masculinity in English and German Literature, 1880-1930* explores male-authored canonical representations of figures such as the double or Narcissus as having originated from a profound modern crisis of masculinity. Kane thus writes that "male fantasies of self-creation or self-reproduction in the 1880s [were a] realization that patriarchy itself and male patriarchal identity were in crisis" (5). Alice Ferrebe's (2005) concept of the "masculine text" (to which I will return later) also echoes the theoretical leitmotif of an internally unstable masculinity: "Masculinity, then, is an illusion. Instability is further built into the epistemological structure of that illusion itself" (14). Finally, Allan Johnson's (2017) *Masculine Identity in Modernist Literature* provides an account of and builds upon feminist scholarship on the early 20th century crisis of masculinity in order to focus on the connection between modernist literary narrative voice marked by elision and the post-World War 1 masculine trauma of physical mutilation and castration.

My point here is not that the explanatory framework of "crises" should be abandoned altogether or that it is somehow flawed beyond repair. Quite the contrary, there is ample evidence that a focus on periods of sudden historical changes and internal incoherences can still yield fascinating results, as evidenced by all the studies I have just mentioned. However, I

find Traister's critique of potentially overusing the framework of crisis extremely instructive for my own project in particular. As my thesis investigated the poetic uses of male homosociality and queerness in *normative* authors' *oeuvres,* the explanatory framework of "masculinity-as-crisis" narrative often seemed temptingly "subversive". However, rather than explaining away the queer component of my analyses as the authors' own homophobia or a sign of internal "anxiety", my aim was to point out the productive role queerness attains in the poetics of normative authors. Before exploring the latter idea in more detail in the following section of this chapter, in the rest of this section I wish to explain why and how I propose that the notion of "normativity" should be retained when approaching literature from the masculinity studies' angle, rather than collapsed into a general "non-normativity".

If we were to use the "masculinity-as-crisis" narrative with regards to Andrić and Selimović, claims could be instantly made that would undermine their normativity. Was Andrić himself not childless, and a bachelor until very late in his life when he married his deceased friend's widow? And was he not also subjected to constant gossip that he was in fact the woman's lover for at least a decade before his friend's passing? The arrangement became all the more scandalous in the late 1930s when Andrić, at the time serving as the Yugoslav ambassador in Germany, arranged for his future wife and her husband to move to Berlin (Martens 2019, 223). This hardly paints a pitch perfect image of a reproductive marriage-bound adult man. And was Selimović not expelled from the Communist Party after having committed adultery and divorcing his first wife, thus tainting, from the point of view of his comrades, the unassailable image of a virtuous Partisan fighter? That must have had left a chink in his sense of self-worth and must have had triggered gender-based anxiety and personal crises. His memoirs are certainly quite upfront about such sentiments, as I discuss in chapter 6 (Selimović 1976, 223-224). If we were to follow the "masculinity-as-crisis" line of reasoning, we could take these biographical facts as a starting point for rereading Andrić's and Selimović's novels

from the queer-inflected, anti-normative perspective, emphasizing, for example, their opposition to normative claims of marriage, reproductivity, domesticity, and kinship. *Bosnian Chronicle*, the novel I explore in chapters 2 and 3, certainly provides ample reason to be read as a critique, sometimes even whimsical and sardonic, of marital bliss and hetero-reproductive normativity. Andrić's habitual less-than-enthusiastic portrayal of marriage has been connected by his biographer, Michael Martens (2019), to personal skepsis and even fear at the prospect of marriage (230). And Selimović's turn towards an idealization of marriage in *The Fortress* is accompanied by his hero's peculiar hesitance, if not outright repulsiveness towards the prospects of biological offspring and fatherhood.

And yet, no matter the persuasiveness of such potential readings, what would be lost in the analysis would be the very idea of normativity. Going back to Traister's critique of masculinity studies' overreliance on anti-normativity, analyses emphasizing Andrić's and Selimović's willingness to break with social conventions of heteronormativity would inevitably cast them as "'monumental anxieties', queer, non-normative, tentative, unsure" figures (Traister 2000, 297-298). Finally, by engaging in protocols of reading guided by the notion of "crisis", I argue, the effort at making visible normative masculinity within the corpus would be eclipsed in favor of demonstrating that normativity is, in fact, not that normative at all. My project thus tackles the question of how can we look at normativity *as* normativity? What is there to be seen once our focus is turned away from the fractures and crises? How do we account for normativity once we acknowledge that it can be quite self-assured and not necessarily in crisis, although acutely aware of its Others and historical change?

1.1.4. Framing the Normative Male Author

The answer my thesis suggests has risen directly out of my focus on male homosociality and queerness and my subsequent findings. All my analyses explore the immense pliability of poetic usages of male homosociality and queerness. Throughout this thesis, I look at the poetic construction of specifically gendered and sexualized aspects of male characters and their mutual linkages, while at the same time exploring the ways in which they channel imperial conflicts, embody sociohistorical change and herald social justice. The frameworks of "social document" or "crisis" cannot account for the abundance, the complexity, the variety and meticulousness with which Andrić and Selimović wrote about masculinity in all its guises. In other words, my thesis postulates that the normative male author himself should not be cast as an example of "masculinity-as-crisis", inadvertently voicing social or personal gendered insecurities, anxieties and failures, and mapping out his own distancing from normativity. What I propose is that we look at literary the text as having been originated by a figure that is very well aware of masculinity's internal frictions – including, crucially, the friction between normativity and queerness – and utilizes them as parts of his creative strategies. For all these reasons, retaining the theoretical pertinence of the idea of "normative masculinity" has led my project to map out the ways in which its internal heterogeneities, crises, its zones of risky proximity to and violent disavowal of queerness, its many gendered and sexualized forms are all poetically used in and for novel-writing.

It bears pointing out that my usage of "normative male author" is not an attempt to essentialize anyone's gender or sexuality. I am not, of course, resorting to the very concepts queer theory has most vehemently and persuasively demonstrated as ultimately untenable: a stable and coherent gender identity conjoined with a likewise stable and coherent sexual orientation. However, I also wish to eschew framing "normativity" predominantly or exclusively in terms of its crises, fractures and instabilities. My usage of the "normative male

author" is meant to address the issue of normativity on its own terms, rather than analyze it with an antinormative outcome in sight. It is only with the figure of the "normative male author" in sight that his poetic usages of male homosociality and queerness can be taken into consideration as productive and even indispensable creative strategies.

In contrast to literary masculinity studies' focus on the transformative effect of its analysis on imagined individual readers, Antoine Pellerin (2016) recently proposed that one of the subfield's real main contributions could be to make visible the ways in which canonical literature and literary epistemology have been produced, shaped and marked by their engagement with masculinity. Focusing on the ways in which masculinity studies can and should intervene into traditional and institutionalized literary studies, Pellerin thus concluded that:

> [T]he connection between writing and masculinity is historically contingent and pragmatically constituted. Writing does not take place ex nihilo, but is intricately woven with a network of social, cultural and aesthetic norms which precede and exceed the writing subject. Authorial identity does not emerge on the corner of a blank page, but on *the public stage of literature* [emphasis added]. The author is *well aware* [emphasis added] that his identity is going to be perceived through the reader's eye and inferred from the stylistic characteristics of his prose. (8)

My notion of an author's normativity and its pertinence to the analysis of normative masculinity in literature takes cue from Pellerin's suggestion that what we consider "authorial identity" is actually taking shape "on the public stage of literature". Whereas Pellerin emphasizes the author's personal involvement with the public stage of literature, my interest lies in framing the publicly gendered figure of the normative author as a regulatory interpretative horizon. In other words, I wish to, first, make the normative author visible in his normativity on the stage of public literature and, second, probe the ways in which this normativity both produces and limits critical reception of his novels.

What I am proposing with the notion of "the normative male author" is conceptually akin to Alice Ferrebe's (2005) concept of "the masculine text". Ferebbe, who somewhat similarly to my dissertation focused on normative authors, in her case "the white, middle-class, English, heterosexual, male, fiction-making majority" (1), developed the concept of "the masculine text" in order to account for the ways in which male-authored fiction immasculated[5] its readers, that is, coaxed them to adopt and identify with a masculine point of view. In Ferrebe's own words "a masculine text retains an ultimate political aim – to channel desires for traditional narrative pleasure and privilege into the acceptance of a range of masculine definitions and principles (ibid., 7)". A "masculine text" brings together a community of immasculated readers, male and female alike, that willingly or unwittingly interiorize "the masculine standards of self and behaviour established by a text" (ibid., 9). Ferrebe describes this as "textual belonging to male-authored novels" (ibid., 7). The word "belonging" is key here because it entails the readership as it does the author and the text. While writing recently about the recurring question of *subjectivation*, or how individual psychological, sexual and ideological identities and beliefs connect to social norms, Vicky Kirby (2015) noted: "The words *norm, compliance,* and *shared* all draw on a sense of belonging, a sense that a language of meaning-making through which social behaviors are interpreted is held in common" (99).

Following Pellerin, Ferrebe and Kirby, I can now define my notion of "the normative male author" as a specific normative gendered and sexualized modality in which the figure of

[5] The concept of "immasculation" was first developed by the feminist literary scholar Judith Fetterley in her book *The Resisting Reader* (1978). Using American literature as her case study, Fetterly argued that male-authored literature subdued female readers into accepting patriarchal systems of values as normal and legitimate, including pervasive misogyny. Feminist literary criticism's role was, according to Fetterley, to teach resisting, opposing modes of reading canonical literature and thus producing transformative criticism. Ben Knights (1999) redeveloped Fetterly's concept as "estranged masculine readings", that is, "readings which - while reflexively conscious of the gender identities of those practising them – do not accept a hegemonic masculinity as an inescapable given" (23). Knight's opined that gender-focused lens could subvert the male reader's own unacknowledged and erased embeddedness within a large social narrative on masculinity "so that we may learn to question our own implication in or distance from the narratives addressed to us and those we ourselves address to others" (ibid., 108).

the male author belongs to the readership at large. More precisely, in my usage, the notion of "the normative male author" applies to a gendered and sexualized presumption of normativity upheld by the "public stage of literature". What interests me are the ways in which "the normative male author" both invites and preempts certain kinds of critical inquiries. My point here is, thus, not that "the normative male author" is a regulatory or prohibitive figure. To the contrary, precisely because he is normatively gendered and sexualized, he generates a lot of specific interest among biographers, specialists and critics. In particular, "the normative male author" invites certain kinds of gender-focused scholarship. For example, as it will be evident from my chapters, there are several well-trodden interpretative paths explored by feminist, non-feminist and male scholars that have focused on issues such as the portrayal of women or heterosexual love in Andrić and Selimović alike. In other words, there are certain gender-related themes and problematics that are immediately and rightfully taken up by contemporary literary studies as pertinent precisely because these two authors epitomize masculine normativity. The critical importance of readings tackling Andrić's and Selimović's depictions of, for example, violence against women, is surely tacitly predicated upon the normative masculine framework in which their authorly persona takes shape as a viable object of study. What my project does is that it makes visible the pertinence of issues that have been evidently reduced to unimportance by this normativity attached to the figure of the author.

As Robyn Wiegman and Elizabeth A. Wilson (2015) remind us, there are two intersecting meanings the very word "norm" designates. On the one hand, it is etymologically derived from the Latin word "norma", denoting "the T-square instrument used by carpenters and masons to measure right angles or by draftsmen to draw them" (Wiegman and Wilson 2015, 15). "In this sense, a norm is a name for a rule; or more specifically the rule, the rule of an inflexible and imperious decree" (ibid.). On the other hand, there is the Foucauldian usage

of the word "norm" which refers to a multitude of rules, the procedures in which they are produced and valorized:

> The norm is a dispersed calculation (an average) that enquires into every corner of the world. That is, the measurements, comparisons, adjudications, and regulations that generate the average man do so not in relation to a compulsory, uniform standard, but through an expansive relationality among and within individuals, across and within groups. (Ibid.)

My notion of normativity is invested with masculine normativity's definitional invisibility, as defined in masculinity studies, and the sense of procedural and regulatory productivity, as theorized in the quote above. What I propose is that we take the normative male author at face value, rather than probe him from an antinormative angle. My research thus recasts "the normative male author" as a facet of masculinity that cannot be reduced to its presumed inner crises and anxieties triggered by a general instability of the gendered self. In other words, I reframe the normative male author as a figure that demonstrably explores, carefully constructs and poetically relies on a multitude of ways in which male homosociality and queerness intersect. Consequently, the normative male author's literary output is, likewise, more than a textual reflection of its author's presumed gender instability or a "social document" indexing social conceptions about gender. It is only when framed in this *anti-antinormative* or *post-antinormative* manner that the normative male author's literature can be theoretically broached as demonstrably dependent upon harnessing the gendered semantics of male homosociality and queerness. Or, put differently, it is only by making visible the normativity of the male author that the gendered aspects of his poetics can be observed through an agential lens as mutable, dynamic and productive, rather than passivized through the antinormative perspectives of the "social document" or "crisis".

In the next section, I will delve deeper into the problematics of antinormativity in queer theory in general and queer literary studies in particular. Through an overview of

antinormativity's contested status and alternative approaches devised, I will end the chapter by answering the question of how we can read the normative male author and his fiction in a way that circumvents the antinormative injunction.

1.2. Overcoming Foundations: Queer Theory and Antinormativity

In 2015, the feminist journal *Differences* published a special issue titled "Queer Theory without Antinormativity". The contributions defined, explored and charted several ways of overcoming queer theory's antinormative tendencies. Antinormativity, as the issue's editors, Robyn Wiegman and Elizabeth A. Wilson (2015) explain, performs several important functions within the field of queer theory. For one, it is definitionally as central to the field as is the opposition of queer theory to the notion of identity. It also provides thematic coherence to queer theory's foundational canon, connecting authors and texts that came from different disciplines, such as "Leo Bersani, Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, Gayle Rubin, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Michael Warner" (Wiegman and Wilson 2015, 3). And finally, antinormativity serves as a theoretical and political meeting point between queer theory and the adjacent fields of "feminist theory, women of color feminism, and transgender studies" (ibid.).

Antinormativity's field-defining injunction has recently been traced by Heather Love (2021) back to the now defunct and, she argues, willfully forgotten field of deviance studies. Focusing on the processes of stigmatization of social outcasts in the post-WWII period, deviance studies researched "social problems such as crime, suicide, and homosexuality in the context of poverty, migration, and tenement housing … [and figures such as] the marijuana user, the stutterer, the jazz musician, the juvenile delinquent, and the ex–mental patient" (Love 2021, 23-24). Although by no means progressive in today's terms, deviance studies have been politically underwritten by an attempt to theorize deviance as integral to all societies, which was a radical notion in itself. This was an "'inclusive' view of social problems [that]

emphasized the variability and inevitability of deviance" (ibid., 140). By the 1970s, deviance studies have been superseded by identity-based approaches to sexuality that have been linked to civil rights movements and thoroughly incompatible with deviance studies' views that posited social outcasts and stigma as a deterministically unavoidable fact of social life. When the nascent queer theory started to oppose the identity-based understanding of sexuality by leveling against it its own "dream of radical antinormativity" (ibid., 17), it drew from deviance studies. It did so, however, Love argues, through a peculiar reversal:

> queer studies turned the descriptive study of deviance into a normative injunction to be deviant. I argue that the field of queer studies has fundamentally misunderstood the politics of deviance studies, which aimed not to disrupt social norms but instead to recognize and create space for marginal communities and practices. (Ibid., 37)

One of the consequences of this reversal was the deepening of the rift between queer theory and social sciences: "Queer antinormativity has taken as its explicit targets heterosexuality, the family, and gender binarism; however, it is directed as much against the protocols and epistemology of the social sciences as it is against prevailing social norms" (ibid., 139).

Moreover, antinormativity, alongside its definitional role for queer theory, has also continually partaken in the field's political self-image since its inception. This is evident, as Annamaria Jagose (2015) notes, in the way "early 1990s accounts of queer theory routinely emphasized its fundamental indefinability in the present and the unknowability of its future forms" (33). The very sense of one's belonging to the field of queer theory is still predicated upon one "*always* knowing the difference between normativity and the value of being queerly set against it" (Wiegman 2015, 55). Of course, this is not to propose that queer theory should somehow be either neutral towards or in favor of normativity. What all the authors quoted above actually point towards is the way in which this near-mandatory antagonism towards normativity inflects and distorts normativity as an object of queer theory's study. In other

words, there is a serious flip side to antinormativity's formative effect on queer theory. As Wiegman (2015) notes, it positively charges the equivalence it itself produces between the concept of queerness and political transformation. Consequentially, through such a lens and political alignment, normativity can appear only as stasis. Wiegman's take on this is worth quoting at length:

> normativity is transformed from its status as an object of study into the figure that renders political the field's own institutional ambitions. In this condensation, normativity is overwritten by the ahistorical presumption that it is always regressive and constraining – in short, that it is always politically bad. … The issue this essay raises is more simple if vexing precisely because any effort to consider normativity a complex object of study is so decisively at odds with the transgressive fictions that underwrite the field's sovereign declarations … it is increasingly the case that a studied approach to the complexity of normativity as it operates across the spheres of social and psychic life is precisely what antinormativity enables the field to most actively resist. (55, 66)

The issue of certain objects being preempted from appearing in queer theory due to the antinormative injunction has been raised in a number of literary studies.

1.2.1. Queer Literary Studies and Critique of Antinormativity

Within queer literary studies, the shortcomings of antinormativity and queer theory's habitually reductive understanding of normativity have been addressed in several recent contributions to the field. Preceding the recent critical inquiries into the shortcomings of antinormativity following the 2015 special issue of *Differences*, there were two important studies addressing aspects of antinormativity *avant la lettre*.

In *Between Women: Friendship, Desire, and Marriage in Victorian England*, Sharon Marcus (2007) drew from Eve Sedgwick's work on homosociality and queer theory in general to revisit cultural history and literary analysis of 19th century female homosociality.

Specifically, Marcus tackled the theoretical presuppositions guiding scholarship on Victorian women that have "made it difficult to conceptualize friendships between women who embodied feminine norms" (12). In particular, what made friendship between normative women imperceptible in research has been, Marcus argued, the idea that female homosociality was dominated by women's relationship with men and, furthermore, its opposition or reappropriation of masculinity. This was echoed in the most prominent field of research with regards to female friendship, lesbian studies. The foundations of Marcus' argument are strikingly similar to the subsequent critique of antinormativity in queer theory. The critical emphasis on resistance to heterosexuality and men in general obfuscated what Marcus set out to reconstruct, namely the dynamics of friendship among women. Once reaffirmed in their own homosociality, rather than being viewed solely through the optics of their relationship with men, normative women could be seen as having created and maintained a vibrant, active, emotionally and physically highly-charged world of female homosociality. Importantly, Marcus intervenes in literary studies by demonstrating how Victorian marriage plots, most often read as centered around the heterosexual couple, are actually framed around female friendship. For instance, "novels by men and women assigned female friendship so much agency that many narratives represented it as both a cause and effect of marriage between women and men[6]" (ibid.).

In *Queer Dickens*, Holly Furneaux (2009) suggests that, following the antisocial turn[7], queer theory narrowed down its own epistemological scope by rejecting domesticity, family

[6] An especially interesting example in this regard is Marcus' (2007) reading of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. In contrast to most readings that focused on Estella and Pip's love prospects, Marcus traced the novel's central theme as one in which "man's desire for a woman is shaped by his identification with the desire between women" (171). In this case, the crucial relationship is not the heterosexual one, but the female homosocial dyad between young Estella and her adoptive mother, the eccentric and dilapidated spinster Miss Havisham.

[7] The anti-social turn designates a body of work in queer theory (e.g. Leo Bersani, Lee Edelman, Judith Halberstam) that ascribes political and theoretical importance to meanings and affects conventionally excluded from mainstream accounts of queerness: anti-teleology, the death drive, failure, illness, addiction etc. (*see more* Halberstam 2008).

and kinship from its purview. The main issue here is, again, framed similarly to the problematics of antinormativity as it was later defined. Specifically, Furneaux argues that antisocial strands in queer theory have conflated heteronormativity with any notion of domesticity or kinship. However, Furneaux proposes that queer theory should recognize "the validity and importance of a variety of conjunctions outside, and indeed, antithetical to, a central domain of queer theory as it is currently constituted: queer parenting, queer family, queer domesticity, queer tenderness, and queer happiness" (12). Abandoning the antisocial framework, and pursuing, instead, the historicist argument that "there is nothing natural in the near synonymy now attributed to the familial and heteronormativity" (ibid., 14), Furneaux inscribes kinship and domesticity back into the queer rubric by focusing on Dickens' literary representations of nurturing masculinity, bachelor fathers and tender male tactility.

Since the 2015 special issue of *Differences*, the topic of (anti)normativity has gained significant traction in queer studies. Ben Nichols (2020) recently argued in his monograph *Same Old: Queer Theory, Literature and the Politics of Sameness* that the topic of normativity has been largely abandoned in queer theory because it was most often considered as a form of *sameness*. In a nutshell, Nichols argues that queer theory has emerged out of a broader poststructuralist foundational privileging of *difference,* conceived of as a site of positive progress and change, over *sameness,* conceived of as stasis and stagnation. As part of this epistemological hierarchy, queer thinking, Nichols argues, "poses values like heterogeneity, variety, multiplicity and change in opposition to a prevailing order that is imagined as seeking sameness in the forms of homogeneity, fixity, mainstreaming and conformity" (ibid., 3). Nichol's own approach, in his own words, "does not accord with the more prominent models available for understanding 'sameness' in queer scholarship and culture, which imagine it as a force of grand ontological disintegration with profound ethical implications" (ibid., 22). Instead, Nichols identifies the politically positive inflection in modalities of queer sameness

that are tied to uselessness, reproduction, normativity, and reductivity. With normativity in particular, Nichols identifies a distinct 20th century genre of middle-brow lesbian novel, such as Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness*. This tradition of writing has demonstrably framed lesbian relationships in distinctly ordinary, normative terms, seeking comfort in aspiring to and defending the importance of middle-class mores and normativity which has, in turn, impacted and popularized modern lesbian identity. Thus, Nichols concludes, "even if queer theory has been staunchly anti-normative, the phenomena that one might associate precisely with the normative have none the less played a crucial role in queer history, particularly in making available certain kinds of queer identity" (ibid., 119).

Finally, both Kadji Amin (2017) and Michael Lucey (2019) argued that queer theory's political self-idealization that, as we have seen earlier, goes in tandem with antinormativity, reduces the scope of its insights by insisting on a forward-oriented, futural political progressivism. Writing about the "antinormative coalition across difference" of queer theory, Amin (2017) notes how "[i]n much queer scholarship, what binds coalition is negatively defined — it is a shared *abjection*, an *exclusion* from normativity, a common *marginalization* as deviant, a *disidentification* with hegemonic ideals, or a stance of *opposition* in relation to state power" (172-173; original emphasis). The negative definition, then, undergoes a process of idealization through which queer theory "remains driven by a set of temporal values that orient it, almost triumphally, toward futurity" (ibid., 33). However, an immediate problem here is that such an antinormative definition of queerness excludes the "backward" looking subjects and objects that do not conform to this projective political utopianism. For instance, in his recent book *Someone: The Pragmatics of Misfit Sexualities, from Colette to Hervé Guibert*, Lucey (2019) takes off from Judith Butler's framing of the concept of "queer" as turned towards "futural imaginings" and the "expanding [of] political purposes", Lucey noted that many experiences of non-normativity do not conform to such a politically progressive

definition (2). In fact, Lucey demonstrates, many writers we usually consider queer were in fact indifferent towards or resisted defining their sexuality in any terms whatsoever. Many were "more past oriented than future oriented", conservative or reactionary (ibid.).

To summarize, what all of these studies, each in its own way, point towards is that some gendered and sexualized literary subjects can only appear in theory once we skew or abandon queer theory's antinormative injunction in which a "properly" queer object is marked by its irrepressible resistance to normativity that is "properly" static and backward-looking. I have already conceptually defined my notion of the normative male author and have made the case for it to be viewed as an explanatory framework that simultaneously eschews antinormativity and serves as an entry point into looking at the poetic role that gender and sexuality play in male-authored fiction-writing. What I want to preliminarily address here is an aspect of the normative male author that does not conform to the antinormative understanding of normativity as being static and backward-looking, as evident, for instance, in Judith Gardiner's (2002) conclusion that

> Masculinity is a nostalgic formation, always missing, lost, or about to be lost, its ideal form located in a past that advances with each generation in order to recede just beyond its grasp. Its myth is that effacing new forms can restore a natural, original male grounding. (10-11)

Neither Andrić's nor Selimović's poetic utilizations of male normativity's inner conflicts and possible rearrangements conform to such an understanding. This is evidenced in their explicit reimagining of the political horizon in their novels through specifically gendered male characters. For instance, in *Bosnian Chronicle*, as I analyze in chapter 3, Andrić constructed the character of a singularly gender-ambivalent bachelor military man whose classical beauty and cold unattainability suffuse the novel with intertextual references to Greek poetry, but also usher in the theme of advancing modernity. And Selimović was so fascinated by male

friendship, elective kinship and camaraderie that he offered two vastly different novels that resolve its tragedies and utopian prospects precisely through mutual masculine attachments, as I analyze in chapters 5 and 6. Normativity, it seems, is as invested in futural imaginings and the expansion of political purposes as queerness is. However, although they rely on queerness as an integral part of male homosocial continuum, these poetic renditions of politics and futurity are not themselves queer in any capacity, if we understand queerness as a politically progressive, emancipatory project for the queer subject.

My thesis postulates an indelible gender-specific poetic stamp on texts produced by authors who themselves epitomized utmost normativity. This multifaceted poetic stamp is generated by the text's reliance on the semantic capaciousness of the cusp between male homosociality and queerness. Yet this stamp requires an abandonment of antinormative premises if it is to be seen as truly poetic, that is meaning-making, and not reduced to, for example, the author's personal homophobia, machismo, latent queerness, inescapable crisis, or an archive of social patriarchal ideology. Parsing out normativity in this way to render it outside an antinormative framework is necessary because

> [b]y exploring the difference between a norm and the terms that often define it – domination, homogenization, exclusion, identity, or more colloquially, the familiar, the status quo, or the routine – we demonstrate the importance of the conceptual and political distinctiveness of normativity as an object of inquiry. In particular, our goal is to show that norms are more dynamic and more politically engaging than queer critique has usually allowed. (Wiegman and Wilson 2015, 2)

I have already recounted how the critically deployed notion of "the normative male author" circumvents antinormativity. What I want to focus on next is the methods of reading that I have relied upon to demonstrate the dynamism and creativity with which the normative male author utilizes male homosociality and queerness to poetic purposes.

1.2.2. Reading Deep in the Surface

That close reading[8] has been indispensable for my dissertation is evident already in the vocabulary of invisibility that has permeated this chapter at every step. Because of their attentiveness to the underlying structures of the text, "queer readings are always close readings" (Hall 2003, 116). In this sense, my readings could be considered close queer readings because they are marked by moves and maneuvers that steer them away from "existing accounts of how one should read and back toward a grappling with the recalcitrant, fecund question of how one does" (Sedgwick 1997, 2; original emphasis). Close reading in my project makes visible the text's gendered aspects that have thus far gone unnoticed, for instance, specific tropes of male queerness or friendship. In order to further corroborate my research findings, I have relied on miscellaneous sources. Alongside the novels' critical reception, I have also drawn from their authors' other literary works, autobiographical materials, memoirs and essays. In order to isolate and understand the specific models of masculine representations and their historical and cultural embeddedness, I have relied on sociology, cultural anthropology, literary history, and cultural studies. For instance, my focus on Andrić's figures of the inviolable modern military man in *Bosnian Chronicle* (chapter 3) or the twinned figure of the Western pervert and an Orientalized eunuch in *Omer Pasha Latas* (chapter 4) would not have been possible without an interdisciplinary body of work specializing on, among other themes, Andrić's intertextual interlocutors like Thomas Mann and Marguerite Yourcenar, classical studies on representations of homosexuality in Western literature or studies of Orientalism and gender. And my readings of male camaraderie, friendship and elective kinship in Selimović's *Death and the Dervish* and *The Fortress* (chapters 5 and 6) would not have been possible without extant research on

[8] Throughout the 20th century, the practice of close reading was repudiated as ahistorical and elitist, and was, furthermore, often neglected in feminist criticism. However, the method was thoroughly rejuvenated with the rise of deconstruction and the influence it exerted on then nascent fields, including queer theory (Gallop 2007; Lukić and Espinoza 2011; Warhol and Lanser 2015).

Yugoslav Partisan sexual ethics, literary histories of war veterans' discourses and Selimović's own life writings.

However, the very discourse of "making something visible" is intrinsically linked to a set of methods that have undergone serious revisions in the last decades. I am referring to what Paul Ricoeur (1970) called the "hermeneutics of suspicion[9]", Eve Sedgwick (2003) described as "the monopolistic program of paranoid knowing[10]," and a host of disciplines taught as "symptomatic reading". As Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus (2009) explain, "symptomatic reading" is a practice that

> encompasses an interpretive method that argues that the most interesting aspect of a text is what it represses … When symptomatic readers focus on elements present in the text, they construe them as symbolic of something latent or concealed; for example, a queer symptomatic reading might interpret the closet, or ghosts, as surface signs of the deep truth of a homosexuality that cannot be overtly depicted. Symptomatic readings also often locate outright absences, gaps, and ellipses in texts, and then ask what those absences mean, what forces create them, and how they signify the questions that motivate the text, but that the text itself cannot articulate. (3)

Often cast as "one of the great hypersymptomatic readers[11]" (Apter and Freedgood 2009, 145), it was Eve Sedgwick herself who first critically reassessed the pervasive methodological and epistemological paranoia in much of late 20th century critical theory, including queer theory and her own writings. What was at the heart of Sedgwick's (2003) criticism was not the very tenets of paranoid thinking, but its transformation "into a mandatory injunction rather than a

[9] Ricoeur (1970) theorized that Marx's concept of alienation, Freud's work on dreams and neurosis and Nietzsche's writings on will to power are different angles from which the three men tackled a shared problem, namely "false consciousness". In his own words, the hermeneutics of suspicion "is not an explication of the object, but a tearing off of masks, an interpretation that reduces disguises" (ibid., 30).

[10] Sedgwick (2003) used the notion of "paranoia" mostly in the sense of Melanie Klein's "paranoid position" which is characterized by a "terrible alertness to the dangers posed by the hateful and envious part-objects that one defensively projects into, carves out of, and ingests from the world around one" (128).

[11] Best and Marcus (2009) similarly see Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet* as being heavily influenced by symptomatic reading. However, Robyn Wiegman (2015) pointed out that Sedgwick's position *vis-à-vis* paranoid thinking was much more complex: "While the current critical consensus takes *Epistemology* as partaking in the paranoid disposition that Sedgwick would come to disclaim, its predilection for incoherence, contradiction, and the political double bind signals a critical sensibility grappling with paranoid reading and its orientation toward political mastery over its objects of study" (54).

possibility among other possibilities" (124). Given her proclaimed goal of questioning the dominance of an epistemological model in which critical theory constructs its object of study, we can already see that Sedgwick's critique of paranoid analysis is similar to subsequent discussions on the antinormative injunction in masculinity studies and queer theory. One especially salient point here is the way in which paranoid knowing, like antinormativity, both formed and limited the scope of queer theory. Paranoid reading, Sedgwick argues, has proven to have been indispensable in driving early queer theory's research[12], yet became a limiting epistemological framework once it spiraled out of control: "It seems no wonder, then, that paranoia, once the topic is broached in a nondiagnostic context, seems to grow like a crystal in a hypersaturated solution, blotting out any sense of the possibility of alternative ways of understanding *or* things to understand" (ibid., 128).

Following Sedgwick's critical intervention into the primacy given to paranoid thinking, the method of "surface reading" has been put forth as a necessary corrective to some of the shortcomings of "symptomatic reading". As Best and Marcus (2009) propose, "we take surface to mean what is evident, perceptible, apprehensible in texts; what is neither hidden nor hiding; what, in the geometrical sense, has length and breadth but no thickness, and therefore covers no depth. A surface is what insists on being looked *at* rather than what we must train ourselves to see *through*" (9).

A key example of surface reading is Marcus' (2007) aforementioned *Between Women*. I have already summarized Marcus' main argument, namely that a sole focus on women's relations to men, be it romantic or resistant, makes invisible the priority which these same women ascribed to their relations with other women. In the context of reading and analysis,

[12] For instance: "Given that paranoia seems to have a peculiarly intimate relation to the phobic dynamics round homosexuality, then, it may have been structurally inevitable that the reading practices that became most available and fruitful in antihomophobic work would often in turn have been paranoid ones" (Sedgwick 2003, 127).

crucial for Marcus' argument is her variant of surface reading which she calls "just reading" and her description of the method is worth quoting at length:

> In tracing the representation of female friendship in the Victorian novel, I do not claim to plumb hidden depths but to account more fully for what texts present on their surface but critics have failed to notice. … just reading recognizes that interpretation is inevitable: even when attending to the givens of a text, we are always only – or just – constructing a reading. To pursue just reading is thus not to make an inevitably disingenuous claim to transparently reproduce a text's unitary meaning. Nor is it to propose that we dismiss symptomatic reading; indeed, the just readings I perform here depend on a symptomatic reading of novel theory, since only by attending to what other critics have been unable to explain can subsequent critics build a more capacious interpretive framework. (75, 76)

There are three important ways in which my thesis employs surface reading. For one, I have proposed to take the author's normativity *at face value*. This in itself already presupposes a kind of surface that I have described as a sexualized and gendered modality in which the figure of the author belongs to the reader. Maintaining that surface for what it *is*, rather than trying to find a hidden depth to it, counteracts the antinormative tendencies in masculinity studies and queer theory.

This brings me to the second way in which I read the surface. Conventionally, symptomatic queer readings entail scrutinizing details and possibilities that are not necessarily directly addressed in the narrative, which means that the lack of easily identifiable sexual identities need not hinder interpretation as even "an oblique suggestion of something beyond the frame of representation allows us to theorize the queerness … even when evidence of their queerness seems most circumstantial" (Bibler 2009, 23). However, in the text of the normative male author, the representations of male homosociality and queerness are neither repressed nor invisible as if in a closeted text. They are, quite literally, right up there, on the surface: ubiquitous depictions of manifold, diverse, perverse, healing, competitive, destructive relations between men. Considered together, the sheer number of complex, intricately portrayed masculinities evinces that a lot of effort, research, thought and consideration went into each

and every one of them. Andrić, for example, is famous for his obsession with historical research and detailed world-building. But, as I demonstrate, he also constructed intricate and explicit sexualized and gendered representations of masculinity: from effeminate homosexuals, hypersexual tyrants, asexual military men, deprived perverts to figures so mysterious that they get split between opposing cultural understandings of male queerness. The poetic construction of these representations and, furthermore, their embeddedness within the novels' larger themes attests to the absence of "crisis" that the antinormative injunction searches for. Shielded by the figure of the normative male author, these texts have no need for the closet.

And finally, the third way in which I utilize surface reading is to reread pertinent parts of critical reception that has rarely or most often never considered the gendered particularities of these characters. In this way, what is right there, on the surface of the text, has almost never been seen in critical reception. My aim, then, is twofold: to show that male homosociality and queerness *do matter* and to show *how they matter*. Thus, for instance, in chapter 3, I use the sudden destruction of established male homosocial ties by a gender-ambivalent Austrian diplomat in Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle* as a window into the novel's thus far critically neglected theme of Habsburg modernity. And in chapter 6, I supplement readings that emphasize *The Fortress'* protagonist's marital life as a shelter from political oppression by highlighting the role of the novel's chain of solidarity forming an idealized male camaraderie.

The chapters ahead are an exercise as much as they are an exploration. The exploration has taken off from a seemingly simple recognition that the surfaces of canonical texts written by normative male authors betray something that has been overlooked or reduced to meaninglessness by the public stage of literature. In a nutshell, these texts betray the many ways in which they are, without exception, poetically dependent upon simultaneous literary depictions of normative and non-normative masculinities. The exercise consists of using masculinity studies' and queer theory's conceptual and theoretical apparatuses to deal with

texts and authors who have never represented anything else apart from exemplary normativity to their readerships. And the main goal of this exercise is not to assail this normativity with a theoretical antinormativity. The main goal is to reconstruct the many ways in which male homosociality and queerness attest not only to the ways in which they were constructed, but also the ways in which they represent the indispensable poetic surface to the normative male author himself.

Chapter 2. Parting Companions: Hegemonic Masculinity and Its Others in Ivo Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle*

In 1924, while working on his doctoral dissertation at the University of Graz, Ivo Andrić, at the time an ambitious clerk at the Yugoslav consulate and an aspiring writer, read a compelling book by the Serbian historian Mihajlo Gavrilović. The book, *Ispisi iz pariskih arhiva* (*Writings from Parisian archives,* 1904) included reports written by one Pierre David, an early 19th century French consul in the Bosnian town of Travnik. This was just the beginning of Andrić's encounters with French and Austrian diplomatic reports from Travnik, and the history of his readings coincided and sometimes even steered his own diplomatic career. At the end of 1926, Andrić spent some time in Paris, doing in-depth research on several hundreds of David's reports archived at the National Library and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' archives. Two years later, probably in part to continue with his research, Andrić requested and was granted a diplomatic position in Paris. Another impactful read was *Travels across Bosnia, 1807-1808* (*Voyage en Bosnie dans les années 1807 et 1808*), a travel book by Amédée Chaumette des Fossés, Pierre David's junior clerk at the Travnik consulate. In 1937, in Vienna, Andrić also consulted reports from Austrian consuls in Travnik, Paul von Mitesser and Jacob von Paulitsch. Collected and carefully inspected for over a decade, Andrić's notes on these writings and their authors could fill whole suitcases (*see more* Šamić 1962, 24-26; Tošović 2014, 24; Nemec 2016, 45-48). They will be put to good use as a vast historical novel was emerging against their backdrop.

In April 1941, Andrić's diplomatic career ended abruptly with the overthrow of Prince Pavle's collaborationist government and Hitler's subsequent aggression on Yugoslavia. Andrić was, with the entire Yugoslav diplomatic corps, expelled from Berlin and subsequently

returned to German-occupied Belgrade. He spent the entire World War II as a recluse tenant in an apartment in central Belgrade, working silently on three novels. *Travnička hronika*, or as it is most known in English, *Bosnian Chronicle*[13], was first published in 1945, along with two other Andrić's classic novels: *The Woman from Sarajevo* (*Gospođica*) and *The Bridge over the Drina* (*Na Drini ćuprija*).

Set during the Napoleonic years of 1806-1814, *Bosnian Chronicle* describes the tumultuous events following the establishment of French rule in Dalmatia, then a political entity called Illyrian Provinces, and part of Napoleon's First French Empire. Prompted by the subsequent tensions over spheres of influence with the neighboring Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman-ruled parts of the Balkans, but also because of an increasing need for commercial and political cooperation, the French and Austrian consuls were sent to Travnik, the seat of Ottoman viziers in Bosnia, and the fabled final frontier between East and West. In the form of an almost 500-pages-long chronicle divided into 28 chapters (plus the prologue and the epilogue)[14], the novel narrates political and private conundrums, conflicts and dilemmas facing Ottoman viziers, French and Austrian consuls and members of their respective households and entourages. It also depicts the repercussions of foreigners' political decisions on local population: the three major ethnic groups – Catholic and Orthodox Christians, and Muslims, – and the minorities, the Sephardic Jews and local Roma. A significant portion of the novel is a catalogue of deeply seated, conflicted and variegated impressions and phantasies the foreigners weave about the locals. Through their eyes, informed by imperial ideologies and colonial pretensions, emerges a tacit portrait of the people equally feared and despised by the Europeans

[13]*Travnička hronika* (literally *The Chronicle of Travnik*) has been translated to English three times: in 1948 as *Bosnian Story*; in 1963 as *Bosnian Chronicle*, and in 1992 as *The Days of the Consuls*. All citations included here are from Joseph Hitrec's 1963 translation.

[14] Two chapters were previously published as standalone short stories: *Ljubav* (*Love*) in 1926 and *Tišina* (*Silence*) in 1936.

and Ottomans alike: the local rayah[15] and Muslims. Except for the somber Catholic Franciscan monks, the locals seldomly speak in their own voice and are almost never heard. Travnik thus functions as a synecdoche for the entire Bosnia and, furthermore, Bosnia itself functions as a synecdoche for a global political landscape carved between Istanbul, Paris, Vienna and St. Petersburg (Vučković 1974, 327; Nemec 2016, 226). Centered around this agonistic encounter between East and West, yet depending on specific aspects highlighted, the novel's reception yielded a plethora of overlapping, yet distinctive understandings of what the story is actually about: a political allegory of the complicated birth of the Yugoslav nation (Vučković 1974); a story of intercultural hostility and differentiation (Hawkesworth 1984, 142-150); an imagological study in Orientalism and Balkanism (Milutinović 2011) or a thematization of cultural cooperation in trying times (Nemec 2016).

When it comes to issues of gender and sexuality in Andrić's works, the dominant scholarship exemplifies a wider scholarly phenomenon of equating these issues with women and femininity. Although there is a diverse and an established tradition of feminist readings focused on Andrić's writings about women (*see more* Novaković 1980; Lukić 1988; Gorup 1996; Liversage 2005; Lukić 2015), not much has been written about the specific gendered and sexual aspects of his writings on men. This phenomenon in the post-Yugoslav context was succinctly described by the literary theorist Tatjana Rosić (2006). Pointing out the lack of research on masculinity and its various representations in Yugoslav literatures, and comparing it unfavorably with the amount of empirical and theoretical research done on women and literature, Rosić writes that it is as if "we are all supposed to 'know' what is meant by the terms such as man, manliness, and manhood" (437). Andrić scholarship occasionally recognizes that

[15] *Rayah* (raja) – the non-Muslim population and thus tax-paying subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Colloquially also denoting the poor in general.

the driving force moving most of his fiction are, indeed, highly charged connections between men. It would be hard to argue otherwise. Even some prominent female figures in his works are ostensibly masculinized[16]. The example of *Bosnian Chronicle* is particularly poignant: except for the French and the Austrian consuls' wives, portrayed, as it were, as the usual antipodes on the spectrum of femininity (one a devoted housewife, and the other a Bovaryesque homewrecker, for more, Lukić 1988), there are no other major female characters that would appear throughout the novel (there are, however, minor female characters emerging in single episodes).

As I have argued in chapter 1, all of my readings are grounded by the notion of the "normative male author" that I have defined as the normative gendered and sexualized framework in which a male author belongs to his readers. I have specifically linked this notion to the problematics of normative masculinity's invisibility. Namely, as chapter 1 has traced through an overview of masculinity studies, the seeming proximity that normative masculinity claims to the notion of universal humanity is founded upon a disassociation from its own particularity as a gendered entity. We have also seen that the oft-taken critical route to tackle normative masculinity has been to conceptually undo it through the optics of antinormativity. My readings, however, circumvent interpretative frameworks that read the literary text as either manifesting the author's own personal gender-related crisis or documenting social anxieties surrounding masculinity. My argument is that rather than attempting to undo the very notion of masculine normativity, gender-centered literary theory can actually benefit from cleaving to the figure of "the normative male author" in order to explore its poetic usages of male homosociality and queerness. With that in mind, what follows is a two-pronged interpretative

[16] For instance, the Jewish inn-keeper Lotika in *The Bridge over the Drina*, or Rajka Radaković, the (anti)heroine of *The Lady*, a female version of the Miser, a long established character trope in European literature, made famous by figures such as Plautus' Euclion, Racine's Harpagon, Shakespeare's Shylock, or Balzac's Grandet (Lukić 1988: 155; Nemec 2016: 270-276).

intervention into Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle*. On the one hand, my reading takes off from the surface of the text. In this chapter, I will reframe the predominance of male characters from a mere textual factuality into a poetic problem. What I mean by that is that I will explore Andrić's creative strategies in constructing gender-based dynamics between male characters, first and foremost hegemonic masculinity. On the other hand, I will explore how these inner dynamics of hegemonic masculinity and the scandal of same-sex sexuality stage broader ideological and political conflicts. To summarize, I will tackle the poetic construction and overall significance of male homosociality and queerness that have thus far went completely under the critical radar. Therefore, this chapter sets out to examine the poetic significance of Andrić's profuse literary depictions of relations between men, of homosociality, and finally, homosexuality.

More specifically, this chapter isolates and focuses on four key aspects in which the *Bosnian Chronicle's* broader ideological and political conflicts are refracted through Andrić's poetic utilization of hegemonic masculinity. First, I will look into the generational conflict Andrić introduces between his two real-life inspired main characters as the backbone of their opposing claims to hegemonic masculinity. I then analyze the ways in which the novel stages its male characters' competing approaches to their own poetic endeavors in order to further deepen and dramatize their gender-based conflict. The third aspect of hegemonic masculinity I examine is the different gendered profiles the *Bosnian Chronicle's* normative men establish through their relations with women and the ways in which these private relations bleed into their public political standings. And finally, I inspect the role male homosexuality plays in cementing a sense of normative masculine belonging that extends beyond the strife and conflict of hegemonic masculinity. It is worth pointing out that his chapter functions analytically in conjunction with the next chapter revolving around a masculine figure that ultimately implodes and unravels many of the gender dynamics I analyze here.

2.1. Brave New Men

The two French Imperial emissaries, the French consul Jean-Baptiste-Ettiene Daville and his younger colleague Amédée Chaumette Des Fossés[17], get on the wrong foot from the very beginning. On the one hand, Daville finds Des Fossés to be a smug and overly confident young man, too bookish and idealistic for his own good. This is evidence, for instance, in Des Fossés' reliance on the kind of Turkish he absorbed in a Parisian École, a language that is a far cry from the one really spoken in Bosnia. On the other hand, prior to his arrival to Bosnia, Des Fossés had been thoroughly briefed about Daville by a superbly informed colleague from the Ministry who described the older Consul as a "plant for a moderate climate" whose interests and talents did not exceed "a happy mediocrity[18]" (Andrić 1963, 62). And while Des Fossés' arrival triggers Daville into a labyrinthine meditation about his own life and the life of his Empire, the young newcomer remains thoroughly unimpressed and unshaken by his superior. Just before going to bed, Des Fossés notes wryly in his diary: "The Consul is just as I had imagined him[19]" (ibid., 61).

In this section, I will focus on the tense, anxiety-ridden relationship between these two protagonists of *Bosnian Chronicle*. I will argue that the relationship between the *Chronicle's* two French consuls functions as a specific literary usage of hegemonic masculinity to stage broader geopolitical and historical dynamics. Before exploring the specific connections between the *Chronicle's* poetic utilization of hegemonic masculinity and its relationship towards women, non-normative men and broader ideological projects depicted in the novel, in this section I will focus on the founding *differences* Andrić used to stage the general political

[17] Joseph Hitrec's translation uses "Defossés" as a transcription for "Defose" in the Serbo-Croatian original. Since Hitrec's translation, the transcription "Des Fossés" has become a conventional way to render the young consul's name in subsequent translations and critical reception in English (and other languages), preserving the name of the real-life model he was based upon and named after. Therefore, for consistency and continuity purposes, I have substituted Hitrec's "Defossés" with "Des Fossés" whenever the young consul's name appeared in direct quotes.
[18] "Biljka za umerenu klimu … Ali sve to ne prelazi granice srećne prosečnosti" (Andrić 2001: 67-69).
[19] "Konzul je onakav kakvim sam ga zamišljao" (ibid.).

and poetic rift between his two French consuls. In particular, I will attend to the generational clash and the competing poetics between Daville and Des Fossés as the basis of their clashing claims to masculine hegemony.

As I have described in the first chapter of my thesis, the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" was developed to theoretically grasp the relational and dynamic processes that established and maintained the legitimacy of patriarchy. As Hammaren et al. (2018) succinctly point out: "the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been an alternative way of approaching and analysing gender relations, transgressing some of the limitations of more static theories of patriarchy that tend to portray gender relations in a structurally deterministic way" (39). In the previous chapter, I have already mapped out the significance of "hegemonic masculinity" for masculinity studies in general and my thesis in particular. Namely, I have emphasized its importance for any attempt at making visible the frictions, conflicts and hierarchies internal to normative male homosocial ties.

Importantly for this part of my reading of the *Chronicle*, Raewyn Connell (1995) pointed out that hegemonic masculinity is "not a fixed character type, always and everywhere the same. It is, rather, the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable" (76). This contestability is evidenced in the existence of emerging aspirants to hegemony that seek to redefine patriarchy to their own ends:

> It is the successful claim to authority, more than direct violence, that is the mark of hegemony (though violence often underpins or supports authority). I stress that hegemonic masculinity embodies a "currently accepted" strategy. When conditions for the defense of patriarchy change, the bases for the dominance of a particular masculinity are eroded. New groups may challenge old solutions and construct a new hegemony. (Ibid., 77)

In order to frame Daville's and Des Fossés' relationship as a drama of hegemonic masculinity and, furthermore, tackle its poetic significance for the novel's overarching themes, I first wish to contextualize some of Andrić's creative choices with regards to these two characters. Andrić

took the broad strokes of Daville's and Des Fossés' biographical backgrounds from their real-life counterparts, but everything else, from their appearance to their comportment, was his own invention (Šamić 1962, 31-56). One of the more significant changes Andrić made was to widen the age gap between the fictional characters to further dramatize the ideological differences between the two men (ibid., 55). The novel thus allocates the two French men into two distinct pre- and post-revolutionary generations:

> Daville was getting on to forty, while Des Fossés was barely twenty-four. In other times and circumstances this gap in their ages would not have mattered too much; but a period of great and stormy changes and social dislocation creates and deepens an unbridgeable chasm between generations and, in fact, makes of them two different worlds[20]. (Andrić 1963, 53)

On the one hand, we have Daville, a dedicated husband and father who had witnessed firsthand the French (post)revolutionary times. Before his appointment in Travnik, he had been a journalist, a volunteer in the war against Spain, an official in Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a literary critic. On the other hand, the happily single Des Fossés comes from the ranks of the first post-revolutionary diplomatic corps, with special expertise for service in the East. A prodigious son of a family that managed to save some of its wealth during the political turmoil, Des Fossés was a fit young man "with a rosy face and large brown eyes that glowed with curiosity and restlessness[21]" (ibid., 53). As Tihomir Brajović (2015) argued, the two consuls' differing profiles are new forms of masculinity characteristic for the development of the European bourgeois liberal society and oncoming modernity (251). In this regard, Brajović

[20] "Davil je bio čovek koje se približavao četrdesetim godinama a Defose je ušao u dvadeset i četvrtu. Ta razlika u godinama ne bi bila velika stvar u drugim vremenima i drukčijim prilikama. Ali burna vremena, sa velikim promenama i socijalnim poremećajima, iskopaju i prodube nepremostiv jaz između dva naraštaja i stvore od njih stvarno dva sveta" (Andrić 2001, 61).

[21] "Mladić je bio visok, atletski razvijen, rumen u licu, sa smeđim velikim očima, sjajnim od ljubopitstva i nemira" (Andrić 2001: 60).

also noted, these strangers in Bosnia contrast the "oriental-patriarchal hierarchy" emblematized by the local beys in scenes of their meetings that open and close the novel (ibid.).

Although "the tense atmosphere of mutual intolerance never culminates into a tragic conflict[22]" (Milošević 1974, 138), it certainly does test the two men's patience and is distinctly political in its overtones. The strain is arguably felt the most on the sensitive issues of imperial ideologies. Against the grain of the Austrian and French Consuls' blatant Balkanism, Orientalism and Western ethnocentrism, young Des Fossés nurtures a kind of anthropological curiosity that comes up with historical, rather than culturally essentialist narratives about the particularities of life in Bosnia. For instance, whereas Daville (and the equally disgusted Austrian consul von Mitterer) condescendingly deem the local population to be primitive and uncouth, Des Fossés talks to local merchants in Turkish, befriends the village's poorest poet, and goes on to micro-expeditions into the wild. In one of the most famous passages from the novel, Des Fossés directly confronts his superior's ethnocentric disdain for the local populace and his ahistoricist view of Bosnian culture:

> This afternoon, as I was riding out to Kalibunar, I came to a place where the rain had washed away a piece of the road. Down to a depth of about eight feet you could see as in a geological cross-section, layer upon layer of the earlier roads that used to traverse this very same valley. At the bottom there were heavy flagstones, remains of the old Roman road. Three feet above it was the cobbled crust of the medieval highway, and on top of that the gravel embankment of the present Turkish roadway, the one we use nowadays. So in this accidental profile I could read two thousand years of human history and three separate epochs that had buried each other. There you are![23] (Andrić 1963, 115)

[22] Unless indicated otherwise, all translations from Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian to English are mine.

[23] "Danas sam, jašući put Kalibunara, video na jednom mestu kako se od kiše odronila zemlja ispod puta. U dubini od šest lakata otprilike mogli su se videti, kao geološke naslage, sve jedan iznad drugog tragovi ranijih puteva koji su tom istom dolinom prolazili. Na dnu su bile teške ploče, ostaci rimske ceste, tri lakta iznad njih ostaci kaldrme srednjovekovnog druma i, najposle, šljunak i nasip sadašnjeg turskog puta kojim mi gazimo. Tako su mi se u slučajnom preseku ukazale dve hiljade godina ljudske istorije i u njima tri epohe koje su pokopale jedna drugu. Vidite!" (Andrić 2001, 131).

With regards to their opposing ideological horizons, Zoran Milutinović (2008) argued that Daville and Des Fossés can be seen as embodying two Europes:

> [A]s much as *Bosnian Chronicle* refuses to essentialize Bosnia, it declines any possible essentialization of Europe too. Instead of simplifying it, reducing it to a single dimension and one meaning, or even to a simple opposition of good and evil, *Bosnian Chronicle* represents Europe in a manner similar to its representation of Travnik: steep and uneven, tortuous and intricate, connected or interrupted. Europe comes to Bosnia with bitter disdain, not speaking its language and not knowing much about it, but wanting to protect its interests in it. Europe also comes to Bosnia speaking its language, benevolent and willing to learn more about it, and without the intention to understand everything only from the standpoint of its interests. These two Europes, Daville's and Des Fossés's, do not understand one another. (456).

One notable avenue in which the internal rift between Daville and Des Fossés further deepens is their opposing views on literature, all the more tense since both are aspiring writers. As Krešimir Nemec (2016) pointed out, the young Consul represents liberal romanticism, while Daville embodies conservative classicism (237-238). On his part, Des Fossés aims to write a level-headed and sober account of Bosnia in the form of a travelogue. Daville, to the contrary, wants to author an ornate epic about Alexander the Great's military campaigns in Asia. Their competing poetics add another layer to their competitive claims to masculine hegemony and tie up the knots of their generational and political clash.

I have thus far mostly been concerned with the ways in which the dissimilarities between the two French consuls spark competition, conflict and contestability with regards to their politics and, subsequently, their poetics. I have placed these dynamics within the framework of hegemonic masculinity in order to make visible their specifically gendered underpinnings. Before moving on to these characters' gendered and sexualized properties, I want to underline one point which I will further analyze in this chapter's final two segments. This point is that, regardless of the heated intensity surrounding their discussions about politics and poetics, both Daville's and Des Fossés' accounts of Bosnia's culture and people ultimately betray a similar sense of Eurocentric Orientalist supremacy. In creating his characters' literary

efforts, Andrić drew from the real-historical Amédée Chaumette des Fossés' *Travels across Bosnia, 1807-1808* (*Voyage en Bosnie dans les années 1807 et 1808*) and Pierre David's *Alexandréide* (published as two volumes long after David's appointment in Bosnia, in 1826 and 1829). With regards to the Daville's *Alexandréide*, Andrić also relied on the book's reception, including notes by David's son, Jules. As Midhat Šamić (1962) noted, the epic was recognized tacitly even by Jules David as a lackluster work, characteristic, in his mind, of the First Empire's overall literary failure (40-42). The character Daville's Orientalist and Eurocentric attitudes are explicitly voiced on several occasions in connection to literature and poetics. For instance, Daville is appalled and personally offended when Vizier Mehmed Pasha ridicules France's high esteem for Racine and poets in general. Daville also partakes in the Austrian consul's von Mitterer's disdain for Bosnian folk songs. The French consul describes the sound of these songs as more savage than the howling of dogs, while the Austrian one calls it a primeval cry of misery. Daville is described as writing the following in a letter: "'Das ist ein Urjammer', he [von Mitterer] said … However, I can't help thinking that von Mitterer, as usual, errs in overrating these people. It is quite simply the frenzy of a wild race that has lost its innocence[24]" (Andrić 1963, 124). The novel's version of Daville's *Alexandriad* is represented as its author's autofiction about his experiences in Bosnia. The narrator makes clear in no uncertain way that Daville ultimately manages to pen down a dull and dusty text that in no way pays off his invested creative work. For instance, as the narrator explains, the book is populated by only thinly fictionalized versions of, among others, Bosnian beys and Catholic friars. It is also described as fraught with ethnocentric, Orientalist, and Balkanist musings and attitudes. Bosnia appears as "a barren country with a harsh climate and peopled by an odious race, but under the name of Tauris … All of Daville's loathing of the East and of the Asiatic

[24] "'Das ist ein Urjammer', rekao je on. A ja sve mislim da se fon Miterer, kao i obično, vara precenjujući ovaj svet. To je, jednostavno, besnilo divljaka koji su izgubili naivnost" (Andrić 2001, 141).

spirit in general was here, expressed in terms of his hero's struggle against distant Asia[25]" (ibid., 72). It is of notice that the depiction of Daville's book as autofiction was not a coincidence. David's son also noted that his father called Bosnia "a Tauris of his own" (Šamić 1962, 40-42).

While Daville's Orientalist fantasies are straightforwardly communicated to the reader, the darker imperialist and colonialist aspects of Des Fossés' mission in Bosnia are somewhat less immediately clear. Moreover, Western European Orientalism and Balkanism haunting Des Fossés' time in Bosnia are all further connected to, as I will analyze next, the novel's framework of hegemonic masculinity. I have thus far explored the ways in which *Bosnian Chronicle* sets up and amplifies *differences* between its normative male characters to immerse them in an agonistic atmosphere of competition, conflict and contestability. In the rest of the chapter, I will shift focus on the ways in which hegemonic masculinity operates at the level of *similarities* between men. In particular, I will take a closer look at the way in which *Bosnian Chronicle's* hegemonic masculinity is underwritten by a joint effort on the part of normative men at exerting control over women and non-normative men. Therefore, I will first analyze masculine attachments to women, before turning to the central part of my analysis focusing on the ways in which the novel refracts its central themes through the scandal of male homosexuality.

2.2. The Privacy of Politics

Together with differences observable when it comes to their political beliefs and artistic inclinations, the *Chronicle's* men also differ when it comes to their private lives. Daville and the Austrian consul von Mitterer are both married, while the young Des Fossés is both happily

[25] "U toj njegovoj Aleksandreidi živela je i Bosna, oskudna zemlja sa teškom klimom i zlim ljudima, ali pod imenom Tauride. … Tu je bila i cela Davilova odvratnost prema azijatskom duhu i Istoku uopšte, izražena u borbi njegovog junaka protiv daleke Azije" (ibid., 82).

and miserably single. As Tihomir Brajović (2015) argued, the Austrian and French consuls' relationships with women are starkly contrasted to Des Fossés' and further reflect their differing political and public personae. As Brajović notes, Daville in particular nurtures a kind of deliberately dispirited and unimaginative attitude towards the world, including his own literary efforts and his romantic life. This is evident, Brajović points out, in the following description of Daville:

> In his attitude toward women Daville had, since his youth, shown a strict discipline of mind and body. This discipline was as much the product of a stern and sound upbringing as of congenital "cold blood" and weak imagination. Like all such men, Daville had a feeling of superstitious fear about all irregular and messy affairs of this kind. Even as a modest and abstemious young man in Paris and in the army, he had always kept a kind of guilty silence during the wild and loose talks of other young men.[26] (Andrić 1963, 244)

Daville's levelheadedness and weak imagination signal a pre-revolutionary subjectivity and a "traditional ideal of virility as the symbolic 'etalon' for the endurance of collective identity" (Brajović 253). Therefore, Brajović concludes, "without exception, Daville is, like the Austrian consul von Mitterer, depicted as an arid and uptight man, dedicated first and foremost to his loyalty to authority, discipline and order" (ibid., 253). In contrast, Des Fossés, the free-spirited new man of the nascent liberal democratic era "reminds of Rastignacian and Sorelian figures of ambitious and passionate young men from the great French novels of the 19th century" (ibid., 253-254).

What I wish to further explore here is the contrastive nature of *all* of these men's attachment to women. The *Bosnian Chronicle's* male characters are related to women in different degrees, forming a veritable metrics of affective attachment. For instance, although

[26] "U odnosu prema ženama Davil je bio još od mladosti čovek jake discipline duha i tela. Ta disciplina je poticala isto toliko od strogog i zdravog vaspitanja koliko i od urođene hladne krvi i slabe mašte. I kao svi takvi ljudi i Davil je imao osećanje nekog sujevernog straha prema svima neurednim i neredovnim odnosima te prirode. I kao mlad čovek u Parizu i u vojsci, on je, iako čedan i uzdržijiv, kod raspusnih mladićkih razgovora o ženama uvek ćutao kao krivac" (Andrić 2001, 276).

von Mitterer and Daville do share some similarities, they are also quite dissimilar with regards to the ways in which they affectively relate to their wives. The *Bosnian Chronicle's* most heavily featured marital arrangements – the Davilles and the von Mitterers – are, among other things, deepening and reflecting their respective spouses' traits by being set in highly contrasting frameworks. On the one hand, von Mitterer's marriage to the beautiful, yet unstable and flirty Anna Maria exists in a perpetual state of mutual agitation. On the other hand, Daville's uneventful marriage to his wife amounts to an aseptic bourgeois alliance, so much so that the French Consul describes his wife in terms akin to male homosociality as his "a peerless and dependable companion[27]" (Andrić 1963, 353). And, finally, the bachelor Des Fossés is the only main male character who distinctly displays heterosexual erotic urges and tries to fulfill them in ultimately failed, reckless affairs. Importantly for this chapter of my thesis, the private lives of these normative male characters can be read in order to highlight the interplay between the novel's overarching themes and their gendered representations. In this aspect, the privacy of male intimate lives and the politics of their public actions are especially telling. Like the issues of generational conflicts and competing poetics, their romantic lives do not only position men in a specific relation towards women, but also in a specific position towards each other. Moving from the competitiveness and strife analyzed earlier, here I will be interested in the shared sense of belonging stemming out of masculine normativity. In the rest of this section, I wish to explore these aspects with regards to hegemonic masculinity and the topic of geopolitics, especially the link between sexuality and Des Fossés' Orientalism and Balkanism.

As noted earlier, *Bosnian Chronicle* often sets up and voices seemingly ossified systems of values through specific characters. However, in a manner true to the *Chronicle's* polyphonic

[27] "[N]jegov jedinstveni i sigurni drug" (Andrić 2001, 401).

structure, these systems of values are then undermined by other characters through a process that Vladimir Biti (2018) described as the novel's "continuous self-refutation":

> the narrator alternately plunges into the views of the French, Austrians, Ottomans, Serbs, Croats and domestic Muslims, the potentates and subjects, foreigners and indigenous, men and women, rich and poor, in order to construct, via their diverse and often confronted opinions, the polyvalent truth of an age full of tensions and misunderstandings. … Inasmuch as no single view deserves the narrator's full attachment, the truth emerges through the changing relationship between them, a mobile network that they are at pains to come to terms with. It is put together not only contrastively but also through the steady reconfiguration of its whole, in a relentless search for the ultimate horizon of reconciliation of human disagreements. However, since this horizon is beyond human reach, the narrator's search is open-ended and uncertain with regard to its outcome. (174-175)

There is something precisely about the context which Joseph and Anna Maria von Mitterer inhabit that, according to Jasmina Lukić (2015), is a perfect example of Andrić's polyphony. Reading the *Bosnian Chronicle* through a feminist lens, Jasmina Lukić argued that text itself offered the reader "points of resistance" to the very systems of values the narrative seemingly promotes: "These 'points of resistance' in Andrić's fiction can be recognized [among other things] in details that are incongruent with the main storyline or the dominant traits of a character" (104). One such detail destabilizing the dominant messages communicated by the narrator and other main characters is the fact that, while "everybody has a negative attitude towards her, or at least has reservations about her", von Mitterer truly loves Anna Maria (ibid., 106). Lukić provides the following excerpt from the novel:

> [He loved] this woman, inflicted on him like an undeserved punishment, and he loved her staunchly and selflessly, as one loves a sick child. Everything about her, within her, and around her, down to the small inanimate objects that belonged to her, appeared to him as something rare and exquisite, deserving adoration and justifying every sacrifice. He suffered from her whims and lapses, he felt embarrassed before the world and ashamed before himself, but at the same time he trembled at the thought that this bewitching woman might leave him or do violence to herself and disappear from his home or from the world altogether[28]. (Andrić 1963, 96)

[28] "U stvari, on je tu ženu, koju mu je sudbina dala kao nezasluženu kaznu, voleo bezgranično i stalno, kao što se voli bolesno dete. Sve što je njeno bilo je za njega drago, otmeno i uzvišeno. Sve što je na njoj, u njoj i oko nje,

This sentence, or better yet, this detail conveyed by the narrator is a point of resistance to the system of values held up by the novel's world. Lukić demonstrates how at this point the novel not only establishes strong intertextual linkages to Flaubert's Mme Bovary and her husband, but it also takes a step further in its representation of a woman frustrated by social norms. Unlike Charles Bovary, von Mitterer is not oblivious to his wife's restless wanderings out of wedlock, and yet he occasionally demonstrates a keen sense of understanding for her circumstances. Almost paradoxically, then, his love is, as Lukić demonstrated, an instance that destabilizes the whole narrative about Anna Maria von Mitterer as established by other characters, including the young Des Fossés who engages with her in a seductive interplay, abruptly cut short when he tries to kiss her. Von Mitterer, on the other hand, loves Anna Maria despite her fits of rage, and showers her with unflinching adoration.

Building upon Jasmina Lukić's reading, I now wish to bring a bit more into focus the figure of von Mitterer and his position within the novel's homosocial universe. The Austrian consul's love for Anna Maria adds an affective valence to himself that sets him apart both from the uptight Daville and reckless Des Fossés. The love he feels towards his wife, I argue, posits the Austrian consul in an intermediary position on the novel's metrics of male affective attachment to women, somewhere between Daville's buttoned-down, friendship-based marriage to Madame Daville *and* Des Fossés' unfulfilled quest for a lover. Within this chapter's conceptual framework, von Mitterer's relationship to his wife is especially interesting with regards to his position vis-à-vis hegemonic masculinity.

sve do mrtvih predmeta koji su joj pripadali, sve mu se to nametalo kao nešto više i lepše, dostojno obožavanja i vredno svake žrtve. Patio je od njenih skokova i ispada, stideo se pred svetom i mučio u sebi, ali u isto vreme on je strepio od same pomisli da bi ta čarobna žena mogla da ga napusti ili da štogod učini sebi i nestane iz njegove kuće ili sa ovoga sveta" (Andrić 2001: 109).

Before suffering yet another of Anna Maria's outbursts about her unhappiness in Travnik and the need for their family to leave that wretched place, we encounter a long scene of the Austrian consul hard at his work. For the tenth night in a row, von Mitterer drafts his big report for Vienna, mapping out potential positions for hypothetical armies:

> These were von Mitterer's best hours and this was where he liked to be most. … Everything from his handwriting and style of expression to the ideas he expounded and the feeling that inspired him, seemed to link him to the great Imperial and Royal Army, to something solid, permanent, and secure on which a man could lean, in which he could lose himself with all his private worries and doubts. He knew and felt that he was not alone, not abandoned to chance. Above him there was a long line of superiors, below him ranks and subordinates. That bore him up and sustained him. Everything was threaded and bound together with countless rules, traditions, and customs, all unified in a pattern, unchangeable, constant, more enduring than an individual. … Now, still writing, he hadn't begun to flag yet, his eyes were not yet bleary, the words did not dance yet. On the contrary, it seemed to him that between his neat written lines other lines were coalescing: neat regiments of men stretching out to infinity, in their shiny imperial uniforms and fine equipment. As he wrote, he felt quietly exhilarated, as if he were working in the presence of the whole armed force, from the commander in chief down to the last Slavonian recruit.[29] (Andrić 1963, 130-131)

As we can see, von Mitterer dreams about an idealized position for himself in an imagined, heavily gendered homosocial chain of military hierarchy. He finds solace and structure in belonging to a chain between "the superiors" and "the subordinates" with history, tradition and mores being imagined as explicitly masculine. Theoretically speaking, von Mitterer is happy to assume the position of what Raewyn Connell (1995) called "complicit masculinity". This term refers to those masculinities that "that realize the patriarchal dividend, without the tensions or risks of being the front line troops of patriarchy" (79). While abstaining from

[29] "To su fon Mitererovi najbolji sati i ovo mu je najmilije mesto. … Od rukopisa i načina izražavanja pa do misli koju kazuje i osećanja koje ga vodi, sve ga to vezuje za veliku carsku i kraljevsku vojsku, za nešto čvrsto, trajno i sigurno na što se čovek može osloniti i u čemu se može izgubiti zajedno sa svojim ličnim brigama i kolebanjima. Zna i oseća da nije sam ni ostavljen slučaju. Nad njim je dugi niz starešina i pod njim niz potčinjenih. To ga nosi i podržava. Sve je prožeto i povezano bezbrojnim pravilima, tradicijama i navikama, sve je zajedničko i sve je predviđeno, stalno, nepromenljivo, i traje duže od čoveka … Tako piše pukovnik fon Miterer i ne zamara se i ne blešti mu pred očima i ne igraju slova, nego mu se čini da između pravilnih pisanih redova nazire druge: do u beskraj postrojene mase ljudstva u dobroj opremi i svetlim carskim uniformama. Piše a oseća se svečano i mimo kao da radi u prisustvu celokupne oružane sile, od vrhovnog komandanta pa do poslednjeg slavonskog regruta" (Andrić 2001, 148).

challenging hegemonic masculinity, complicit masculinity also abstains from explicit gestures of domination over women: "Marriage, fatherhood and community life often involve extensive compromises with women rather than naked domination or an uncontested display of authority" (ibid). Ultimately marked with providing sustenance and deliberate avoidance of patriarchal punishing of female adultery, von Mitterer is nothing like Daville who is capable of seeing only a caricature of Anna Maria as a hysterical homewrecker. And he is also nothing like Des Fossés who completely discards Anna Maria after she recoils from his embrace. However, despite his love for her, von Mitterer still blames Anna Maria for his own mediocrity (Andrić 1963, 94).

Unlike von Mitterer's testing yet loving monogamy, des Fossés' heterosexuality manifests itself as a reckless, irresponsible and, ultimately, failed attempt at becoming a womanizer. Apart from Frau von Mitterer, Des Fossés' erotic interest is captured by another woman in the novel: a young local girl, Jelka. The episode will prove to be as ill-fated episode as the one with Anna Maria. In an oft-quoted passage, Des Fossés' perception of the young woman is codified in a language of nature and its elements and properties, such as flowers, fruit and fruitfulness:

> It was the time of the year when everything sprouted and burst into leaf and flower, and so she appeared to him as an aspect – a distinct flesh-and-blood aspect – of that rich, pullulating world of plants and trees. 'She's a sapling,' he told himself … With that rosy skin and bashful smile of hers, and that trick of hanging her head like a flower nodding in the wind, she did, indeed, become associated in his mind with flowers and fruit, although in a deeper and special sense, which he didn't pause to examine- something like a materialized quintessence of fruit and flowers[30]. (Ibid., 179)

[30] "Kako je u to doba sve klijalo i listalo, njemu je i ona izgledala kao deo — oduhovljeni i izdvojeni deo — toga bogatog vegetalnog sveta. 'Ona je vegetalna...', govorio je sam sebi … Onako rumena, na smejana a stidljiva, obarajući svaki čas glavu kao cvet krunicu, ona je zaista u njegovim mislima bila vezana za cveće i voće, i to u nekom dubljem i naročitom smislu o kome on sam sebi nije davao računa; nešto kao svest i duša voća i cveća" (Andrić 2001, 201).

Undoubtedly, des Fossés' image of the girl voices an androcentric worldview in which both nature and femininity are associated with passivity and thus likened to each other (Grosz 2005, 46). However, although there are other instances in Andrić's fiction of women being compared to nature and its elements by their male admirers[31], Des Fossés' musings in particular have broader meanings. As Persida Lazarević di Giacomo (2014) demonstrated, the young consul's phantasmagoric and objectifying impressions of Jelka are inextricably linked to a distinct literary, historical and political context that welts together gender with cultural otherness and Balkanism. Lazarević di Giacomo read Des Fossés' episode with Jelka as Andrić's intertextual engagement with and overwriting of the Western European literary tradition of Morlachism. Morlach[32] was a vague and now defunct exonym for South Slavic Christians living in the hinterlands of Dalmatia and Herzegovina. Consequently, Morlachism as a concept denotes a set of stereotypical Western European assumptions produced in fiction and travelogues from the end of the 18th and the beginning of 19th century about Morlachs, South Slavs and Illyrians (Lazarević di Giacomo 2014, 260-261). The central scene of the episode is Des Fossés' unsuccessful attempt to court the girl with which Andrić, according to Lazarević di Giacomo, isolates and redevelops a specific European romanticist trope from the Morlachist tradition. This trope usually involved an innocent Balkan girl ravaged by a Western man, with the girl herself embodying the plight of her paradise-like lands and people: "In this way, the reader was supposed to feel compassion towards Slavic women as European men tried to defile their chastity and corrupt their community" (ibid., 266). Moreover, as Lazarević di Giacomo notes, even the girl's name – Jelka – echoes its many similar derivatives (Jela, Jelena, Elena etc.) that

[31] Brajović (2015), for instance, draws a parallel to Andrić's short story "Bajron u Sintri" (259).
[32] The term is believed to have originated etymologically from the Byzantine Greek *Μαυρόβλαχοι* (Morovlachs). As the Croatian *Encyclopaedia* notes, the term was applied to shepherd ancestors to indigenous Balkan people. Morovlachs, or the Black Vlachs, "got their name probably because of their recognizable attire made from dark fabrics. The term sprung the Latin *Morlachus* (*Murlachus*), and the Italian *Morlacco*" (online: http://www.enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?id=41968, accessed December 21st 2019).

can be found in many of Morlachistic writings over the centuries. The name is a South Slavic variant of the Greek name Elena, but also means literally "the fir tree" that symbolized protection and immortality for the ancient Slavs. The scene of Des Fossés' sexual advances takes place under a pear tree, and Jelka manages to fight him off by literally becoming tree-like, anthropomorphizing symbolically the very spirit of nature:

> when the young man's hands slid downward and gripped her soft middle between the waistcoat and the trousers, where there was only her shirt, the girl pulled away to free herself, straining over backwards, like the branch of a fruit tree ready to snap back when they bed it down at harvest time.[33] (Andrić 1963, 181)

Des Fossés, who at that point indicatively imagines himself to be a "pagan imperator", ultimately recoils confronted with the unyielding and empowered girl. All these motifs, Lazarević di Giacomo concludes, retell the Morlacistic trope from the perspective of the temple/paradise fending off a man that threatens to defile it and contaminate with Western civilizationalism. Andrić thus intervenes in the Western European trope of "Morlachia, Illyria, the Balkans" as an uncharted, wild "oasis in the heart of Europe" (Lazarević di Giacomo 2014, 269) by infusing it with elements of Slavic mythology, religion and folk songs. Another point we could add to Lazarević di Giacomo's analysis is that this particular combination of elements – travel writing, Balkanism and imperatorial conquest of wild nature and people conceived of as wild by nature – vocalizes the novel's point of resistance to Orientalizing discourses. More specifically, Des Fossés hot-tempered and ultimately unfulfilled desire signals the darker imperialist motives hat lurk beneath his nominal cultural open-mindedness. This becomes evident once we consider the way in which Andrić ended Des Fossés episode with Jelka, once

[33] "[K]ad mladićeve ruke kliznuše niz nju i obuhvatiše njen struk, na slabinama, između dimija i ječerme, gde je samo košulja, devojka se izvi, kao grana koju u berbi savijaju i koja se otima" (Andrić 2001, 204).

again bringing into direct contact Jelka's embarrassment, the young consuls' callousness and a note he writes in his travelogue:

> He still saw the needleworkers as he passed through the garden, and Jelka's lowered head among them, but he no longer stopped or felt embarrassed; he would call out to them gaily and speak a word or two that he had learned and memorized that day, and then pass on with a smile, brisk and without a care in the world. However, one evening about this time, he added a sentence to his manuscript on Bosnia, in the chapter devoted to the types and racial characteristics of the Bosnian people: "The women are well built as a rule and many of them have conspicuously fine and regular features, beautiful bodies, and a white skin that is dazzling to the eye[34]." (Andrić 1963: 183)

Importantly for this chapter's overall analysis of Andrić's poetic utilization of hegemonic masculinity, affective bonds with women can be thus read in two directions. On the one hand, as we have seen, these bonds are indeed part and parcel of the *differentiation* between the men: the passionless Daville, the loving and forgiving von Mitterer, the hot-blooded Des Fossés. They also reflect these men's position towards each other. From the conflict over hegemony between Daville and Des Fossés to von Mitterer's happy and unchallenging complicity with the patriarchal order as embodied by the military. On the other hand, however, affective bonds with women invariably illustrate that homosocial bonds in the *Chronicle* entail control over women as exemplified in the attempts of men to overcome unruly or unobtainable women (Anna Maria and Jelka) or ridicule the men who fail to do so (von Mitterer). In other words, underneath the agonistic nature of hegemonic masculinity, the *Chronicle's* normative men ultimately rely upon the presumed shared sameness of gendered and sexual normativity that is evidenced by their power over women and, as we will see next, their expulsion of male non-normativity.

[34] "Tako su ga neutoljena želja i mladićka sujeta mučile nekoliko dana, pa je i to prestalo. Počeo je da se miri i zaboravlja. U prolazu je i dalje viđao vezilje u bašti, među njima i Jelkinu oborenu glavu, ali se nije zbunjivao ni zaustavljao, nego im je dobacivao slobodno i veselo poneku reč, koju je toga dana naučio, i prolazio, uvek nasmejan. svež i užurban. Samo je, jedne od tih noći, u rukopisu svoje knjige o Bosni, tamo gde govori o tipovima i rasnim osobinama bosanskog čoveka, dodao sledeći stav: 'Žene su redovno stasite: mnoge od njih padaju u oči finim i pravilnim i crtama lica, lepotom tela i belinom kože koja zasenjuje oči'" (Andrić 2001, 210).

2.3. The West's Backdoor

As we have seen, Des Fossés' episode with Jelka signalizes a darker connection between Des Fossés' self-avowedly benevolent, mainly inquisitive attitude towards the Other. Indeed, his sexual desire towards Jelka seems at least partly to be motivated by a phantasmatic amalgam of colonialism, imperialism, Orientalism and Balkanism. Yet there is another way in which these ideologies are refracted through the sexual and gendered aspects of the young consul. So far, this chapter has established the dynamics governing homosocial relations between the *Bosnian Chronicle's* normative male characters. In particular, through the theoretical optics of hegemonic masculinity, the chapter previously explored the ways in which differences and similarities between male characters are poetically used to convey broader conflicts over politics and poetics. Andrić carefully constructed his historically based male protagonists by modifying, amplifying or reimagining their mutual relationships and characteristics. Significantly, many of these are revolve around or are based in gender and sexuality, most notably the generational conflict between the two French consuls and the variegated plethora of ways in which male characters attach to women. Surpassing their mutual differences, I have argued, is the status quo of the male protagonists' normativity. As we have seen, in the last instance, it is precisely through Des Fossés sexual advances that, despite his vocal opposition to blatant racial stereotypes, his deeper entrenchment with Eurocentric colonialism becomes obvious. In the following section, I will turn to the issue of male non-normativity in *Bosnian Chronicle*. Specifically, I will look at the ways in which Des Fossés private and political anxieties as a normative man are dramatized through a seemingly fleeting Orientalist exchange about masculine non-normativity with an officer at the very eastern border of the West.

In order to contextualize my analysis, I wish first to provide an overview of extant theoretical readings of *Bosnian Chronicle's* general staging of Eurocentrism and Orientalism.

As Zoran Milutinović argued, in *Bosnian Chronicle* bonds of shared interest, be it political or otherwise, can be stronger than bonds of cultural homogeneity. For instance, Milutinović (2008) demonstrated how the generational gap between Daville and Des Fossés is ultimately unbridgeable, despite the fact the two share the same language and same culture. Daville is, somewhat unexpectedly, closest to Mehmed Pasha and Ibrahim Pasha, with whom he communicates through a translator, "but who do have something important in common with Daville: they represent an empire which at that moment happens to have political interests similar to those of Daville's" (Milutinović 2008, 463). These interests are also reflected in ideological deployment of Orientalism and Balkanism. In the novel, as Enver Kazaz (2015) argued, negative conceptions about Bosnia and its people are parts of an overall imperial strategy to morally justify the Enlightenment's civilizing mission that attempts to "produce a Europeanness in a space and culture that the Enlightenment beforehand designates as un-European" (51). Yet, this veritable Balkanism is not inherently nor exclusively Western. Indeed, as Kazaz demonstrated, both the Western and Eastern Empires partake equally in it, producing and fueling disdain towards local population in equal manner: "Balkanism is thus not only a result of Eurocentric, but also the imperial, Ottoman- and Orient-centric discourses as well" (ibid., 59). The consuls' and viziers' imperial ideologies manifested towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and its people are harbored by all three Empires – the French, Austrian and Ottoman.

Furthermore, Marina Protrka Štimec (2014) demonstrated that the character of Des Fossés is mostly overlooked in critical interpretations of the thematization of Orientalism in *Bosnian Chronicle*. As a consequence, the concept of Orientalism thus employed and interpretations offered are invariably scrutinizing the characters' negative imaginings of the Orient, and thus failing to notice the fact, already analyzed by Said, that "as a discourse that produces knowledge about the Orient and buttresses differences between East and West,

orientalism is not realized solely through antagonisms and negative stereotypes" (Protrka Štimec 2014, 132). Andrić's East (Travnik, Bosnia, the Orient) is not a space nor a mentality, but a condition – a heterotopia. Observed through the Western gaze, Bosnia appears interchangeably as "a theatrical stage, a prison, a museum, a madhouse" (ibid., 137). The novel, Protrka Štimec argued, stages Bosnia as a *pharmakon* that either makes manifest and radicalizes the foreigners' repressed cultural baggage *or* initiates one into a specific cultural interplay. Therefore, confronted with the East, one can either take shelter in privacy and start to wither away, as Daville does (and other characters, the Ottomans included), or freely and inquisitively roam the country and ultimately leave the East unscathed, as does Des Fossés (ibid., 137). However, as Enver Kazaz noted, not even Des Fossés' seemingly innocuous curiosity and intellectual openness are entirely ideology-free. Indeed, "regardless of his implicit criticism towards both French and Austro-Hungarian imperialisms, Des Fossés too cannot keep his enlightenment away from Eurocentrism" (Kazaz 2015, 61).

This Eurocentrism, apart from the episode with Jelka, is also heavily sexualized through Andrić's play on the Orientalist trope of a sodomitic Turkish East. In fact, let us now consider the very opening of this fabled East for Des Fossés. Unlike the description of Daville's entrance into Travnik as an unwelcomed military parade, Des Fossés' first contact with Bosnia is not the town itself. He begins to feel the "invisible noose" of the East already in the coastal town of Split, the last French outpost on the way to Ottoman Empire. While departing for Bosnia, Des Fossés asks one of the officers if the carriage he will be taking was sturdy and comfortable enough:

> The commandant stared at him and there was a light in his eyes that was almost like a drunken man's.
>
> "It's the best we can do in this bloody country. Anyone going to work in Turkey ought to have an arse of steel, anyway."
>
> Not batting an eyelash, the young man looked him in the eye and replied with a grin:

"My instructions in Paris said nothing about that."

The officer nibbled his lower lip, realizing that here was someone who didn't run away from an argument but seized the opportunity to talk and get a few things off his chest.

"Well, you see, *monsieur*, there wasn't too much of that in our instructions either. It was all put in later, right here on the spot," and he did a wicked imitation of a scribe wielding a pen. With this cynical blessing young Des Fossés then set out on a dusty road that presently turned to bare rock as it heaved up steeply beyond the town of Split, taking him farther and farther away from the sea, from the last civilized buildings and green cultivation, only to ease him down once more, on the other side of the craggy ridge, into that other vast sea, Bosnia, where his young credentials would be tested for the first time[35]. (Andrić 1963, 77)

The scene is constituted, I argue, by a staged misunderstanding. Here I am following Milutinović (2008) who noted that *Bosnian Chronicle* hermeneutically postulates the state of a general misunderstanding as a rule between the characters, with mutual understanding appearing as an exceptionally rare, even miraculous event. What differentiates this scene from all the other instances of dialogic misunderstandings is the fact that Des Fossés and the Split-based commander *actually do understand* each other. Commander's provocation works precisely because Des Fossés understands what he is saying.

The scene emphasizes once again Des Fossés' lively, but overly bookish enthusiasm, as captured in the description of Bosnia as "testing his young credentials". Des Fossés exudes the same sense of naïve bookishness when he replies to the commander's risqué remark that his Parisian training made no mention of Oriental sodomy. However, his naivete is (at least

[35] "Komandant ga je posmatrao ukočeno nekim svetlim očima kao u pijanog čoveka.
'To je najbolje što se u ovoj đavolskoj zemlji može da nađe. Uostalom, onaj koji ide u Tursku na službu treba da ima stražnjicu od čelika'.
Ne trepćući, gledajući pravo i nasmejano, mladić mu je odgovorio:
'U instrukcijama koje sam dobio u Parizu nema toga'.
Oficir se ujede malko za usne kad vide da je naišao na nekog koji ne beži od prepirke, ali odmah prihvati žučan razgovor kao olakšanje.
'E, vidite, gospodine, ni u našim instrukcijama mnogo toga nije bilo. To se, znate, naknadno unosi. Na licu mesta…' I oficir pakosno pokaza rukom kao da piše.
Sa tim jetkim blagoslovom mladić je krenuo prašnim drumom a zatim strmim i golim kamenjarom koji se dizao u pozadini Splita, udaljujući se sve više od mora, od poslednjih skladnih građevina i poslednjeg plemenitog rastinja, da se s druge strane kamenite kose spusti, kao u novo more, u tu Bosnu, koja je za njega bila prva velika proba na ulasku u život" (Andrić 2001, 88).

partly) staged, as he replies this by "not batting an eyelash" and "with a grin" on his face". Indeed, even if French diplomatic textbooks hadn't prepared Des Fossés' for "that", the young man understands immediately why he is supposed to have a rear end of steel.

It would be tempting to conclude that the scene is simply Andrić himself voicing his own personal cultural prejudice towards the Ottomans. However, there are two reasons why this scene is irreducible to any personal authorial bias. For one, it refers to Bosnia as part of the Ottoman Empire and it would be hard to convincingly argue that Andrić would have himself subscribed to an Orientalist stereotype about his own country. And two, the context of the scene is inseparable from both the fictional and real-life Des Fossés' travel writing. As for the latter, the rest of this section will aim to highlight and contextualize the significance of the cultural baggage informing the exchange between the Split officer and Des Fossés. Thus, I will now look into the real-life Amédée Chaumette-des-Fossés (2012) *Travels across Bosnia, 1807-1808* and the ways in which it can be taken as an illustration of broader European Orientalist sexual imagination.

Edward Said's take on the sexual and gendered aspects of Orientalism emphasized the feminization of the East, demonstrating the conflation of the perceived sexual availability of the East with the assumption of European masculine rationality and militarism (Said 2003, 206). However, as Joseph Allen Boone (2014) argued, this "implicit heterosexism" associated with femininity was only one aspect of Orientalist sexual politics. The other was the conflation of Orientalism and male same-sex sexuality, especially evidenced in European travelogues:

> The dramatic increase in diplomatic and trade relationships between Europe and the Islamicate world in the early modern period was accompanied by an explosion in published travel narratives and histories of the Middle East, a vast number of which make mention of male homoeroticism. (Boone 2014, 27)

One such European travelogue was precisely the book that Andrić heavily drew from for his character of Des Fossés. First published in 1816, Amédée Chaumette-des-Fossés' *Travels across Bosnia, 1807-1808* (*Voyage en Bosnie dans les années 1807 et 1808*) proved popular enough to go through two prints. Chaumette-des-Fossés organized the travelogue as an encyclopedic overview of Bosnian geography, economy, politics and society. The latter topic in particular reveals many of the author's assumptions, observations and shocks with the local population's way of life. Andrić later transposed many of these impressions to his Des Fossés (and other characters), especially the fascination with affective dimensions of the Bosnians, such as their capacity for fear, love, hatred and cruelty[36]. In a section about "Mentality, Customs and Wardrobe", Chaumette-des-Fossés touches upon, among other things, sexuality. His foci of interest are compliant with Boone's (2014) assessment that "the primary erotic curiosities that fascinated most European writer-observers were blatantly heterosexual—namely, Muslim practices of polygamy and fantasies of harem life" (Boone 2014, 28). However, Chaumette-des-Fossés, having been to Bosnia rather than the Middle East, checks his observations about Bosnian Muslims against Orientalist knowledge of other Ottoman Muslims. Among other things, Chaumette-des-Fossés notes the non-existence of polygamy and harems among the Bosnian Muslims, and (in the absence of these exoticized and tantalizing options) emphasizes the cruel methods of punishing adultery, indexing several atrocious cases of honor killings. What I have found especially interesting in the *Travels across Bosnia* is the following remark:

> The vices of debauched Asian and Istanbul Muslims have not taken root in this harsh climate. Pederasty is almost unknown, which partly accounts for the abundance of big families with many children. (Chaumette-des-Fossés 2012, 50)

[36] In the travelogue, Chaumette-des-Fossés reveals many of his own affects as well. For instance, the vocabulary used to describe the locals' food and beverages communicates the author's disgust with "awful stews" and a certain fear with people soaked in plum brandy that sets their "blood on fire" (Chaumette-des-Fossés 2012, 46).

There are two telling ways in which this short observation construes geopolitical imaginings and semanticizes male same-sex behaviour. On the one hand, as we have seen, Chaumette-des-Fossés explicitly linked homosexuality with the "debauched Asian and Istanbul Muslims", while explaining its presumable non-existence in Bosnia by way of its "harsh climate". This explanation for the apparent absence of pederasty is noteworthy for being deduced out of a specific Orientalist explanation for the perceived prevalence of male same-sex behaviors in the East. As Rudi Bleys (1995) argued, in the Western accounts of the Arab world, it was the warm climates that were often posited as the trigger for both male and female sexual vices and excesses: "climate, religion, regional variety and *couleur locale* were subjected to the exigencies of a more general reification of Oriental identity" (95). The warm climate of some parts of the Middle East was equated with other forms of luxury and opulence, such as gastronomy and smoking and, unsurprisingly, sex. Homoeroticism in particular was often seen as an alluring and risky opportunity for Western self to end "in unnerving (and sometimes ecstatic) experiences of self-estrangement, in which one is no longer legible to oneself, much less to one's home culture" (Boone 2014, 16-17).

On the other hand, Balkan harsh climate and conspicuous poverty proved less fertile ground for travelers' exoticization. As Maria Todorova (2009) argued, the Balkans "with their unimaginative concreteness, and almost total lack of wealth, induced a straightforward attitude, usually negative, but rarely nuanced" (14). Instead of an opulent Orient promising the pleasure of Otherness, the Balkans presented Europeans with an image of an imperfect, primitive Self. And unlike the Orient that was feminized as geographically and sexually penetrable, the Balkan got masculinized: "[Balkan's appeal was] a distinctly male appeal: the appeal of medieval knighthood, of arms and plots" (ibid). If, as argued before, homoeroticization goes hand in hand with the feminization of the Orient, it is not unsurprising that Chaumette-des-Fossés underscores his descriptions of Bosnian poverty and masculine cruelty with an absence of

pederasty. After all, the image of "the standard Balkan male is uncivilized, primitive, crude, cruel, and, without exception, disheveled" (Todorova 2009, 14). He is also presumably – heterosexual.

Thus, it seems Andrić replaced the real-life Chaumette-des-Fossés' written observation about the rarity of male-to-male sodomy in Bosnia with the above quoted scene in which the literary character is jokingly warned about its prevalence in Ottoman lands. This recasting is indicative, I argue, of a broader creative strategy. Even though the fictional Des Fossés, as noted before, provides a contrapuntal voice to many of the other characters' blatant Orientalist and Balkanist attitudes, he still remains an ideologue of Enlightenment and an agent of his Empire's interests. Thus, the joke about being sodomized deepens the anxieties and vulnerabilities des Fossés already feels. Cultural otherness is at once singed with an imprint of the Other's presumed sexual debauchery and one's own vulnerability and penetrability. The geopolitical spectacle of Oriental Otherness that unfolds before the Western man thus safeguards his own sexual self. And vice versa: the trope of Oriental sodomy delineates for the young man a constitutive geographical, cultural and sexual exteriority that maps out the porous borders of his own body and the body of his Empire. Des Fossés knows that by guarding his body from penetration, he guards all the buttocks of the entire French Empire, and the buttocks of Napoleon himself.

By the same token, the scene illustrates the French men's displacement of male same-sex sexuality away from the Western Self, and into the vastness of the Ottoman lands. The joke, by referring explicitly to the vulnerability of Des Fossés' rear end, also tells something about the vulnerability of his mission. He is not there to penetrate the East ideologically and militarily, but to compete with the Ottoman Empire and defend his own lands from Turkish penetration. As he himself enters Bosnia, Des Fossés fears being penetrated; as he opens the front gate to the East, he simultaneously anguishes over his own backdoor.

Rather than being a marginal, slightly comedic event, the brief exchange between two men at the West's final frontier is thus laden with meanings. Specifically, as we have seen, it amplifies Des Fossés' private and political anguish of serving his Empire in foreign lands. And from a wider perspective, it delineates a concrete sexual border for the *Bosnian Chronicle's* normative male characters. Alongside previously analyzed dynamics between men, and between men and women, the sacrosanctity of both physical and cultural impenetrability of the European subject in foreign lands is inextricable from the novel's broader thematic of hegemonic masculinity. Namely, the evocation of male homosexuality radically and explicitly splits the homosocial universe between masculine normativity and non-normativity. In this regard, the scene of des Fossés' anguished entrance paves the way for an event in which male homosexuality will literally circle back to the West. However, unlike the phantasmatic sodomy of the East, this scene will ultimately show cracks in the presumed Western cultural homogeneity.

2.4. The Estranged Compatriot

In a section chronicling the successive arrivals of three vagabonds to Travnik, seeking help from the French consulate, one stands out, literally and figuratively. This vagabond is a French traveler:

> one Pepin, a tiny, nattily dressed man, powdered and perfumed, with a shrill voice and a mincing gait. He told D'Avenat that he had come from Warsaw, where he ran a dancing school, and was stopping here because he had been robbed on the way; that he was returning to Istanbul, where he used to live at one time and where some people owed him money. (How he got to Travnik, which could not, by any stretch of the imagination be said to lie on the Warsaw-Istanbul route, he did not explain.)[37] (Andrić 1963, 359)

[37] "Pepen, sitan, pedantno odeven čovek, namirisan i napuderisan, tankog glasa i vižlastih pokreta. Objasnio je Davni da dolazi iz Varšave, gde je držao školu igranja, da je ovde zastao, jer je na putu pokraden, da se vraća u Carigrad, gde je nekad živeo i gde ima neke verovnike. (Kako je zalutao u Travnik, koji nikako ne leži na putu Varšava- Carigrad, to nije objašnjavao.)" (Andrić 2001, 408)

Pepin stops Daville in the middle of the bazaar by stepping in front of his horse and theatrically asking him for consultations. Daville concedes, afraid of another public scene by this man who was obviously "as forward as a tart[38]". The consul later asks D'Avenat, the temporary official and interpreter at the French Consulate, "to get rid of the pest" (ibid.). Part of Daville's agitation at the thought of Pepin comes from his paranoid conviction that the dance teacher is an English spy. However, D'Avenat "formed an accurate idea of the traveler right away":

> "Watch out for this man," the Consul had warned D'Avenat in some excitement. "Get rid of him, please. He's obviously an agent, sent here to compromise the Consulate or for some such purpose. He is an *agent provocateur*."
>
> "He is not," D'Avenat said flatly.
>
> "How not? What do you mean?"'
>
> "He's a pederast."
>
> "He's what?"
>
> "A pederast, *monsieur le Consul*."
>
> Daville clutched at his head. "O-o-o-h! That's all we need in this Consulate. You say he is… *oh, mon Dieu*![39]" (ibid., 359-360).

The next day, D'Avenat proceeds to banish Pepin from Travnik:

> Not saying anything to anyone, he cornered this faggot in his room, got a firm grip on the immaculate lace ruffle of his shirt, and told him that unless he moved on right away the Turks would give him a public lashing in the middle of the bazaar and then throw him into the fortress dungeon[40] (ibid; trans. modif.).

[38] "Taj sitni čovek imao je drskost javne žene" (ibid., 409).

[39] 'Molim vas, obratite pažnju na toga čoveka', govorio je konzul uzbuđeno Davni. 'Molim vas, skidajte mi ga s vrata, jer on je agent, poslan očevidno da kompromituje Konzulat ili za neki sličan posao. On je provokator ...'
'Nije', odgovorio je suvo Davna.
'Kako nije?'
'On je pederast'.
'Šta je on?'
'Pederast, gospodine generalni konzule.'
Davil se hvatao za glavu.
'O, ooo! Šta još neće naići na ovaj Konzulat. Dakle, tako kažete? Oooo!" (ibid.).

[40] "Ne kazujući nikom ništa, on je saterao toga kekeza u jedan ugao njegove sobe, stegao ga za njegov besprekorni žabo, oštro pretresao i zapretio mu da će sutra biti bijen nasred čaršije i bačen u tvrđavu od turskih vlasti ako odmah ne otputuje dalje" (ibid., 409).

Upon hearing the news, the relieved Daville "kept wondering what trash and human flotsam and debris blind and senseless chance would bring next into this valley where life was quite hard enough without them[41]" (ibid). The reader is obviously meant to inhabit the position of D'Avenat who, unlike the paranoid Consul, immediately realizes what kind of a man Pepin is. On the other hand, once Pepin's sexual nature is revealed to the Consul, he accepts it as an unequivocal fact. Daville makes no attempt at either contradicting D'Avenat or making the case that – regardless of Pepin's paederasty – he still could have been an English spy. The thing that made him question the vagabond was now put into place. Thus, the nature of D'Avenat's remark is not polemical nor explanatory, it is merely eye-opening. And once opened, Daville's eyes want the dancer out of sight.

As Midhat Šamić (1962) demonstrated, Andrić modelled all three of his vagabonds on real-life people that sought Consulate's services and were mentioned in Pierre David's writings[42] (146-154). The historical Charles Pépin can be traced back to two of David's reports. Šamić also pointed out that Andrić kept only the historical Pépin's surname and his points of departure and arrival, while developing the rest of the story on his own. Thus, by "letting his imagination run free, [Andrić] developed an original and lifelike character" (ibid., 154). In the context of this chapter, and my thesis overall, the very fact that Andrić introduced this character is significant for three reasons. First, despite his brief and isolated appearance in the novel, the character of Pepin is a rare example of an unambiguously effeminate homosexual character in Andrić's *oeuvre*. Although, as we will see later in the thesis, there are other homosexual and gender non-normative characters in other works by Andrić, Pepin is rare for functioning as a

[41] "Davil je bio srećan što se toga skitnice resio, ali je u sebi već strepio, pitajući se kakve će mu sve društvene otpatke i brodolomce naneti mutna i glupa igra slučaja u ovu dolinu u kojoj i bez njih teško živi" (ibid.).
[42] The other two novelistic vagabonds were Lorenzo Gambini, a shady Palermo-born merchant, trying to take his family back to Italy after having survived financial ruin in the Levant; and Ismail Raiff, a converted Alsatian Jew and an alcoholic, offering allegedly important intelligence on Napoleon's adversaries.

straightforward representation of an unequivocal homosexual man completely reducible to his homosexuality. Secondly, there is something interesting about this example that unfolds at the level of narration and offers a rare glimpse into the *Bosnian Chronicle's* narrator's cultural embeddedness, an aspect that is otherwise effectively effaced in the novel. And thirdly, Pepin is interesting as literally embodying the sexual otherness from the perspective of hegemonic masculinity. Unlike the innuendo-drive joke from the previous section, Pepin is a personified and, as we have seen, quite vocal example of male non-normativity. His expulsion from Travnik thus has a specific political valence to it that, once again, requires a look from the perspective of male homosociality and queerness. The rest of this section looks in more detail at these three aspects of Pepin.

It is the theatrics of Pepin's performative gender non-normativity that convey to the modern reader an unambiguous picture of male homosexuality. As "a tiny, nattily dressed man, powdered and perfumed, with a shrill voice and a mincing gait", Pepin readily becomes legible in his fictional surroundings as a fundamentally *different* kind of man by virtue of his effeminacy. However, rather than *only* representing a full-fledged modern homosexual, I argue that Pepin comes from the ranks of another, more ancient brethren of the irredeemably perverted men – that of *inverts*. This does not exclude the fact that he would be read by the modern reader as a modern homosexual. Quite the contrary, it is precisely the tropology of inversion that enables this legibility. The narrative relies on the reader's familiarity with the pervasive tropological terrain of inversion in order to make it clear from the start that Pepin is, indeed, a pederast. As David Halperin (2002) noted, "[i]t doesn't take one to know one": "Everybody seems to know what an invert looks like and how he behaves, even if no normal man could possibly impersonate one" (124). Unlike gender-conforming men who engage in same-sex sexual practices, the invert is always conspicuously at odds with normative masculinity. This one consistent feature of inversion provided the basis for what Halperin

described as "a particular European tradition of discourse, a particular discursive mode of representing male inverts or passives, which emphasizes their extravagantly feminine appearance" (ibid., 125-126). The trope of an invert coalesces precisely around a figure wearing perfume and ornate dress that signal, as Vernon Rosario (1997) noted, "the effeminate façade and psyche of the typical pederast" (90).

As a "typical pederast", Pepin inadvertently affects Andrić's mode of narration. When it comes to Pepin's scene in particular, in the original, the narrator uses the archaic Bosnian derogatory regionalism "kekez" meaning "faggot" when describing the final moments between D'Avenat and the dance teacher. While it originally provided the reader with a local Bosnian synonym for D'Avenat's "pederast", the term is today literally unknown and has to be indexed even in local editions' glossary of lesser known words as a synonym for "homosexual" or "pederast". Again, as with the example form the previous section, it would be tempting to interpret the whole scene and the term used as a simple expression of Andrić's personal homophobic fantasies. However, there are important reasons why it could be misleading to focus on the ways in which the usage of "kekez" potentially cements the author's or the narrator's personal homophobia. As Jasmina Lukić (2015) argued, Andrić's fiction "establishes a distance with regards to the narrator's voice at the level of the implicit author" (106), thus making evident that even the most seemingly ossified systems of value, even the ones that aim to represent themselves as universally accepted by the characters and the narrator, are represented from the viewpoint of the represented diegetic world, not the authorial voice. Thus, the usage of this derogatory term, I argue, has two other important ramifications *vis-à-vis* the narratorial voice.

On the one hand, it voices and amplifies the character D'Avenat's disgust as he physically ruffles Pepin. On the other hand, and more importantly, the term "kekez" simultaneously offers a rare evidence of the narrator's belonging to the local tradition. Andrić

has often been called an "ideal chronicler". Alongside his inimitable writerly precision and attentiveness to detail, he was celebrated for his success in creating detached and mostly impersonal, arguably objective narrators (*see more* Milošević 1974, 121; Vučković 1974; Nemec 2014). The voice of the *Bosnian Chronicle's* narrator in particular has been shown as both extradiegetic and homodiegetic. In other words, the narrating voice inhabits the diegetic universe, but is constantly vanishing through a process of his own effacement (Lešić 2014, 31). However, although extremely reticent, it has been also demonstrated that the narrator does occasionally use first person plural and thus identifies himself with the Bosnian locals' collective and makes value-driven observations that cannot be attributed to any of the characters (Košćak 2014, 235). Or as Enver Kazaz (2015) argued, the narrator "tentatively emphasizes his own belonging to the tradition of the narrated world" (64). The term "kekez" reveals precisely this belonging of the narrator to the narrated world since it effectively translates "pederast" into a regionalism. It also, inadvertently or otherwise, indexes the phenomenon of male homosexuality in local vernacular and culture. This is almost paradoxical given that the scene in question describes homophobic ostracization.

And finally, immediately upon Pepin's arrival, the narrator points out that the dance teacher is not able to explain how he ended up in Travnik, and thus implies that the most important element of Pepin's background story simply does not hold under scrutiny. This codes Pepin in both a criminogenic and gender and sexually non-normative discourse, even before D'Avenat's revelation to Daville. A significant detail that signals Pepin's inversion is that the dance teacher is not only tentatively framed as a possible con artist (or worse) but is also described "as forward as a tart". In part, the pre- and modern scandal of inversion arises from the fact that a grown-up male allows himself to be penetrated by another male. Historically, this volitional subjection to penetration has been likened to prostitution. For instance, as Halperin (1990) demonstrated in the case of classical Athens, this self-inflicted violation of

masculinity constituted the crime of *hubris*[43] (96). A free citizen voluntarily engaging in prostitution was seen as degrading himself to the ranks of women and foreigners, forfeiting his citizenship in process (ibid., 97). The fact that Pepin's directness in public spaces gets combined with the scandal of his effeminacy anticipates his ultimate banishment from the Consulate and Travnik. Instead of helping their fellow citizen in need, the French Consulate basically strips Pepin from his civil rights in a vivid scene of homophobic physical violence.

Another aspect of the same scene is D'Avenat's threat. He tells Pepin that, unless he leaves immediately, the Turks will lash him publicly and then imprison him. Cultural solidarity established between Western Europeans in foreign lands breaks off at Pepin. In the process, the Ottoman Empire is used as a scarecrow, presumably playing a crucial role in finally ridding the town of the disreputable dance teacher. This is a reversal of the Orientalist stereotype of a sexually deviant and predatory Ottoman Empire, as analyzed in the previous section. Now the French summon the imago of the Orient as highly punitive, echoing the double-edged representation of the Orient as sexually licentious and repressive (Massad 2007). This coding, however, only serves the purpose of the French expelling male homosexuality from their own ranks.

Finally, the narrative never gives an answer with regards to Pepin's potential shady businesses. He is unwanted, first and foremost, in the political and homosocial environment of other men due to his gendered otherness. As such, he is ultimately transparent, always-already known and semantically monolithic. He is readily legible for the narrator, the characters and, presumably, the reader. Pepin thus functions as a clearly delineated exteriority to both male homosociality and cultural solidarity, elements embodied in the relationship between the

[43] This crime had a strong sexual aspect because the Athenian gender regime conflated, on the one hand, citizenship and masculinity with an insertive role in sexual acts and, on the other hand, slavery and femininity with the receiving role (*see more* Halperin 1990).

normative male characters such as Daville, von Mitterer and Des Fossés. Once banished, Pepin produces no ripple in the texture of homosociality, no identificatory crisis nor a change in homosocial dynamics between normative men. Neither D'Avenat nor Daville experience anything other than disgust and outrage at the prospect of dealing with this man. If anything, Pepin only strengthens normative male homosocial bonds insofar as his case further proves to Daville that he can rely on his translator even in dealings of the most unsavory nature.

2.5. Conclusions

This chapter has focused on the indispensability of the poetic aspects of male homosociality and non-normativity for Andrić's novel *Bosnian Chronicle*. By reconstructing and contextualizing many of Andrić's interventions in historical sources and his own authorial imaginings, the chapter has analyzed the dominant modes of establishment, rupturing and maintenance of male homosocial bonds. I have relied on the concept of hegemonic masculinity to map out the dominant masculine interpersonal conflicts, but also the underlying sense of a shared normativity. In this regard, I have aimed to highlight the specific gendered aspects of Andrić's creative strategies regarding his male characters: from the widening of the age gap between the two French consuls, the reworking of Amédée Chaumette-des-Fossés travel writings, to the introduction of an explicitly homosexual character. The central aim of the chapter was to demonstrate that these gendered and sexualized aspects poetically partake in the construction of the novel's overarching themes of competing imperialisms and Orientalism. And vice versa, the chapter connected the *Bosnian Chronicle's* dramatization of both internal and external European cultural and ideological anxieties with hegemonic and complicit masculinity, the overall relations main male characters establish with women and their explicit denunciation of homosexuality. As for the latter, in cases of both des Fossés' welcome to Bosnia and Pepin's exile from it, male homosexuality remains an easily displaced and

reallocated phenomenon, completely differentiated and expelled from the male homosocial universe and its conflicts over geopolitics, poetics and heterosexual desire. Male homosexuality thus demonstrates the malleability of Orientalism, the neuralgic point of cultural homogeneity and the ways in which geopolitical imagination is hinged upon normative notions of male gender and sexuality. It is also the ultimate border that neatly groups the normative male characters around their shared gendered and sexual normativity.

However, all of this is only half of the *Chronicle's* story. In the following chapter, I will look at a figure that will subvert all of the preconditions of thus far established hegemonic masculinity and shatter this previously established microcosm of male homosociality from the inside out. This figure of extreme and simultaneously queered masculinity will be the new Austrian consul, replacing at last von Mitterer, exasperated by his unhappy familial life and a failed diplomatic career.

Chapter 3. The Approaching Destroyer: Inviolate Manhood and *Bosnian Chronicle's* Anticipated Modernity

The year is 1811. The days of the consuls are still on horizon as a dashing, impeccably polished man in his primes arrives to Travnik. This is the new Austrian consul, von Paulich, an impressive successor to the somewhat feeble Joseph von Mitterer, a middle-aged family man disillusioned both in his professional and private life. Von Paulich, on the other hand, is an ambitious servant of the Austrian Empire, a poster face for order and civilization who arrives to Bosnia of his own will, the only man in this context that does not see his appointment as a complete career failure. Yet, despite his remarkable expediency and professional aptness, von Paulich soon proves to be a figure so puzzling to his surroundings that not an occasion goes by without him disrupting, reversing or undermining the previously analyzed structures of hegemonic masculinity, heterosexual desire and gender normativity. And he does so to a great extent by literally embodying and performing a puzzling blur in the narrative alignment of male sexuality and homosociality, and all that is generated by it – conflict, solidarity, and belonging between men.

This chapter functions in conjunction with the previous one. Building upon the analysis of the poetic role of hegemonic, complicit and non-normative masculinity in *Bosnian Chronicle*, the following reading will focus mainly on the character of von Paulich. The new Austrian consul is arguably the least analyzed character from the *Bosnian Chronicle* in Andrić studies, with most scholarship focusing on Des Fossés, Daville and von Mitterer. Critical sidetracking of von Paulich, I argue, does not only stem from the fact that he occupies less space than the other main characters (von Paulich appears only in the last third of the novel), but also because his character does not really make much sense without constant attendance to

the recurring ways in which he is made precisely to blur the novel's previously established rationality. Through an exploration of his gendered and sexualized aspects, this chapter will provide a new interpretation of von Paulich, framing him as a figure that effectively suspends, disentangles and destroys many of the dynamics established between the main characters and their homosocial, romantic and political bonds. This chapter's main argument rests upon two lines of theoretical analysis. First, I will cast von Paulich as belonging to the literary trope of "inviolate men": men who, although desired by women and admired by other men, willfully exempt themselves from bonds of heterosexual romance and homosocial belonging. And secondly, I will further use the textual ramifications of von Paulich's gendered and sexual inviolability to bring into focus his embeddedness within a broader thematic of modernity and its both destructive and constructive aspects. With these two theoretical moves, this chapter makes the argument that von Paulich's inviolate manhood ultimately thematically anticipates the arrival of Austro-Hungarian modernity to Bosnia, making him a herald of this new form of social organization and political power.

3.1. Volitional Bachelorhood and Attachment to Artifice

It all begins long before von Paulich's actual arrival to Bosnia. In an episode already analyzed with regards to complicit masculinity in Chapter 2, von Mitterer sends a letter to his superintendent in Vienna. Having suffered yet another of Anna Maria's nervous attacks, and having faced the feeling of utmost despair at the prospect of finishing his career as an aging man at the borderlands of his Empire, von Mitterer finally becomes resolved: there is no way for him to continue with his work in Bosnia and demands a replacement as soon as possible. A man without a family, von Mitterer writes in his letter, would be ideal for the post; a man who will fight for the interests of his Empire without having to deal with a wife and children in this poverty-stricken, backwards limbo between East and West. Little does he know that the letter

will be stashed away for many years before his request is granted. In the Austrian capital, the letter is received by a strange, shadowy figure:

> His application would reach Vienna quickly and punctually, and be referred to the proper official, a tired gray-haired *Sektionschef*. The man would browse through it one winter morning in his warm, high-ceilinged, bright office, which looked out to the Franciscan church, and would then draw an ironic red-pencil line under the sentence in which von Mitterer suggested that they replace him with "einem familienlosen Individuum"- a man without a family. He would write in the margin that the Consul must be patient.
>
> For the *Sektionschef* was a placid man, a confirmed bachelor, a pampered lover of music and the arts who, from the cozy and secure heights of his position, could not possibly know or imagine the Consul's plight, or the kind of place Travnik was, or for that matter the endless variety of human predicaments and needs. A man like that would never, not even in his last moments, in the throes of death, find himself face to face with the kind of wall that von Mitterer confronted that night[44] (Andrić 1963, 135).

The Sektionschef seems to condense many of the meanings tentatively at odds with normative masculinity. As analyzed in the previous chapter, the *Chronicle's* normative men all partake in hegemonic masculinity through, among other things, the unassailable status of their heterosexuality. This heterosexuality is confirmed, as we have seen, through their relations both with women and non-normative men. With regards to the latter, explicit homosexuality is depicted in the novel as epistemologically transparent and, therefore, easily expelled from the realm of normative homosociality. The Sektionschef, however, by virtue of being a "groomed bachelor" (in the original, "negovan neženja") who is also "a pampered lover of music and the arts", introduces a much more ambiguous gendered trouble for hegemonic masculinity.

[44] "Jer, molba će brzo i tačno stići u Beč i doći do nadležnog referenta, jednog prosedog i umornog Sektionschef-a. Ovaj će pročitati stvar, jednog zimskog jutra, u visokoj, svetloj i toploj kancelariji sa izgledom na minoritsku crkvu, i samo će crvenom pisaljkom ironično podvući rečenicu u kojoj fon Miterer predlaže da se na njegovo mesto pošalje 'ein familienloses Individuum', a na poleđini napisati da konzul treba da se strpi.
Jer Sektionschef je miran, negovan neženja, razmažen meloman i esteta, koji sa svog sigurnog, visokog i bezbrižnog položaja ne zna i ne pomišlja kakve su muke ovoga konzula, ni šta je Travnik, ni šta Ana Marija fon Miterer, ni kakva sve može biti ljudska nevolja i potreba. Taj se ni na poslednjem času, u trenutku samrtnih muka, neće naći pred ovakvim zidom pred kakvim je noćas stajao pukovnik fon Miterer" (Andrić 2001, 153).

My following analysis rests upon Gregory Woods' (1998) assertion that as an analytical endeavor, the concept of "gay literature" "needs to include not only representations of queer people by writers of whichever sexual orientation, but also characters who are merely regarded by others as being, even slightly, 'strange' in ways related if not to sexuality itself, then to gender identity or marital status" (137). The Sektionschef is precisely one such figure since both his overall inclinations and the specifics of his bachelorhood clash with the previously established normativity of the novel's protagonists such as Daville, Des Fossés and von Mitterer.

For one, Andrić's Sektionschef is infused with notions of artifice and unnaturalness by being described as a pampered and groomed art-lover, completely oblivious to the "endless variety of human predicaments and needs". Combined with his bachelorhood, to which I will turn next, these characteristics bring the Sektionschef in close proximity to many of the meanings traditionally associated with modern understanding of male homosexuality. As Gregory Woods noted, the theme of male same-sex desire and intercourse was often coded in Western literature from Wilde onwards through the figure of an "aesthete", the appreciator of artifice. The figure of the male art appreciator is at once cut-off from enjoying the "banality of nature" associated with women and lifted up to finding pleasure in more "valuable" man-made things: "The worship of artifice is often presented as part of a pose of celibacy, particularly since sex involves so much stickiness and filth. Thus, the aesthete often constructed the image of himself as a paradoxical combination of *mens insana* in *corpore sano*: the embodiment of unquenched (but not necessarily frustrated) desire" (Woods 1998, 182).

This conceptual conflation of detachment from heterosexual desire for women (equated with Nature) and attachment to the realm of aesthetic artifice brings the art-lover close to the figure of the homosexual. In the case of Sektionschef, this becomes even more apparent once we contrast him to the *Bosnian Chronicle's* Des Fossés. As argued in the previous chapter, the

Young French Consul's heterosexual desire – with all its geopolitical and ideological baggage – manifests itself as an ultimately failed attempt at conquering precisely the temple of Nature and its vegetal-like emanation, the local girl Jelka. Unlike that scene of an attempted defloration in an earth-bound, almost chthonic setting, the Sektionschef is markedly turned away from Nature, away from women, and even elevated physically (his office being "high" and "bright", with the same word for "high" used twice in the original).

When it comes to the Sektionschef's bachelorhood, the text makes it clear it is of his own choice. The Sektionschef's volitional bachelorhood is emphasized not only by his age, but also by the fact that it makes him happy and comfortable. His "familienloses" life enables him both to enjoy the arts and attend to his physical appearance, and lead a "groomed and pampered" existence. The figure of the volitional bachelor, apart from simply raising eyebrows in heteronormative settings (or in particularly attentive readers), lends itself to especially interesting critical interpretations. As Katherine Snyder (1999) analyzed in her *Bachelors, Manhood and the Novel, 1850-1925*, the onset of modernity and fixed sexual categories also coded bachelorhood and its nominal, and hence suspicious absence of sexual activity as potential or even highly likely indication of homosexuality (33). The figure of the bachelor is, to an extent, always-already a critical interpretation of heterosexual marital domesticity since he willingly exempts himself from bonds of marriage. As Holly Furneaux (2009) argued, bachelorhood condenses as specific foci of resistance not to a specific sexual identity, but to a more encompassing notion of heteronormativity and sexual identity as such by eschewing the establishment of social links through marriage and blood-based kinship (73). Returning to the Sektionschef, it is telling that the text propels him heuristically to the hour of his death in order to emphasize that he will never have known "*women* like Anna Maria von Mitterer" or "all the possible *troubles* and *needs* human beings could have". He thus circumvents forever and altogether the marriage- and family-induced ordeal causing so much suffering to von Mitterer.

Although the Sektionschef is not explicitly denoted as a homosexual man, he is still significantly positioned against the normative and marriage-oriented heterosexuality. Combined with his affinity for beautiful man-made things, his mocking attitude towards von Mitterer's private problems, the Sektionschef's volitional bachelorhood turns him into a queered figure that serves as a critical and sardonic lens over the troubles von Mitterer faces. However, the ambiguous greying Sektionschef, rather than remaining the *Chronicle's* isolated figure of a potentially homosexual bachelor, serves only to lay out in broad strokes the building blocks of an equally puzzling, but much more developed character of von Mitterer's eventual replacement sent from Vienna, the Lieutenant-Colonel von Paulich.

Coming from an affluent Germanized Zagreb family, von Paulich[45] cuts an imposing figure:

> He was thirty-five years old and strikingly handsome. He was tall, fine-complexioned, with a small brown mustache over his mouth, large eyes in which a pair of dark blue pupils shone with a steady light, and a shock of naturally wavy hair that was cropped and combed in military fashion. The whole man radiated a cool, self-possessed, almost monkish air, without, however, a trace of those inner conflicts and strife that so often leave their tortured imprint on the visage and bearing of monks. This exceptionally handsome creature seemed to move and live, as it were, in a sort of icy armor, behind which all sounds of a personal life and human weakness and needs faded and grew inaudible as in a shell. His conversation was like that too, factual, affable, and quite impersonal; and so were his deep voice and the smile that sometimes played over his regular, white teeth and flitted over his stony face like frosted moonlight.[46] (Andrić 1963, 307)

Here we can trace several recurring characteristics and tropes surrounding the new Austrian consul. Some of them refer to his body, first and foremost his mesmerizing beauty and the

[45] While creating the literary character, Andrić preserved his real-life counterpart's surname (yet dropped the name, Jacob, entirely), and created the rest of his personality from scratch (Šamić 1962, 68).

[46] "Bio je čovek od trideset i pet godina neobične muške lepote. Stasit, fine kože, sa malim, smeđim brkovima koji su mu senčili usta, sa velikim zagasitim očima u kojima je iz duboke senke sjala tamnomodra zenica, sa gustom, prirodno grguravom kosom, vojnički podsečenom i pričešljanom. Iz celog čoveka izbijalo je nešto monaški čisto, hladno i stišano ali bez onih tragova unutarnjih borba i skrupula, koji tako često daju mučan pečat izgledu i držanju mnogih kaluđera. Ceo taj neobično lepi čovek kretao se i živeo kao u kakvom studenom oklopu iza kojeg se gubio svaki znak ličnog života ili ljudskih slabosti i potreba. Takav je bio i njegov razgovor, stvaran, ljubazan i potpuno bezličan, takav i njegov duboki glas i osmejak koji je sa belih i pravilnih zuba obasjavao, s vremena na vreme, kao prohladna mesečina, njegovo nepomično lice" (Andrić 2001, 347-348).

notion that his body emanates its properties, namely its ostensible coldness. Furthermore, there is the noticeable absence of a "personal life" and "human weaknesses and needs". This absence echoes back to the Sektionschef through a series of synonymic substitutions: *personal life* for *women*, and *weakness/needs* for *trouble/needs*. This not only firmly establishes that von Paulich indeed is "the man without a family" imagined by his predecessor as the perfect consul, but also cements an isomorphic relationship between von Paulich and the Sektionschef. Von Paulich's expertise in Ancient Greek and Latin, and Classical literatures and philosophies also connects him to Sektionschef, a fellow connoisseur of man-made things. Instead of his superintendent's love for the art of music, von Paulich has an appreciation for Greek and Roman poetry. The themes of artifice and physical elevation also reverberate in von Mitterer's first impressions of his long-awaited replacement:

> the man himself seemed to stand above and outside everything [everyday work and tasks] … He was not hampered by any of these – or at least so it seemed [to von Mitterer]; the man functioned like a disinterested higher spirit or like unfeeling nature herself[47]. (Ibid. 309).

A former child prodigy, von Paulich was once studying with Jesuit fathers who saw in him a future monk, "one of those perfectly rounded, commanding personalities who stand like cornerstones at the base of their Order[48]" (ibid., 308). Yet, reaching puberty, the boy crashed the friars' dreams and demonstrated "an unexpected inclination" towards military profession which he soon entered:

> And so, from a boy who amazed his humanities teachers with the quickness of his intelligence and the extent of his knowledge, he progressed to a lanky, bluff cadet with an apparently brilliant career ahead of him, then to a young subaltern who did not drink

[47] "Sam čovek bio je negde visoko iznad i izvan svega toga … On je bio bez svih tih opterećenja. Bar tako je izgledalo izmučenom fon Mitereru, kome se činilo da ovaj čovek radi kao viši duh ili kao neosetljiva priroda" (Andrić 2001, 349).

[48] "Oci jezuiti, kod kojih je učilo to neobično dete, već su mislili da će njihov Red dobiti u njemu jednu od onih savršenih ličnosti koje stoje kao ugaoni stubovi u zgradi Reda" (Andrić 2001, 348).

> or smoke, had no love affairs, no trouble with his superiors, no duels, and no debts[49]. (Ibid., 308)

What is especially interesting here is that von Paulich is not only a stranger to women, but is also willfully disassociating himself from male homosocial bonds. In particular, he does not drink, does not smoke and enters no conflicts with his superiors. In the context of the whole novel, this puts him in a peculiar position. Not only does von Paulich abstain from often fiery conflicts over hegemonic masculinity, but he also has no interest in communal bonding activities such as drinking and smoking[50].

As a volitional bachelor, much like his Sektionschef, von Paulich represents a solidified critique and an alternative to traditional nuclear family as such. As a man exempted from conventional heteronormative domesticity, relations with women and reproduction, von Paulich is mostly immersed in relations with other men, namely his garrison. However, he is not only not misogynistic nor (excessively) patriarchal, but also demonstrates a great deal of respect for women that goes beyond expected etiquette, yet never falls into courtship. This too sets him apart from other prominent male characters, most notably Daville, Des Fossés and von Mitterer who, for the most part, do not show any substantial interest for their wives' or love interests' preoccupations. Von Paulich thus stands apart from the benevolent, but firmly patriarchal Daville and the enamored, but quite traumatized von Mitterer. To an extent, von Paulich is effeminate himself, or at least a part of his interests is, as evident in this conversations with Madame Daville:

[49] "I tako je od dečaka koji je zadivljavao svoje profesore klasičnih jezika brzinom svoga shvatanja i širinom svoga znanja, postao vitak i otresit kadet kome su svi obećavali veliku budućnost, a zatim mlad oficir koji nije pio ni pušio ni imao avantura sa ženama, ni sukoba sa starešinama, ni dvoboja ni dugova" (Andrić 2001, 348).

[50] In one of the rare critical reflections about von Paulich in Andrić studies, Radovan Vučković (1974) saw him as "the 'healthiest' persona in the whole novel", and, by virtue of his punctuality, orderliness and rationality, starkly contrasted him to the messiness of other characters (528). His kindred spirit, according to Vučković, was De Fossés, with the important difference that von Paulich lacked the young French Consul's curiosity and liveliness (ibid).

> At the other end of the table Mme Daville and von Paulich were in a lively tête-à-tête. Ever since she had first met him, she had been surprised and charmed by his genuine interest in everything that had to do with home and household and by his remarkable knowledge of domestic affairs and needs (just as Daville had been astonished and charmed with his fluency in Virgil and Ovid, and von Mitterer, in his time, had been amazed and intimidated by his versatility in military matters). Whenever they met, they talked long and pleasantly on these subjects. At the moment they were discussing furnishings and how to preserve and keep things in the peculiar climate of their present domicile[51]. (Ibid., 334)

The conversation unfolding between Madame Daville and von Paulich is not only interesting because it reveals the young consul's knowledge of matters conventionally associated with the domains of privacy and femininity (and this is perhaps not that surprising given his age and marital status). The conversation is also singular because this is the first and only disinterested and positive account of von Paulich by any of the characters. For one, Madame Daville notices the oddity of his keen knowledge about household affairs, yet following her initial surprise, she begins to enjoy conversing with von Paulich: "She was delighted to be able to talk with this courteous, precise man about the things that were foremost in her mind and around which her life revolved[52]" (ibid). Seen through Madame Daville's motherly eyes, the young consul appears as both pedantic and polite. Madame Daville is also the only person who actually overcomes her initial confusion with the odd young consul and establishes an amicable relationship with him centered around their shared interest in gardening. For the rest of the characters, however, von Paulich will forever remain a puzzling, ambiguous and sinister figure.

[51] "Na drugom kraju stola tekao je živ razgovor između gospođe Davil i fon Paulića. Ona je bila od samog dolaska potpukovnikovog u Travnik iznenađena i očarana njegovim iskrenim interesovanjem za sve što se odnosi na kuću i domazluk i njegovim neobičnim poznavanjem kućnih poslova i potreba. (Isto kao što je Davil bio iznenađen i očaran njegovim poznavanjem Virgila i Ovida. Isto kao što je, u svoje vreme, fon Miterer bio iznenađen i uplašen njegovim poznavanjem vojnih pitanja.) I kad god bi se videli, oni su lako nalazili te beskrajne i prijatne teme razgovora. Oni su i sada razgovarali o nameštaju, o čuvanju i održavanju stvari u ovdašnjim naročitim prilikama" (Andrić 2001, 379).

[52] "Ona je bila zadovoljna što sa ovim učtivim i pedantnim čovekom može da razgovara o predmetima koji su njena glavna briga i njen stvarni život" (380).

With a focus on his willful exemptions from, on the one hand, masculine gender norms and, on the other hand, marital heterosexuality, we can now identify von Paulich as coming from the puzzling literary ranks of what David Greven (2005) defined as "the inviolate men". In his study *Men Beyond Desire: Manhood, Sex, and Violation in American Literature*, Greven focused on "the inviolate male", a literary figure marked by its sexual, emotional and psychical isolation and unavailability to women and men alike. A bachelor by definition and choice, the inviolate male is a figure of considerable subversive potential. With a specific focus on antebellum America and American Romanticism, and authors such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, Greven's main argument in *Men Beyond Desire* was that the figure of the inviolate male reflected a critical distancing from the 19th century's American social programs that aimed to incise a decisive cut from European models of society construed as backward, decadent and effeminate. These programs were increasingly targeting young men understood as the nation's future and aimed to cultivate and govern them through new forms of health and sexual reforms, and new biopolitical discourses on conduct and desire. Crucially, these social programs mostly revolved around intense forms of male homosociality, such as intimate friendship and fraternities. Socially orchestrated into such forms as are secret clubs, societies and college fraternities, male homosociality became both institutionalized and compulsory for young men. The figure of the inviolate male, a bachelor by definition and choice, emerged as a neuralgic and critical point of subversion towards this general societal fraternalism:

> The individual male – most recognizably embodied in the iconic figure of the bachelor – maintained a peculiar relationship to these forms of male collectivity. … The inviolate male stands apart from both male collectivity and Woman, from both fraternity and marriage. (Greven 2005, 26-28)

As Greven notes, not all bachelors necessarily represent inviolate manhood, but all inviolate men are bachelors. By virtue of his proximity to other two 19th century sexual pariahs

– the homosexual and the masturbator – the inviolate male is "a queer figure in that he refuses, rejects, and repudiates normative modes of sexual identity and performance" (ibid., 28). And most importantly:

> while the inviolate male is potentially sodomitical, onanistic, or some combination thereof, he is not necessarily categorizable in these terms. Equally besieged by heteroerotic and homoerotic desires, the inviolate male incites desire from both women and men that he cannot satisfy or refuses to satisfy. His own sexual identity remains an elusive, socially maddening blank. (Ibid., 29)

With regards to the specific cultural and historical context of *Men Beyond Desire*, it would be, of course, farfetched to argue that von Paulich reflects the exact same societal anxieties that have plagued antebellum America. However, the literary tradition of inviolate manhood, as Greven points out, did not emerge in 19th century America, but has deep roots in classical Greek mythology that extend to present-day. With this in mind, this chapter will further analyze the details and specifics of von Paulich's inviolate manhood, the intertextual references Andrić connected to this character and the broader effects sexual inviolability has for the *Bosnian Chronicle's* overarching political themes.

3.2. Inviolate Manhood and Classical Literature

Although von Paulich, because of his bachelorhood and profession, inhabits a realm that is more male-oriented than any of the other consuls, he still manages to subvert, overpower or empty out a whole catalogue of tropes and motifs that link other men in a chain of normative homosociality. First and foremost, von Paulich becomes sexually inviolable by opting out of romantic heterosexuality. Following her quasi-romantic mishap with Des Fossés, and just before leaving Travnik, the volatile, despondent Anna Maria tries her luck with von Paulich. "Our beautiful Antinous", she at first muses, "Our very own Antinous in a uniform[53]," (Andrić

[53] "Antinous u uniformi" (Andrić 2001, 350).

1963, 310). However, rather than attracting him, Anna Maria finds herself strangely deflected by von Paulich. Unlike Des Fossés, Anna Maria's former interest, von Paulich has no night-time urges and never indulges in romantic daydreaming. To put it succinctly, von Paulich has no desire for women whatsoever. Setting the stage for further analysis of von Paulich's destructiveness and his role as the herald of modernity in the rest of this chapter, this section will focus on von Paulich's two interconnected exempting gestures that form and uphold his inviolate manhood. In particular, I am interested in the specific gendered dynamics between the theme of classical Western literature and von Paulich's inviolate manhood. Ancient literature, as we will see, serves as the stage upon which the drama of von Paulich's inviolability unfolds on two planes. On the one hand, the novel itself signals von Paulich's inviolability through intertextual references, most notably, by connecting him to the figure of Antinous. On the other hand, at the level of the plot, von Paulich's peculiar relationship towards poetics in general becomes the terrain upon which he signals his inviolability to other characters and willfully excludes himself from both the dynamics of compulsory heterosexuality *and* bonds of hegemonic male homosociality.

One notable aspect of the figure of "the inviolate male" is precisely its perennial embeddedness in the tradition of Western literature. As Greven notes, the figure of the inviolate male has a long tradition in Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian mythologies and can be traced to literary and cinematic figures of present day, such as Arnold Schwarzenegger's Terminator. In the context of Western literature, figures like Euripides' Hyppolytus and Ovid's Narcissus and Endymion are singled out by Greven as archetypal inviolate males. What all of these men have in common is that they are all

> ostensibly heterosexual male protagonists, who treat heterosexuality, the spectacle of female beauty, with puzzled indifference, deep ambivalence, or outright hostility. Coupled with their rejection of homosocial friendship, inviolate men's indifference to women – beautiful, desirable women … – forces us to rethink the heterosexual presumption with which we approach most fictional males. (Greven 2005, 29)

Going back to the *Bosnian Chronicle*, von Paulich's belonging to the ranks of literary inviolate men is visible the most through his relationship with Anna Maria von Mitterer. In an attempt to charm von Paulich, Anna Maria tries to impress him by discussing ancient mythology and quoting classical Roman poetry to him, yet manages only to embarrass herself as von Paulich corrects her on every occasion. Von Paulich also remains completely unmoved with the nickname of Antinous she gives him as "something which did not and could not have any connection with him and the world around him[54]" (Andrić 1963, 310). He also reads poetry dispassionately and factually "as if the thing had nothing whatever to do with him or with the surroundings or with live mankind in general, and all her [Anna Maria's] lyrical allusions bounced off him like an unintelligible sound[55]" (ibid). Finally, by the very act of correcting Anna Maria's quotations, von Paulich both deflects her flirting and makes it clear that he knows she's trying to seduce him. He remains inviolable to her advances and precludes any possibility of heterosexual romance between him and Anna Maria:

> Anna Maria was taken aback. All her encounters so far – and there had been a good many of them – had ended in disappointment and in running away, yet in all her "strayings" she had always managed to force the man to take a step forward or a step back, or both; never yet had it happened that he stayed exactly where he was, like this robot Antinous for whose benefit she now put on her fluttery, preening game in vain[56]. (Ibid.)

As already mentioned, this scenario – a woman's failed seducing of an unobtainable, extremely beautiful man – is a core narrative in the context of the figure of the inviolate man. In this case, Anna Maria assumes the role of the inviolate male's mirror image: the passionately desiring

[54] "[Nadimak Antious je] potpukovnik primio bez reči i promene na licu, kao stvar koja nema i ne može da ima nikakve veze s njim i sa svetom oko njega" (Andrić 2001, 350).
[55] "Ali sve je to fon Paulić govorio hladno, stvarno bez ikakve veze sa njim ličino, sa okolinom i sa živim ljudima uopšte. A svaka njena lirska aluzija odbijala se od njega kao nerazumljiv zvuk" (351).
[56] "Ana Marija je bila zaprepašćena. Svaki njen dosadašnji susret, a bilo ih je toliko, završio je razočaranjem i bežanjem, ali u svojim 'lutanjima' ona je uvek uspevala da muškarac učini korak napred ili korak unazad ili jedno pa drugo, a nikad nije bilo slučaja da ostane u mjestu, ovako kao ovaj bezdušni Antinous pred kojim je ona sada izvodila svoju uzaludnu igru" (ibid.).

woman. Usually depicted as lively, seductive, intelligent and immensely beautiful, the figure of the passionately desiring woman forms a dyad with the inviolate man:

> The passionately desiring woman and the inviolate male are in some ways mirror images, in that they both defy the boundaries of their gendered identities, both commit gender insubordination in their failure to align themselves with their constructed gendered roles. The inviolate male's refusal to acquiesce to or to perform desire makes him *not a man*, potentially onanistic, sodomitical, or, worst of all, sexless. The passionate woman's sexual hunger and socially transgressive desiring push her perilously close to the edge of social morality. (Greven 2005, 29).

Some of Anna Maria's characteristics were already analyzed in the previous chapter. As we have seen, she is an incredibly beautiful, compelling woman and, moreover, beloved by her husband, despite her nervous, unpredictable character and flirty nature. We have seen that when it comes to her relations with men other than her husband, she, indeed, hovers close to the "edge of social morality" and is often looked-down upon by other characters. In this case, surprisingly, her usual seducing techniques, as we have seen, fail her. Devastated and upset, Anna Maria is left "tormented by thoughts of the handsome, cold Lieutenant-Colonel, whom she no longer called Antinous but 'the glacier,' since she had found him to be even colder than the marble statue of the beautiful youth of antiquity[57]" (Andrić 1963, 312). In the next section, I will take a deeper look into the pervasive motif of von Paulich's coldness. For now, I wish to focus a bit more on the figure of Antinous. The beautiful youth Anna Maria refers to is of special interest here and deserves a bit more attention for three reasons. For one, Antinous adds another connotation to von Paulich's inviolability, one that is significantly queer. Secondly, as a figure in Western literature, Antinous is also interesting because he intersects many of Andrić's literary interests and intertextual influences. And finally, Antinous also opens up the question of von Paulich's singular relationship towards classical literature as such. These three interconnected issues are explored in the rest of this section.

[57] "Ali više od toga nju je mučila pomisao na lepog, hladnog potpukovnika koga je sada zvala ne više Antinous, nego glečer, jer je nalazila da je još hladniji nego mermerna statua lepog antičkog mladića" (Andrić 2001, 353).

A Bythinian-born young man who drowned during a visit to Egypt, under unclear circumstances[58], Antinous remains remembered in Western canon for being the untimely and tragically deceased lover to Emperor Hadrian. As Sarah Waters (1995) recounts, Hadrian had his deceased lover deified and named cities and stars after him, becoming himself notorious for ostentatious and "woman-like" public mourning among his contemporaries. Alongside many other legendary youths, Antinous functioned in Western literature as a topos and shibboleth for male same-sex love and desire, especially in the modern novel (Woods 1998, 174). Antinous' legendary beauty was immortalized in statues and coins that materially preserved and transported his image through the ages, and into the modern world. Despite different historical artistic traditions in which he was rendered, some visual features remained immutable and thus iconic, first and foremost, his "broad, swelling chest, a head of tousled curls, a downcast gaze" (Waters 1995, 198). Let us now return to Andrić's first description of von Paulich's physical appearance:

> He was thirty-five years old and strikingly handsome. He was tall, fine-complexioned, with a small brown mustache over his mouth, large eyes in which a pair of dark blue pupils shone with a steady light, and a shock of naturally wavy hair that was cropped and combed in military fashion[59]. (Andrić 1963, 307)

Apart from the moustache, a feature consistent with von Paulich's age and cultural and professional context, the rest of his appearance reverberates all the iconic elements of Antinous' ideal masculine beauty. In the original phrasing ("neobična muška ljepota"), he is emphatically described as endowed with an unusual manly or masculine beauty Of special notice is von Paulich's naturally wavy hair, stylized in 19th century military manner. Anna

[58] The mysterious event of Antinous' death was never clarified. A generally accepted theory is that he sacrificed himself to the Egyptian god Osiris to prolong Hadrian's life and political glory (*see more* Aldrich 1993; Waters 1995).

[59] "Bio je čovek od trideset i pet godina neobične muške lepote. Stasit, fine kože, sa malim, smeđim brkovima koji su mu senčili usta, sa velikim zagasitim očima u kojima je iz duboke senke sjala tamnomodra zenica, sa gustom, prirodno grguravom kosom, vojnički podsečenom i pričešljanom" (Andrić 2001, 347-348).

Maria's likening of von Paulich to Antinous thus seems well-founded and not purely symbolical. Given von Paulich's appearance, it seems that "our very own Antinous in a uniform" is a quite literal description. While not straightforwardly denoting homosexuality, the similitude of von Paulich to Antinous certainly does anticipate the failure of Anna Maria's usual pattern of heterosexual seduction and adds distinctly queer overtones to von Paulich as an inviolate man.

Antinous' queer symbolism was something that Andrić, as a literature scholar, must have been fully aware of. For one, Antinous' legacy as the quintessential symbol of homoeroticism in literary and artistic production was by the 20th century a well-established tradition in itself (Waters 1995, 195-197; Aldrich 1993, 90). From the 18th century onward, Antinous-related symbolism gained considerable traction in the developing homosexual literary communities[60], especially in the *fin de siècle* Western Europe, and was heavily featured as the pinnacle of male beauty in the works of some authors Andrić held in high regard, for instance Oscar Wilde (Novaković 2010, 13). Moreover, Andrić himself must have been also perfectly aware of the many homoerotic narratives in classical literature since he was an avid appreciator of ancient Greek, Roman and medieval Latin literature. Andrić read and took many notes in both primary and secondary sources of, among others, Horace, Ovid, Seneca, Tacitus, and Cicero, intertextually weaving many of them into his works (ibid., 172). And when it comes to modern thematization of historical forms of homoeroticism, Andrić's utmost appreciation for Marguerite Yourcenar's depiction of Hadrian is notable[61]. Andrić held *Memoirs of Hadrian* in the highest esteem (Jandrić 1982, 314). Of course, *Memoirs of Hadrian* were published 6 years after *Bosnian Chronicle* and thus cannot be said to have influenced the figure of von

[60] For a comprehensive survey of both homophile and homophobic usages of Antinous in fiction and non-fiction alike, see more in Waters (1995).

[61] Jelena Novaković provided an in-depth analysis of the intertextual seams between Andrić's and Yourcenar's *ouvres*: from an avid interest in the same European historical figures – from Montaigne and Flaubert to Tolstoy and Thomas Mann – to common themes and motifs such as "loneliness, work, the relationship between subjective and objective, literary and artistic creation" (Novaković 2010, 149).

Paulich in any way. However, these two works of modernist historic fiction share the same interest in classical Western literature and draw from the same tradition that has exemplified and idealized male beauty and sexuality precisely through the figure of Antinous. Considering everything, there is no doubt that Andrić knew precisely who Antinous was and was fully aware of the associated cultural baggage, including the details of his legendary beauty. His creative decision to have Anna Maria christen von Paulich with the name of Antinous is, thus, not a random choice, but one that is inextricable from the story of their failed romance.

Alongside emphasizing his beauty, but also, as we have seen, the conspicuous absence of women in his life, the nickname of Antinous further inscribes von Paulich in the historical setting of antiquity and echoes his profound erudition in classical languages and literature. If the scene with Anna Maria stages his disinvolvement with heterosexuality, the theme of classical literature will become the most prominent point of his exit from male homosociality. As analyzed in the previous chapter, male homosocial conflicts, but also the sense of masculine belonging – most notably the central one, between Daville and Des Fossés – are partly channeled through the characters' competing poetics. Daville's relationship with von Paulich is in this case thematically analogous to Anna Maria's. As his young companion Des Fossés leaves Bosnia for good, and von Mitterer is getting ready to do the same, Daville finds himself increasingly isolated. Hoping to establish a new friendship with the fiercely intelligent and interesting von Paulich, Daville resorts to literature as a potentially fertile ground to sprout a new friendship. However, unlike Daville's heated discussions over their clashing views on literature with Des Fossés, von Paulich's approach to such conversations will be all but passionate. The French consul ultimately finds it impossible to establish a link to the newcomer. As was the case with Anna Maria's recitals, when Daville sends him a French translation of Virgil, von Paulich only finds mistakes in the book. And although impressed with the scope of von Paulich's knowledge of classical literature, and even disregarding the slightly

offensive approach to the translated Virgil, Daville's enthusiasm at the prospect of having someone to talk to about his own literature soon completely dissipates:

> Everything about these talks was impersonal, dispassionate, and general. Having said all he wanted to, the Colonel would leave with his rich and precious bag of facts, as fresh, neat, cool, and upright as he had come, and Daville would be left just as lonely as he had been before, his craving for a good talk unappeased. A discussion with the Colonel left nothing for the senses or the soul; one could not even recall the timbre of his voice. His conversation gave the partner no clue to his inner personality, and invited no confidence from the latter. In general, everything that was personal, close, and intimate recoiled from the Colonel as from a rock. So Daville had to forego all hope of discussing his own poetic work with this cold-blooded lover of literature[62]. (Andrić 1963, 314)

Thus, as an inviolate man, von Paulich exempts himself from heterosexuality and male homosociality altogether. With regards to the latter, he halts the establishment of new and causes the disentangling of existing male homosocial connections. He disintegrates the field of baseline male normativity and its adjacent complicit forms that, as we have seen in the previous chapter, ground conflictual hegemonic masculinity. Above everything else, the, he undoes the shared sense of masculine belonging. Von Paulich almost literally cools Daville and freezes him in his loneliness. Taken as a whole, von Paulich's dual gesture of deflecting a heterosexual woman seeking romance *and* a normative man looking for a male friend thus has profound consequences for the novel's social dynamics. In particular, as analyzed in the next section, gendered and sexualized aspects of von Paulich's inviolate masculinity are connected to an emerging form of social and ideological power: namely, modernity.

[62] "Sve je u tom razgovoru bilo bezlično, hladno i uopšteno. Posle takvog razgovora, potpukovnik je odlazio sa svojom bogatom i dragocenom zbirkom podataka, isto onako lep, čist, hladan i prav kao što je i došao, a Davil je ostajao isto onako usamljen i željan dobrog razgovora kao što je bio i pre toga. Od razgovora sa potpukovnikom nije ostajalo ništa ni u čulima ni u duši; ni boje glasa nije čovek mogao da mu se seti. Potpukovnik je svaki razgovor vodio tako da sabesednik nije mogao ništa da sazna o njemu ili da ma šta kaže o sebi. Uopšte, sve što je blisko, prisno i lično odbijalo se od potpukovnika kao od stene. Tako je Davil morao da napusti svaku nadu da će sa ovim hladnim ljubiteljem književnosti moći da razgovara o svom pesničkom radu" (Andrić 2001, 355).

3.3. The Soldier and the Spy

Von Paulich is a new generation of soldier, not only because he replaces the worn-down von Mitterer, but because his whole persona exemplifies the successfully molded modern military man. Here I am following Foucault's (1995) tracing of a distinctive transformation in the idea of the soldier in his *Discipline and Punish*. The pre-modern soldier was conceived of as someone whose courageousness, honor and strength were attributed to his intrinsic properties, discernible as signs upon his body. This idea was, Foucault argued, superseded with an alternative model that emerged out of a general societal and discursive shift towards the disciplinary society. The new soldier was now a malleable, docile body that could be fine-tuned through rigorous training, as evidenced in the late 18th century ordinance Foucault proceeds to quote in the following passage:

> By the late eighteenth century, the soldier has become something that can be made; out of a formless clay, an inapt body, the machine required can be constructed; posture is gradually corrected; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body, mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism of habit … Recruits become accustomed to "holding their heads high and erect; to standing upright, without bending the back, to sticking out the belly, throwing out the chest and throwing back the shoulders." (135)

As we have already seen, in connection to von Paulich, the text makes repeated references to precisely the characteristics Foucault later discovered as emblematic of the modern soldier. Von Paulich is upright, rigid, and likened to a machine. He is institutionally educated, trained and disciplined. In a way, he is the exemplary subject of modernity because not only does he incorporate its disciplinary apparatus, but because his serves a notable part in its politically motivated expansion. This, concluding part of the chapter will take a closer look at von Paulich's mission in Bosnia. In particular, I will look closely at the ways in which von Paulich's coldness, his mission in Bosnia and his one, almost fatal conflict are connected thematically to modernity's destructive aspects.

It is not just the disappointed Anna Maria and Daville who liken von Paulich to all things cold. Indeed, apart from his mesmerizing beauty, von Paulich is seen as emanating something sinister and chilling by all other characters. His whole persona is repeatedly likened to coldness and ice: his face is lit with something "like frosted moonlight[63]" (Andrić 1963, 307); he is described as "fresh, neat, cool, and upright[64]" (ibid., 314); his eyes are in the shade of "cold, dark blue[65]" (ibid., 340). Von Paulich's coldness has thus far been read as a metaphor for "negative emotions" such as alienation and inaccessibility (Čeh Steger 2014, 149). However, once we place a specific focus on its impact on others, this coldness assumes a new importance. On the one hand, von Paulich's coldness is his intrinsic property, connected to his beauty, as in the example of his statuesque face and chill blue eyes. On the other hand, it also projects out of him and affectively suffuses his environment. Von Paulich's coldness spreads out, it chills and instills his surroundings with an apprehensive, even fearful atmosphere, and is often experienced collectively. To use Sara Ahmed's (2014) notion, his coldness functions as a "sticky affect", it becomes a lingering apprehension that spreads from person to person, cooling its surroundings.

Significantly, von Paulich's coldness literally freezes others' actions and drives entire plotlines to a halt. In this regard, this coldness is another facet, I argue, of von Paulich's inviolate manhood. We have already seen how his romantic unobtainability stops Anna Maria's usual pattern of seduction, after which she stops calling him Antinous and instead nicknames him "the Glacier". Likewise, as another principle of von Paulich's inviolability, he also deflects Daville's attempts at befriending him, thus suspending the establishment of male homosocial linkages. There are other ways, as well, in which von Paulich's cold inviolability affects those around him. For instance, during his arrival to Travnik, the townspeople stand mesmerized by

[63] "prohladna mesečina" (ibid., 348).
[64] "lep, čist, hladan i prav" (ibid., 355).
[65] "Pod pogledom njegovih zagasitomodrih, hladnih očiju nije se mogla održati nikakva iluzija" (ibid., 386).

von Paulich's beauty and demeanor, in a sharp contrast to the fiery dislike and cursing they expressed during the arrivals of Daville and von Mitterer. An especially interesting example of von Paulich's effect on other people is his destructive conflict with the Austrian consulate's translator, Nicholas Rotta. This storyline escalates and culminates all of von Paulich's themes as an inviolable man: his beauty, coldness and, as we will see, his capacity to cause immense destruction, while remaining inviolate to death.

In many ways Nicholas Rotta is von Paulich's antipode. While the new Austrian consul is singled out for cold level-headedness, Rotta is indiscriminately "highhanded and shorttempered with the Turks and Christians alike" and has a knack for looking down upon "even the tallest man, twice as big as himself[66]" (Andrić 1963, 100). He is obsessed with the idea of preserving his savings and irrationally afraid of becoming a victim of poisoning. In a sharp contrast to the magnetically beautiful, tall and upright von Paulich, Rotta was "born stunted, ugly, and with a hump[67]" (ibid., 102). However, Andrić paints a more complex portrait of Rotta by providing a long history that has led the interpreter to become the unpleasant presence the novel introduces us to. This life history, I argue, also accounts for the conflict that will engulf the two men.

Born in the slums of Trieste, then part of Austrian Empire, as a twelfth child of an alcoholic father, Rotta was confronted with the difficulties of surviving from the cradle when he "was so sickly during the first months of his life that they kept a lighted candle over him and once even bathed him and prepared him for the funeral[68]" (ibid.). Relying on his determination and intelligence, Rotta began his long escape from poverty as a clerk in a shipbuilding company. Rotta soon became known as a polyglot and a highly informed man. He

[66] "Ovako malen i grbav, on je nekako uspevao da i najvišeg čoveka, za polovinu stasa višeg od sebe, gleda sa visoka" (ibid., 114).
[67] "To dvanaesto dete bilo je sitno, nakazno, grbavo" (117).
[68] "prvih meseci [to dete bilo je] tako slabo da su mu stalno palili sveću i jednom ga već bili okupali i opremili za sahranu" (ibid., 117).

took instructions from a Royalist emigree, a former member of the "good and cultivated Parisian society" in subjects "such as geography, history, and those other subjects that, in his words, constituted 'knowledge of the world[69]'" (ibid., 104). Rotta ends up following the former commanding officer of Trieste across the Balkan parts of the Empire, finally ending up in Travnik. During all this time, and especially during the stay in Zemun, Rotta becomes overworked and disillusioned in his professional and private life alike. Serving as an interpreter and an intelligence agent takes its toll by making him adopt some of the unsavory and aggressive methods used by people he has to deal with. He marries a woman that ultimately disappoints him. His daughter dies in infancy. Now, a prematurely aged man, an insomniac and a hypochondriac, with a ruined marriage behind him, Rotta serves as von Mitterer's indispensable translator and his trustworthy spy. This will all change with von Mitterer's departure, and von Paulich taking charge of the Consulate.

Von Paulich's arrival effectually makes Rotta obsolete. None of the things that had made Rotta indispensable for von Mitterer are anymore needed. For one thing, unlike von Mitterer, von Paulich is fluent in several languages, and does not depend on Rotta as much as his predecessor. Von Mitterer's ailments and marriage crises oftentimes meant that he made Rotta deal with darker aspects of his service, making the interpreter "a kind of glove for the dirtiest work[70]" (ibid., 339). Von Paulich's dispassionate and precise nature makes him more than capable to deal with everything that comes his way. And, finally, while von Mitterer used to turn a blind eye to Rotta's excessive behaviors such as shouting at and humiliating his subordinates, von Paulich would allow no such thing. After being warned by von Paulich that

[69] "Od njega je mladi Nikola Skarparota primio mnogo znanja ne samo iz jezika nego i iz geografije, istorije i uopšte onoga što je stari gospodin nazivao 'poznavanje sveta'" (ibid., 118-119).
[70] "neka vrsta rukavica za najodvratnije poslove" (ibid., 385).

his days of harassing servants and errand boys came to an end, Rotta's resentment manifests almost instantaneously:

> The cool, laconic, and sober Colonel, who cast around him an atmosphere of sharp, crystalline frost and clarity, bewildered and irritated the vain and touchy interpreter by his very presence and stirred in him the old convulsive tangle of uncertainties which had lain dormant and quiescent up to that moment. It would have been inaccurate to say that the aversion of the two men was reciprocal, because, in fact, it was Rotta who quailed away from the Colonel as from a bleak and monolithic iceberg; even worse, by some inescapable quirk of fate, he kept corning back and lunging at it again and again[71]. (ibid., 338)

Rotta throws himself against his superior "like a frenzied creature against a wall of ice or an imaginary shaft of light[72]" (ibid., 339), obsessed to the point of complete irrationality, leading into his own demise. The reasons behind Rotta's destructive obsession with von Paulich are never fully made clear by the narrator. Unlike von Paulich's contempt for the sleaziness and aggression for the way Rotta handles his odd jobs, the translator's hatred has something almost instinctive about it. However, at closer inspection, there are distinct gendered dynamics at play here. As the text makes clear, von Paulich touches an "old convulsive tangle of uncertainties which had lain dormant and quiescent up to that moment[73]" (ibid., 338). These uncertainties are undoubtedly connected to Rotta's own personal sense of fragile masculinity, exacerbated by resentment towards von Paulich's upbringing, beauty, success. This is evidenced in the initial reason of the conflict, namely Rotta's misuse and abuse of the little power over people he was entrusted with. The text also makes it clear that von Paulich feels nothing of the sorts towards Rotta which further underlines the futility of the hunchbacked translator's wrath. This

[71] "Hladni, odmereni i čisti potpukovnik, koji je svuda širio oko sebe onu atmosferu kristalne i oštre studeni i jasnoće, zbunjivao je i izazivao sujetnog i razdražljivog tumača i samim svojim prisustvom i podizao u njemu bezbrojne grčevito zamršene račune koji su dotle bili uspavani ili pritajeni. Reći da su se ova dva čoveka odbijala jedan od drugoga, bilo bi pogrešno, jer u stvari samo se Rota odbijao od potpukovnika kao od ogromne i nepomične sante leda i, što je još gore, vraćao se po nekom neumoljivom i sudbonosnom zakonu, i nasrtao na nj uvek i ponovo" (Andrić 2001, 384).

[72] "Ali protiv ovakvog starešine Rota se bacao kao besomučan čovek protiv ledenog zida ili nestvarnog snopa svetlosti (ibid., 385).

[73] "podizao u njemu [Roti] bezbrojne grčevito zamršene račune koji su dotle bili uspavani ili pritajeni" (ibid., 384).

conflict, therefore, is not a conflict over hegemonic masculinity, as was the case with Daville and Des Fossés. It is, instead, a conflict that arises from Rotta's entrenched, desperate resentment towards the cold, inviolate von Paulich.

Despite von Paulich's attempts to pacify his translator and a whole year between the two spent in truce, Rotta eventually turns back to his old ways of treating people, bringing upon himself von Paulich's wrath. Violently thrown out of the Austrian Consulate, Rotta seeks protection from the French by officially pleading to the laws, yet unofficially offering classified information to Daville's translator and spy, D'Avenat. Yet even though the French offer him a helping hand, Rotta proves unable to leave his conflict with von Paulich behind. His actions are again heavily gendered. Once detached from performative violence that nourished it, Rotta's deteriorating fragile masculinity is represented as a fall into increasingly "hysterical", thus effeminate behavior:

> Accompanied by a kavass[74] from the French Consulate, he rode out to the Austrian Consulate and demanded some of his things that were still there, he quarreled loudly and made public scenes, he invented new demands, ran about town in a huff, went up to the Residency and to the town Mayor. *In short, he basked in his own scandal like a demented woman who has lost all shame*[75]. (Ibid., 343; emphasis mine)

This sort of outrageous, emasculating behavior triggers his downfall, as both the French consulate and the Turskish authorities find it unacceptable, especially in a situation of peace among their countries. In the previous chapter, through the example of Pepin the homosexual, we have seen that publicly scandalous male behavior has dire consequences since it is seen as incompatible with normative masculinity. Rotta similarly falls from Daville's mercy, who sides with von Paulich. Stubborn to the point of self-destruction, and unflinching in his dedication to bring down von Paulich, Rotta dedicates his days to devising vengeful plans. In a constant

[74] Kavass (orig. kavaz): a guard, bodyguard.
[75] "Odlazio je sa kavazom Francuskog konzulata pred Austrijski konzulat, tražio još neke svoje stvari, izazivao javne scene i glasne svađe, izmišljao nove zahteve, trčao zaduvan kroz varoš, odlazio u Konak i kod kajmakama. *Ukratko, uživao u svome skandalu kao luda žena bez stida*" (Andrić 2001, 389-390; emphasis mine).

fear that von Paulich will kill him, he becomes a tenant to one Pero Kalajdžić, "a single man who lived alone and had a bad reputation[76]" (ibid., 344). The symbolic filthiness of his landlord is soon mirrored in the filth that swallows up Rotta's increasingly unclean room, and then the crazed translator himself:

> He became careless of his dress and stopped caring about cleanliness. His shirts were soft and crumpled and he wore them over and over again; his black cravat was spattered with food, his shoes trampled and dirty. His hair, which had turned completely gray, now developed greenish and yellow streaks. His nails were black, he stopped shaving regularly, he began to reek of the kitchen and drink[77]. (ibid., 344)

The squalor in which he lives, finally, signals Rotta's descent into the very same filth and poverty from which he once worked so hard to escape. Utterly consumed by paranoia, Rotta has iron bars placed over his windows, special locks built in his doors, and buys a lot of ammunition. Ultimately, with help from his newfound lover, a woman as corrupt as himself, Rotta tries to poison von Paulich. Yet, Rotta's lover's sister uncovers the pair's plan to von Paulich. Rotta disappears from Travnik with his lover, never to return.

Like the rest of the novel, the conflict between Rotta and von Paulich was inspired, as Midhad Šamić reconstructed, with real-life events as chronicled in consuls' and Turkish authorities' correspondence and reports. The novel's version is heavily dramatized and "exaggerated", precisely in order to make it "a conflict between two different temperaments" (Šamić 1962, 143-144). So far, I have placed the emphasis on Rotta's motives for engaging in this conflict. From the perspective of von Paulich, and even more importantly, from the perspective of the broader consequences this conflict leaves behind, another interpretation can be made. In a nutshell, my argument here it that the amalgamation of von Paulich's properties

[76] "samca čoveka rđavog glasa" (ibid., 391).
[77] "Popustio je u čistoći, postao aljkav u odelu. Košulje su mu bile meke, zgužvane i dugo nošene, crna kravata pokapana jelom, obuća nečista i izgažena. Njegova potpuno bela kosa dobila je žute i zelenkaste prelive, nokti su mu bili crni, nije se više redovno brijao, sav je mirisao na kuhinju i na piće" (ibid., 391).

– coldness, level-headedness, destructiveness – ultimately cast him as an embodied version of modernity. More precisely, through his opposition to Rotta's "peculiar" and brutish ways (as von Mitterer awkwardly describes the translator upon von Paulich's arrival), von Paulich not only brings about the gradual destruction of Rotta, but also effectively makes dispensable his whole unarranged, volatile and despotic way of functioning. What this conflict ultimately stages, I argue, is a small scale version of the modernity's destruction of premodern society in order to replace it with a modern state apparatus. The rest of this section will explore this point from the vantage point of von Paulich's intrinsic properties and the historical context of Austrian-Hungarian rule in Bosnia.

With regards to von Paulich's destructive actions towards Rotta and their relation to modernity, I am following Zygmunt Bauman's (2000) classical definition of "solid" modernity. While making the distinction between the first, hard, solid modernity and the second, liquid modernity, Zygmunt Bauman posited solid modernity as a process that aimed to dissolute premodernity in order to replace it with a brand new solid societal institutions and a new kind of individuals[78]. This original, goal-driven, modernity was "top-heavy" (Bauman 2000, 30), meaning that it relied on transforming and utilizing state apparatuses and institutions. Indicatively with regards to von Paulich, solid modernity was both destructive and transformative: "Configurations, constellations, patterns of dependency and interaction were all thrown into the melting pot, to be subsequently recast and refashioned; this was the 'breaking the mould' phase in the history of the inherently transgressive, boundary-breaking, all-eroding modernity" (ibid., 6). Furthermore, solid modernity, as a principle, aimed to destroy everything that was incalculable and unforeseeable:

[78] By contrast, liquid modernity is understood by Bauman as definitionally marked by its move from "from the 'system' to 'society', from 'politics' to 'life-policies' – or have descended from the 'macro' to the 'micro' level of social cohabitation" (Bauman 2000, 7).

> That modernity was a sworn enemy of contingency, variety, ambiguity, waywardness and idiosyncrasy, having declared on all such "anomalies" a holy war of attrition; and it was individual freedom and autonomy that were commonly expected to be the prime casualties of the crusade. (Ibid., 25)

And finally, Bauman provides an account of solid modernity that sums up its destructive, goal-driven project of constructing a new sociality and the specific acquiescence it imposed on the individual with regards to the State:

> Heavy modernity was, after all, the era of shaping reality after the manner of architecture or gardening; reality compliant with the verdicts of reason was to be "built" under strict quality control and according to strict procedural rules, and first of all designed before the construction works begin. This was an era of drawing-boards and blueprints - not so much for mapping the social territory as for lifting that territory to the level of lucidity and logic that only maps can boast or claim. That was an era which hoped to legislate reason into reality, to reshuffle the stakes in a way that would trigger rational conduct and render all behaviour contrary to reason too costly to contemplate. For the legislative reason, neglecting the legislators and the law-enforcement agencies was, obviously, not an option. The issue of the rapport with the state, whether cooperative or contestant, was its formative dilemma: indeed, a matter of life and death. (Ibid., 47-48)

Going back to von Paulich and Rotta, we immediately see a number of similarities between the eroding nature of solid modernity and the root causes and dynamics underpinning and ultimately resolving the conflict between the two men. Not only is Rotta disposable because von Paulich does not need an interpreter, but, more crucially so, von Paulich has no need for Rotta's crony network of spies. Furthermore, Rotta's raw, alcohol-fueled, humiliating outbursts towards people he considers his subordinates are completely at odds with von Paulich's detached, clear and discipline-driven handling of social hierarchies. A man of institution, embodying modernity by being a cog in the machine of military structures and imperial expansion, von Paulich erodes Rotta's waywardness, unpredictability and contingency. In a nutshell, there is no place for the unpredictability Rotta is prone to in von Paulich's cold new world. The *Bosnian Chronicle* does not set up von Paulich as its hero nor does it portray Rotta as its antagonist. As we have seen, Andrić carefully constructed Rotta's

story as one of survival against all odds. What the conflict between Rotta and von Paulich is actually concerned with, I argue, is the clash between the problems von Mitterer leaves due to his incompetence and weakness and the solution the Empire sends to Bosnia. From Rotta's point of view, the story reveals itself as a tragedy of a self-made man entrusted with unsavory tasks by an irreparably weakened institution. From von Paulich's perspective, the story is the advancement of modernizing processes destroying the old in order to make room for the new. Von Paulich ushers in this approaching new world by rectifying what he sees as one of the system's main flaws: its dependency on the likes of Rotta. The central conflict, then, revolves as much between Rotta and von Paulich as it does between von Paulich and the organizational, institutional and systemic mess his feeble predecessor left behind. In broad strokes, as we have just seen, the destructive aspects of von Paulich are manifestations of his thoroughly modern subjectivity. Indeed, as I have argued earlier, the inviolate von Paulich, the perfect soldier with a cold, machine-like rationality, can be seen as modernity turned flesh. Understood in these terms, von Paulich as a figure recasts the *Bosnian Chronicle* as a novel that is thoroughly preoccupied with the question of modernity. This point necessitates some contextualization with regards to the political circumstances surrounding the onset of modernity in Bosnia.

Following the defeat of Ottoman Empire in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, Austria-Hungary first occupied Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1978, and then annexed it in 1908. As Pieter Judson (2016) writes, not only did this move turned Austria-Hungary into a colonial power, but it also turned Bosnia into a playground for a properly Habsburg "civilizing mission" that aimed at modernizing the former Ottoman territory:

> The resulting thirty-year occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina provided bureaucrats, ideologists, map makers, technicians of all kinds, teachers, and priests (among others) an unparalleled opportunity to realize Austria-Hungary's new civilizing mission in Europe. … Many people also saw in Bosnia-Herzegovina an opportunity to fulfill either their own ambitions or, in the cases of Croat, Serb, and south-Slav activists, to fulfill the ambitions of their national movements. (329)

As Stijn Vervaet (2013) pointed out, Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and its modernizing processes are a pervasive theme in Bosnian-Herzegovinian literature of the time. Alongside the technical aspects of modernization (such as newspapers and railroads) and the transformation of feudalism into capitalism, Vervaet points out the introduction of a new social order

> founded on a system of laws (and discursive practices) enabling the center of power to act as a productive network, penetrating all layers of society, even across great distances, and discipline and tightly incorporate them into a whole … The transition to this modernity takes place only, I believe, with the arrival of Austria-Hungary and its bureaucratized rule. (407)

The question of modernization and its ramifications during and after the Austro-Hungarian rule over Bosnia is heavily explored in Andrić's literature as well, most notably in *The Bridge on the Drina* and *The Woman from Sarajevo*, both covering the time period following the *Bosnian Chronicle*. According to Zoran Milutinović (2011), modernity appears in Andrić's works as a "Faustian project possessed by a drive for endless and aimless change, and intent on destroying everything it creates" (36). More recently Vladimir Biti (2018) theorized that *The Bridge over the Drina* depicts a shift from, in Foucauldian terms, sovereign Ottoman power to Austrian disciplinary power, ultimately displaying "the same skepticism toward historical progress as its modernist novelistic predecessors such as Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness*" (162).

When it comes to *Bosnian Chronicle*, modernity as such cannot be said to be as heavily featured as in some of Andrić's other works since Austro-Hungarian occupation was more than half a century away from the time of the story. However, it is precisely through the figure of von Paulich, I argue, that modernity still assumes its place as one of the novel's central themes. Of course, given the time period it is set in, the *Chronicle* only anticipates the processes of modernization that will unfold in the future. This anticipation ultimately resolves itself, as we have just seen, through a clash of inviolate manhood and its antipode as embodied by Rotta.

With this in mind, the end result of this conflict, namely Rotta's disappearance from Travnik, indicates von Paulich's real mission. Through an expulsion of the wayward, insubordinate and unpredictable translator, von Paulich seems to anticipate modernity's impending arrival. Thus, the Lieutenant-Colonel von Paulich, this "imperial Austrian robot who did not waver or make mistakes[79]" (Andrić 1963, 327) functions as a foreshadowing of the Habsburg rule over Bosnia and its attending problematics of a modernity imposed from above and outside.

Cold and destructive, yet beautiful and majestic, von Paulich's last gesture ties up his whole puzzling character. Before his departure due to imminent closure of the French Consulate, Daville decides not to say goodbye to von Paulich in person because he does not want to witness the Austrian's cold, victorious gaze. As a farewell gift, he sends von Paulich a gun and several bottles of expensive liquor, and ends his pacifistic letter on a personal note:

> "Wherever I may be," wrote Daville, "wherever destiny chooses to send me, I shall never forget that in the barbarous land where I was condemned to live, I found the most enlightened and most amiable man in Europe[80]." (Ibid., 423)

Due to the French leaving Travnik, and an impending conflict between the Vizier and the local beys guaranteeing that all their resources will be spent in mutual fighting, thus leaving the Austrian frontier untouched, von Paulich sends his superiors in Vienna a proposal to shut down the Consulate for the time being. Instead of operating a Consulate amidst an upcoming regional conflict, the Empire should, von Paulich advises, just rely on information from Catholic friars and spies for all matters concerning Bosnia, until the day comes for its victorious comeback. Von Paulich leaves the novel as he entered it – with a letter. This time, it is him who is doing the writing, and in a final act that fuses together all the analyzed tropes of inviolate manhood, von Paulich echoes his Sektionschef's gesture. Just as the bachelor aesthete in his lofty office

[79] "carski austrijski automat" (Andrić 2001, 371).
[80] "'Ma gde bio', pisao je Davil, 'i ma gde me sudbina bacila, neću nikada zaboraviti da sam u varvarskoj zemlji, u kojoj sam bio osuđen da živim, našao najprosvećenijeg i najljubaznijeg čoveka u Evropi'" (Andrić 2001, 481).

underlined ironically von Mitterer's plea, so does von Paulich add one final remark to Daville's farewell note, indicating all the ways in which he remained and will remain forever disentangled from the realm of masculine attachment. This remark is his final word in the novel, and there is no way to read it but as both ironic and chilling:

> To this proposal of his von Paulich attached a copy of Daville's letter. In the margin, against the passage where Daville had written of him flatteringly, von Paulich added in his own hand: "I have often had occasion in the past to draw attention to M. Daville's luxuriant imagination and his tendency to exaggerate[81]." (Ibid., 423)

3.4. Conclusions

Following the previous chapter's analysis of *Bosnian Chronicle's* normative and explicitly homosexual characters through the theoretical lens of hegemonic masculinity, here I was interested in exploring the poetic role of the new Austrian consul, von Paulich. Unlike the neatly aligned gendered and sexualized boundaries between masculine normativity and non-normativity explored in chapter 2, von Paulich paints a much more puzzling picture. Specifically, I have analyzed von Paulich as belonging to the literary tradition of "inviolate manhood" to demonstrate that it is precisely his role to puzzle, blur and subvert the novel's previously established modes of normative masculine belonging and heterosexuality. With regards to the latter two points, von Paulich's inviolability can be traced to his refusal to bond himself romantically with women or forge linkages of homosocial friendship with men.

The gendered and sexual specifics of von Paulich's inviolate manhood have another important consequence. Rather than exhausting themselves as an otherwise inconsequential reversal of heteronormativity, they are connected to his modern subjectivity, and furthermore, to the question of modernity itself. This chapter's central claim was that the topic of modernity

[81] "Sa tim svojim predlogom fon Paulić je poslao i kopiju Davilovog pisma. Na kraju, gde Davil govori laskavo o njemu lično, dodao je svojom rukom: 'Ja sam i ranije dosta puta imao prilike da skrenem pažnju na bujnu maštu g. Davila i njegovu sklonost ka preterivanju'" (Andrić 2001, 481).

is present in *Bosnian Chronicle* precisely through von Paulich's inviolability. His coldness and beauty, apart from disentangling him from romance and friendship, also trigger a conflict with a man who is his complete opposite: Rotta, the unpredictable, alcohol-fueled man of humble origins, marked by physical deformations, entrapped by unfortunate amorous liaisons. With von Paulich's inviolability and modern character in mind, his homosocial conflict with Rotta reveals itself as a particular geopolitical and historical drama. It is a culmination of von Paulich's erosion of his political adversaries' aspirations and a stark preview of what is to come in the future, namely the future Habsburg rule in Bosnia and its contested modernization.

In more general terms, with a focus on the complexity, intertextual references and semantic depth of von Paulich, this chapter also contributed more broadly to Andrić scholarship and queer approaches to literature. On the one hand, it has further strengthened this thesis' central argument about the authorial investment normative male authors have with male homosociality and queerness. In the previous chapter, we have seen Andrić's profound understanding and poetic usage of hegemonic masculinity. Here I have explored Andrić's keen interest, deep understanding and poetic utilization of masculine non-normativity as evidenced in his reworking of the theme of inviolate manhood and its connections with the novel's broader theme of geopolitical conflicts and modernity. On the other hand, this chapter has also broadened our understanding of the trope of inviolate manhood, demonstrating it was taken up and thematically reworked in the context of South Slavic literature as well. Perhaps more importantly, my aim here was to further underline the immense capacity of masculine non-normativity to serve as a semantic vessel for meanings far exceeding the seemingly marginal topics of male desire, sexuality, beauty and embodiment. Male non-normativity, in this case male inviolability, reversed and subverted hegemonic masculinity in order to erode its political dreams and replace it with an anticipation of its own vision of social power. Building upon these two concluding insights, the next chapter will deal with the cusp of homosociality and

queerness from a reversed angle, focusing on a figure that is von Paulich's complete opposite in every regard, including sexuality and modernity.

Chapter 4. Twinned and Undone: Male Deviancy and Cultural Non-Belonging in *Omer Pasha Latas*

Omer Pasha Latas is almost an inverted mirror image of *Bosnian Chronicle* analyzed in the previous two chapters. If the latter was Andrić's first novel and self-admittedly, although reticently, acknowledged as his personal favorite (Tošović 2018), *Omer Pasha Latas* was his last, ultimately unfinished, and posthumously published project[82]. The story follows the titular antihero – Mihajlo "Mićo" Latas/Omer Pasha, an Orthodox-born convert to Islam and subsequently an Ottoman field marshal – during his two-year campaign in Bosnia where he crushes the revolt of local beys. Several portraits emerge against the backdrop of this mid-19th century military campaign. Alongside Omer Pasha's, these tell the life stories of his wife, Saida Hanuma, and various other members of his entourage. Among these, the story of Kostake Nenišanu, Omer's femicidal *maître d',* is arguably the most notorious.

The story of Kostake Nenišanu first appeared as two installments in the journal *Politika* in 1961 and 1963, under the titles "Svatovi" ("The Wedding Procession") and "Posle" ("The Aftermath") (ibid., 78). The character of Kostake himself was a complete product of Andrić's imagination, with no real-life counterpart in the historical Omer Pasha's entourage (Nemec 2016). In other words, the two episodes recounting Kostake's misfortunate life and terrible plight were devised especially for the novel. Together they form one of the novel's longest and most thoroughly developed episodes.

[82] Comprising 19 chapters (14 of which were published during Andrić's life as short stories), the first edition (1976) was prepared by an editorial board of Andrić scholars. This edition offered a coherent narrative unfolding in the timeframe of two years and organized according to the principle of chronology. This was in keeping with Andrić's other novels, as was the novel's title since Andrić collected his notes in a binder with the header "Omer" (*see more* Đukić Perišić 2012, 521-527; Nemec 2016, 311-330; Tošović 2018, 53-59).

Taken at face value, the story at hand seems rather straightforward. Kostake gets maniacally obsessed with a Bosnian prostitute, Anđa. However, the girl stubbornly rejects the aging bachelor's advances. When Kostake finds out that Anđa became a concubine to another man, he loses his mind and shoots to death both the girl and himself. The novel's reception, despite different angles from which it approaches its subject, paints a rather consistent portrait of Kostake Nenišanu. This stern, strict and brooding character is considered "diffuse" and "perverted" (ibid., 23), his psychological profile "morbidly distorted" (Stojanović, n.d.), his life a "tragic story" brought about by "erotic insanity" (Brajović 2011, 183) that ultimately functions as a representation of the modern man's "sexual egoism" (Brajović 2015, 229). Dominant interpretations thus revolve around an image of an unattractive and socially awkward middle-aged man that slowly descends into madness, triggered by unfulfilled heterosexual erotic urges and unreciprocated libidinal investments. While not arguing against the importance of Kostake's mental breakdown for his story, this chapter does, however, analyze its semantic crux from another perspective.

The analysis in this chapter takes cue from the scene in which Kostake decides to commit his crime. On the morning of the killing, Kostake accidentally overhears a conversation in the courtyard between two men "who were mockingly and shamelessly talking about how Kostake's masculinity had been belatedly aroused[83]" (Andrić 2018, 195). He also finds out Anđa became a concubine to another man. The two men conclude their conversation by mockingly referring to Kostake as being emasculated. After work, Kostake heads to Anđa's home. He runs after Anđa down the streets and catches up with the girl in front of her new lover's house, killing both her and himself with his revolver.

[83] "Kostake je jutros u dvorištu čuo razgovor nekih dokonjaka koji su podrugljivo i bezočno govorili o tome kako se u Kostaću neočekivano, kad mu vreme nije, probudilo muško" (Andrić 1977, 227-228).

The short, seemingly simple mocking exchange between two random passers-by contains an element to Kostake's story that will prove quite complex under scrutiny. It invokes gender non-normativity, effeminacy and homosexuality all at once. The text, furthermore, ascribes such importance to this brief exchange that it uses it as a trigger for Kostake's subsequent crime. In this chapter, I will bring into focus precisely these gendered and sexualized aspects of the text and point to the ways in which Kostake is shaped by two culturally specific discourses of male deviancy: one relating to the nascent Western sexual modernity and the other coming from Orientalizing fantasies and anxieties. Thus, I will diverge from extant readings that emphasize the depths of Kostake's psychological torments and veer the interpretation towards a reading of social operations of othering that continually embed Kostake into culturally specific discourses of perversion, homosexuality, effeminacy and emasculation. I am following here Sharon Marcus who demonstrated that the sole focus on hidden or repressed meanings in a given text produces protocols of interpretation that overlook what the text makes manifest on its surface[84] (Marcus 2007). If the previous chapters analyzed men seeking their own agency among fellow men or men capable of omnipotent orchestration of homosocial ties, here we will meet a figure utterly overdetermined and manipulated by the discourse of others. This destructive representation, however, radiates out of the novel's larger poetics of male homosociality and queerness that constructs the narrative's overarching themes.

My proposition is that this analysis of the chasm of sexual ambiguity that devours Kostake also enables us to discern an additional thematic current in the novel. Namely, I argue that Kostake's catastrophic plight stages a geopolitical drama of an attempted Ottoman modernity clashing with local Bosnian population. In particular, my analysis uses elements

[84] As analyzed in chapter 1, Marcus (2007) tackled gender-inflected criticism of Victorian literature by supplementing symptomatic readings with "just readings", a method that aims "to account more fully for what texts present on their surface but critics have failed to notice" (75).

from of the novel's other episodes in order to reconstruct a broader context for Kostake's relationships with various people. This broader context shifts some of the critical attention away from the presumed centrality of his equally presumed heterosexual maniacal desire for Anđa. Instead, I will tease out a different version of Kostake. First, I will reconstruct his formative relationships with his homosexual adoptive father and Omer Pasha's wife, Saida Hanuma. Secondly, I will map out Kostake's congenital and familial oddities that mark him socially as an indicative, suspicious, telling man. I then analyze the cultural registers of deviancy that completely overwrite his character through the figures of a perverted, dangerous individual and an Orientalized eunuch. And finally, I reread Kostake's relationships with both Omer and Anđa, and demonstrate that his crime and suicide actually expand the entire novel's geopolitical stakes from a single military campaign in Bosnia onto a theater of global power struggles.

4.1. Kostake's Bonds

A closer look at Kostake's childhood and formative years, prior to his service in Omer Pasha's household in Bosnia, is crucial in order to provide the basis for this chapter's subsequent analysis of the ways in which Kostake's overall ambiguous personality attracts other people's curiosity, destructive gossip and homophobia. Of notice, in this regard, will be two of Kostake's closest personal relationships. One with his adoptive father, Tanase, who helps young Kostake immensely, but also inadvertently taints his reputation since Tanase is homosexual. The other important relationship will be Kostake's friendship with the piano player Ida Defilipis, or Saida Hanuma as she will be known once wedded to Omer Pasha. It is precisely at the behest of Saida Hanuma that Kostake joins Omer Pasha's household.

Kostake's story starts in poverty and violence. Both of his parents were migrant workers who met in the Romanian town of Ploești. His father came from Macedonia and died very young. His mother was eventually ruined by another house servant who took her to Bucharest under false pretense and sold her into slave labor. The exact nature of his mother's work is never explicitly revealed, yet the narrator heavily implies that she was a sex slave. It is stated that she was driven to an early grave by "hard work, poverty and a disorderly life, *about which at that time Kostake could not know much, and later did not dare to think about*[85]" (Andrić 2018, 177; emphasis mine). It is also implied that Kostake was molested, perhaps even sexually, by the same men that were destroying his mother:

> Yes, she was a beauty, but one of those weak and helpless women who, having taken their first reckless step, tend to be grabbed, trampled on and destroyed by men as they pleased, like an unfenced garden. *And people mercilessly exploited and abused not only her but also her little boy*[86]. (Ibid., 177; emphasis mine)

Following his mother's death, Kostake survives by working for fellow immigrant Macedonians, but dreams about escaping his situation into a life more akin to the one his parents had when they worked for a wealthy family in Ploești. His wishes come true when he joins the dishwashers at the house of one Prince Gika where he meets Tanase Nenišanu and, with time, Ida Defilipis.

Soon after starting his service, Kostake catches the eye of Prince Gika's most important servant, Tanase, a homosexual bachelor who will become Kostake's only family:

> The slender, taciturn young man's hard work and orderliness were immediately spotted by the then all-powerful *majordome* of the prince's house, old Tanase Nenišanu. Tanase was a dour, portly man, who had grown old as an unrivalled master of his profession, worn out by work and perhaps still more by his passions, acknowledged and unacknowledged, acceptable and unacceptable. An old bachelor who lived alone, he

[85] "Od rada, sirotinje i neurednog života o kome on tada nije mogao mnogo da zna, a docnije nije smeo ni hteo da misli, ona je rano uvela i mlada umrla" (Andrić 1977, 207; emphasis mine).
[86] "Da, bila je lepotica, ali od onih slabih i bespomoćnih koje muškarci, posle prvog nepromišljenog koraka i pada, grabe, gaze i satiru kako ko stigne, kao neograđeno baštensko zemljište. *I ljudi su bezdušno iskorišćavali i zloupotrebljavali ne samo nju nego i njenog dečaka*" (ibid.; emphasis mine).

> formally adopted the young man and gave him his family name. The way the adoption was interpreted by the numerous servants in the household was far from fine or pure, thought it was perhaps the one genuinely noble and entirely selfless act in the life of this dissolute old man[87]. (Ibid., 177)

Even though the figure of Tanase is abundant with the usual repertoire of homophobic meanings like depravity, excessiveness, and selfishness, the narrator makes it clear in no uncertain terms that his bond of elective kinship to Kostake had been made in good faith and with pure intentions. And indeed, the young man will prosper under the guidance and with support from his well-off adoptive father. Fathering Kostake does good to Tanase as well, at least in the eyes of the narrator, since it represents the old man's only noble and selfless deed. Its selflessness reflects eventually in Kostake's career path. Under Tanase's protection, the young man first becomes the head servant and following his stepfather's death, Kostake takes over his post as the *maître d'*. Prompted by envy, Tanase's homosexuality and Kostake's personal unconventionality in appearance and comportment, a web of gossip starts forming around the newly initiated *maître d'*:

> By then Kostake had become a typical eccentric. A bachelor like his late father, he lived for his work, which he was known to carry out with great skill, but, like his father, he was dogged by the same untested and unproved yet persistent reputation of being an enemy of the female sex if not of well-mannered, good-looking young men. In fact, he lived a chaste, retiring life, with a small number of acquaintances and even fewer friends. But the staff of this household were inclined to wrongful and scurrilous interpretations of everything around them.[88] (Ibid., 178)

[87] "Tadašnji svemoćni majordomus kneževske kuće, stari Tanase Nenišanu, zapazio je odmah toga vitkog, ćutljivog mladića, njegovu vrednoću i urednost. Tanase je bio mrk i ugojen čovek, ostareo u svom poslu kao majstor bez takmaca, iznuren radom, a još više možda svojim priznatim i nepriznavanim, dopuštenim i nedopuštenim strastima. Stari neženja i samac, on je mladića i formalno usvojio i dao mu svoje porodično ime. Nisu bila nimalo lepa ni čista tumačenja kojima je mnogobrojna posluga pratila ovo usvojenje, iako je to bio možda jedini zaista plemenit i potpuno nesebičan postupak u životu raspusnog starca" (Andrić 1977, 207-8).

[88] "Tada je Kostake Nenišanu bio vec potpun tip osobenjaka. Neženja kao i njegov pokojni poočim, on je živeo za svoj posao u kome je važio kao veštak, a pratio ga je isti, neproveren i nedokazan ali uporan glas da je neprijatelj ženskog pola, ali ne i uljudnih i lepih mladića. U stvari, on je živeo čedno i povučeno, sa malim brojem poznanika i još manje prijatelja, ali ta bojarska posluga bila je takva, sklona naopakim i skarednim shvatanjima svega oko sebe" (Andrić 1977, 208).

At this moment, Kostake becomes semantically imprinted with homosexuality, and, as we will later see, this reputation will follow him into his subsequent position with Omer Pasha.

Although it seems to have gone completely under the critical radar, the relationship between Kostake Nenišanu and Ida Defilipis/Saida Hanuma is crucial for the way the novel further sets the terrain for Kostake being increasingly perceived as a non-normative man. The relationship between the two seems somewhat underdeveloped for Andrić's usual style, abundant in minutiae. For instance, there is not a single depicted direct interaction between Kostake and Saida Hanuma. Given the fact that the novel was left unfinished, this underdevelopment is not at all surprising. However, even in the absence of real interaction between Kostake and Saida Hanuma, it is possible to reconstruct the specific context and ensuing events in which the two met, befriended and interacted with each other. My following analysis will highlight the relevance of patriarchal male violence and the asymmetrical yet connected ways in which it affects Saida Hanuma and Kostake Nenišanu. This experience, I argue, forms the backdrop of their sexually disinterested friendship that will subsequently lead Kostake to Bosnia, but also makes him vulnerable to the homophobic assumptions people make about him both within Omer Pasha's household and the local community.

Ida Defilipis is a heavily fictionalized and renamed character modelled on Omer Pasha's real-life wife.[89] The novel's Ida is born in Brașov, Transylvania, the result of an unfortunate wedlock between a violent and alcoholic, short-lived Hungarian mother and a gentle Romanian father[90]. Following her mother's death, Ida first lives with her father, and then proceeds to spend her early adolescence in Vienna, studying at the famous Carl Czerny's

[89] The historical Saida Hanuma's maiden name was Ana Simonis. She was hailed as the first female music composer in Ottoman Empire. Ana died in 1914, aged 72, in Paris, having divorced Omer Pasha some 50 years earlier (*see more* Bazović 2018).

[90] To an extent, Ida can be seen as a more developed and eventually grown-up version of Agata, the daughter of Anna Maria and Joseph von Mitterer from *Bosnian Chronicle*. Like Agata, Ida is deeply resentful and ashamed of her restless and deprived mother, and similarly attached to her benevolent father. However, unlike the von Mitterers (analyzed in the previous chapter), Ida's parents are depicted as irreparably destroyed by their marriage.

musical school. In Vienna, she also meets a friend of her relatives, one Prince Nikolae Gika of Bucharest or "Onkel Niki", as she will come to call him. The sixty-year-old bachelor and patron of the arts becomes her dedicated guide through the Viennese high society. Yet, a more sinister consequence accompanies her coming of age. From the errand boys to her peers and older gentlemen, Ida constantly and eerily starts feeling observed by men: "The world at times seemed to her like an endless dense undergrowth through which males, like greedy wild beasts, pursued powerless females[91]" (ibid., 159).

After her father suddenly passes away, Ida moves back to Brașov and falls into a deep depression. With her Viennese studies unfinished, she accepts an invitation from Prince Gika to spend some time at his Bucharest manor. Given the 1848 events, Ida eventually stays with Gika more than she planned. In the meantime, her host becomes increasingly clingy and intrusive. One night, fueled by alcohol, the old man tries to rape her in her room. Gathering all her strength, Ida fights him off and, consumed by rage, pacing across the room in her torn nightgown, she delivers a veritable proto-feminist critique of male sexual violence over women. At the sight of half-naked and furious Ida, the suddenly diminished Gika is left "in fear and wonder" and "reminded of Judith in paintings by old masters and it seemed to him that at any moment he would see in her right hand a short, sharp heavy saber and in her left the bloody head of Holofernes[92]" (ibid., 165). The incident with "Onkel Gika" makes her realize:

> These men would never grasp the simple truth that the female being sitting before them, attracting them so irresistibly, was not here for them, and was not merely what they saw and desired: she was a whole, complex person, with specific characteristics and needs, and her own soul, at the end of the day. … but in this evening, here, in this first, great, salutary attack of fury, she discovered another pleasure, her own: that of defending herself from assault and avenging herself for insults … calling all those men around her by their true name, along with their "passion" and "raptures", their pretense, tricks and

[91] "Taj svet joj se na mahove činio kao beskrajni, gusti šiprag po kome mužjaci, kao pohotljivi zverovi, jure nemoćne ženke" (Andrić 1977: 185).

[92] "U njegovoj mašti strasnog ljubitelja slikarstva, neodoljivo se javljalo sećanje na Juditu sa slika starih slikara i činilo mu se da bi svakog trena mogao u njenoj desnoj ruci ugledati tešku kratku i oštru sablju, a u levoj okrvavljenu Holofernovu glavu" (ibid., 192-193).

deceit; showing them that she had matured, that she was not afraid of them, that they disgusted her[93]. (Ibid., 168-169)

Soon after Gika's assault, at a reception she meets the supreme commander of the Turkish army in Wallachia, Omer Pasha Latas. Ida will accept to become the field marshal's wife. Interestingly, it is not out of love nor just because the marriage to the wealthy marshal promised to save her from both male violence and pending poverty. The crucial moment comes when Omer Pasha mentions his little daughter who "in his nomadic military life, was too often left to her own devices and how obliged and grateful he would be to a woman who would devote a little bit of attention and time to her[94]" (ibid., 171). It seems that Ida Defilipis, now Saida Hanuma, voluntarily attaches herself to Omer's daughter in order to save her from the fate she experienced. Saida Hanuma thus intervenes into female child-rearing by hacking heterosexual marriage with female homosociality. In other words, instead of accepting her role as the child's caretaker as a consequence of getting married, Saida Hanuma accepts becoming a spouse so as to establish a bond of elective kinship with Omer Pasha's daughter.

Because it portrays a rare example of aromantic intimacy between a man and a woman in Andrić's fiction, Kostake's and Saida Hanuma's relationship calls for scrutinization. Several important elements can be reconstructed out of (deliberate or otherwise) textual lacunae. For one, Kostake never exhibits any sexual interest in Saida Hanuma (nor does he exhibit any interest in women whatsoever prior to meeting Anđa). Furthermore, their relationship is based on mutual trust, as can be deduced from the fact that Kostake moves freely in the women's

[93] "Ne, nikad ti ljudi neće uvideti prostu istinu da žensko stvorenje, koje sedi prema njima i koje ih neodoljivo privlači, nije radi njih tu, i da se ne sastoji samo od onog što oni na njemu vide i žele, nego da je potpun i složen čovek koji ima i svojih drugih osobina i potreba, i svoju dušu, najposle! … ali je večeras, ovde, u ovom prvom velikom i spasonosnom nastupu gneva otkrila drugu, svoju slast: da se brani od nasrtaja, i sveti za uvrede, da bar rečima, kad ne može drukčije, podseća ruke koje se pružaju prema njoj; da neštedimice, surovo i bolno iskreno nazove pravim imenom sve te ljude oko sebe, zajedno sa njihovim 'strastima' i 'zanosima', pretvaranjima, varkama i podvalama; da im pokaže da ih je prozrela, da ih se ne boji, da joj se gade" (ibid., 197-198).

[94] "Još jednom prilikom rekao je, uzgred, kako je njegova kćerkica, u ovom njegovom vojničkom nomadskom životu prepuštena sama sebi, i kako bi obavezan i zahvalan bio ženi koja bi joj posvetila malo pažnje i vremena" (ibid., 200).

quarters, the only man in the residence, apart from Omer Pasha, to do so. Moreover, their life trajectories share similarities that presumably enable their relationship in the first place, despite insurmountable differences in class positions. They are both orphans, sexually and otherwise repeatedly harassed and victimized by men. As a young adult left to fend for herself *and* as a woman, Saida Hanuma shares traits both of Kostake and his mother. Most importantly, it is at the behest of Saida Hanuma that Kostake Nenišanu, at the time a *majordome* at Prince Gika's manor, subsequently lands a position in Omer Pasha's household. And finally, both characters are implicated in homosocial networks of support: Saida as the stempother of Latas' daughter, and Kostake as the adopted son of Tanase. However, as I will analyze in next sections, alongside inheriting Tanase's homosexual reputation, Kostake's intimate, yet completely professional and sexually disinterested relationship with Saida Hanuma will only raise further eyebrows.

4.2. The Dangers of Weirdness

In the previous chapter, we have seen how the curious figure of von Paulich puzzles his surroundings and subverts the *Bosnian Chronicle's* established modes of normative masculine belonging and heterosexual romance. More specifically, as the figure of an inviolate man, von Paulich purposefully disentangles himself from friendship with men and relationships with women, causing considerable social puzzlement and apprehension. Yet, as queered and peculiar as he is, von Paulich never gets overwritten by others' discourses. Quite the contrary, his inviolability extends over everything and everyone, protecting him even from death. However, not all gender-based ambiguities are made the same. When it comes to Kostake Nenišanu, although similarly disentangled from heterosexuality and male homosociality as von Paulich, his ambiguity hands him irretrievably over to others' curiosity and imagination. Before continuing to the specific grounds and circumstances of Kostake's ambiguity, I first wish to

briefly clarify my usage of the term "ambiguity" with regards to queer theory, and in particular, queer literary studies.

Ambiguity and queerness have been theorized together from the onset of queer research. Arguably one of the most compelling takes on the issue has been Lee Edelman's (1994) notion of "homographesis". Heavily influenced by Derrida, Foucault and Sedgwick, Edelman set out to explore the rhetorical operations and tropologies that semanticized homosexuality in the West by way of cultural phenomena and artifacts such as cinema and works of literature. Expanding upon Foucault's distinction between the pre-modern juridical category of the sodomite and the modern fully-fledged identity of the homosexual, Edelman added that homosexuality only emerged as a totalized identity, once a specific sexual conduct was turned into a metaphorical designation for a whole person and, furthermore, a type of persons. Thus, the homosexual "acquires a 'face' only through the rhetorical redistribution of 'meanings'" (196) and is suspended as derivative and indefinitely ambiguous with regards to heterosexuality. Indeed, it is this ambiguity that discerns homosexuality from the supposedly original and transparent heterosexuality. While discussing the Production Code (i.e., self-censoring) cinematic portrayals of male sexuality, Edelman singled out ambiguity as the crucial means to convey homosexuality in a completely understandable way to the spectatorship, while avoiding naming it directly. This ambiguity is then a

> calculated sexual ambiguity that interprets gay male sexuality as a trope for ambiguity as such, especially insofar as that ambiguity informs the male body and its susceptibility to representation. Now in modern American culture such ambiguity is anything *but* ambiguous: nothing is more decidedly and punitively "known" than the "meaning" of sexual "ambiguity." … Ambiguity as such, then, is not permitted innocently or non-tropologically to enter the modern discourse of male sexual orientation since it occupies a virtually tautological relation to the construction of male homosexuality. It undergoes translation immediately into "that which is other than heterosexual" … Ambiguity and homosexuality, in consequence, trope endlessly upon each other. (201-202)

A result of this semantic operation (or "homographesis") is the modern fictional trope of the sophisticated, effeminate, dubious and terrifyingly (self)destructive male figure, open to endless speculation[95].

Of course, Andrić's usage of Kostake's ambiguity cannot be said to have anything with (self)censorship or even as something as banal as not wanting to address homosexuality directly. We have already seen that Andrić not only did not have any problems with naming, addressing and describing male homosexuality, but also populated his works with a whole plethora of differently gendered and sexualized characters. By poetically relying on ambiguity, Andrić manages to stage, I argue, two different things. On the one hand, ambiguity casts Kostake as the stage for dramatizing the cultural tensions between the local population and Omer Pasha's entourage. On the other hand, it sets the conditions for a final, tragic failure of Omer Pasha's efforts at upkeeping the impression of representing modern political power. These two points will be further elaborated in following sections. The rest of this section will provide a more detailed look into Kostake's ambiguous nature, its connections to his gender and sexuality and, finally, one particular way in which people try to make sense of it.

A big part of Kostake's ambiguity has to do with his homosexual adoptive father's inherited reputation of an "enemy of the female sex" but not of "good-looking boys". However, while the narrator maps out the network of meanings attributed to Kostake in different communities (Gika's and Pasha's households and the local Bosnian population), he also supplements these speculations by positing irrefutable facts. A lot of these facts are communicated to the reader in a circumstantial way. For instance, even though the narrator makes it clear that while Tanase was indeed worn down by his "illicit passions" (i.e., same-sex

[95] Edelman's (1994) key example of the semioticization of homosexuality comes from Otto Preminger's film noir *Laura* (1944), and the character of Waldo Lydecker, a homicidal effeminate upper-class man (192-243).

sexual practices), he makes sure to let the reader know that Kostake did not indulge in excesses of any kind, sexuality included.

It is also possible to deduce that this reputation is not only inherited because he was brought up by a pervert, but also because Prince Gika's servants assumed he was Tanase's lover, thus infusing queerness with meanings of corrupt nepotism. Here too the narrator establishes as a fact that, while Tanase undisputedly lived a debauched life, he had done no wrongs to Kostake and has not taken advantage of the boy in any way. Indeed, as mentioned before, rather than being an instance of crony nepotism, the adoption only benefits the already talented boy.

Yet, it is not only the history of having been brought up at the hands of a notorious boy-lover that marks Kostake as peculiar in the eyes of communities he inhabits. Their imaginations are also fueled by several Kostake's unconventional and eyebrow-raising intrinsic features. In many ways, Kostake is, plainly speaking, weird: his body is odd, his habits are peculiar, his way of moving is unnerving. His whole being is described as oddly ungraspable and liquid. This epistemological elusiveness is reflected in his serpent-like bodily movements:

> The man's slender body moved around the residence from early morning until late at night. It slipped everywhere, softly, with no sound or effort, but briskly and decisively … with easy, swaying step, he reached every corner[96]. (Andrić 2018, 180)

Moreover, his oddity is ingrained in his congenital properties, namely the unflattering disproportion of his limbs and facial features:

> He was one of those tall people with a certain disproportion between the upper and lower parts of the body. It would be hard to determine whether his legs were too long or his torso too short, but with each of his movements *it was clear that he was put together differently from other people*. Above his broad thin shoulders he had a small head with a pale face … The lines of his face were irregular and asymmetrical, as if

[96] "Vitko telo toga čoveka kreće se od ranog jutra do kasne noći po Konaku. Uvija se i uvlači svuda, meko, bez šuma i napora, ali snažno i odlučno. … on svojim lakim talasastim hodom klizi i dopire svuda" (Andrić 1977, 211).

> blown by the wind. … His eyes were blue, the blue of a plant, and for the most part resembled two flowers, recently picked, not quite equal in size or the same color[97]. (Ibid., 179; emphasis mine)

That these attributes are indeed intrinsic to Kostake is evident from the fact that he retains them in new contexts. Even after he leaves Prince Gika's household where everybody knew about Tanase's sexual proclivities, Kostake gets yet again entangled in a network of gossip prompted by his overall weirdness. After he settles in Omer Pasha's residence, Kostake immediately attracts attention, mostly due to his strange appearance and habits. His dandyesque appearance fuel people's imagination, as does his personal belongings:

> [His] rooms were always cleaned by the same woman, and it was said that they were spread with exceptional fabrics of various colors and adorned with paintings and engravings about which people in the residence whispered as of something strange and shameful. That small apartment and his genteel and carefully chosen clothes were his only eccentricities, his only expense and luxury. Otherwise, he had neither friends nor female acquaintances[98]. (Ibid., 181-182)

After his death, the major leading the investigation and his officers finally break into Kostake's fabled room, and it is there that Kostake's gender non-normativity is once again addressed and mocked by younger men:

> The faces of the junior officers who carried out the search reflected all shades of surprise and amazement at what they found in the cupboards and chests. And had Major Sabit not been there personally, they would certainly have expressed loudly in jokes, laughter or curses their opinion of the luxurious clothes and sundry toiletries, gadgets and trifles they had no idea existed. As it was, they had to restrain themselves and,

[97] "Bio je od onih visokih ljudi kod kojih postoji neka nesrazmera između gornje i donje polovine tela. Teško bi bilo kazati da li su mu noge suviše dugačke ili trup suviše kratak, tek pri svakom pokretu primećivalo se da je nekako drukčije prepolovljen nego drugi ljudi. Na širokim mršavim ramenima sitna glava sa bledim licem. I brada i brkovi obrijani, što izaziva najviše čuđenje sarajevske čaršije. Crte tog lica su različite i neskladne, kao da su vetrom snesene tu … Oči su modre, ali modrinom bilja, i ponajviše lice na dva plava cveta, maločas otkinuta, i ne sasvim jednaka po veličini, pa ni po boji potpuno" (ibid., 209-210; emphasis mine).

[98] "Te prostorije, koje čisti uvek ista žena, zastrte su, kako se priča, naročitim tkaninama raznih boja i ukrašene slikama i gravirama o kojima se u Konaku šapuće kao o čudnoj i sramotnoj stvari. Taj mali stan i uz to gospodska i birana nošnja, to su njegove jedine nastranosti i sav njegov trošak i raskoš. Inače, on nema ni prijatelja ni ženskih poznanstva" (ibid., 213).

> heads bowed, silently lay out and record all the jewelry, clothes, paintings and books[99]. (Ibid., 203-204)

The general ambiguity surrounding this otherwise silent man – his gait and movements, his features and the overall physical oddity, his habits and way of life – opens him up to others' imagination, speculation, ill-meaning gossip. Unlike Saida Hanuma who reclaims the narratives of atrocious male sexual harassment as an empowered survivor, Kostake never provides an account of himself, his surroundings or the effect others' constant speculations has on him. Even his suicide letters, apart from the letterhead, remains unfinished. The protocols of his othering, however, prove relentless:

> Idlers and gossipmongers struggled in vain to find some "hidden" attributes of the man they found puzzling. And as they found nothing, nor could they have found what did not exist, they indulged in arbitrary assumptions and fabrications, in which everyone unconsciously attributed to Kostake something of their own desires, inclinations and anxieties. They did this all the more easily and assiduously because they had hit upon a man who did not defend himself from slander, or avenge himself, living aloof from all idle talk, intrigue and gossip[100]. (Ibid., 182)

Kostake is also recurrently imagined by others as creepy or dangerous, most notably Anđa who thought Kostake had "strange, mad eyes and she was afraid of him[101]" (ibid., 187). Combined, Kostake's congenital oddity, weird habits, his menacing aura and the fact that his ambiguity gets constantly interpreted as related to his gender and sexuality, ultimately casts him as the dual figure of a sexual pervert and a dangerous individual. I am following Michel

[99] "Na licima podoficira koji su pretres vršili mogli su se čitati svi stepeni iznenađenja i čuđenja pred svim onim što su nalazili u ostavama i sanducima. I da tu nije bio sam major Sabit, oni bi svakako i glasno izražavali šalama, smehom ili psovkama svoja mišljenja o luksuznim haljinama i svakojakim toaletnim spravama i sitnicama za koje nisu ni slutili da postoje. Ovako su morali da se uzdržavaju i da oborene glave, ćutke slažu i popisuju nakit, odelo, slike i knjige" (ibid., 238.)

[100] "Uzalud su se mučili besposlenjaci i ogovarači da otkriju neke 'skrivene' osobine ovog za njih zagonetnog čoveka; i kako nisu nalazili ni mogli da nađu ono čega nema, upuštali su se u proizvoljna nagađanja i izmišljanja, pri čemu je svak nesvesno pripisivao Kostaću ponešto od sopstvenih želja, sklonosti i strahovanja koje je krio u sebi i nosio kroz život. To su činili utoliko lakše i utoliko više što su naišli na čoveka koji se ne brani od kleveta, ne sveti zbog njih, i živi daleko od svih razgovora, spletaka i ogovaranja" (ibid., 1977, 213).

[101] "A devojka se sa malo reči ali nestrpljivo i odlučno branila i otimala, govoreći da taj čovek ima čudne, lude oči i da ga se ona boji" (ibid., 219).

Foucault (2003) who, in his 1974-1975 lectures at Collège de France, subsequently published as *Abnormal*, first located the idea of a "dangerous individual" as being the fulcrum of a nascent medico-judicial apparatus. Significantly, Foucault demonstrated that the defining feature of a dangerous individual is the potentiality of him being dangerous, not necessarily its realization. In other words, the dangerous individual is one who could potentially do something harmful, not an individual who has already committed something. Because it projected the idea of potential threat onto the social body at large, the notion of a dangerous individual blurred and blended the boundaries between psychiatry, medicine and the judicial system, giving rise to biopolitical societal governing that aimed at recognizing the traits of a potentially harmful subjects. When it comes to Kostake's overall profile, a striking similarity arises with the "dangerous individual", namely, the conceptual proximity of the notion of "danger" and "perversion":

> on the one hand, there is the notion of "perversion" that will enable the series of medical concepts and the series of juridical concepts to be stitched together and, on the other, there is the notion of "danger", of the "dangerous individual", which will make possible the justification and theoretical foundation of an uninterrupted chain of medico-judicial institutions. Danger and perversion constitute, I think, the essential theoretical core of expert medico-legal opinion. (Foucault 2003, 34)

The discourses of perversion and danger jointly further place Kostake firmly into a general zone of well-delineated modern zone of abnormality, something preceding and anticipating the monolithic notion of (homo)sexuality, a zone of proto-identity or "pre-gay queerness" (Woods 1998, 1). Both ridiculed and feared, talked about inquisitively and observed suspiciously, Kostake, I argue, embodies the abnormal subject of modern sexology *avant la lettre*. The abnormal individuals were the building blocks of a thoroughly modern dispositive of sexuality that solidified throughout the 19th century (Foucault 2003, 168; Oosterhuis 1997). Kostake joins their ranks by virtue of being seen by others as a member of that "numberless family of perverts who were on friendly terms with delinquents and akin to madmen" (Foucault

1978, 40). Even his penchant for lonesome walks by the riverbank marks him as conspicuously aloof and strange. And in the absence of a veritably modern Western European type of a medico-juridical apparatus, this coding takes place through the inquisitive gaze of the communities surrounding Kostake. As the epistemological grip on Kostake tightens, it amounts to, as I will demonstrate in more detail later, a veritable form of homophobic bullying.

What is important here, again, is that the text never resolves Kostake's general ambiguity. To the contrary, it sustains and extends his ambiguity *ad infinitum*, and uses it as a blank canvas to be overwritten by a whole catalogue of ideas surrounding male non-normativity. Ambiguity, then, effectively shatters Kostake's image in such a way that it becomes altogether impossible to subtract any definitive "truth" about him. However, Kostake's ambiguity also invites those surrounding him to repeatedly try to decipher him. Thus, Kostake is continually overpowered by a collective epistemological imposition that tries to spectacularize him as a radical discontinuity with male homosociality and heterosexuality. Some, as we have just seen, coalesce around properly modern 19th century Western European ideas around dangerous individuals, perversion and abnormality, yet never reduce Kostake to any of them completely. However, there are other ideas about male non-normativity that are levitating around Kostake's ambiguity. From the perceived mysteriousness and ornamentation of his private abode to his apparent distance from male heterosexuality, from his carefully curated appearance to his professional position, Kostake is asymmetrically approached by the Ottomans and Western converts in Omer Pasha's residence *and* the local Bosnian population. It is here, I argue, that the novel stages its geopolitical setting by twinning the modern sexual personae of a heavily sexualized abnormal individual with another figure – that of the eunuch.

4.3. One of Seraskier's Marvels: The Twinning of the Pervert and the Eunuch

Petar Džadžić (1983) (incidentally, a member of the novel's editorial board) demonstrated that Kostake's and Anđa's story parallels other, almost identical narratives in Andrić's fiction, most notably, the so-called lust killings of Anika and Tijana from the 1931 novella "Anikina vremena" [Days of Anika]. Kostake, according to Džadžić, is the most rounded iteration of a figure that appears recurrently in Andrić's *oeuvre*, that of a man irreparably obsessed with a woman. Moreover, Džadžić argued, Kostake amounts to a veritable archetype of a "man-running-after-a-woman", literally and with lethal consequences (ibid., 144-145). Indeed, following Džadžić, it is not hard to see that the broad strokes of Kostake's story are isomorphic to the ones found in "Anikina vremena"[102]. However, there are also considerable and telling differences between the novella and the novel. Most importantly, whereas all the stories from "Anikina vremena" thematize the social (dis)order of a self-contained, small-scale and homogenous rural community, Kostake's story, as this section aims to demonstrate, functions as a synecdoche of a global geopolitical drama of modernization, akin, yet asymmetrical to the one from *Bosnian Chronicle*. This facet of the strange case of Omer Pasha's *maître d'* emerges only through an analysis of the semantic entanglement of the geopolitical and sexual via the figures of the perverted, dangerous individual and the eunuch.

The story of Kostake Nenišanu opens by emphasizing the symbolism of his professional position. In Omer Pasha's large residence, people conducted themselves both in Turkish and

[102] "Anikina vremena" (Andrić 2017) comprises several loosely connected stories depicting social chaos ensuing once human sexuality escapes individual and social control. The eponymous main character is a village beauty who, after having been rejected by the man she has fallen for, turns her deceased parents' home into a brothel. After attracting men from all social strata, and thus causing scandal and uproar in the local community, Anika is killed by her brother Lale, a hard-working and modest young man with learning disabilities. Connected to Anika's story are those of Vujadin, an Orthodox priest descending into homicidal madness, and Tijana, a lewd woman shot to death by her rejected pursuer who later kills himself as well. Both Vujadin and Tijana share similarities with Kostake and his victim.

Western ways. And while Omer Pasha preferred Turkish customs, Saida Hanuma favored Western-style domestic arrangements. At her behest, a new post was introduced in the residence:

> Among the very large staff that arrived in Sarajevo along with Saida Hanuma and the harem, there was an official with a special post. This was Kostake Nenišanu, the pasha's *maître d'hôtel* or *majordome*, as he liked to call himself. He was the chief cook, supervisor of all the kitchens and senior overseer of the staff, a kind of chief of protocol for luncheons and dinners. Existing regulations and tradition made no provision for such a position, at least not in this form. … From the outset, Kostake was under the personal protection of Saida Hanuma. His official name was *Antoine*, but this was only relevant in the presence of foreigners and foreign guests. People in the residence called him by his real name, while citizens of Sarajevo called him the Bosnian variant – Kostać[103]. (Andrić 2018, 175; original emphasis)

Apart from being refracted yet again through others' perspectives, as evident in the three names ascribed to him in different contexts (Antoine/Kostake/Kostać), it is noteworthy that Kostake himself prefers to think of his position as the Western-type *maître d'hôtel* or *majordome.* This is not surprising considering that Kostake, under the patronage of his adoptive father and with Prince Gika's permission, perfected his craft in the great hotels of France, Switzerland, Italy and Austria. He was fluent in Macedonian, Romanian, Greek, Turkish, and French. It was precisely these professional features that made him an especially sought-after asset for Omer Pasha's residence. Kostake becomes part-and-parcel of the Ottoman Empire's, and by extension Omer Pasha's project to represent themselves as fully modern. Indeed, Kostake/Antoine is meant to be shown as a flashy token of cultural openness in front of Westerners. His professionalism and dedication in managing household servants, groceries and meals made Kostake a reputable figure: "there was no doubt that it was due to him, his work

[103] "Zajedno sa Saida-hanumom i haremom stigao je, pored mnogobrojne posluge, i jedan naročit službenik. To je bio Kostake Nenišanu, pašin maitre d'hotel ili majordom, kako je sam voleo da se naziva. On je bio glavni kuvar, nadzornik svih kuhinja i starešina posluge, neka vrsta šefa protokola za ručkove i večere. Postojeći propisi ni tradicija nisu predviđali to zvanje, bar ne u tom obliku. … Kostake je od samog početka bio pod ličnom zaštitom Saida-hanume. Njegovo zvanično ime bilo je *Antoine*, ali ono je važilo samo u prisustvu stranaca i stranih gosta. Ljudi u Konaku zvali su ga njegovim pravim imenom, a i svet u Sarajevu zvao ga je tako, i to prema bosanskom izgovoru — Kostać" (Andrić 1977, 205; original emphasis).

and his maniacal persistence that the Omer Pasha's kitchen was renowned and that the viziers in Istanbul might have envied him for it" (ibid., 181). He is also arguably the only member of Omer Pasha's residence that is viewed by Sarajevo locals in a somewhat positive light as "one of the seraskier[104]'s marvels[105]" (ibid.).

However, it is not only Kostake's incredible competence that the locals marvel at. While the people in Omer Pasha's residence, as we have seen in the previous section, are darkly fascinated with his love for beautiful things and conjure up all sorts of speculations about his private rooms, the local Sarajevo people are fascinated by his appearance: "Both his beard and moustache were shaved, which provoked the greatest surprise among the townspeople of Sarajevo[106]" (ibid., 179). Furthermore, his flashy attire makes him stand out both in the residence and in town:

> Kostake's clothes too were unlike those worn by any of the other staff. Gray or black narrow trousers of a Western cut, a snow-white shirt with a bit of starched lace on the front and cuffs. A short housecoat with no lining, of light material with yellow or black stripes. Round his neck a white kerchief with a gold pin. Bareheaded like no one else in the residence, with thin, only slightly graying hair held down with pomade in a few waves of unequal form and size. On his feet low soft shoes of dark green or cherry-colored kind[107]. (Ibid., 179-180)

Unlike the congenital oddity of his physique or the reputation inherited from his deviant adoptive father, the weirdness of Kostake's apparel is truly only in the eyes of the beholders. His flashy style has been likened to that of 19th century dandies (Bilić 2018), and we could add here that it is also safe to assume that his uniform would be considered not only normal, but

[104] Ottoman title for a vizier who commands an army.
[105] "Takvim svojim radom taj čudnovati majordomus brzo je postao jedno od seraskerovih čuda o kojima je Sarajevo pričalo. Ali sumnje nema da njemu, njegovom radu i njegovoj manijačkoj upornosti treba zahvaliti da je Omerpašina kuhinja čuvena i da mu carigradski veziri mogu na njoj pozavideti" (ibid., 212).
[106] "I brada i brkovi obrijani, što izaziva najviše čuđenje sarajevske čaršije" (ibid., 209).
[107] "I odelo je na Kostaku neobično i mimo sve ostalo osoblje Konaka. Sive ili mrke uske pantalone zapadnjačkog kroja, snežnobela košulja sa malo uštirkane čipke na grudima i rukavima. Kućni kaputić bez postave, od lake materije na žute i crne pruge. Oko vrata bela marama prikopčana zlatnom iglom. Gologlav kao niko u Konaku, a proređena, samo malo proseda kosa učvršćena pomadom u nekoliko talasa nejednakih po obliku i veličini. Na nogama plitke, meke cipele od safijana tamnozelene ili višnjeve boje" (ibid., 211).

also mandatory in the great European hotels he was apprenticed in. However, in the context of an Ottoman marshal's residence in Bosnia, Kostake's appearance causes a cultural shock. Let us go back for a moment to the previously quoted description of Kostake's physique. He is said to look as if "put together differently from other people". The original formulation – "nekako drukčije *prepolovljen* nego drugi ljudi" – uses the adjective that literally means "split" or "halved", as in "he was split/halved differently from other people". And although it conveys the same meaning as the English translation, I do think the original adjective's literal meaning further buttresses the asymmetry of Kostake's whole representation and, furthermore, Kostake *as a* representation. In other words, the asymmetry of his physical blueprint is superimposed onto the tokenized nature of his professional appointment: to be a symbol of Westernization and modernity for Ottoman Empire. This splitting or halving is heavily gendered and sexualized, as well. His Western-style clothing and the lack of facial hair are not only visual cues of his belonging to a different cultural background. They are also, I argue, laden with meanings associated with another masculine non-normative figure – the eunuch.

The first significant aspect in which Kostake is conceptualized as a eunuch has to do with his appearance as perceived by the local Bosnian population, first and foremost his shaved facial hair. The presence or absence of hair and beard can function as a powerful tool to delineate the boundaries of both masculinity and cultural alterity (Whithey and Evans, 2018). For centuries, as Joseph Allen Boone (2014) explains, both in the West and East, beardlessness was associated with the penetrated sexual partner, effeminacy and castration, and thus associated with male youths, women and eunuchs (29). For instance, as Eleanor Rycroft (2018) has shown through an analysis of early modern era travel writings, cultural anxieties surrounding the perceived threat of Ottoman Empire were often connected to rumors of Englishmen being forcefully shaven at the hands of the Turks. The shaving of the beard was seen in Europe as emasculating and associated with "the spectre of the gelded Turkish eunuch",

cementing the "association between beardlessness and the sexual disorder of effeminacy or sodomy" and Islamic sexuality (Rycroft 2018, 77-78).

Eunuchs, castrated African and Caucasian slaves, were a significant and, because of their proximity to ruling dynasties, a politically influential institution, pervasive in all Mediterranean and Asian Empires (Boone 2014; Hathaway 2018). Unsurprisingly, their gender and sexuality often posed a significant challenge to dominant constructions of masculinity. As Jane Hathaway (2018) argued, the Ottoman eunuch was not a third gender, but a male gender seemingly arrested in perpetual boyhood with all the accompanying androgyny. On the other hand, in European imagination, the eunuch "emerged as the emblem, par excellence, of a generalized sexual perversity … as likely to be called forth to service women as to be used as an instrument of pederasty" (Boone 2014, 99). The fascination with the eunuch's paradoxical position as "the non-phallic man capable of exercising heterosexual desire" framed him as "the liminal 'twilight man' who ambiguously bridges states of being" and turned him into a "touchstone for a variety of European sexual myths and fictions" (ibid). His gender liminality, perceived physical and assumed psychological effeminacy, combined with castration, made eunuch "synonymous with homosexuality", especially anal receptivity because he "must perforce enjoy being penetrated as his sole source of erotic pleasure" (ibid., 100).

With these meanings associated with the eunuch in mind, we can see that Kostake's general ambiguity, as previously analyzed, gets semantically overwritten with two distinct, yet overlapping registers. On the one hand, there are the modern Western European discourses of perversion and danger, while, on the other hand, here we encounter the imaginaries associated with Ottoman eunuchs. While bifurcating into these two culturally differentiated discourses, these two registers still overlap in several aspects. Both within the discourses of a dangerous individual and the eunuch, Kostake's general ambiguity is understood as indicatively effeminate and indicative of male same sex practices; he is perceived as equally mystifying

and dangerous; and, finally, both understandings exclude him from the realms of normative male homosociality and heterosexuality.

Apart from his appearance and habits, Kostake's proximity to the eunuch also stems out of his professional duties in Omer Pasha's residence. In practical terms, the institution of the eunuch historically provided a mediating zone around the ruler. By handling social interactions with the commoners and women in the harem, eunuchs delineated a zone beyond which it was impossible to impose on the sultan. Their role was thus perceived as akin to demigods and angels (Hathaway 2018). Kostake's duties in the residence code him symbolically and practically into exactly that role. Consider this description of his duties, conflating at one and the same time the function of the European *maître d'* and the Ottoman eunuch: "Sweetmeats and fruit for the harem, a variety of drinks for the seraskier and his guests, everyday and formal lunches and dinners *à la turca* or *à la franca* – it was all his concern[108]" (Andrić 2018, 180). Moreover, on two occasions in the novel, Kostake is explicitly referred to as "the eunuch". Significantly, both are connected to Saida Hanuma, and by extension, Omer Pasha's harem. In the first of these, the narrator describes Kostake's authorization to access the women's quarters: "With the calm confidence of a eunuch, he entered the women's side of the residence, where Saida Hanuma always had some task for him or an issue to discuss[109]" (ibid., 180). The other explicit reference to Kostake as a eunuch comes from the mouth of Saida Hanuma herself, in a scene following Kostake's murder and suicide: "And what did that eunuch need with all this? He chose that unfortunate woman to avenge his impotence[110]" (ibid., 217).

Furthermore, Kostake's appointment as the *maître d'* in Omer Pasha's residence unfolds during the 1850s, at a time of the westernizing Tanzimat reforms during which the

[108] "Slatkiši i voće za harem, razna pića za seraskera i njegove goste, obični i svečani ručkovi i večere *à la turca* ili *à la franca* - sve je to na njegovoj brizi" (Andrić 1977, 211).
[109] "Sa mirom i sigurnošću evnuha on ulazi u žensku stranu Konaka, gde Saida hanuma ima uvek ponešto da mu naredi ili o nečem da se sa njim posavetuje" (ibid., 210).
[110] "I šta je sve to trebalo tome evnuhu? Našao je tu nesrećnicu da se na njoj sveti zbog svoje nemoći" (ibid., 253).

Ottoman harem eunuch culture was decimated and its overall influence diminished (*see more* Hathaway 2018). His position, created especially to both appease Saida Hanuma's lifestyle preferences *and* represent Omer Pasha's residence as Western-oriented and modern, subsequently gets saturated, I argue, with meanings pertaining to the ancient – and properly non-Western, non-modern – position of the eunuch. This process of Kostake's Ottomanization and Orientalization unfolds in the eyes of Bosnian population and Omer Pasha's entourage through a series of cultural and thematic reversals.

First, as reconstructed in the previous section, Saida Hanuma's and Kostake's relationship can be traced back to Prince Gika's household. In other words, it precedes their life with Omer Pasha. Kostake has no sexual interest in Saida Hanuma, a woman repeatedly exposed to male sexual aggression. Their mutual respect and confidence are reflected in Kostake's access to female quarters of the residence. However, it is precisely this asexual closeness of the two characters that associates Kostake to the figure of the eunuch in the eyes of the servants and, to an extent, of Saida Hanuma herself. Kostake is not castrated nor is it anywhere implied in the novel that he is impotent. To the contrary, he does experience some sort of sexual desire towards Anđa.

Furthermore, an array of Kostake's characteristics get culturally translated in gendered and sexual terms, both in *and* outside Omer Pasha's residence. His professional position, beardlessness and the dandyesque apparel come to signify emasculation, impotence and sexual deviancy. His posh Western European-style uniform and well-tailored clothing are taken by the people in the residence as another effeminized and queer aspect of Kostake. Combined with the perceived mysteriousness of his private rooms, his appearance – both congenital and stylized – marks him as non-normative gender-wise and sexually perverse. Both are then codified in the proto-modern Western understanding of the abnormal individual/homosexual and, at the same time, the Ottoman eunuch with all the accompanying stereotypes and anxieties.

Finally, hypersexualized as the abnormal individual *and* symbolically emasculated as the impotent eunuch, Kostake simultaneously inhabits two cultural registers of male deviancy. Through the epistemology of rumors, his gender and sexuality become semanticized with the geopolitical stakes of his professional position. And vice versa, his professional position gets saturated with his own gender non-normativity. He is thus too Western to be a true eunuch for the people in the residence, and too Ottoman-identified to be anything else in the eyes of the Bosnian locals. In both cases, Kostake functions as a depository of dangerous and anxiety-ridden cultural assumptions surrounding both same-sex male sexuality and emasculation. This is why, I argue, Anđa stubbornly deflects all Kostake's advances by saying nothing more than: "*that she knew what she knew* and nothing would induce her to go to that man[111]" (Andrić 2018, 185; emphasis mine).

Twinned and halved between East and West, Kostake's sexual being – suspended in others' discourses – and his final destiny thus function as a synecdoche of a much broader theme. Namely, Kostake's story represents Omer Pasha's failed attempt at convincingly representing himself and his Empire as modern. This is evidenced immediately after Kostake's crime, when Omer Pasha is left with damage-control, trying in vain to counteract the ensuing scandal. While the Catholic priest rages from the altar against Anđa, the "scurvy sheep" (i.e. the corrupted woman), the Muslim Imam, without mentioning neither the murderer nor the victim, "attacked the wicked customs and habits brought by foreigners, and also the commanders and leaders, for the superiors were responsible for the actions and infringements of their subordinates and the young[112]" (ibid., 223). Omer Pasha appoints one Major Sabit as his lead investigator. Significantly, to deflect criticism of Omer Pasha's army and politics, it is

[111] "Procedila bi samo jogunasto i nejasno kroz zube: *da ona zna što zna* i da živa tome čoveku neće" (Andrić 1988, 216; moj kurziv).
[112] "Ne pominjući nesrećnog stranca ni ubijenu devojku hrišćanske vere, on je napao zle običaje i navike koje donose stranci, a i upravljače i glavare, jer su starešine odgovorne za postupke i prestupe svojih potčinjenih i mlađih" (ibid., 260).

agreed beforehand that the findings of the investigation will be: "Due to a mental disturbance… etc.[113]" (ibid., 205). The story of Kostake and Anđa ultimately ends up imbued with political meanings and wielded against Omer Pasha: "With a master like that, even the cooks commit murder. That is essentially what everyone said, or would have liked to say[114]" (ibid., 222).

4.4. The Effeminacy of Masculinity

It is indeed the case that Kostake, like other characters, is inseparable from Omer Pasha as the central thematic crux of the novel. One way this chapter has looked at it was by positing Kostake's professional role within the residence as Omer Pasha's symbolic flag of modernity, ultimately only striking a catastrophic blow to Omer's already dark reputation. Critical reception has elucidated several possible ways in which the relationship between the two characters can be conceptualized. Tihomir Brajović (2011), for instance, considered Kostake a scale model of Omer Pasha (190). And Krešimir Nemec (2016), following Brajović, saw the function of Kostake's story as deepening Omer Pasha's portrait and "highlighting the difference between a man's publicly displayed personae and the hidden depths of psychological trauma, sexual obsessions and abnormality" (320). This chapter's overall focus is, of course, Kostake Nenišanu and, with that in mind, the following section proposes another angle of looking at the relationship between him and Omer Pasha. Specifically, I will explore the gendered and sexualized contrasts between Kostake and Omer Pasha. This will further illuminate two aspects of my overall analysis. Firstly, it will enable this section to reconstruct the novel's differentiation between two modalities of male sexuality and its impact on the overall context in which Kostake meets Anđa. And, secondly, it will bring into focus the

[113] "U nastupu umne poremećenosti... itd." (ibid., 239).
[114] "Kod takvog gospodara, eto, i kuvari ubijaju! – To oni u suštini svi govore, ili bi hteli da kažu" (ibid., 259).

gendered aspects of Kostake's attraction to Anđa that, although heterosexual, are represented as non-normative enough to render him even more sexually ambiguous.

The text informs us about many striking differences between Kostake and Omer. First, if the central theme of the novel is, as most of the reception agrees, the topic of religious and cultural conversion or "the renegade complex", as embodied by Omer and most of his entourage (Brajović 2011, 199), it is noteworthy that Kostake is not a religious convert. To the contrary, at major holidays, Kostake attends liturgy and for this has "the seraskier's special approval" (Andrić 2018, 182). Moreover, as demonstrated in the previous section, Kostake is not trying to fit in neither in the residence nor among the local population. Indeed, he is meant to stick out as an emblem of Ottoman westernizing reforms, which he does gladly since he is dedicated to his profession and European apprenticeship. Furthermore, as previously shown, Kostake's most important social linkages are those to a queer man, his adoptive father, and a woman, Saida Hanuma, through whom he acquires his education, professional positions and social status. This is all very different from Omer Pasha whose most important linkages are those with other men. The differences between Kostake and Omer Pasha extend to their sexualities as well.

In the novel, Omer Pasha is depicted as hypersexual, so much so that he is also arguably the most sexually imbued male character in all of Andrić's novels. And the novel does not spare details about the seraskier's sexual life, logistically mainly organized by one Ahmet Aga. Nominally the seraskier's *kavedžibaša* or overseer of coffee preparation, Ahmet Aga takes care of a lot more than his official posting suggests. One of Ahmet Aga's responsibilities that he himself refers to as "that bussiness" serves to meet the needs of Omer Pasha's "great, capricious and callous carnality":

> Ahmet Aga had to find and procure young women, girls and, in recent years, children, both girls and boys, bring them in secretly, unseen above all by the scheming, jealous

> women in the harem, and keep them, conceal, feed, produce them when required, then pay them off and remove them from the master's sight when they were no longer needed and when they could have become difficult and dangerous[115]. (Ibid., 101)

Some examples of Ahmet Aga's dealings with Omer's objects of are viscerally dark[116]. Although he defends his master's reputation in public, Ahmet Aga is privately disgusted with Omer blurring the boundaries of "permissible and natural":

> For the seraskier was so blind and insatiable, capricious and self-willed in his passion and lust, so focused on his desires and so steeped in them, that he no longer saw the women, girls and boys, the objects of his lust, as living people who had existed before he set eyes on them[117]. (Ibid., 103)

Omer Pasha's sexual insatiability has been interpreted as a sign of his "nihilist-driven, hedonist absolutism" that construed him as a "militant libertine" and a "a crypto-modern sensate" (Brajović 2015, 235-237). As a "contradictory emblem of the new and, in many aspects, modern age and modern character", Omer Pasha, according to Brajović, also introduces a new masculine subjectivity, ambiguously and interchangeably appearing as "predator and victim, a fierce 'beast' and a seductive 'woman'" (ibid., 233). However, it is precisely this feminine seductiveness that, combined with Omer's power, cruelty and sexual perversion, also signalizes a figuration of another kind that connects Omer Pasha to Kostake.

My analysis here follows Joseph Allen Boone's (2014) work on distinctive tropes and figures that emerged in Western imaginings of the "Orient" and homoeroticism. The eunuch is one of those figures, and we have already seen its connection to Kostake. Another specific

[115] "On je morao da pronalazi i nabavlja mlade žene, devojke, a poslednjih godina i devojčice i dečake, da ih privodi krišom od sveta, u prvom redu od spletkarske i ljubomorne čeljadi iz harema, i da ih čuva, prikriva, hrani i podvodi kad treba, a isplaćuje i sklanja gospodaru s očiju kad više nisu bili potrebni i kad bi mogli postati teški i opasni" (Andrić 1977, 119).

[116] For instance, the notorious scene of Ahmet Aga's attempts at getting rid of a desperate mother of a 14-year-old girl in Omer's harem.

[117] "Jer serasker je tako slep i nezasitljiv, ćudljiv i samovoljan u svojoj strasti i pohoti, tako jedno sa svojim prohtevima i tako ogrezao u njima, da žene, devojke i dečake, predmete svoje pohote, više i ne zamišlja kao žive ljude koji su postojali pre nego što ih je on video" (ibid., 121-122).

figure is the "the cruel and effete pasha". This figure comprises notions of, on the one hand, masculine sadistic power and, on the other, carnal indolence that imbues masculinity with effeminacy:

> This stereotype of the polymorphously perverse yet powerful man, as honed in practices of sadism as he is in debauchery, is primarily the phantom of Western imaginations, spawned by equal amounts of desire (to have such power at one's fingertips), fear (of the unscrupulous means by which such power asserts its dominance), and anxiety (that such sensual indulgence becomes an addiction that is ultimately unmanning). (Boone 2014, 96)

Omer's cruelty and power, and the connections between the two, have already been traced earlier. As for his effeminacy, there are two occasions in the novel when Omer Pasha is described by others as simultaneously sinister and effeminate. The centerpiece motif in both instances is his eyes. This is what the intimidated Bosnian leaders see in Omer Pasha:

> The liveliness of these eyes attracted all the attention of the audience; they altered expression of the seraskier's face, not always in keeping with what he was saying. His eyes were dark, full of forest gloom and shade, now brown, intelligent and a little sad, now amber, almond-shaped – one could say as beautiful as in a woman, had they not shined unexpectedly from time to time with a green and dangerous flame[118] (Andrić 2018, 22; trans. modif.)

And during a portrait sitting with the seraskier, the painter Vjekoslav Karas similarly notes Omer's eyes that were "beautiful, sharply outlined like an eagle's, in which a special gleam came and went" and "in their outlines there appeared by turn two expressions, of a bird of prey and of feminine seductiveness[119]" (ibid., 111-112). These even remind Karas of Roman girls and women he once painted (ibid., 113).

[118] "Igra tih očiju privlačila je svu pažnju slušalaca i menjala izraz seraskerovog lica, i to ne uvek u skladu sa onim što je govorio. Te oči su bile mrke, pune nekog šumskog mraka i hlada, čas smeđe, pametne i pomalo tužne, čas kadifaste, bademasto izvijene, moglo bi se reći: gotovo ženski lepe, da se iz njih nije povremeno javljao neočekivan zelen i opasan sjaj" (Andrić 1977, 30).

[119] "Očni otvori rasečeni široko i srezani oštro i neobično: u njihovim linijama stalno se javljaju i smenjuju dva izraza, čas izraz ptice grabljivice, čas izraz neke ženstvene zavodljivosti" (132)

Of course, Omer Pasha Latas cannot be completely subsumed under the category of the "cruel and effete pasha". For one, he is not a proper "Oriental subject", but a European convert. And adding to this, he is neither effeminate in his style nor mannerisms, unlike some of the figures Boone traces in Western representations[120]. However, and significantly so, both quoted examples do combine the theme of Omer Pasha's (masculine and sadistic) power with a sense of feminine seductiveness. The first scene is the prelude to the bloody plight of Bosnian beys once Omer Pasha crushes their revolt. And the second stages a semblance of power-reversal. During the portrait sitting, Omer Pasha is taking orders from the painter, an unimaginable scene in any other context that shocks Omer's adjutants and servant lads and provokes something retaliatory even in Omer himself.

What is important here is that Andrić seems to have drawn on certain aspects of the imagery of the "cruel and effete pasha" in order to flesh out the extent of Omer Pasha's power and the ways in which he abuses it, his sexual proclivities included. Importantly for this chapter, the figures of "the cruel and effete pasha" and "the eunuch" enable a mapping out of the sexual and gendered differences between Omer Pasha and Kostake. On the one hand, Omer Pasha is a powerful and merciless convert; masculine and at times effeminate, lustful and perverse; immersed in male homosocial networks of politics and military. On the other hand, Kostake's powers are limited to the residence, and none exceed the sphere of domesticity. He never converts, leads an ascetic existence, and has no real appetites for anything, apart from cherishing a few coveted personal belongings that fuel further gossip. He is neither virile nor effeminate enough to be considered unambiguously decipherable, nor does he engage in any sexual acts, deviant or otherwise.

[120] Boone's crown examples are representations of decadent, voracious, corpulent, bejeweled and highly effeminate figures such as Aubrey Beardsley's famous cover for *The Thousand Nights and a Night* (*see more* Boone 2014, 96-98).

Crucially from the perspective of the story, these differences cumulatively lead to Kostake meeting Anđa in the first place. Kostake first lays eyes on her in Ahmet Aga's coffee kitchen. Accompanied by an older woman who presents herself as her aunt, Anđa is in fact being offered for sexual services to Omer Pasha. Yet Ahmet Aga sees from the start that Anđa would never be to Omer's liking:

> this well-developed, strong girl, with her pure, open face, something bold and provocative in her eyes, had no prospect of appealing to Omer Pasha, who had never liked such athletic, masculine types, and the older he grew, the more inclined he was to a soft, submissive type of woman with a fragile, boyish figure[121]. (ibid., 183-184)

As we can see, Anđa is not rejected by Ahmet Aga because she is masculine, but because she is masculine in the wrong way. She evokes the appearance of a grown man, rather than that of a male youth[122]. Omer Pasha's taste renders him as the appreciator of the topos of "the beautiful youth", well accounted for in both Ottoman and Orientalist artwork and literature (Boone 2014). It also marks him exclusively as the phallic penetrator of others' bodies, in keeping with the classical age- and power-differentiated model that prohibits grown men from disavowing their bodily sacrosanctity predicated upon its impenetrabiliy (Halperin 1990). Omer's proclivities may make him deviant, but they do not threaten his masculinity in any way whatsoever. If anything, they reaffirm his virility and power over others. Kostake, on the other hand, is repeatedly discursively emasculated by his surroundings. It is thus of even more significance that it is precisely those manly qualities in Anđa that attract Kostake. Indeed, when he fantasizes about her as "the only woman" with whom he "he would burst into flames" and already sees "movements, his own and hers", Kostake savors Anđa's masculine physical traits:

[121] "Ova razvijena i snažna devojka sa čistim, otvorenim licem, ali sa nečim drskim, izazivačkim u očima, nije imala izgleda da se svidi Omerpaši, koji nikad nije voleo tu vrstu devojaka-atleta i muškobana, a otkako je stariji još više naginje mekom i podatljivom tipu žene krhkih, dečačkih oblika" (Andrić 1977, 214-215).

[122] This is another significant difference, alongside its geopolitical scope, that separates this story from "Anikina vremena" in which both victims of femicide, Tijana and Anika, are described as unnaturally beautiful and conventionally feminine women. For a feminist interpretation of the relationship between violence and female characters in "Anikina vremena", *see* Lukić (2015).

"He saw this in her *big, strong arms, in the firm gait of her powerful legs,* in each movement, and even in her silence[123]" (Andrić 2018, 185; emphasis mine). Kostake fantasizes about her body spread at his feet, "fair-haired, vigorous and sturdy[124]" (ibid., 186). When he daydreams about the first time he saw her, Kostake remembers her as "tall, sturdy and proud, with regular features, pale skin and thick fair hair, strong white hands and neglected unpolished nails[125]" (ibid., 190). I do not wish to *homosexualize* his object-choice and claim that Anđa serves as a substitute for latent homosexual desire. However, Kostake is undeniably further semantically queered by virtue of falling for a masculine woman precisely because, rather than despite, her masculine traits. This queering joins all other tropes that suspend Kostake permanently in the undecidable position of both a modern abnormal individual *and* the eunuch. It also highlights once again the impact of others' narratives about Kostake.

Finally, Kostake's mental breakdown does not come as much from his desires, but from a culmination of all the elements mapped and analyzed earlier: the geopolitical stakes of his profession and its entanglement with his perceived personal oddity. In one passage, the story explicitly refutes heterosexual desire as its main narrative engine:

> When he [Kostake] pulled himself together and with a shake of his head freed himself at least for a moment from the fire within and the mist before his eyes, he saw perfectly clearly. He did not care about the girl as such. At that moment he could not even remember her name. In fact, it was not her that he needed, but her consent. … Just to master and defeat that "No"'[126]. (Ibid., 186)

Why would her consent matter so much to him? It is here that Kostake's position as the permanently suspended object of others' sexual semioticization *and* the resentment he harbors

[123] "Čini mu se da je to žena sa kojom bi nešto moglo biti. *On to vidi po njenoj krupnoj, jakoj ruci, po čvrstom hodu moćnih nogu,* po svakom pokretu, pa čak i po njenom ćutanju (Andrić 1977, 216; emphasis mine).
[124] "plava, stamena i tvrda" (ibid., 217)
[125] "Visoka, snažna i gorda, pravilnih crta lica, blede kože i plave tvrde kose, sa belim jakim rukama i noktima bez sjaja i nege" (ibid., 221).
[126] "Kad se malo sabere i jednim trzajem bar za trenutak oslobodi te vatre u sebi i te magle pred ocima, on vidi vrlo jasno. Nije njemu do te devojke kao takve. Ni imena joj se u ovom trenutku ne seća. U stvari, i ne treba mu ona, nego njen pristanak. ... Samo da savlada i obori to njeno 'neću'" (ibid., 217).

among his staff ultimately clash. On the one hand, his pursuit of Anđa's acquiescence could be interpreted as his own attempt at overpowering the ambiguity he is constantly shrouded in. Her "Yes", instead of her "No", would have dispelled all the rumors, all the guesswork, all talk of eunuchs and homosexuals. In a nutshell, it would grant him the status of masculine normativity, both in others' and his own eyes. On the other hand, Kostake's state of confusion while pursuing Anđa creates a chink in his armor, the distance between him and his subordinates shrinks, and the malevolent servants use this to approach him with mean gossip and allusions, all the while gloating at the *majordome's* state of distress. Amidst all this, coming full circle to the mocking exchange about his emasculated nature that turns him into a killer, the text prepares the ways for a situation in which amidst an "inextricable tangle of calumnies … a slanderous word would sometimes be too extreme and strike the man concerned in a particularly vulnerable spot" (ibid., 195).

On the morning of the killings, Kostake accidentally overhears a conversation in the courtyard between two men who discuss Anđa's relationship with the handsome Djordje the Greek, the treasurer of a local bey. The men's conversation ends with the determining blow that, I argue, ties up and radicalizes the gender-inflected and homophobic bullying that, as demonstrated earlier, discursively frames Kostake as an emasculated and perverse figure:

> "And anyway, what would she want with a girlfriend? The woman's found herself a man," someone snickered. Further talk was lost in raucous laughter[127]. (Ibid., 195)

Kostake finishes his daily chores and then puts on his best formal black suit. He takes his American revolver and heads to Ivka's house. Anđa once again sneaks out, but this time

[127] "Pa dabogme, ne treba njoj drugarica. Našla žena muško! – kaže neko kikoćući se. Dalje reči izgubile su se u opštem gromkom smehu" (ibid., 134).

Kostake runs after her. During the ensuing race, his sensitivity, low origins, and life achievements are recalled:

> He, who had never liked rough games, not as a small boy with other children, or as a young man at the height of his strength, was now running, had to be running, and in his high-class suit, in front of hundreds of malicious eyes … in the open, for all the world to see, he had to win[128]. (Ibid., 198)

As Kostake shoots his pistol, but misses the girl, the streets echo with gunfire. It is then that the scene takes up a truly macabre turn: "In the silence that reigns for a moment, a clear, joyful child's voice can be heard from a courtyard: 'A wedding party![129]'" (ibid., 199). During this parodic reversal of the wedding procession, Kostake even remembers his mother who promised to dance at his wedding. Kostake catches up with Anđa in front of Djordje's house. He shoots again and does not miss. He then kills himself and falls next to the dead girl's shalwars "but not touching them[130]" (ibid., 200).

Two unfinished suicide notes are found, one meant for an unknown friend in Macedonia and the other addressing Saida Hanuma. The latter contained only a crossed out beginning where he begs Saida Hanuma not to think too badly of him. As recounted earlier, the religious leaders either blame the victim or politicize Kostake's terrible actions. In turn, Omer Pasha's investigation ends up in ascribing all the guilt to Kostake's deranged mental condition. Interestingly, the overabundance of discourse around Kostake that followed him during life, ultimately follows him beyond the grave. As Petar Džadžić (1983) noted, the femicide/suicide immediately doubles itself as a story, it immediately becomes a re-enaction, and soon a legend (144). It gets immortalized in songs and tales, fueling unfulfilled dreams of many men that

[128] "On, koji nikad, ni kao dečak s decom ni kao mladić u punoj snazi, nije voleo ni grubu igru, ni jurnjavu, ni nagle pokrete uopšte, trči sada, mora da trči, i to ovako u gospodskom odelu, pred stotinama zluradih očiju … i kad se vec krenuo i upustio u to, pod otvorenim nebom, na očigled sveta, da je mora dobiti" (ibid., 231).
[129] "U tišini koja je trenutno zavladala, čuo se jasan i veseo dečiji glas iz neke avlije: - Evo svatova!" (ibid., 232).
[130] Kostać je vec ležao nepomičan, savijen, na samoj ivici onog kruga što su ga stvarale ženine dimije, ali ne dotičući ih nigde i ničim" (ibid., 234).

wanted total control over an "unresisting body of a beautiful, nameless woman[131]" (Andrić 2018, 221). Little boys reenact the crime, taking in turns roles of the pursuer and the pursued. The story thus survives only in folklore, remembered, retold and transformed among the people, "particularly among the women[132]" (ibid., 226).

4.5. Conclusions

In this chapter, I have approached Kostake's story as singular with regards to the processes through which he gets rendered as an abnormal individual and its ramifications for the entire narrative. Unlike Omer Pasha's overtly polymorphous sexuality and immersion in Orientalist discourses of an effeminate and cruel despot, Kostake's sexual and gendered persona never fully congeals into any one thing. To the contrary, it is his structural trait that he remains split into two distinct registries of deviancy. First, his adoptive father's sexual disrepute and Kostake's own congenital and social oddity stage him as the sexually abnormal individual. Secondly, his sexually disinterested closeness with Saida Hanuma and the strangeness of his European professional apparel paradoxically codify him among the Western converts and local Bosnian population as a eunuch, a figure that encapsulates collective Orientalized anxieties over emasculation, sexual and cultural difference. Kostake's figuration, however, reaches into much darker realms than those from previous chapters. From his upbringing at the hands of an exploited mother with whom he shares an experience of male harassment, through him inheriting his adoptive homosexual father's stained reputation, to his friendship with a woman survivor of male sexual violence, Kostake repeatedly inhabits contexts marked by men's cruelty. In the end, his failure to carve out a sphere of belonging to heteronormativity and his

[131] "Nije jedan od njih u bunilu prekipelog seksa maštao da vlada … tvrdim a savladanim i neotpornim telom lepe bezimene žene" (ibid., 258).
[132] "Samo u narodu, tamo duboko, među sitnim svetom, po zatvorenim I gluvim kućama, naročito među ženama, živela je i trajala priča o Kostaću i devojci" (ibid., 263).

act of ultimate misogynistic brutality inscribe him paradoxically into the most radical form of male violence.

Concluding the first half of my thesis focused on Andrić, this chapter has elucidated another facet of his creative interest and poetic utilization of male homosociality and queerness. Alongside hegemonic masculinity and inviolate manhood, here I have focused on Andrić's poetic reliance on sexual ambiguity in order to stage competing and conflicting facets of Omer Pasha's failed attempts to represent himself as a modern political figure. Triggered by Kostake's complete ambiguity, all the protocols of his sexual othering intersect with his position in Omer Pasha's household. Brought in to serve as a shining beacon of the Ottoman Empire's modernizing reforms, Kostake ends up being turned into a powerful political weapon against the Turkish presence in Bosnia and enters local folklore as a dark symbol of foreign despotism. Kostake's twinned and halved figure is thus another example of Andrić's poetic usage of male homosociality to carve out figures that literally embody properties and functions of larger, namely imperial geopolitical situations and entities. As was the case with *Bosnian Chronicle* and its staging of post-Enlightenment European internal dissonances and troubled modernity through men gendered and sexualized in opposing ways, here too we have a figure that channels a much broader thematic through its sexuality, gender and position within the sphere of male homosociality. Kostake extends the novel's geopolitical setting from Bosnia towards both the imagined Orient and European capitals. The ultimate demise of Ottoman modernization is textually connected to the (self)destruction of a tokenized *maître d'hôtel/*eunuch. Instead of merely thematizing Omer Pasha's own "renegade complex", Kostake thus represents a singular literary figure that at one and the same time semantically transposes both the darker aspects of nascent sexual modernity and the failed modernity of a dying empire.

Chapter 5. Faltering Friends: Healing Masculine Attachments, War and Elective Kinship in Meša Selimović's *Death and the Dervish*

First published in 1966, and set sometime in the early modern Ottoman Bosnia, Meša Selimović's *Death and the Dervish* (*Derviš i smrt*) remains to this day one of the most celebrated Yugoslav novels. In this chapter, I will focus on the gendered aspects of the relationship between the three central characters and the ways in which their constellations of friendship and elective kinship intersect with and stage broader themes of war and political justice. These three characters are the middle-aged dervish Ahmed Nurudin; his protégé Mullah Jusuf, once a war orphan and now a young scribe and calligrapher; and their mutual friend, Hasan, an adventurous and mischievous cattle herder from a wealthy family of beys.

During his ultimately failed attempt to plead for his incarcerated brother's life, Ahmed the dervish establishes a strong intimate friendship with Hasan. At the same time, Hasan befriends Jusuf as well and learns that it was him who betrayed Ahmed's brother for criticizing authorities. The dervish, instead of punishing his protégé, avenges his executed brother by igniting a complete overturn of political power in the city, and incidentally becomes the new magistrate in the upheaval's aftermath. However, in a misfortunate turn of events, the dervish is forced to betray his most beloved human being, Hasan. The cattle herder is thus imprisoned and sentenced to death for helping his business partner flee Bosnia after a discovery is made that this Dubrovnik merchant was, in fact, a spy. In turn, Ahmed is betrayed by his protégé, Jusuf, who forgers his signature on a fake release warrant and runs off with Hasan. The novel is a confession narrated by Ahmed while awaiting his execution, and functions as the "found manuscript" format. It is retrieved by Hasan who adds the epitaph on the last page.

One of the leitmotifs connecting the first three chapters was conflict. We have seen male homosocial conflicts unfolding in the arena of hegemonic masculinity, inviolate manhood and male deviancy. In all three cases, Andrić's characters were either deeply embroiled in agonistic relations with one another or willfully exempting themselves from such conflictual situations. Yet, even exemptions ended up either prospectively winning the long-term political conflicts, as was the case with von Paulich, or losing everything through homicidal self-destruction, like Kostake Nenišanu. In contrast, if there is one leitmotif connecting the next two chapters, it would be an idealized form of masculine friendship. This is not to say that the novels analyzed are somehow conflict-free. Quite the contrary, they are as conflictual, or even more so than Andrić's novels. However, Meša Selimović's *Death and the Dervish* and *The Fortress* crucially revolve, as this chapter and the next one will argue, around male solidarity, love, dedication and devotion. Unlike Andrić's conflictual depictions of the world of hegemonic masculinity, Selimović's poetic usage of bonds between men goes in another direction. Namely, both *Death and the Dervish* and *The Fortress* mobilize male friendship and camaraderie up and against the decadent, deviant, decaying world of politically corrupt powerholders. In this way, Selimović introduces an unbridgeable gap into male homosociality, splitting into two distinctly politicized groups: the community of friends and the elite world of corrupted hierarchy. My next two chapters thus represent an exploration of these issues in Selimović's two approaches to male homosociality. As friendship is this chapter's key concept, I first wish to conceptually frame it within my broader focus on male homosociality and queerness which will then allow me to analyze the specifics of Selimović's poetic utilization of masculine friendship.

In his *Politics of Friendship,* Jacques Derrida (2006) traced the tradition of Western thinking which conceptually organized the very idea of political life around a similitude established between fraternity and friendship. In this regard, Derrida built upon Émile

Benveniste's linguistic exploration of the Greek concept of *phílos*, meaning love, as semantically partaking in and forming a whole family of concepts, from the "fellow citizen" and "hospitality" to "the welcoming of a guest" and "taking an oath". What all of these concepts had in common, Derrida noted, was the underlying idea of "friendship" which was, in turn, conceived of as a political version of autochthonous consanguinity. In other words, friendship emerges as a version of fraternity that is not established in ties of blood. This has important consequences, both for those who are excluded from such a notion of friendship, as is the case with women and I will look at this aspect in the second section of this chapter, but also for those who are included in it. When it comes to the modalities governing the inclusion of friends, that is, the inclusion of men, Derrida speaks of a "performative commitment" that provides friendship the same legitimacy and rights that consanguinity provides fraternity:

> there has never been anything *natural* in the brother figure on whose features has so often been drawn the face of the friend, or the enemy, the brother enemy. … The relation to the brother engages from the start with the order of the oath, of credit, of belief and of faith. The brother is never a fact. Nor any bond of kinship. (ibid., 159; original emphasis)

All of these elements, Derrida notes, inform Greek, Christian, Jewish and Islamic cultural and religious understandings of the friend/brother doublet "where the figure of the brother accumulates so many virtues" (ibid., 103). The main reason for turning to Derrida's reading of friendship is the novel's explicitly political usage of the concept. *Death and the Dervish*, as this chapter will argue throughout, deploys an idealized notion of friendship as capable of regenerating individuals and communities wounded by political injustice.

I will first analyze two elements of *Death and the Dervish* – namely, the contrasts between the two male protagonists and the question of symbolic ostracization of effeminacy/femininity. This will then allow me to attend to the fulcrum of one of the novel's most salient themes: male friendship and its political significance. In particular, I will analyze

male friendship and its capacity to provide an invaluable source of regeneration, healing and hope in the face of state violence, structural inequalities and personal trauma. The chapter's thematic foci are thus the political stakes of masculine friendship, Selimović's depiction of (post)war disenchantment as the experiential crux between his three main character, and bonds of elective kinship and queer love. With a focus on these heavily gendered themes and the ways in which they are hinged upon notions of masculinity, this chapter aims to reopen *Death and the Dervish* as a book with a crucial interest in friendship among men, depicting it as simultaneously succeeding and tragically failing both as a social panacea and a personal survival strategy.

5.1. Contrasting Masculinities and Their Attachments

The friendship between the novel's narrator, the introverted and stern dervish Ahmed Nurudin and Hasan, the high-spirited and outgoing bachelor, beloved by women and men alike, emerges out of their contrasting natures. In many crucial ways, as Selimović's critical reception has demonstrated, Hasan is Ahmed Nurudin's antipode. As one critic has succinctly put it: "they are friends not because they are similar, but because they are different from each other" (Protić 1986, 223). Hasan is an educated and well-travelled man who had previously lived in Istanbul where he taught as a teacher in a madrasa, worked as an official at the Porte[133], and served as a military officer. Yet, the pride his wealthy family took in his accomplishments in the imperial capital gave way to utmost disappointment and shame once this intellectual man abandoned his former career, returned to Bosnia and became a *dželepčija*, a cattle herder, and thus the "black sheep" in the eyes of his sister and father. To make things worse, Hasan's first marriage was an arranged union that dissolved rather quickly, and the subsequent circumstances of his

[133] The central office of the Ottoman government.

love life were a matter of much gossip since it was widely rumored that he was a lover to Marija, his business partner's Catholic wife from Dubrovnik. Although seemingly narcistic and egotistical, this temperamental rebel-without-a-cause towards the end of the story becomes actively engaged in helping people of Posavina, crushed by a retaliatory Ottoman military campaign. His dissident lifestyle also provides the basis for his friendship with Ahmed since it is for this reason that Hasan's sister implores the dervish to persuade Hasan that he quietly renounces his claim to the family inheritance. Through a review of pertinent critical reception focusing on Hasan, this section will flesh out the meanings and themes associated with this character such as his political anti-colonialism, his cosmopolitanism and freedom-seeking lifestyle. This will then serve as an entry point into the rest of this chapter's analysis of the political and gendered nature of friendship that forms between Hasan and the other two main characters, the dervish Ahmed Nurudin and Mullah Jusuf, the young scribe.

Recent scholarship has posited Hasan as the novel's true hero (Kazaz 2010; Milutinović 2016; Antić 2013) and highlighted the importance of Hasan's affective positivity in comparison to Ahmed's nihilism and lack of love. For the most part, criticism has connected Hasan's love for life and freedom with deep-seated attachment to his own community of Muslims in Bosnia, which is somewhat unexpected for a character that highly values personal autonomy and avoids becoming overly attached to places and people. Hasan also harbors a positively intoned cultural openness and provides a critical perspective on colonialism and imperialism. Aldijana Šišić (1997), who provided a rare feminist reading of Selimović's novels, pointed out that Hasan's optimistic pursuit of freedom from societal and familial expectations finds its limit at his dedication to help the ordinary people suffering under the vengeful wraith of political power. Similarly, Robert Hodel (2011) discussed how, unlike the dogmatically inclined Ahmed, Hasan values people over ideologies and abstract truths, "starting from his Christian lover to the endangered people of Posavina" (120). Enver Kazaz (2010a) also contrasted Hasan's "ethical

concretism and activism" to Ahmed's "ethical dogmatism" and concluded that Hasan's struggle to defend his autonomy from the social system saves him from "ethical Nothingness" (46). Zoran Milutinović (2016) noted that Hasan's contrapuntal worldview has a precise function for the novel's self-representation as a confession, substituting the theocentric model of confessions (like the ones by Saint Augustin and Rousseau) with modern Camusesque existentialism. In this context, Hasan's values and actions provide an alternative resolution to Ahmed's ethical dilemmas that he ultimately fails to recognize and adopt. Milutinović refers to this alternative as "Hasanism": an opting out of dogmatic and bureaucratic approaches to life in favor of a continual affirmation of "an unfinished system with open horizons of meaning" (Milutinović 2016, 71).

Other readings emphasized Hasan's performative cosmopolitanism and cultural openness. Because he voices not only a critique of opposing cultural prejudices of Orientalisms and Occidentalisms, but lyrically delineates Bosnia as a zone of cultural "inbetweenness", Miranda Jakiša (2008) interpreted Hasan as a literary precursor to postcolonial theory (257). According to Jakiša, through a tacit intertextual dialogue with Cologna's[134] famous speech about the "third world" of Levantine non-belonging from *Bosnian Chronicle*, Hasan placed the emphasis on the local situation of Bosnians: "In Hasan's eyes, Bosnia is permanently searching for its identity and finds this longed-for self not independent of the colonizing powers it is surrounded by" (Jakiša 2008, 258). The geopolitical symbolism of Hasan's lifestyle was also pointed out by Marina Antić (2013):

> Hasan and the spaces he occupies suggest a concept beyond multiethnic coexistence and towards a true cosmopolitanism: belonging not just "nowhere" like Cologna but

[134] In *Bosnian Chronicle*, Giovanni Mario Cologna serves as the physician in the Austrian Consulate in Travnik. Cologna, who is of European descent, yet have spent most of his adult life in Turkey, is one of Andrić's Levantine characters, a man who summarized the fate of his hybrid identity and life between cultures in an oft-quoted passage: "Such is the fate of a man from the Levant, for he is *poussiere humaine*, human dust, drifting wearily between East and West, belonging to neither and pulverized by both" (Andrić 1966, 262).

> always tied to a point of origin, always returning home. Hasan's cosmopolitanism is as much about belonging as Cologna's is about not belonging: belonging to a space that embodies "belonging to all parts of the world; not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants." Cologna, on the other hand, embodies the negatively defined cosmopolitanism: belonging nowhere. (201)

The novel, Antić argues, is marked by mercantile multiethnic cosmopolitanism of Istanbul and Dubrovnik, the two main Eastern Mediterranean ports in the early modern period. Through such optics, Hasan's destiny becomes legible as an attempt at renegotiating peripherality:

> [Hasan's] identity as a trader, his association with cosmopolitan conviviality, and his love for Marija all point to the promise of these early modernizing moments. In that sense, the "regional' is not abandoned for the universal but rather, compared to the urbanizing center, the regional (Bosnian) can serve as home to which one always returns but from which one must depart if it is to have any meaning at all. (ibid., 204)

Going back to the novel itself, the dynamics of Hasan's attachment and detachment to other people and other cultures set the stage for numerous analyses Ahmed makes by observing Hasan. The dervish details Hasan's many loves, whether for women or his fellow men, such as his father Alijaga, or old friends like hafiz Muhamed and hadji Sinanudin. Apart from his ties to his homeland and his almost nomadic, uprooted lifestyle, the most represented of Hasan's attachments remains the one to Ahmed. This is not only because the two form a strong bond of friendship over the course of the novel, but because Hasan – as we come to know him – is presented to us through Ahmed's perspective. Yet, as much as he is a creature of devotion and love, Hasan is first and foremost a man of pathways and open roads. Many of his interpersonal relations remain platonic, and many other (like the ones with his family) are compromised due to his lifestyle. Hasan never remarries nor does he father any children of his own.

I want to point out that in his memoirs, Selimović identifies his father as the prototype for the character of Hasan. Selimović describes his father as a smart, good-spirited, and an anarchic, impractical person: "My father loved horses, gambling, drinking, and company. Because of his cheerful character and generosity, because he was jovial and funny, he had many

acquaintances and was always happy and smiling, always in the center of attention. Just like Hasan in *Death and the Dervish*" (Selimović 1976, 34-35). However, in terms of affectivity, Selimović describes his father as the burdensome, ambiguous gravitational center of familial life who acts like the "patriarchally indifferent … Zeus" (ibid., 40) towards his apprehensive children and wife. Through his extramarital affairs, the father effectively stifled his wife's affective energies and turned her into a stern, silent matriarch of domestic life. In one especially poignant scene, Selimović negatively compares the abundance of his father's affection for his dogs with an almost complete lack of interest for his children. When his favorite dog and Meša fell seriously ill at the same time, the father watched over the pet, while leaving his pneumonia-stricken child to the care of the family doctor. With regards to Hasan's bachelorhood and childlessness, Selimović thus writes: "It was not by accident that I had left my father's idealized character, Hasan, childless: I didn't want to burden him with such a heavy guilt" (ibid., 42).

These are, then, some of the foundations for Hasan – an idealized, free-spirited, although loveable man who leads an adventurous and mostly uprooted, yet still politically active life. Selimović himself pointed out love as one of the novel's central themes, and among the many notes he penned down in an attempt to provide his own sketch of the novel in *Sjećanja*, Selimović also writes that "Hasan is all about life, love, passion" (ibid., 205) and "For Hasan, love is the only certainty in the precarity of life" (ibid., 215). When focusing on Hasan's loving connections, extant critical reception has mostly focused on Hasan's relationship with Marija (for instance, Kovač 2016, 99-113). However, this heterosexual romantic plot is secondary to, I argue, the tumultuous dynamics of Hasan's relationship with other men, primarily Ahmed and Mullah Jusuf. This all-male triangle of homosocial desire delineates a conflictual zone in which the murky boundaries of friendship are constantly being renegotiated over the course of the novel.

5.2. Male Friendship as the Panacea for Abused Political Power

The process of Ahmed's pleading for his brother's life in front of men of power is parallel to his process of befriending Hasan and both of these processes, as we will see, are equally semantically marked by a poetic utilization of masculinity. Before analyzing these two aspects, I want to first offer a brief additional sidenote about the place of femininity within the novel's patriarchal value system. Most of the *Dervish's* male characters voice patriarchal and phallocentric convictions, whether explicitly or by innuendo. Hasan repeatedly makes sexist jokes, equating femininity with infantility and a lack of seriousness. For instance, after his reconciliation with his father, Hasan jokingly remarks how "he had gained a guardian, a mother-in-law, and a spoiled child all in the same man[135]" (Selimović 1996, 255). He calls Ahmed a "bearded, capricious girl[136]," (ibid., 286), and mocks him by saying that the dervish is "as cruel as a hawk and as sensitive as a spinster[137]" (ibid., 393). In this all-male world of religious orders, military, commerce, and institutionalized forms of social control such as justice, all values, as previously analyzed, are phallocentrically linked to homosocial bonds of friendship, camaraderie and brotherhood. This is evidenced even in such unexpected circumstances as when Hasan sends away one of his employees for having had an affair with another employees' wife. After describing the adulterous woman's period of grief, Ahmed notes: "Her husband grieved longer. 'It's really empty here without him. And he, the ingrate, has forgotten us,' he would say reproachfully, long after the youth's departure[138]" (ibid., 315).

Cumulatively, these textual examples of patriarchal attitudes contextually and thematically frame the superior value male characters place in normative masculine bonds over bonds they establish with women. Going back to *Politics of Friendship,* this male homosocial

[135] "tutora, svekrvu i razmaženo dijete u istoj osobi" (Selimović 1968, 217).
[136] "hirovita, bradata mušičava djevojka" (ibid., 244).
[137] "derviš je surov kao kobac i osjetljiv kao usidjelica" (ibid., 334).
[138] "Muž je žalio duže. 'Baš je prazno bez njega, a on, nezahvalnik, zaboravio na nas' - govorio je prijekorno, još dugo poslije mladićeva odlaska" (ibid., 270).

constellation of friendship aligns neatly with Derrida's (2006) conclusion that the conceptual schema of friendship-as-fraternity rests critically upon exclusionary gestures. The friendship/fraternity represents a decisively male, "familial, fraternalist and thus androcentric configuration of politics" (viii). As fraternity does not include women, friendship between women and men is rendered impossible, much like friendship between women themselves. As David Ventura (2022) notes in his reading of the position of femininity in *Politics of Friendship*:

> In both cases, women are excluded in favour of entirely male bonds and relations, and phallogocentrism presents itself as the tradition's most indispensable schema … As such, the tradition of friendship has not only violently supported the historical exclusion of women from the institutions of democracy, but it has even justified their exclusion from the sites of the political itself: the state, the city and the country. (175)

In the novel, the exclusion of femininity from the very idea of friendship goes hand in hand with the exclusion of homosexuality. This is evidenced in a scene where Hasan's father, Alijaga, scandalized by his son's unusual liaisons with Marija and her husband, complains to the dervish:

> "I can't figure out why he's going on a trip with the woman and her husband together. Who's the fool here? My son or that Catholic man?"
> "Or both," Hassan said with a laugh, not offended in the least. "It seems you don't acknowledge friendship."
> "Friendship? With women? My thirty-year-old child, where have you been living? Only pederasts[139] can be friends with women[140]". (Selimović 1996, 323-324)

Ahmed's personal misogyny requires a bit more analysis because it informs the ways in which he describes the powerholder's decadence. More precisely, the enmity and malice of

[139] Orig. *kulambara*: Turkish-originated word for "homosexual" (Škaljić 1965, 423).
[140] "Ne ide mi u glavu da će on na put sa ženom i njenim mužem, zajedno. Ko je sad budala? Moj sin, ili taj Latinin?
- Ili obojica - smijao se Hasan, nimalo uvrijeđen.
- Ti, izgleda, ne priznaješ prijateljstvo?
- Prijateljstvo? Sa ženama? Dijete moje od trideset godina, u što ti vijek prođe! Sa ženama je prijatelj samo kulambara." (Selimović 1968, 277)

some men is represented through Ahmed's narration as reflected in their effeminacy, as I will show further below. At the moment the primary narrative takes place, Ahmed and Hasan are, as we have seen, at very different points in their lives and are tentatively portrayed as irreconcilably different from each other. Apart from their overall differences mapped out earlier, many of these two characters' facets are marked by their contrasting attitudes towards gender and sexuality. Unlike Hasan's jovial sexuality that is a source of shame for his family[141], Ahmed is impassive and restrained, and repeatedly references fighting off temptation. An example of this is the spectral motif of a haunting femininity in the dervishes' home, the tekke. Given over to the dervishes by Hasan's father, Alijaga, Ahmed's tekke was once a brothel and, in Ahmed's eyes, the femininity of its former tenants seems to have been permanently imprinted into the building:

> Through prayer and incense we cleansed the house of its sin and the tekke acquired the fame of a holy place, although we never rid it entirely of the shadows of young women. At times it seems that they pass through the rooms, leaving their fragrances to linger behind[142]. (Ibid., 6)

Thus, Ahmed's identification with the tekke[143] is tainted by this haunting, never fully expelled femininity. His few diegetic in-person interactions with women are also unsettling. Ahmed admits that he is awkward around women and even afraid of their presumed intention to enslave men. For instance, all his scenes with Hasan's sister are interspersed with his dark thoughts about her, going so far as to call her "the daughter of devil[144]" (ibid., 15). He repeatedly rants about her ruthlessness, yet marvels at her beauty, while at the same time annulling any prospect

[141] As explained by his scandalized sister: "He took to drinking and squandering his fortune, doing unheard-of things around the kasaba with his companions and with tavern-dancers (her voice lowered, but did not break), and at other places that should not even be mentioned" (Selimović 1996, 23). Alongside him frequenting bars and brothels, there are also the issues of a shipwrecked marriage and the open secret of his feelings towards the married Marija.

[142] "Molitvama i tamjanom sprali smo grijeh s te kuće, i tekija je stekla slavu svetog mjesta, iako nismo potpuno istjerali sjenke mladih žena. Ponekad se činilo da prolaze odajama i da se osjeća njihov miris" (ibid., 12).

[143] "The tekke, its fame and holiness – that was me" (Selimović 1996, 17).
"tekija i njena slava i njena svetost, to sam bio ja, njen temelj i njen krov" (Selimović 1968, 12).

[144] In original: Iblis, the fallen angel or jinn in Islam.

of his own carnality: "I beheld a beautiful woman on a divan, a reminder of life more powerful than could be good for me[145] (ibid., 14) and "I do not have a weakness for women, but her face was hard to forget"[146] (ibid., 343).

Crucial for this chapter's overall analysis of male homosociality and power are the ways in which the motif of effeminacy is connected to issues of social hierarchy and, concomitantly, justice. As he is received by several figures of authority to plea for Harun's life, Ahmed frequently conveys relations of male homosocial hierarchies by resorting to the motif of effeminacy. On the one hand, Ahmed equates effeminacy with his own powerlessness. In this regard, it is also of notice, as Ajka Srebreniković (2004) indicated, that the scene of Ahmed's pleading for his brother's life evokes Scheherezade's endless narration and is thus also intertextually brought into proximity with a trope of feminine negotiation with power. On the other hand, Ahmed uses effeminacy, alongside tropes relating to decay and death, to signify the decadency and ruthlessness of the powerholders he visits. When he tries to attract the powerful mufti's[147] attention, Ahmed thinks to himself: "I would have lifted the edges of my gown and begun a belly dance, or done other things that never occur to reasonable men[148]" (Selimović 1996, 173). Both the mufti and his servant are described in unflattering terms as overweight, colorless and lifeless. Furthermore, during a reception at the kadi's[149] office, Ahmed notices the man's passionless conduct and physical frailty and then speculates that he must be impotent as well. Ahmed also describes the vali's[150] defterdar[151] as follows:

> He was plump, soft, round, wrapped in a broad silk garment. He resembled an old woman – like everyone who for years hangs around those in power.[152] (Ibid., 422).

[145] "[njena ljepota] je podsjećala na život više nego što može biti dobro" (ibid., 17).
[146] "Nisam slab prema ženama, ali se njeno lice ne zaboravlja lako" (ibid., 293).
[147] Mufti – Highest religious official in a province.
[148] "digao bih skutove džubeta i zaigrao trbušnu igru, učinio bih sve što bi razumnom čovjeku teško i na um palo" (ibid., 149).
[149] Kadi – Muslim judge who interprets and administers the religious law of Islam.
[150] Vali – Civil governor of an Ottoman province.
[151] Defterdar – Officer of finance, accountant-general of a province, or secretary.
[152] "Pun je, mekan, obao, zamotan u prostrano svileno odijelo. Liči na staru ženu, kao svi koji godinama čuče uz velikaše" (ibid., 358).

These effeminizing attributes that Ahmed ascribes to the powerholders stand in sharp contrast with his admiration for Hasan's specifically masculinized appearance and conduct. In other words, Ahmed's misogynistic tendencies point towards the gendered aspects of his appreciation of Hasan. Unlike the men of authority Ahmed equally fears and despises, and describes as effeminate or marked by death, Hasan is for him an image of untainted, superior masculinity. This heavily gendered differentiation informs the ways in which Ahmed equates the powerholders with decay, stagnation and death, while bringing Hasan in close proximity to the motifs of life and healing, as I will analyze next. Hasan's healing nature and his capacity for friendship are inextricably connected. Likewise, Ahmed discovers Hasan's healing effect on others and himself as their friendship develops and strengthens.

The novel makes it clear the two men know each other from before the beginning of the story, thus we as readers are witnessing Ahmed's change of heart towards Hasan. In the beginning, Ahmed partakes in Hasan's sister's judgmental attitudes about this voluntary social outcast, finding him superficial and useless. However, he soon has a change of heart, following Hasan's return from a months-long trip to Wallachia. Hasan's return is the first time he makes an appearance in the novel and is described as a spectacular event, with Hasan painting a magnificent picture of domineering, yet gentle masculinity:

> Hassan rode on horseback at the front of the herd. He was dressed in a red cape, upright, cheerful. He alone was calm and smiling in that drove, amid the angry lows, shouts, and curses that resounded in the river valley. The man never changed. He also recognized me, and leaving the herd, the cattle drovers, and the billowing dust, he rode up to the gate where I stood.
>
> "I wouldn't want to ride you down," he said, laughing. "If it were someone else I wouldn't care[153]." (Ibid., 79)

[153] "Na konju ispred dželepa jahao je Hasan, u crvenoj kabanici, uspravan, vedar, jedini on miran i nasmijan u toj gužvi, u tom uzbuđenom mukanju, vici i psovkama što su se razlijegali riječnom dolinom. Uvijek isti. Poznao je i on mene, i odvojivši se od dželepa, od goniča, od oblaka prašine, dokasao do moje kapije.
- Ne bih želio da baš tebe pregazim - rekao je smijući se. - Da je neko drugi, ne bih žalio" (ibid., 71).

Hasan then gently hugs Ahmed with his powerful arms and inquires compassionately about his troubles. It is then that Ahmed lowers his guard, and their friendship begins to develop. Ahmed's relationship towards Hasan, as we will see, will soon escalate into a full-blown adoration, almost an obsession. The two initial scenes of their growing friendship are marked with tactility. Alongside the abovementioned hug, Ahmed narrates a scene in which Hasan presents him with an extremely mindful gift, Abul Faraj's "Book of Tales":

> He surprised me with an answer and an act that were unexpected but natural, so simple that they were even strange. He put his long, firm fingers on my hand, which rested on the back of the bench, barely touching me, only enough for me to feel the pleasant freshness of his skin and soft fingertips. He said calmly, with a soft, deep voice, with which, for all I know, people usually declare love:
>
> > "It seems that I've hurt you; that wasn't what I wanted. I thought that you knew more about people and the world, much more. I should've spoken with you differently."
> > "How could you have spoken with me differently?"
> > "I don't know. As with a child[154]." (Ibid., 110-111)

After this, Ahmed becomes nearly obsessed with Hasan and narrates his feelings for the cattle herder in an increasingly florid language of safety, tenderness and love. Ahmed becomes possessive towards Hasan and exhibits jealousy towards other people in his life. Upon bumping into Hasan's lover, Marija, he angrily notes:

> If he ever thought about me, he certainly forgot about me then; she had displaced me long before, me and everything that was not her. And if I hated her then it was because

[154] "Iznenadio me odgovorom i postupkom, neočekivanim a prirodnim, toliko jednostavnim, da je baš zato bio čudan. Stavio je svoje duge čvrste prste na podlanicu moje ruke što je ležala na naslonu klupe, jedva me dodirnuvši, tek da osjetim ugodnu hladnoću njegove kože i mekih jagodica, i rekao mirno, tihim dubokim glasom kojim se valjda izgovara ljubav:
- Izgleda da sam te povrijedio, a nisam to htio. Mislio sam da znaš više o svijetu i ljudima, mnogo više. Trebalo je drukčije da razgovaram s tobom.
- Kako si drukčije mogao da razgovaraš?
- Ne znam. Kao sa djetetom" (ibid., 97).

> her long velvet dress, full girlish lips, and mature, seductive voice were more important to him than I and my troubles[155]. (Ibid., 138-139)

He is also jealous of Mullah Jusuf and even of Hasan's father: "I thought, somewhat saddened, that he might be reconciled with his father and, with a trace of envy, that he would forget me[156]" (ibid., 209). Finally, Ahmed himself acknowledges and repudiates the disturbing proximity of his infatuation to homosexuality, as he tells Alijaga: "We're both attached to him; you more closely, by blood and fatherhood, I by friendship, *which is stronger than anything a man can feel without sin*[157]" (ibid., 328; emphasis mine). This is a telling moment of self-reflection. On the one hand, we encounter an almost verbatim Derridean definition of friendship that is surpassed only by the primacy of bloodlines. On the other hand, we also witness Ahmed's self-consciousness with the almost overstepping intensity of his feelings towards Hasan, clearly taking a step back from sinful same-sex attachments.

Ahmed goes at great lengths to describe Hasan as his anchor and sanctuary, his source of gentleness and warmth, his confidante and only friend. Ahmed also starts describing Hasans curative effects on people, having first witnessed the healing effects the cattle herder has on him:

> With some unknown sense he discovers who needs help, and offers it, like medicine. A wizard, because he's human. And he never abandons those he's helped; he's more faithful than a brother. Most beautiful is that his love doesn't even need to be earned. … I'm no longer vulnerable, his love has healed me, enabled me to support someone else[158] (Ibid., 272).

[155] "Zaboravio je na mene sad, ako je ikad mogao da misli, istisnula me ona odavno, i mene i sve ostalo što nije ona; i ako sam je mrzio u tom času, bilo je to zato što su njena kadifena haljina do tala i njena djevojačka puna usta i zreli mazni glas važniji od mene i moje muke" (ibid., 120-121).
[156] "Sa sjetom sam mislio da će se možda pomiriti s ocem. I sa trunkom zavisti: zaboraviće me" (ibid., 178).
[157] "Obojica smo vezani za njega, ti više, po krvi i po očinstvu, ja po prijateljstvu, jačem od svega što čovjek može bez grijeha osjećati" (281; emphasis mine).
[158] "On nekim nepoznatim čulom osjeti kome je pomoć potrebna i pruža je kao lijek. Čarobnjak, jer je čovjek. I nikad ne napušta onoga kome je pomogao, vjerniji nego brat. Najljepše je što njegovu ljubav ne treba ni zaslužiti. … A nisam više ni rovit, njegova ljubav me izvidala, osposobila me da i sam budem oslonac drugome" (ibid., 231-232).

Viewed from Ahmed's eyes, Hasan's presence is an energizing one, he radiates vitalism on other, especially older men, regenerating them in the process. Ahmed emphasizes his gentle and caring nature, while his immersive storytelling is seen as the key to his power for dispelling negative affects and even healing physical ailments. During his visits to the tekke, Hasan is able to revitalize the tired and usually uninspired old dervish Hafiz Muhamed and engage him in the most imaginative and cheerful conversations; he is a caring friend to the old goldsmith *hadji* Sinanudin; and he even manages to dispel his own father's anger by taking care of him:

> He took his father into his house. He showered him with attention that was somewhat strange, joyful, somehow carefree, as if he did not worry much about the old man's illness. He treated him as if he were healthy. He told him about everything … The old man pretended to frown, but it was obvious that he was content. He had had enough of being left to his illness and being prepared for death[159]. (Ibid., 311-312)

This idealization is striking since Hasan is not flawless. He also has a darker, more violent side that is hard to ignore. He drinks, smokes, and gambles. Scenes of his gentleness towards Ahmed and other men interchange with scenes of his often brutal dominance over others. Hasan does not only have the epistemological and symbolical hold over other men, but a very literal and physical one as well. He is occasionally very violent, gets into bar fights and makes his two men attempt to tame a wild horse. When Ahmed, perplexed, asks him why he has exposed them to such a danger, Hasan cold-bloodedly replies that they had angered him, and he wanted one of them to die (ibid., 105) All of this makes Ahmed occasionally question Hasan's character, criticize him or even bringing into question their friendship itself:

> Whoever severs my roots or undermines my foundation is not my friend, or is a very strange kind of friend. No true friendship can exist between people who think differently[160]. (Ibid., 134)

[159] "Preveo je oca u svoju kuću, okružio ga pažnjom, pomalo čudnom, veselom, nekako bezbrižnom, kao da nije vodio mnogo računa o starčevoj bolesti, postupao s njim kao da je zdrav, pričao mu o svemu … Starac se tobože mrštio, ali se vidjelo da je zadovoljan, dosadilo mu je što su ga do tada prepuštali bolesti i pripremali za smrt" (ibid., 267).

[160] "Nije mi prijatelj, ili je čudan prijatelj koji mi siječe korijenje, potkopava temelje. Nema prijateljstva među ljudima koji drukčije misle" (ibid., 117).

Indeed, to such an extent is Ahmed aware of his own increasingly idealizing image of Hasan that he sometimes reflects critically upon his own writing:

> Later I tried to distinguish between the fairy tale and reality, but as much as I knew the truth I could hardly free myself from that spellbound state, in which we often trap ourselves, wishing for our own heroes. (329) … This realization was invaluable, I saw that he was no stronger than I. But I was charmed then, and I preferred to invent fairy tales about my great friend: Once upon a time there was a hero[161]. (Ibid., 339)

Ahmed's self-awareness runs as a tacit countercurrent to his more passionate, observant, yet also willfully blind adoration of Hasan. Ahmed's (auto)criticality towards the image he has assembled of Hasan indicates a narrative strategy that shapes Ahmed's account inside out. More specifically, Ahmed's enraptured idealization of Hasan is narratively framed through a selective process unfolding before the reader's eyes. Going back to Derrida's *Politics of Friendship*, Ahmed's idealization of Hasan can be seen as a process of producing his own "ideal image" or the exemplar. This is how Derrida describes the relation between the self and the friend as argued by Cicero in his *De Amicitia,* one of the most influential philosophical treatises on friendship in Western culture:

> We envisage the friend as such. And this is how he envisages us: with a friendly look. Cicero uses the word *exemplar*, which means portrait but also, as the *exemplum*, the duplicate, the reproduction, the copy as well as the original, the type, the model. The two meanings (the single original and the multipliable copy) cohabit here; they are - or seem to be - the same, and that is the whole story, the very condition of survival. Now, according to Cicero, his exemplar is projected or recognized in the true friend, it is his ideal double, his other self, the same as self but improved. (Derrida 2006, 5)

In order to cast Hasan primarily as an exemplar of gentle and healing masculinity, Ahmed must continually purposefully minimize his more aggressive and impulsive aspects. It could be thus

[161] "Poslije sam pokušavao da odvojim bajku od stvarnosti, ali ma koliko da sam znao istinu, teško sam uspijevao da se oslobodim opčinjenosti, u kojoj često sami sebe ulovimo, želeći da imamo svoga junaka (ibid., 281) … Dragocjeno mi je to saznanje, vidim da nije jači od mene. Ali tada sam bio opčinjen, i radije sam o svom velikom prijatelju zamišljao bajke: bio jednom jedan junak" (ibid., 290).

said that the text urges us all to fall in love with Hasan-the-romantic-hero, the idealistic outcast, the gentle rebel who uplifts and heals men wounded by trauma, loneliness and old age. Such a readerly love for Hasan can be seen in many texts about the novel[162].

Most importantly, Hasan has a curative effect on the troubled and vulnerable Ahmed. Firstly, he gets actively involved in Ahmed's attempts to free his brother. Secondly, Hasan's compassion and nurturance spill over into his friendship with Ahmed who becomes increasingly reliant and even addicted to it. Taken together, Ahmed's idealizations turn Hasan into his own private pinnacle of unchallenged hegemonic masculinity. Ahmed exalts his bodily properties, since Hasan is frequently focalized as radiating toughness, domination and beauty. Hasan's strong physique and gentle, loving, open-minded and happy nature are thus further sharply contrasted to the physically repulsive, dogmatic and cruel old men of power in the town. Where the latter disseminate enmity, death and brutality, Hasan sparks friendship and vitality. This is a significant differentiation because it provides their friendship with distinct political overtones. If his failed attempts to negotiate his brother's imprisonment with the powerholders deepen the hopelessness of Ahmed's situation, his newly founded friendship with Hasan reignites some sense of life and hope in the dervish. This hopefulness that marks Ahmed's relationship with Hasan echoes once again with the kind of idealism Derrida recognized in Cicero's understanding of friendship, specifically its rarity and singularity:

> [Friendship] illustrates itself, makes happy or successful things shine, gives them visibility, renders them more resplendent … Friendship provides numerous advantages, notes Cicero, but none is comparable to this unequalled hope, to this ecstasy towards a future which will go beyond death. Because of death, and because of this unique passage beyond life, friendship thus offers us a hope that has nothing in common, besides the name, with any other. (Ibid., 4-5)

[162] For instance, in an essay dedicated to Hasan, the writer Miljenko Jergović (2011) writes: "Hasan is the one who makes Nurudin's story humane. … For we are nothing like Ahmed Nurudin, our miseries are not as grand or as historically determinate as his are; but everything in us and in our petty bourgeois lives yearns for – Hasan. … It would be wonderful to read a novel about Hasan. Or have Hasan for a friend" (online).

By virtue of providing Ahmed some hope in the face of death, Hasan comes to embody, I argue, Ahmed's political utopia turned flesh: a healing, life-oriented masculine friendship that would serve as a panacea for the toxicity of death-distributing vertical homosocial structures spearheaded by the likes of mufti, kadi and vali.

Significantly, although the differences and contrasts between Ahmed and Hasan dominate their relationship and complement each other, as analyzed in previous section, there are some similarities that could have provided the basis for Ahmed's idealizations. The figure of the friend, as Derrida has pointed out with regards to the exemplar, is also partly an ideal, or a perfected image of oneself. Some similarities between Ahmed and Hasan are that they are both intellectuals, both childless bachelors, and both actively immersed within the homosocial structures of public life through their professional and political activities. And even if the Ahmed we meet at the dominant diegetic plane is a middle-aged prude, we know from his reminiscences that he was once a passionate and enamored young man, not unlike Hasan. But there is one particular similarity that I will analyze in the next section that has to do with the very essence of Hasan's healing powers. If Hasan becomes for Ahmed a panacea to toxic authority that infuses vitalism into dispirited or oppressed men through his gentle tactility and healing storytelling, it is because the two men have in their pasts a singular meeting point – that of having been soldiers.

5.3. Legacies of War

War is a recurrent and occasionally the central theme in Selimović's writings, including his memoirs. Unlike his novels set in the contemporary world, Selimović's historical fiction uses war more as a background, or a part of its main characters' personal histories. Both *Death and the Dervish* and *The Fortress* recount wartime episodes in the past of their main characters, episodes that have left an indelible stamp on their lives. Both novels also share a critical,

disillusioned stance toward some aspects of war's brutality. In the previous section, I have analyzed the gendered aspects of Ahmed's process of befriending Hasan. In particular, I have focused on the political importance that Ahmed's idealization of Hasan acquires through a contrast with a number of the novel's antagonistically portrayed political figures. In the face of politically corrupted, emasculated, decaying and dogmatically obstinate men of power, Hasan – in Ahmed's eyes – becomes a utopian figure of domineering, yet gentle masculinity that radiates vitality, regeneration and functions as a source of a logorrheic cure because of his gift of storytelling. Before moving on to an analysis of the role male homosociality and queerness play in the ultimate failure of Ahmed's overall political aims, to be analyzed in the final section of this chapter, here I am interested in two aspects in which the novel echoes the broader, real-historical context of World War 2 and Selimović's own wartime biography, in particular the tragic loss of his brother Šefkija. Alongside Hasan's regenerative storytelling understood as a curative gift taken from the war, here I will also focus on Ahmed's postwar sense of disillusionment and disappointment. This will allow me to further underline the contrast between Ahmed and Hasan, this time with a focus on two specific ways in which they deal with their wartime pasts. Yet, this reading will also point towards the tacit, yet profound sense in which war as an experience establishes a relation of similarity and belonging between Hasan and Ahmed. As posited earlier, this similarity partakes in Ahmed's idealization of his friend Hasan as his own perfected image, and here, I will connect this perfection as having to do precisely with Hasan's more positive outtake from the war in comparison to the dervish's darker legacy.

Death and the Dervish is a novel populated by war veterans and soldiers. Among others, young Ahmed and his troop (and their enemies) in the episode recounting his wartime experiences, Kara-Zaim, Miralay Osman-bey, and finally Hasan. Many of them are thoroughly disappointed with their postwar lives, with Mullah Jusuf's life story most devastatingly

impacted by the war, as will be analyzed in the next section. The tropology of warfare and war veterans' lives in Ahmed's narration is one that mixes memories of war glory and disillusionment in his past and present alike. Ahmed is not only angry and disillusioned with the overall political rule over *kasaba*; he is also a man haunted by a sense of his own diminishment, linked in particular to his past as a soldier:

> I had imagined everything, I had confused everything within myself unnecessarily; I did not know where the source of my cowardice lay. I had stood in the face of death a hundred times without flinching, and now my heart was like a pebble, dead and cold. What had happened? What had become of our courage? … we have shrunk to nothing and not even noticed it. When did we lose our way, when did we allow this to happen?[163] (Selimović 1996, 142)

The character of the heavily scarred and disfigured Kara-Zaim can be seen as a physical rendition of Ahmed's own sense of diminishment. This forgotten *gazija*, a war hero, is now the mufti's miserably paid gardener, his humiliating job reflecting the waning of his physical prowess and the disappearance of his reputation. The world of men of power is at odds with the soldiers like Kara-Zaim. It is also at odds with Ahmed's world as he – a former fearless soldier and now a seemingly important public figure – now pleads and begs for his imprisoned brother's life. This dark plotline is inseparable from Selimović's own biography and I wish to position this chapter's reading of *Death and the Dervish* with regards to this direct and central inspiration behind the novel. Warfare is not only the most salient point of connection between Ahmed's and Hasan's lives. It is also the cusp at which the intradiegetic universe of Ahmed Nurudin and the extradiegetic life story of Meša Selimović meet and intersect.

Meša Selimović's reputable family of Tuzlak Muslims gave five fighters to NOP (National Liberation Movement/Narodnooslobodilački pokret). Alongside Meša, his sister

[163] "Sve sam uobrazio, isprepleo u sebi bez potrebe, ne znam samo odakle se pojavio taj kukavičluk, stotinu puta sam stajao na biljezi smrti i nisam se uplašio, a sad nam je srce kamičak, mrtvo i hladno. Šta se to desilo? U što se pretvorilo naše junaštvo? … smanjili smo se a nismo to ni primijetili. Kad smo se to izgubili, kad smo to dopustili?" (Selimović 1968, 123).

Fadila and his brothers Muhamed, Fadil and Šefkija joined the Yugoslav Partisan struggle. Before joining the Partisans and becoming a commander and a political commissar of the Tuzla Detachment, Meša was arrested as a NOP activist in 1942 and spent some time in prison (Selimović 1976; *see more* Hoare 2013, 126-130, 257-260). Of course, the most notorious event connected to Selimović's wartime experiences, one that, furthermore, directly inspired his subsequent novel about a desperate dervish trying to save his brother, is the tragic story of Šefkija, the eldest son of the Selimović family and their father's favorite child (Selimović 1976, 34). In late 1944, while expecting the return of his wife, a concentration camp survivor, Šefkija took some furniture from a warehouse of confiscated goods, since his own house was robbed and emptied by the Ustaše militia. For this act, Šefkija was sentenced to execution by a firing squad. Parts of his death sentence were printed and plastered all over Tuzla, making it clear that he was being shot precisely because he was coming from a "renowned Partisan family" (ibid., 192). Unlike the grave of Ahmed's brother, Harun, Šefkija's final resting place was never uncovered.

In his memoirs, Selimović describes the repercussions of this "blind, mindless act" and "a senseless, terrible injustice" as a shockwave that ripped through his Partisan family. I wish to highlight a paragraph that Selimović puts in parentheses and that deals with the deep-cutting disappointment with his comrades who were members of the Partisan court-martial that sentenced Šefkija:

> (I name no names, although I know them, of course. They do not know, or they do not remember what they have done to me and my brother. I had the chance to see this for myself recently when I refused to shake the hand of one of them, and he turned to some of my friends, asking with great surprise why was I angry at him?) (Ibid., 190).

The issue of Selimović's disappointment requires a short digression about some aspects of the novel's reception with regards to Selimović's memoirs (*Sjećanja*). According to Enver Kazaz (2010b), both the Yugoslav socialist and post-Yugoslav nationalist criticism managed to

obliterate *Sjećanja* and their politically subversive content, including the very transparent connection between the *Death and the Dervish's* plot and Šefkija's execution. These two forms of "essentialist criticism", Kazaz posited, originally erased the historical novels' "subversion with regards to Titoism" (understood here as a distinct model of political dictatorship) and later suffused the post-Yugoslav interpretations with nationalist ideology (123-124). Instead, Kazaz suggests a useful methodological approach in which *Sjećanja* (and autopoetic commentaries found within) function as a semantic and interpretative "supplement" (nadopuna) to Selimović's novels.

Moreover, contemporary interpretations that read Selimović's historical novels as being everything from "anti-Titoist" to "anti-socialist" and "anti-communist" tend to somewhat distort Selimović's complex political and ideological stances. In this regard, my reading follows the approach developed by Marina Antić (2013). Taking, among other things, Selimović's explicitly stated and firm Marxist convictions (especially in *Sjećanja*) and his official standing as an award-winning literary giant in Yugoslavia, Antić concludes that reading Selimović's novels as anti-communist "rests on a biographical reading of the plot and a confusion of Selimović's anti-totalitarian and anti-Stalinist politics with a critique of communism as such" (189). As Antić noted:

> [*Death and the Dervish*] does not critique socialism and communism in the manner often interpreted even by current critical works. Rather, it attempts to preserve the notion of the social, the imperative to intervene in history, and the tradition of rebellion at the heart of the Yugoslav revolution, all the while providing a critique of the trends of ideological purity, vulgar Marxism, and the necessarily positive synthesis of progress in dialectics (ibid., 240)

It also needs to be added that Selimović's tragic disappointment did not make him denounce his own wartime experiences as futile or misguided, neither did he ever abandon the legacies of NOP, Yugoslavia, or socialism. To the contrary, *Sjećanja* predominantly tell stories of

proud, resourceful, suffering, victorious and sacrificing Partisans, Selimović himself and his family included.

While using *Sjećanja* as an interpretative supplement in my own reading of *Death and the Dervish,* I do not want to imply that the novel is somehow overdetermined or completely shaped by historical events as accounted for in Selimović's memoirs. I use the memoirs only in order to point out a connection between Selimović's personal tragedy and the *Dervish's* war- and military-related homosocial tropologies. Thus, rather than taking the novel as an anti-socialist or anti-Marxist allegory or parable, my reading considers it as a story marked by Selimović's profound disappointment with some of his fellow Partisan comrades and their "blind, mindless act" that took the life of his beloved brother. In this regard, the political aspects of the story of Ahmed and Hasan's friendship acquires a new salience. In particular, the hope and regeneration Hasan provides for the increasingly hopeless dervish trying to save his brother can be seen as a literary return to and reversal of the life-shattering disappointment with his comrades that Selimović describes in his memoirs. The tragedy of lost brothers, then, is communicated in the *Death and the Dervish* as a particular willingness on Ahmed's part to regrow and use male homosocial bonds as a panacea for the society at large. As we have seen, this is a heavily gendered theme since it not only coagulates around an already masculinized understanding of friendship, but also idealizes Hasan's hegemonic masculinity and, furthermore, is grounded in a shared experience of war. Going back to the novel, I will next focus on the way in which all of these aspects – regeneration, war, trauma and political change – come to the fore in Hasan's peculiar gift for healing wounded, traumatized men.

Unlike Ahmed's grueling and humiliating dialogues with men of power, Hasan's conversations with his friends and equals are, as we have seen, events of intimacy, joyfulness and healing. This is another aspect that sets Hasan in direct opposition to the men of power

Ahmed despises, first and foremost the absent-minded mufti and the cruel kadi. As Ahmed notes about Hasan:

> He liked to talk and he did that well; the roots of his words were deep in the ground, and their branches spread out into the sky. They became a need and pleasure for me. I do not know what it was in them that filled me with joy. I barely remember some of his stories, but they intoxicated me with something unusual, bright and beautiful: stories about life, but more beautiful than life[164]. (Selimović 1996, 315)

This quality of being a great storyteller is inextricably intertwined with Hasan's soldierly life. Although the text does not provide the reader with a lot of information about this aspect of Hasan, it does predicate some of his most prominent characteristics precisely upon the experience of being once a war prisoner. Hasan attests to it himself, while trying to explain to Ahmed his chatty nature saying how he is an "an incorrigible babbler[165]" (ibid.) who was taught the connective value of human conversation by an old soldier whom he met as a prisoner of war. The novel then multiplies diegetic planes and through a story-within-story format recounts Hasan's imprisonment with his fellow cellmate, an old soldier whose favorite pastime was telling stories:

> He built a bridge of cobwebs between us, a bridge of words. They fluttered above us in an arch; they rose and dropped, like the waters of a river. He was the source; I was the mouth. A secret was woven between us, and the beautiful madness called conversation worked a miracle: two dead logs that lay side by side suddenly revived, and were not completely separated. When they exchanged us for enemy prisoners, we parted without regret. He'd always find people to listen to him, because he needed them; and I also began to find them. People became closer to me, through conversation. Not all of them, of course. Some are deaf to the words of others; they're a misfortune both for themselves and for everyone else. But one should always try[166]. (Ibid., 318)

[164] "Volio je da priča, a pričao je lijepo, korijeni njegovih riječi bili su duboko u zemlji, a grane su im se izvijale u nebo. Postale su mi potreba i zadovoljstvo. Ne znam šta je to bilo u njima što me obasjavalo, nekih priča se jedva i sjećam, ali je ostala nekakva omama od njih, nešto nesvakidašnje, svijetlo i lijepo: priče o životu, a ljepše od života" (Selimović 1968, 270-271).

[165] "Ja sam nepopravljivi brbljavac" (ibid., 271).

[166] "Gradio je između mene i sebe most od paučine, most od riječi, lepršale su iznad nas, u luku, izvirale i uvirale, on je izvor, ja ušće. Neka tajna se plela među nama, divna ludost što se zove govor, činila je čudo: dvije mrtve klade što su ležale jedna pored druge, odjednom su oživljavale, i nisu bile sasvim odvojene. Kad su nas zamijenili za neprijateljske zarobljenike, rastali smo se, bez žaljenja. On će uvijek naći slušaoce, jer su mu potrebni, a počeo sam da ih pronalazim i ja. Ljudi su mi postali bliži, zbog govora. Ne svi, naravno. Neki su gluhi za tuđe riječi, oni su nesreća i sebi i drugima. Ali uvijek treba pokušati" (ibid., 272-273).

As we can see, Hasan is well aware of the effect his storytelling has on others. There is a clear understanding of storytelling as another man's gift that Hasan now wants to extend to others. In a way, then, storytelling functions as a mission. And as we have seen in the previous section, Hasan is very successful at it, bringing comfort and regeneration to men wounded by history or old age. There is also a deeper, more general connection between war and storytelling that I want to briefly take into consideration.

As Kate McLoughlin (2018) demonstrated in her *Veteran Poetics*, the war veteran is constantly expected to talk, as if matching with his excessive discourse the excessiveness of war itself: "Veterans tell war stories for any number of reasons: to satisfy the expectations of comrades and civilians; for catharsis; to set the record straight; to cover up the truth; to memorialize; to forget; to shock; to entertain; to focus attention; to distract attention" (148). Hasan's stories of war do just that: they condense the values Hasan acquired through war. This value-system offers tentative pacifism, compassion and friendship as cures for trauma, loss and violence. This is perhaps best evidenced in his reaction to his fellow prisoner's story about an encounter of two enemy soldiers' in the forest. Arguably one of the most famous passages from the whole novel, the story tells of the soldiers' one-on-one fighting. During a brief reconciliation, the two men talk about their children and families, after which they proceed with fighting, ultimately killing each other[167]. Hasan finds the story sardonically optimistic. In literary terms, Hasan can be thus interpreted as voicing the "poetical antiwar attitude" taken by a number of authors from Yugoslavia at the end of the 1960s. As Maciej Czerwiński (2018) demonstrated, this antiwar stance could only have appeared in literature "at the moment when Yugoslavia began to build its own brand of the unaligned state leading humiliated countries,

[167] Their short reconciliation was, as Stef Jansen (2010) argued, achieved through a highly gendered recognition, "allowing men to meet as men" (39), a trope well-documented in war movies and literature. Among other similar examples from the post-Yugoslav cinematography, Jansen points out several scenes from Danis Tanović's *Ničija zemlja* and Pjer Žalica's *Gori vatra*.

victims of colonialism. Therefore, unlike the first postwar years, more emphasis was being placed on pacificism and overcoming the bipolar division of the world" (183). This political turn has reflected, Czerwiński argues, in a literary move away from the "heroism and militarism of early Socialist years" and a turn towards "overarching problems of humanity" (ibid.). And even though Czerwiński analyses only Selimović's explicitly WWII-themed *Magla i mjesečina*, his overarching argument about the poetical antiwar attitude seems to fit Hasan as well. In his reaction to his fellow prisoner's story, Hasan emphasizes the following:

> That friend of mine from the dungeon ring was cheerful, and he made me laugh with this sarcastic parable. … maybe it was precisely because the end was so cruelly truthful that I was left with a childlike idea, a stubborn hope that they nevertheless made peace with one another. And if not those two soldiers, then maybe some others, because it almost happened that way even in this story[168]. (Selimović 1996, 317)

Hasan's power to heal and reenergize faltering men manifests practically when he gets involved in helping people of Posavina ravaged by Miralay Osman-bey's bloodthirsty, retaliatory military campaign. This grass-roots activism is contrapuntal to Ahmed's attempt at overthrowing the political structure in kasaba altogether and signals yet again Hasan's power of being "close to the people", a lesson he learned while in captivity. This is then a realization of Ahmed's vision of a social panacea: a chain of friends opposing the toxic pillars of powerholders. As I have argued throughout this section, this thematic crux echoes back to Selimović's own personal and political disillusionment following his brother's death at the hands of men corrupted by dogmatic extremism. The topical centrality of war thus can be traced to the things that have remained with Ahmed and Hasan from their soldierly days to the time of the main story. While Hasan has taken from war the greatest gift of all – his healing means of communication and action – Ahmed was not so lucky. Indeed, if Ahmed's life is marred by a catastrophic series of betrayed friendships that will ultimately bring about his personal and

[168] "Bio je vedar taj moj drug sa zindanske halke, i razveselio me tom podrugljivom poukom. … baš zato što je kraj surovo istinit, ostala je u meni djetinja misao, uporna nada, da su se ipak pomirili. Ako ne ova dva vojnika, onda možda neki drugi, jer i u toj priči umalo da se nije tako desilo" (Selimović 1968, 272).

political downfall, it all begins with the original and most painful link – that between the dervish and his young *protégé*, Mullah Jusuf.

5.4. Breaking Promises of Elective Kinship

Because of themes such as betrayal, anguish, mourning and revenge, and numerous scenes of torture and violence, some critics have highlighted solely the novel's agonistic, combative aspects and depicted it as a dark, hopeless work of fiction. Šišić (1997), for instance, concluded that "in the portrayal of Selimović's male characters, it is also impossible not to experience the atmosphere of constant male-male conflict, wars and their yearning for domination ... the world of Selimović's male characters [is] the world of men who live in constant fear of each other" (120). However, as I have emphasized throughout this chapter, the novel also continually meditates about male friendship through gentleness and healing, and sets up an idealized notion of love-fueled friendship as its utopian horizon. If anything, the novel counteracts depictions of violence with as many, and arguably a lot more scenes of male-to-male gentleness, companionship, confidence and intimacy, reliance and solidarity. This is not to argue that fear or violence between men is absent or rarely portrayed in the novel. As we have seen, violence in all its forms, even the most extreme ones such as war, is a constitutive and pervasive element of the narrative. Yet, the specific focus on friendship allowed this chapter to highlight two important aspects of the novel. On the one hand, it fleshed out the political importance friendship acquires since it comes to counteract the death-driven powerholders with its regenerative and healing powers. On the other hand, the focus on friendship also fleshed out its heavily gendered aspects such as the a priori exclusion of women and queerness. So far, we have seen how these themes play out between Ahmed the dervish and Hasan. In this, final section of this chapter, I will analyze how all of these themes inform and reach a crisis in Ahmed's relationship with the young Mullah Jusuf the scribe. Their bond of elective kinship

in the novel functions, alongside male friendship, as another iteration of man's non-mandatory devotion to and care for fellow men. Like friendship, this affective connection is also contiguous with war. Jusuf's storyline will, however, remain singular since it not only brings about Ahmed's final downfall, but is also marked by queerness.

Jusuf is the son of a widow shot by Ahmed's fellow troopers for consorting with enemy soldiers. Ahmed immediately takes a liking to this unusual, sensitive boy and saves him from witnessing his mother's execution by transporting Jusuf and his grandmother to a nearby village. After a while, he encounters the boy again, this time completely orphaned since his grandmother had also died in the meantime:

> He resembled a marsh flower transplanted into hills, a grasshopper whose wings had been torn off by children. He resembled a boy from the plain whose freedom from care had been taken away by people. … You'll be with me, I'll take care of you, you'll go to school, I said, although I wanted to shout: Laugh, run after a butterfly, speak of the pigeon that flutters over your dreams. But he never spoke about anything again[169]. (Selimović 1996, 253-254)

Ahmed takes the boy to the tekke and has him schooled in the madrasa. He perceives their relation as one of elective kinship, understood here, following Furneaux (2011), as an affective and nurturing tie established voluntarily between a man and a child who is not his biological descendant. In this regard, elective kinship can be seen as a paternalistic version of friendship. If friendship functions, as we have seen, as fraternity untied from bloodlines, then elective kinship likewise functions as paternity in the absence of direct consanguinity. Ahmed Explains to Hasan that his relationship with Jusuf was "like the closest of kin, so our disagreements were like family problems, they always bordered on love" (Selimović 1996, 257-258). And when

[169] "Ličio je na barski cvijet prenesen u brda, ličio je na skakavca kome su dječaci otkinuli krila, ličio je na dječaka sa ravnice kome su ljudi oteli bezbrižnost. Sve je bilo njegovo, i lice, i tijelo, i glas, a to nije bio on. … Bićeš sa mnom, brinuću se o tebi, učićeš školu, govorio sam, a htio da zavapim: nasmij se, potrči za leptirom, govori o golubu što lepršа nad tvojim snom. Ali on više ni o čemu nije govorio" (216).

Hasan retorts that there is such a thing as hatred among relatives, Ahmed replies: "We haven't gotten that far yet[170]" (ibid., 258).

The story of Jusuf's childhood is inextricably linked to Ahmed's military past, but also his class background. It is striking that this story of trauma and violence even physically splits the printed book in half, like an eternally opened wound. As Furneaux (2016) demonstrated on the example of the Crimean war writings, the narrative of a gentle soldier adopting an orphaned child is a prevalent literary theme. This narrative usually involves the soldier providing the conventionally feminine-identified labor of emotional and physical care, domesticity and upbringing. The resulting trope provides the gendered counter-figure in the usual narratives about war as a masculinist affair: "In representations of the military man of feeling the impulse presented as natural is to preserve rather than destroy the body[171]" (Furneaux 2016, 23). We can see something similar at play in Ahmed's and Jusuf's story, most importantly, Ahmed's capacity for care and affection. The history of living with Jusuf in the tekke and the age-difference between them relegated Ahmed into a father-figure for the youth. Although complicated and largely unhappy, this relationship, unlike the ones with his biological father and brother, represents for Ahmed a quotidian lived reality. The importance Ahmed ascribes to his attachment to Jusuf is especially poignant since his connections with his biological next of kin are not very strong. For example, upon meeting his father, although emotionally moved, Ahmed mostly comments on the distance that has grown between them. The father also inadvertently hurts the dervish when he instructs him to plead for Harun's life by saying Harun was all he had left (Selimović 1996, 76). Robert Hodel (2011) noted that even Ahmed's motives

[170] "Ja i Jusuf smo kao najbliži rod, pa i nesporazumi su nam rođački, uvijek su blizu ljubavi.
- Postoji i rođačka mržnja - nasmijao se Hasan.
Nije me iznenadio. Dugo je i bio ozbiljan.
Odgovorio sam šalom:
- Nismo stigli dotle." (220)

[171] Furneaux (2016) emphasizes that the figure of the gentle soldier or "military man of feeling" performs a variety of roles in the culture writ large and can be"used in the service of, variously, social reform and warmongering" (2).

for trying to save Harun come more out of a dogmatic understanding of kinship as a value in and of itself, instead from a tangible brotherly love. Prior to his brother's incarceration, Ahmed did not know anything important about his life, and he was not even aware of Harun's friendship with Jusuf (Hodel 2011, 113).

Moreover, Ahmed's gentleness towards Jusuf accentuates parts of his own biography, namely his overcoming of modest class origins. Unlike most other characters in the novel, most importantly Hasan and his well-educated and wealthy family, Ahmed and Jusuf come from the ranks of illiterate peasantry. As a self-made intellectual, Ahmed takes great pride in his knowledge. There is something almost programmatic about Ahmed's will to reproduce this effect of upward class mobility with Jusuf, but other boys as well. For instance, upon encountering a jovial little boy who tells him how he was beaten by the hodja and discouraged from attending school by his own father[172], Ahmed jokingly suggests to the boy that he should take him to the tekke and educate him. And towards the end of the novel, another young man is sent to Ahmed for education, this time from his village of birth. The dervish can be thus seen as dedicated to a teacherly mission that aims to cultivate illiterate peasant boys into men of knowledge, religion and order. If Hasan's political engagement amounts to regenerating wounded men and communities, Ahmed's one is its asymmetrical counterpart: while the former tries mainly to heal men wounded in the past, the latter tries to form men of a new future. In this regard, Ahmed's efforts with Jusuf can be seen as a repetition of his own life story and his class stratification, having been born into poverty, yet becoming "the tekke itself".

Saving Jusuf, however, proves a difficult task. Jusuf deflects all Ahmed's attempts to address the historical trauma of his mother's death and lives with a deep-seated mixture of

[172] The boy reports his father's words: "He says 'You'll never be an alim anyway. And you can plow with or without reading and writing. The land's waiting for you; I won't give it to anyone else. And if it comes to giving thrashings, I can do that, too,' he says" (Selimović 1996, 116).

anger, resentment and grief, or as Ahmed puts it, "the gloomy order that he had created within himself[173]" (Selimović 1996, 254). Ahmed speculates that he himself must have become in Jusuf's mind the sole tangible culprit for his mother's death and concludes: "I had loved him once, and he had loved me, but now we looked at each other with lifeless eyes. … we continually reminded each other that joy can never last for very long[174]" (ibid.).

Ahmed too harbors a complicated and often spiraling reservoir of negative emotions towards the youth. Their relationship is an inverted image of Ahmed's friendship with Hasan. If his idealized friendship with the former provides refuge, intimacy and a source of energy, his bond to the young scribe is a threatening, alienated and a mutually draining relationship. A part of it comes from the way he thinks Jusuf perceives him: "I turned away from him, from the ugly image that I saw in him, and from the absurd hatred that flared in me, choking me like smoke, like something rotten[175]" (ibid., 65). Ahmed is also jealous of the young man's intimate friendship with Hasan, as evident in the way he gets irked by Hasan's curiosity about Jusuf:

> I had been speaking about myself, but all he heard was the boy's name. By telling about him I pushed myself aside. Was it because Jusuf was young? Or because I was proud and strong? No one pities the strong[176]. (Ibid., 257)

With time, Ahmed builds a paranoid image of Jusuf, constantly implying there is something quite off about him. In other words, there is an ambiguity surrounding the young man. In chapter 4, I have discussed at length the theoretical underpinnings of the trope of ambiguity with regards to male non-normative sexuality. And Jusuf's ambiguity seems to extend from the same thematic tradition. He is repeatedly described as sneaky, even creepy, especially his way of materializing without sound. for instance: "Now he surfaced, as if from underwater, an

[173] "mračni red koji je u sebi stvorio" (Selimović 1968, 217).
[174] "Nekad sam ga volio, i on mene, a sad smo se gledali mrtvo. … neprestano smo podsjećali jedan drugoga da radost ne može dugo da traje" (ibid., 217).
[175] "Okrenuo sam se od njega, od ružne slike koju sam vidio u njemu, i od bezrazložne mržnje što je u meni buknula, gušeći me kao dim, kao gnjilež" (ibid., 60).
[176] "Govorio sam o sebi, on je čuo samo mladićevo ime. Pričanjem o njemu istisnuo sam sebe. Da li zato što je Jusuf mlad? Ili što sam ja ponosan, i jak? Snažne niko ne žali" (ibid., 219).

unpleasant reminder of himself[177]" (ibid., 398). Ahmed often speculates about Jusuf's sexuality. For instance, upon returning to the tekke on Saint George's Eve, Ahmed fantasizes about Jusuf as an inexperienced, seductive, perhaps even sinful creature:

> The scent of lovage was on him; he brought it on his hands, in his breath, he was pervaded by the spell of the intoxicated streets. He had heard the capercaillie's mating call, and had been deafened by it. Maybe the pulse of another young body's blood still beat in his numb palm. A flame, barely controlled, shot out of the ovals of his eyes[178]. (ibid., 38)

Jusuf's sexuality is never explicitly addressed, despite Ahmed's projections and Hafiz-Muhammed's unfounded speculations that the youth might have been the kadi's wife lover. Jusuf's singular affective attachment is toward Hasan. With his tactfulness and gentleness, Hasan manages to regenerate Jusuf, and is arguably the only character that holds the youth in such high regard that he proclaims to Ahmed such people should be kept as seeds (ibid., 256). Hasan admires not only Jusuf's talents for calligraphy, but also his modesty. Their relationship flourishes with Hasan visiting the tekke and Jusuf visiting Hasan's home. They go on walks along the riverbank and Jusuf soon starts exhibiting outward signs of Hasan's curative effect on him. Restless in his absence, Jusuf comes back to life each time Hasan visits him: "He looked at him, beaming, when he finally did appear, and rejoiced at his serenity and friendly words[179]" (ibid., 258).

However, unlike Ahmed's affection for Hasan that recoils before the sin, Jusuf's love crosses that border. Since Ahmed's relationship with Jusuf is strained and the youth never confides in the dervish, we get little to no insight into his inner motivations, thoughts and feelings. What we do get is Ahmed's jealous, but approving perspective on Jusuf's flourishing

[177] "Sad je izronio, kao iz vode, i neugodno me podsjetio na sebe" (338).
[178] "[M]iris miloduha je na njemu, donio ga je na rukama, u dahu, prožet je čarolijom ostrašćenih sokaka, čuo je tetrijebski šapat i ogluhnuo od njega, možda mu u obeznanjenom dlanu još bije udar krvi nekog drugog mladog tijela i teško stišavani plamen suklja iz njega kroz otvore očiju" (38).
[179] "Postajao je nemiran ako Hasan ne bi došao, gledao bi u njega ozaren kad bi se pojavio, radovao se njegovoj vedrini i prijateljskoj riječi" (ibid., 200).

upon meeting Hasan. Although hinted at in the novel, the homosexual nature of Jusuf's feelings towards Hasan is never explicitly acknowledged, yet Selimović obviously had it in mind all along. As Marina Antić (2013) noted, it is precisely because Jusuf falls in love with Hasan that he ultimately saves him once the dervish betrays him and, by the same gesture, condemns the dervish to death (213).

In a desperate act to save his own life, towards the end of the novel, Ahmed betrays his friend Hasan to the authorities, claiming that Hasan was aware that Marija's husband acted as a spy for Dubrovnik. As Derrida (2006) argued, friendship rests upon a performative commitment of the oath whose breakage signals the most abhorrent form of betrayal – that of the fratricide as "the possibility of radical evil, the evil of evil" (ibid., 273). Exemplifying the far-reaching severity of the act of betrayal, the effect of Ahmed's actions will realign the homosocial ties between him, Hasan and Jusuf. In particular, the end of friendship with Ahmed leaves Hasan in the care of Jusuf who loves him more than a friend. If we look at the dozen pages of a rough draft of the never-written *Hasan* novel, dated to 1973 and published in 1991 in a posthumous edition of his manuscripts, Selimović penned down the following notes:

> Mullah Jusuf is completely devoted to Hasan … Hasan has fun in taverns by the river. Jusuf sings and cries / he does not drink … *Jusuf's limitless love for Hasan as a man as well* [*Jusufova bezgranična ljubav prema Hasanu i kao muškarcu*]. He guards him and takes care of him when there is danger. He falls ill and gets a fever, Jusuf brings medical doctors, Hasan makes jokes. (Selimović and Lagumdžija 1991, 85-86; emphasis mine)

Thus, alongside his deep-seated contempt for Ahmed, it is also Mullah Jusuf's romantic love for Hasan *as a man* that makes him free Hasan from the fortress and, as Selimović envisioned, keeps him saving Hasan again and again. It is within this zone of constant negotiation and blurring of sexual desire, desexualized friendship and renegotiated kinship, or the "double bind of male homosociality" (Sedgwick 2016, 201), that the semantics of male homosociality finally resolve. It is not only his brother that Jusuf takes away from Ahmed. By detaching himself

from the dervish, Jusuf destroys Ahmed's political dream of boys saved from poverty, ignorance and war turned into pillars of knowledge and religion. By robbing him off his most precious and beloved human being, Hasan, he collapses the final remnants of faith Ahmed had in male friendship as a cure for abused power. In the process and by proxy, he also takes the dervish's life. On the other hand, his complete love for Hasan is the reason why Jusuf leaves everything behind: the Mevlevi order and his fellow dervishes, the tekke, calligraphy, and, finally, Ahmed. Jusuf lets himself be completely immersed in Hasan's regenerative powers that heal his war trauma and, in return, reciprocates with never-ending solidarity and love, dedicated to saving Hasan from everyone and everything, forever.

5.5. Conclusions

Like the rest of this thesis, this chapter elevated the visibility of masculinity in *Death and the Dervish* in order to open up the specific configuration in which the poetic usage of male homosocial bonds ultimately builds a larger novelistic theme. In particular, and in contrast to previous chapters, here I have focused on the poetic usage of male friendship. As part of this thesis' broader theoretical focus on male homosociality and queerness, my specific understanding of "friendship" came from Jacques Derrida. This has enabled me to focus not only on the ways in which masculine friendship depends on fraternity, but also on the ways in which it precludes femininity and effeminacy, and queerness.

Through the lens of friendship and its gendered aspects, this chapter has opened several thus unattended themes in the *Dervish*. For one, I have argued that the central thematic crux of friendship serves as a bridge between the novel's tragedy and Selimović's personal loss of his brother in a way that is more complex than a mere transposition of biographical material into literature. Namely, by tracing the theme of friendship back to Selimović's account of his

disappointment with fellow comrades who executed his brother over a minor offence, this chapter emphasized the reinvention of friendship as a social panacea. More specifically, by focusing on the wartime experiences and postwar disappointment of Ahmed and Hasan, I have traced the ways in which male friendship has a curative effect on individual men, but also the social community at large. In that regard, male friendship becomes a veritable beacon of political hope amidst a growing darkness represented by the effeminate, decadent elite. However, and crucially so, the central drama ultimately collapses under its own burden, triggered in part by the tacit introduction of male queerness. As we have seen, in the moment Ahmed overthrows the political elite and betrays his friend Hasan, his protégé, who fell in love with the cattle herder, brings upon Ahmed's destruction and saves Hasan. The novel thus uses queerness to implode the universe of homosocial bonds and inflict a heavy blow to any political hope in healing the society.

Combined, the insights derived from my analysis have not only made visible the centrality masculinity holds in the novel, but also its inextricability from Selimović's overarching concerns such as social justice, wartime trauma and love. More specifically, precisely by placing the critical focus on male friendship, this chapter has managed to reconstruct the scope of importance of the themes of war, curative storytelling of war veterans, the gendered aspects of political power and the resistance it encounters. These themes, since they are poetically constructed through masculinity, emerged fully only by theoretically attending to the dynamics of male homosociality and queerness.

Selimović will come back to all of the issues thus far analyzed in his following novel as well. In the next, final chapter of my thesis, I will look at the alternative poetic usage of male homosociality and queerness that emerges in Selimović's *The Fortress*.

Chapter 6. Camaraderie Vindicated: Horizontal Homosociality as Survival Strategy in Selimović's *The Fortress*

The Fortress (1970) was originally planned as the second installment in Selimović's never-finished Bosnian trilogy, following *Death and the Dervish* and preceding its unwritten sequel with Hasan as the protagonist (segments of which were analyzed in the previous chapter). Anchored by a prologue describing a vicious and futile war episode in a faraway country and an epilogue questioning the inevitability of history repeating, *The Fortress* follows its hero's mostly ill-fated attempts at navigating a complex life of poverty and postwar disenchantment. Ahmet Šabo, a twenty-five-year-old war veteran, aspiring poet and a newlywed husband, witnesses and partakes in several stories that, combined, form the meandering plot of the novel. All of the plotlines chronicle different conflicts and negotiations between the city's corrupt clerical authoritarian elite and various locals. Among these are a lone heretic student directly opposing the elite's teachings and political power by fomenting revolt among the impoverished and repressed peasants; a bereaved father who seeks to avenge his son's death by using his wealth to loosen the powerholders' grip on the local populace; and a plethora of war veterans, Šabo included, who are trying to navigate the harsh social climate and face their own disappointment with postwar life. I understand *Death and the Dervish* and *The Fortress* as a thematic diptych, narrating strikingly similar stories from opposite perspectives, and the following chapter will occasionally read the two novels comparatively to flesh out its central argument.

In this, final chapter of my thesis, I will argue that *The Fortress'* version of resistance to the verticality of corruptible politics relies on establishing a horizontal chain of mutual aid and solidarity among normative men. The notions of "verticality" of political power and

"horizontality" of male camaraderie are, in this case, more than metaphors. In the context of masculinity studies, the distinction between "verticality" and "horizontality" has been employed in recent attempts to rethink the (dis)continuities between male homosociality and hegemonic masculinity, with a particular emphasis on the inclusion and exclusion of non-normative men and women (Hammarén and Johansson 2014; Haywood et al. 2018). As the sociologists Hammarén and Johansson argue (2014), existing accounts of male homosociality mostly emphasize its negative role in maintaining the patriarchal gender order, while failing to account for forms of homosociality that are based in inclusive and nonprofitable relationships such as intimate friendship. In masculinity studies, this distinction is meant to imbue theory of homosociality with a more dynamic and comprehensive outlook that allows for certain forms of homosociality to be recognized as not only not further strengthening patriarchal hierarchy, but also challenging it from the inside by engaging in dissenting forms of friendship:

> Hierarchical homosociality is similar to and has already been described as a means of strengthening power – of creating close homosocial bonds in order to maintain and defend hegemony. … Horizontal homosociality is similar to what was earlier described as female homosociality. This concept is used to point towards relations between, for example, men – relations that are based on emotional closeness, intimacy and a non-profitable form of friendship. There are, clearly, no absolute boundaries between these two approaches to homosociality. Aspects of hierarchical homosociality in horizontal relations and vice versa might be present, but making a distinction between them and discussing them separately makes it easier to analyze different aspects of the concept and highlight different implications. (Haywood et al. 2018, 67)

While used mostly in social sciences-based masculinity studies, this contemporary theoretical distinction between vertical and horizontal homosociality allows for a useful framing of the differentiation between Selimović's two novels with regards to their poetic usage of male homosociality. While *Death and the Dervish* depicts its protagonist's demise in an attempt to overtake mechanisms of power, *The Fortress* enables the salvation of its main character's morality through his voluntary disentanglement from political structures and relying, instead,

on the solidarity of his fellow men. Moreover, if *The Dervish*, as I have argued in the previous chapter, thematized Selimović's personal tragedy and his utmost disappointment with some of his fellow Partisan comrades, *The Fortress* reimagines and vindicates male camaraderie as a new solution to the same problem of political corruption and autocratic rule. This male camaraderie, I argue, functions as the novel's utopian horizon, challenging the verticality of political power with a horizontal chain of solidarity among disenfranchised and justice-seeking men.

This chapter's aim is to explore three interconnected aspects of *The Fortress'* poetic dependance upon male camaraderie. In the first two sections, I will focus on Ahmet Šabo's idealized morality as the novel's central theme and the way in which it depends on a wedge that Selimović drives between his normative and queer male characters. In the second section in particular, through a focus on the novel's antagonist, the queer character of Džemal Zafranija, I will explore both the specific discourses utilized in the construction of male homosexuality in the novel *and* the way in which masculine non-normativity partakes in the novel's political drama. Secondly, my chapter will analyze the character of Šabo's wife, Tijana, and the novel's continual voicing and overwriting of her perspective that is contrapuntal to that of Šabo. Of special notice in this regard are Tijana's role as the breadwinner for their family, her critical view on her husband's homosocial ties and, finally, the constraining effect the emerging camaraderie has on her autonomy and marriage. Finally, I end this chapter with a reconstruction of the novel's camaraderie as a form of horizontal homosociality. On the one hand, I will argue that male camaraderie attests to the capacity in which male normativity can be imagined as future-oriented and transformative. On the other hand, I will trace the ways in which this transformative camaraderie tacitly imposes an exclusionary gender-based hierarchy on women and queer men.

6.1. The Cowardice of Wisdom

One of *The Fortress'* leitmotifs is the self-avowed simplicity with which it approaches the same basic set of moral and political questions that formed the backbone of *Death and the Dervish*. Selimović (1976) himself famously wrote that *The Fortress* was "a much simpler novel than *Death and the Dervish*, and as such did not necessitate any special explanations" (213). However, instead of taking Selimović's auto-commentary about *The Fortress'* simplistic nature at face value, I will read this apparent simplicity as a broader creative strategy that is linked inextricably to Selimović's poetics of male homosociality. Namely, I will argue that the rendering of social justice and utopianism in *The Fortress* is hinged upon a distinction where simple action is considered brave and honorable, whereas wisdom, complex strategies and calculations are equated with the amorality and corruption of the power apparatus. This has two important consequences. On the one hand, the *The Fortress* equates contemplation and strategizing with the scheming, conniving and, as we will see in the next section, sexually deviant men who are corrupted by hierarchical power. On the other hand, the novel reimagines the utopian potentialities of brotherhood and camaraderie as proportional to some men's capacity for embracing intellectual simplicity and value-driven action as an ethical credo. Spearheading the latter worldview is the novel's autodiegetic narrator, Ahmet Šabo himself.

The Fortress' overall symbolism is notably more grounded than that of *The Dervish*, especially when it comes to depicting humiliation and violence. In fact, there are several impactful scenes of people getting soiled by their own or others' feces and urine, and the imagery of war is far more gruesome and visceral than anything in *The Dervish.* The characters' dialogues are often crude, with occasional usage of profanities. Compared to the *Dervish*, the novel is also more explicitly critical towards Yugoslav socialist state apparatus, and, as we will see later in the chapter, there is a number of direct autobiographical connections between Selimović and his protagonist, Šabo. As Andrew Wachtel (2010) points out, the practice of

using the very genre of historical novel to allegorize and critique contemporary societies was widespread in 20th century socialist states. What makes *The Fortress* singular is that, unlike all other socialist-era critical allegories, the novel does not even try to avoid anachronisms and uses its historical setting purely as decorum (Wachtel 2010, 110). Selimović scholarship has isolated a plethora of textual elements that are unabashedly out of place in a presumably historical novel. Everything from the novel's historical setting[180] to its usage of language and references[181] has been demonstrated as idiosyncratic and anachronistic. For instance, as Wachtel further pointed out, the characters' mindsets and intimate lives often sound distinctly modern. Furthermore, the depiction of the war and the character's attitude towards it (and their own country) is "obviously anachronistic and reflects a 20th century sensibility, not an 18th century one" (ibid., 110). All of this combined and then compared to the diegetic universe of *Death and the Dervish* does leave an impression of a much more straightforward, much *simpler* and *simple-minded* world.

[180] For instance, most critics have identified the novel's battle at Khotyn as being the literary depiction of either the 1621 or 1673 real historical battles. However, both Robert Hodel (2011) and Andrew Wachtel (2010) recently pointed out that the novel's historical context is probably that of the late 18th or even early 19th century. For one, there were several battles fought at Khotyn during the 18th century Russo-Turkish war. The novel also contains many other textual traces that seem to point firmly towards the 18th century as its historical setting. For instance, the novel mentions the Ottoman ruler named "Abdulhamid" (both Abdulhamids ruled in 18th century), the insurgent Morić brothers (executed in 1757), and Selimović himself had stated that the novel was first envisioned as being about (and partly modelled upon the writings of) the chronicler Mullah Mustafa Bašeskija (1731 or 1732-1809) (Wachtel 2010; Hodel 2011). However, none of the historical elements congeal into a coherent representation of a verifiable historical moment.

[181] In one of the novel's most famous scenes, the rebellious student Ramiz stands what basically amounts to a show trial *in absentia*. The language used by the ulema congress to accuse him of inciting religious heresy and social upheaval is actually a linguistic anatomy of the the inner workings of a politically motivated show trial. As critics have shown, even the scene's vocabulary – with the usage of terms such as "narodni vođa" ("people's leader"), "policija" ("police"), "narodni prijatelj" ("friend of the people") – explicitly invokes the times of Tito's Yugoslavia, rather than Ottoman-ruled Bosnia, etc. (Rotar 1973, 206). Thus, Prohić (1988) considered the ulema episode as an especially poignant literal transposition of Stalinist-type politically motivated proceedings into literature. This has also led some critics to recognize in Ramiz the figure of the famous Yugoslav dissident, Milovan Đilas (Wachtel 2010: 114). While acknowledging allegoric valence of the novel, Andrew Wachtel (2010) also warned against reading the novel as a simple *roman à clef*, and insisted that it combines several semantic levels, including a universalizing critique of modern state power. From the perspective of literary theory and history, all these elements – deliberate subversion of historical novel's genre conventions, the autobiographical connection between the author and the protagonist, and the thematization of a disappointment with the post-Enlightenment modern state apparatus – highlight the importance of *The Fortress* in the South Slavic context as a proto-postmodernist novel (Kapidžić-Osmanagić 2012: 11-12).

Another key difference between *The Fortress* and the *Dervish* is the striking tonal shift between their narrators' voices and style. Most of the *Dervish's* complexity had to do with Nurudin's intellectually elevated narration, abundant with personal reflections and meandering sociopolitical meditations, incessant strategizing, intertextual references, and quotations. In comparison, *The Fortress'* simplicity seems almost shocking[182]. Although there is an occasional exchange of words of wisdom, *The Fortress* has nothing resembling the dervish's bookish ruminations; and while some of the *Fortress'* characters are well-educated and intellectuals by profession, they are not as prominently featured as was the literati cast of Selimović's previous novel. And unlike the *Dervish's* narrator, Šabo has no total control over the narrative since he often does not have enough information to reconstruct the whole picture of specific events. Whereas the dervish either inhabits a privileged social and political position or uses his wisdom and knowledge to reconstruct everything that happens once his privileges are taken away, Šabo is neither experienced nor educated enough to provide the reader with the kind of narrative the dervish manages to pen down. On top of that, the set of quotidian worries in *The Fortress* is different from the dervish's incessant metaphysical and ethical dilemmas. In place of speculating about the meaning of death or justice, Šabo is confronted by a never-ending flood of poverty-related everyday issues like providing food on the table. Despite all this, *The Fortress* ends in a much more optimistic way, saving its hero from moral and physical demise. In his *Author's note* to *The Fortress'* first edition, Selimović explicitly laid out his own understanding of Šabo:

> Ahmet Šabo, the novel's hero, wants to find a bridge towards other people and leave the fortress behind. This is because he knows that it is hatred that divides and destroys us, whereas the only thing that can sustain us is love, or even just a belief that any sort of mutual understanding among individuals and in a community is possible. Guided by

[182] This is probably one of the reasons why general readership and critics alike had a hard time digesting it after *Death and the Dervish*. For one critic's reflection on accepting *The Fortress* as an equal to its predecessor, see Kapidžić-Osmanagić (2010).

> this belief and yearning, he remains cheerful and morally untainted. (Selimović 1976, 214)

Even for an author who famously indulged in auto-commentary of his own work[183], Selimović's deterministic idealization and, for the reader, almost instructive assessment of his own character seems almost too unwarranted and direct. Selimović's authorial remark about *The Fortress'* hero, combined with his notion of the novel's apparent simplicity, signalizes a crucial way in which Šabo conjures up an ideal solution to Selimović's overarching problematics of the corruptive nature of power. This is evidenced in the reception that was heavily influenced by Selimović's idealization of Šabo as being "morally untainted". Perhaps more than any other of his literary creations, Šabo was widely revered and regarded as an ethical giant, not because of his *thoughts*, but because of his *actions*, thus reproducing the novel's ethically charged distinction between intellectual strategizing and imminent action that I delineated earlier. Although some critics pointed out Šabo's alleged "intellectual maturity" (Mirković 1973, 183), for the most part, the reception focused on his almost innate ability to react ethically and justly in morally challenging situations. Consider Kasim Prohić's (1988) description of the character:

> A poet by spiritual needs and original vocation, a moral rigorist that strictly separates right from wrong, and ethical dignity from a moral failure, Ahmet Šabo is never able to be a representative of *pure action*. Yet, he acts "in accordance with his nature" and, thus, builds his character's uniqueness through his specific modes of action. (52; original emphasis)

Furthermore, Miodrag Petrović (1981) noted that "Šabo is a hero out of ignorance. He is continually bewildered by everything that happens" (162). And indeed, the shift in narrational

[183] As Ivan Majić (2017) demonstrated, Selimović's *Memoirs* as a whole served as an unusually explicit and determined "auto-commentary" on his *oeuvre*, effectively intervening in and shaping the subsequent reception of his writings. For a more detailed analysis on the relationship between *Memoirs* and Selimović's novels, see Kazaz (2010).

voice from the *Dervish's* ornate analyses to Šabo's often disparate impressions is striking. Šabo is, of course, not portrayed as stupid, gullible, or irrational. To the contrary, he is very smart, cunning, and quite savvy. However, his growing disenchantment with the world of powerful men leads him into devaluing the virtues of the intellect and embracing instead a kind of presumably incorruptible street-savviness. After a disastrous reception with the town's elite men that leads to his ostracization, a scene to which I will come back in more detail in next section, Šabo self-pityingly muses: "I, a stupid *sparrow*, went to visit a *hawk* and scarcely got away with it[184]" (Selimović 1999, 75; emphasis mine). Šabo's auto-victimizing discourse will reverberate throughout the novel. A "foolish sparrow", a bird known for begging scraps off people's tables, is directly compared to the predatory "hawk". Once hurt, Šabo-the-sparrow flees, and even though humiliated, he seeks no vengeance nor justice.

While other characters neither forget nor forgive the injuries they have suffered at the hands of corrupted political leaders, Šabo seemingly detaches himself from his wrongdoers and pursues a deliberately simple-minded life, devoid of vengeance and plotting. Tijana, Šabo's wife, never lets go of the fact that her father was executed for political reasons. And the wealthy merchant Šehaga Sočo, Šabo's protector and father-figure, aims to take down the whole political leadership in a quest to avenge his son's senseless execution for deserting a futile war effort. In contrast, Šabo's simple-mindedness is a deliberate choice to disentangle himself both from seeking vengeance *and* from attaining political power. In fact, it is precisely the incessant strategizing inherent to power struggle that Šabo primarily alienates himself from. For Šabo, power for is a situation of disingenuous strategizing, founded in strenuous intellectual activity, and inherently in proximity to malice. This is how Šabo describes the political powerholders:

> What a life these people led! What an unremitting strain, the calculation of every step and of every word, the fatiguing consideration of the possible moves of an opponent!

[184] "Ja, ludi *vrabac*, pošao sam *jastrebu* u pohode. Jedva sam izvukao živu glavu" (Selimović 1988, 72, 75; emphasis mine).

> What a torment, what a waste of life! What little time or opportunity for normal human thinking and feeling, for caring for anything beyond oneself and one's danger![185] (ibid., 262).

Kasim Prohić (1988) noted that Selimović's fiction emphasizes continual contingency of events, thus placing all his main characters within "a rift between contemplation and action" (20). Šabo is a good illustration of espousing action over contemplation. Indeed, his sense of morals are inextricably linked to abstaining from contemplation. Perhaps the most striking damnation of intellectualism and, concomitantly, the most striking celebration of lowbrow simple-mindedness is given towards the end of the novel, when Šabo, thinking about Ramiz's incendiary political activism, concludes:

> All wisdom and all experience would refute the actions of the student Ramiz. But Ramiz offered people hope. *Wisdom was both cowardly and desperate. Experience was valuable only for crawling through life*[186]. (Selimović 1999, 376; emphasis mine)

However, although nominally favoring action, Šabo oftentimes imagines himself more as *reacting* to others' moves rather than *acting* autonomously. In other words, Šabo likes to think of himself more of being a pawn than a real agent. It is almost as if by framing himself in that way he manages to absolve himself of the more problematic – more strategic – aspects of his actions. Indeed, on several occasions it is precisely Šabo's tacit *strategies* that set in motion far-reaching, sometimes lethal events. He even questions his "cheerful morality", tentatively subverting his own narration otherwise serving to strengthen the impression of his "untaintedness". For instance, in order to rid himself of the nosy inspector Avdaga, it is Šabo

[185] "Kakav je život tih ljudi, kakvo prezanje bez predaha, izračunavanje svakog koraka i svake riječi, naporno razmišljanje o mogućim potezima protivnika, kakva muka, kakva danguba! Kako malo vremena i mogućnosti za običnu ljudsku misao i osjećanje, za brigu i o čemu izvan sebe i svoje ugroženosti" (Selimović 1988, 212-213).
[186] "Ono što čini student Ramiz, odbila bi svaka mudrost, odbilo bi svako iskustvo. A Ramiz nudi nadu ljudima. *Mudrost je kukavička, očajnička, iskustvo je korisno samo za životno puzanje*" (ibid., 297; emphasis mine).

who approaches Šehaga and tells him that something needs to be done about the man. Following the insufferable inspector's murder, Šabo thinks to himself:

> Fearing later repentance, I mercilessly inquired of myself whether, nonetheless, in my subconscious I'd not expected just such an outcome? For could it have been otherwise? … How could a man so completely hush his conscience? How could one snap off one's thoughts, like a thread, and forbid oneself from thinking of the consequences, not wishing to be aware of them. It would appear that one could. Instinct defends us with complete oblivion, to save us the torture of responsibility. I'd left everything to others … If this was so and there was no other explanation, then man was a somewhat unpleasant creature, even when he was not aware of what he was doing. Because he didn't want to be aware! … Thus did my partial thinking, my faithful defender, seek new ways of relieving my conscience[187]. (Ibid., 369-370)

To sum up my point here, the framework within which the novel sets up a political and ethical system of values around an opposition between, on the one side, simple-mindedness and action, and, on the other side, strategizing and plotting, is also revealed as an idealization that not even Šabo can fully realize in practice. It has been argued that *The Fortress* runs a sort of inner contradiction (Kovač 2016). This is a point to which I will come back in more detail in the penultimate section of this chapter, as this contradiction is crucially thematized through Šabo's relationship with his wife Tijana. For now, I wish to underline that Šabo's relationship to his own agency and morality is contradictive to the point that it brings into question Šabo's reliability as the narrator and complicates the question of Šabo's supposedly irreproachable moral grounds and untaintedness. All of these aspects – the link between agency and morality, the self-aware contradictive actions and narratorial reliability – are, as we have just seen, voiced by none other than Šabo himself. In the rest of this chapter, I will explore the gendered foundations upon which Šabo builds the image of his moral irreproachability: a clean-cut

[187] "Plašeći se kasnijeg kajanja, nemilosrdno sam ispitivao sam sebe: da nisam ipak, u dnu svijesti, očekivao upravo ovakav izlaz? Jer, kakav bi drukčiji mogao da bude? … Zar može čovjek tako potpuno uspavati svoju savjest? Zar može prekinuti misao kao konac, I zabraniti sebi razmišljanje o posljedicama, ne želeći da zna za njih? Eto, izgleda da može. Nagon nas brani potpunim zaboravom, da bi nas spasio od mučenja zbog odgovornosti. Sve sam predao u tuđe ruke … Ako je tako, a drugog objašnjenja nema, onda je čovjek prilično prljav stvor, čak i kad nije svjestan svojih postupaka. Jer, neće da ih bude svjestan! … Tako je moja pristrana misao, moj uporni branilac, tražila nova olakšanja za moju savjest" (ibid., 292-293).

separation of male normativity from queerness, material dependence on his wife, and a reliance on male camaraderie. In the next section in particular, my focus is on the radicality with which *The Fortress* drives a wedge between its normative protagonist and its queer antagonist, the irredeemable and power-hungry Džemal Zafranija. During a reception with the town's elite, the sudden conflict with Džemal will end up cementing Šabo's position as an irrecuperable social bottom feeder and trigger a whole avalanche of events that form the bulk of the novel's plot.

6.2. The Buggers' Den

Džemal Zafranija is most heavily featured in the novel's chapter "Enemy's land" which revolves around the crucial scene of Šabo's reception with the town's elite. After a lengthy process of coaxing, Šabo's boss, the notary Mullah Ibrahim, finally manages to get the city's powerholders to invite him and Šabo to one of their fabled reception parties. Ibrahim's goal would be, in today's vocabulary, networking: he aims to establish lucrative connections with the local elite. Just before arriving to the party, Šabo's mood is fouled by an encounter with Muharem the flag-bearer, once a soldier, now a beggar. The episode signals the same sentiments we have already seen in *Death and the Dervish*, namely post-war disenchantment, and the waning glory of former war heroes: "I gave him some small change, feeling ashamed: ashamed because I was going to the dinner. It was his place to be there, not mine. Before and above all others[188]" (ibid., 54).

Šabo's agitation grows exponentially upon arriving to the party and meeting his former schoolmate Džemal Zafranija. There are many unnerving qualities to Džemal. His general

[188] "Dao sam mu nešto sitniša, stideći se. Stidio sam se što mu dajem milostinju, stidio sam se što idem na sijelo. Njemu je mjesto tamo, a ne meni. Mjesto mu je prije svih koji dolaze" (Selimović 1988, 56).

sneakiness and unreliability are signaled in his bodily properties. Almost blind, Džemal squinted through glasses, "but he used his ears as eyes[189]" (ibid., 60). He is alarmingly kind and courteous, perennially smiling and sweettalking. Šabo's dislike for this disquieting man reaches back to their schooldays in the madrassa and is now amplified by the fact that Džemal works as a notary for the *kadi*, the magistrate. Džemal's ambitiousness is something Šabo finds repulsive, even though he does exhibit some sort of sympathy for Džemal's childhood hardships:

> He was like water. He'd no form of his own; he'd adapt himself to any vessel he was poured into. Nothing disgusted him if it was useful, for he had one and only one aim in life: to succeed, to escape the memories of a poverty-stricken childhood and of a father who was a prison warder, a drunk who'd spy for anybody, who died despised by everybody, and whose son turned even this family tragedy to his own advantage … He was calm, self-controlled, dangerous. He knew how much people feared him, and he enjoyed this with a smile of satisfaction[190]. (Ibid., 61-61)

Džemal's ambition and thirst for power are where his life history and sexuality meet. Already tipsy when he encounters him at the reception, Šabo makes an innuendo regarding Džemal's homosexuality as "this man's only vice":

> I recalled what was being said of him, half-laughingly and half-admiringly. Namely that for a year h'd been the lover of the rich haznadar Feyzo, partly in order to have a powerful protector but mainly because he wanted to marry Feyzo's daughter, who would bring him a fair dowry … But I knew one thing: he disgusted me. His smile made me sick. I wanted him to go, which is why I made my remark[191]. (Ibid., 62)

[189] "Tada je, ne žureći, iz srednje sobe izašao Džemal Zafranija, s naočarima, koje mu nisu mnogo koristile, ali je gledao sluhom, koji ga je odlično služio" (ibid., 61).

[190] "Sličan je vodi, nema svoga oblika, prilagođava se sudu u koji ga naspu. Ništa mu nije gadno ako mu je korisno, jer je imao jedan jedini cilj u životu: da uspije, da pobjegne od uspomene na sirotinjsko djetinjstvo i na oca zatvorskog stražara, pijanicu i svačijeg špijuna, koji je umro prezren, a sin mu je i tu obiteljsku nesreću pretvorio u svoju korist, igrajući žrtvu … Bio je miran, odmjeren, opasan, znao je koliko ga se ljudi plaše i, smiješeći se, uživao je u tome" (ibid., 61-62).

[191] Sjetio sam se kako o njemu govore, sa smiješkom i gotovo s priznanjem, da je već godinu dana ljubavnik bogatog haznadara Fejze, nešto zato da bi imao moćnog zaštitnika, a najviše zato što je htio da se oženi njegovom kćerkom mirazušom. … Ali znam da mi je gadan, mučno mi je od njegova osmijeha, želio sam da ode, zato sam ga vrijeđao" (ibid., 62).

Following Šabo's provocation, the two men engage in a short back-and-forth about the nature of vice and evil that culminates when Džemal asks Šabo:

> "You mean that everybody has the job of deciding what's good and what's evil?"
> "Everybody! And no evil can become good just because the majority accept it."
> "Is defense evil? Defense of one's faith, for instance?"
> "Defense is often aggression[192]." (Ibid., 63)

Unbeknownst to Šabo, now quite overtaken with his alcohol-fueled moralizing, Džemal slowly walks him over to the central room where most of the guest have gathered. Džemal then falsely warns him that he is lucky the reception guests – "our best people" – have not heard his words about defending the faith. Enraged, Šabo replies:

> "Best? Did you see the *bayraktar*[193] Muharem on your way here? The best people are probably those who are starving, or dying in prisons".
>
> Then I noticed, by the look of delight that he tried to conceal with apparent embarrassment and by the sudden deathly silence, that he desired nothing more than that I should say this! That was why he'd led me into the middle room, without my noticing. That was why he'd encouraged me, counting on my drunked pride that I'd blurt it all out, like a fool[194]. (Ibid., 64)

Unable to stop himself, Šabo gives a little speech about the futility of war and the way his comrades, and thousands of others, perished in battlefields that had little to do with them. He then concludes: "And if they'd come back, they'd probably have had to beg, like *bayraktar* Muharem. It's not enough to think only of our own good"[195] (ibid., 65).

[192] "- Hoćeš da kažeš da svatko određuje što je dobro, što zlo?
- Svatko! I nijedno zlo ne može postati dobro, zato što ga prihvaća većina.
- Da li je i obrana zlo? Obrana vjere, na primjer?
- Obrana je često napad". (ibid., 63)

[193] Flagbearer.

[194] "- 'Najbolji? Jesi li vidio bajraktara Muharema kad si dolazio ovamo? Najbolji možda gladuju, ili umiru po tamnicama'.
Tada sam primijetio, po njegovom likovanju koje je skrivao tobožnjom nelagodnošću, I po grobnoj tišini što je nastala odjednom, da on ništa drugo nije ni želio nego da ja ovo kažem! Zato me doveo u srednju sobu, a ja to nisam ni primijetio, zato me poticao, računajući na moj pijani ponos, da se istrtljam kao budala" (ibid.).

[195] "A da su se vratili, možda bi prosili, kao Muharem bajraktar. Nije dobro ako mislimo samo na svoje dobro" (ibid., 64).

The repercussions to Šabo's mindless outburst will be swift and grave, afflicting his personal and public life alike, causing him getting effectually socially ostracized. I will go into more detail on the reception's consequences in the next section of this chapter. For now, I wish to focus a bit more on Džemal as a *telling man,* especially the way in which he connects to the novel's previously analyzed dichotomy between strategy/power/corruption and simple-mindedness/action. If Šabo personifies the moral side of this dichotomy, Džemal personifies its dark, corruptible counterpoint.

Šabo's judgment over Džemal is moralistic in nature and repeatedly enveloped in visceral disgust. At the moment he realizes just what sort of calamity he has brought upon himself by inadvertently offending the city's elite, Šabo thinks to himself about Džemal:

> Damn him for the bugger he was! He'd made an ass of me, as a whore would. Beware of pederasts, Smail Sovo used to say, or perhaps it was somebody else. I'd got to ascribing everything to dead comrades. And that somebody had also said: Those who don't hide it, they're not so bad, but those who do are the worst shit of all. Why did I have to prove it on myself![196] (Ibid., 66-67)

Needless to say, every queer and queer-friendly reader of *The Fortress* must have been thoroughly startled with such blatantly homophobic discourse coming from the author who was, as we have seen in the previous chapter, capable of writing the most exquisitely lyrical celebrations of male friendship and emotional closeness. However, instead of speculating about the degree of the author's own homophobia – which would, in itself, be an anachronistic and moralistic move, – I suggest Šabo's homophobic disgust should be analyzed for its broader political importance in the context of *The Fortress'* central problematics.

[196] "Dušu mu njegovu pedersku, baš me kurvinski namagarči. Čuvaj se pederasta, govorio je Smail Sovo, ili možda netko drugi, sve počinjem da pripisujem poginulim drugovima. I još je govorio, taj netko: Oni, što se ne kriju, još i nekako, al oni što se kriju, to je najgori skot. Pa kud baš na sebi da se uvjerim!" (Selimović 1988, 65).

As Sarah Ahmed (2010) argued, the affect of disgust operates in the immediacy of the contact zone between subject and object, with the disgusting object carrying on its surface a history of its own "badness", triggering the subject to pull away from its stickiness:

> The body recoils from the object; it pulls away with an intense movement that registers in the pit of the stomach. The movement is the work of disgust; it is what disgust does. Disgust brings the body perilously close to an object only then to pull away from the object in the registering of the proximity as an offence. (85)

Disgust is thus almost an alarm system that blares against the viral quality of bad objects, against their ability to stick to us, to turn us bad as well. It is precisely disgust with Džemal's sexual proclivities that defends Šabo from being seduced by his sweettalking.

Džemal, Šabo's peer of similarly humble origins, can be seen as Šabo's antipode. Voluntarily accepting strategizing and scheming as ways of ascending the social ladder, Džemal ultimately surrenders himself willfully to corruption. This corruption makes him do unimaginable things such as using brute violence and even murder against those who endanger or oppose him. Male queerness and corruption are synonymized here since Džemal's political and economic power is directly connected to his love affair with the wealthy merchant Fejzo. Of note in this regard is a scene in which, in complete opposition to Džemal, Šabo refuses to become Fejzo's sexual object as means of ameliorating his position. The following example will underline not just the way in which morality and heterosexuality become synonymous in Šabo's case, but also the way in which the novel echoes its time of writing.

Following the disastrous reception, Šabo engages in a series of desperate attempts to shed the newly acquired status of the social pariah. During one such attempt, Šabo visits Fejzo the merchant, Džemal's protector and lover. Fejzo welcomes Šabo to his shadowy carpet-adorned and incense-scented shop. Although the merchant immediately proceeds to caress and smell Šabo's palms, it takes some time before Šabo realizes what Fejzo is truly proposing to

him. Fejzo is a figure compiled out of sheer excess and triviality, completely overtaken by consumption of goods and men, spoiled by carnal pleasure. Fejzo offers Šabo the keys to his shop and his "friendship". It is only then that it dawns on Šabo what is actually happening, and he asks the merchant if Džemal frequents his abode:

> "He does. Often. We're great friends."
> "Was it you who got him the job with the kadi?"
> "I like to help people. Especially my friends. And I'll help you."
> "And does [Džemal] know how to enjoy himself?"
> "He does. Indeed, he does![197]" (Selimović 1999, 100)

Before abruptly leaving the lusty merchant's shop, Šabo spills his disgust:

> He spoke more and more quietly, in a muffled voice, bringing his face so close to mine that I felt his breath damp and hot, and his hand sought mine and stroked it ever more softly.
>
> I saw that things were getting serious, and they were none of my making, and I thought: Should I strike him across his trembling chops, so he'd remember the day he brought me into his stinking lair? Or should I get out of it without a quarrel, safely? I'd had enough of hatred and conflict[198]. (Ibid.)

On a final note, Šabo asks Fejzo whether there are many of these "friends" who help each other out, to which the merchant replies: "Come and see for yourself. We don't desert one another"[199] (ibid). Despite the straightforward portrayal of his homosexuality, Fejzo is by no means a simplistic figure since he, as I will now analyze, reflects an amalgamation of Orientalist tropes and Yugoslav Partisan sexual ethics.

Historian Franko Dota (2018) recently demonstrated that Yugoslav Communist Party promoted a strict moral comportment among their members both in their official roles and

[197]"- Dolazi. Često. Veliki smo prijatelji.
- Ti si ga i namjestio kod kadije?
- Volim da pomognem ljudima. Pogotovu ako su mi prijatelji. I tebi ću pomoći.
- A Zafranija, i on zna da uživa?
- Zna. Oh, zna" (Selimović 1988: 91).

[198] "Govorio je sve tiše, sve muklije, unoseći mi se u lice da sam mu dah osjećao, dah vlažan i vreo, a ruka mu je tražila moju, i gladila je sve mekše. Vidim, šale više nema, a nisam je ja ni započinjao, i mislim: da ili da ga udarim po drhtavim gubicama, da zapamti kad me je doveo u ovo svoje smrdljivo leglo, ili da se nekako izvučem bez svađe i bez štete, dosta mi je sukoba i mržnje" (ibid.).

[199] "Dođi, uvjeri se. Mi ne ostavljamo na cjedilu jedan drugoga" (ibid.).

private lives. As an answer to European conservatives' and Fascist propaganda during the interwar years that sought to taint their opponents' image in every aspect[200], Communist sexual politics was one of the ways in which the Party fought to maintain a spotless picture of the brave, self-restrained and virtuous Communist fighter. Josip Broz Tito was writing already in the 1930s about the importance of a Communist's control over their private life:

> Every single member of the Party has to be impeccable in his private life. His political work cannot be separated from his personal life. This is a paramount condition that a communist has to fulfil in order to gain the trust of the masses. Disheartened men, drunks, blabbermouths, *debauchers* etc. have no place in the Party. (Josip Broz Tito, quoted in Dota 2018, 130; original emphasis)

The Party was thus given the power of surveillance over its members' private lives and punishing those who have committed trespasses such as adultery. It is of note that Selimović himself felt the severity of the Party's strictness when he was expelled from the Communist Party for having committed adultery. The Party's intrusiveness and policing left an indelible mark in Selimović's memory[201] and there is a distinct autobiographical connection between the kinds of hardships Tijana and Šabo have to endure and Selimović's life with his second wife, Darka (*See more* Selimović 1976, 224-230). There were also other, more severe punishments for sexual trespassing, especially for queer men, and Selimović must have been familiar with some of them, including the rationale and ideologemes fueling the persecution of homosexual men.

Dota (2017) reconstructed two striking examples of Yugoslav Partisan wartime dealings with male homosexuality. In 1944, a prominent Partisan communication officer was

[200] In the interwar period, European conservative and fascist political movements attempted to contain the Bolshevik revolutionary turmoil within Soviet borders by, for instance, depicting communists as sexual offenders, libertines, promoters of "free love" and abortion, and destroyers of the traditional family (Herzog 2011, 49).

[201] In his memoirs, Selimović recalled: "Members of the organization, and especially comradesses, asked me reproachable, distastefully indiscreet questions ('What exactly did you talk about? Did you kiss? What else did you do?' etc.) When I had enough, I angrily said: 'If you think you'd have your way with me, think twice.' I left the meeting embittered. I was expelled from the Party, and later got fired from my job" (Selimović 1978, 223-224).

court-martialed, sentenced to death, and executed by a firing squad for having maintained homosexual relations with his subordinates and thus, as was stated in the verdict, corrupting them. His verdict was sent to all Partisan units and read aloud to the fighters, making his case a well-known cautionary tale (65). The other story comes from the memoirs of Milovan Đilas, one of the leaders of antifascist movement in Yugoslavia, who recounted his dilemma on what was to be done with a young Muslim Partisan fighter, who was outed as a homosexual. Đilas, upon serious consideration, thought it wisest to expel this young man from the Party, and was later happy to hear that the youth has bravely perished in the battlefield. When confronted with his "vice", the youth admitted having been corrupted by a wealthy bey in his adolescence, a piece of information that somewhat ameliorated his position with his superiors. Dota (2018) concludes:

> In the early to mid-20th century, some communist and leftist circles believed that homosexuality stemmed from a decadent and aberrant social order, that it represented bourgeois individualism and aristocratic hedonism, and was completely at odds with the interests of the morally and physically healthy working classes … [Đilas] was seemingly also convinced that homosexuality was, at least in some instances, a consequence of privileged men seducing naive and pure peasant or working-class adolescents. (132)

As Dota demonstrates, Đilas' story is embedded with an Orientalist ideologeme, at the time widespread in Yugoslavia and the Balkans in general (and, as we have seen in the previous chapters, Europe as a whole), that ascribed "the vice of sodomy" to the Ottomans' moral and sexual corruption of local poor peasantry (Dota 2018; *see more* Škokić 2011). Furthermore, the idea of a youth-defiling bey also taps into a vulgarized version of Marx's and Engels' writings on homosexuality, popular among the leftist circles in the first half of the 20th century, that "believed that homosexuality stemmed from a decadent and aberrant social order, that it represented bourgeois individualism and aristocratic hedonism, and was completely at odds with the interests of the morally and physically healthy working classes" (Dota 2018, 132). Finally, to counterweight both their enemies propaganda and their own understanding of the

link between class exploitation and sexual corruption, the Partisans developed a strict understanding of sacrosanct masculinity:

> In their aspirations and efforts towards a revolutionary transformation of society, communists were expected to provide a role model for the people. Masculinity, moral impeccability and the fighting strength of soldiers, officers and heroes of the National Liberation War (NOR) became items of national awareness and patriotic concern, a component of a new culture of worshipping Partisan and communist moral and physical (male) superiority. (ibid., 130-131)

We can see both ideas at play in *The Fortress'* depiction of homosexuality. On the one hand, Šabo's disgust at Džemal Zafranija's and Fejzo's sexual proclivities are framed by a reconfirmation of his own sexual and gender normativity and, hence, impeccable moral authority, virtual incorruptibility, and absence of any decadence. On the other hand, Džemal and Fejzo's relationship is constructed around the notion of a poor youth (Džemal) and a debauched wealthy man (Fejzo) who seeks carnal pleasure at no expense. And on top of it all, Fejzo is described in distinctly Orientalist overtones so as to differentiate his "Turkish vice" from Džemal's more opportunistic motives for a homosexual liaison. In fact, as Šabo voices the town's gossip, it is often presumed that Džemal beds Fejzo only to acquire the old man's protection and marry his daughter for dowry (Selimović 1999, 62).

This is another of the novel's indicative anachronisms that reconnects the novel to the time of its writing and its parabolic criticism of Socialist Yugoslavia's political elite. When compared to Milovan Đilas' story about a youth corrupted by a bey, *The Fortress* presents us with traditional elements of Yugoslav Orientalist *and* Marxist/Partisan popular imaginings of homosexuality. Selimović's contemporary readers must have been familiar not only with the older notion of the "Turkish vice" and all it entailed, but have also had no problems in recognizing the discursive juxtaposition of normative, manly and impeccable militaristic sexuality and ethics with a debauched, hedonist, corruptible world of sexually deprived wealthy

entrepreneurs[202]. The totality of Šabo's moral condemnation of Džemal can be understood here as based in the contempt for the way in which Džemal compromises his healthy working class masculinity by engaging in homosexual relations with an older rich man. Džemal subsequently becomes part of a closeted homosexual lobby and a bolt in the city's autocratic power mechanism. This sexual facet of the squinty intellectual thus solidifies him as the embodiment of the corruption and corruptibility of power that Šabo, as we have seen in the previous section, equates with cowardly strategizing.

As a consequence, the novel's homosocial universe splits into two distinct networks. One is a perverted hierarchy marked by strategizing and fear, corruption and excess, inauthenticity, and homosexuality, and is centrally represented by Džemal. The other is an ostensible camaraderie of men who lean on each other, while excluding every possibility of queer desires, and celebrating masculine normativity as a means to potentially usher in a better future. Before attending to this utopian camaraderie of normative men in the final section of this chapter, I wish to first analyze the ways in which Šabo's marriage with Tijana further reflects Šabo's contradictive narration, as discussed in section one, and introduces Tijana as a contrapuntal and critical voice at odds with the novel's exaltation of normative masculinity.

6.3. The Fortress of Love

Following his disastrous conflict with Džemal at the reception, Šabo loses his job and effectively becomes a social outcast. As the invisible influence of the offended elite seeks vengeance, Šabo's future prospects suddenly become utterly grim and hopeless. As Kasim Prohić (1988) noted, the logic of this incremental political retribution aims to demonstrate its victim both his own powerlessness *and* the magnitude of the ruling elite's powerfulness (47).

[202] The fact that nothing was ever mentioned about homosexuality in reception is hardly surprising given the fact that most of Yugoslav-era interpretations of Selimović effectively erased all of the novel's subversive aspects and read it only through the more detached and apolitical prism as a "universal parable" (*see more* Kazaz 2010b).

However, Šabo himself becomes more and more at peace with his despondency. In fact, he comes to embrace it as yet another chance to remain exterior to the morally corrupting nature of power. As Selimović scholarship has noted, if we can talk about a political program on the behalf of Šabo, it is one of a deliberate self-exemption from the world affairs in an attempt to, as Petrović (1981) put it, "float freely [as a consequence of] establishing a markedly casual relation with the world" (118).

What makes this possible for him, I argue, is a process of renegotiation of his gendered self, especially with regards to partaking in hegemonic masculinity. What I mean by this is that the processes of supplanting action for strategizing *and* embracing a willingness to live a powerless life depend on an underlying acceptance of effective social emasculation. In a nutshell, Šabo's preservation of his morality, heavily romanticized both by the novel and its critical reception, ultimately depends on his acceptance of becoming existentially dependent on his wife, Tijana.

Šabo's marriage to Tijana, a poor Christian woman and a proud daughter of a man executed for his political stances, is perhaps the only relationship described completely idealistically in the whole novel and reflecting many of the novel's overall characteristics, including autobiographical elements and anachronisms[203]. In Šabo's account of his wife there is nothing akin to the *Death and the Dervish's* high-brow, often misogynistic musings and lyrical fantasies. Šabo's affection mostly belongs to the realm of cheap sentimentalism and

[203] Critics have pointed out that Tijana's and Šabo's marriage potentially dramatizes certain events from Selimović's own marital life, for instance his hardships following his move to Belgrade after losing his job at the University of Sarajevo, and reflect Selimović's marriage with a Christian woman. At several instances in the novel, Šabo is explicitly marginalized because of his interfaith marriage, something that, as Robert Hodel (2011, 155) noted, connects him both to the *Dervish's* Hasan and the author himself. Furthermore, Wachtel (2010) demonstrated that Šabo's and Tijana's interfaith marriage is also quite anachronistic. Apart from being an uncommon practice in the time *The Fortress* takes place, when people of different religions did marry, the wife would usually convert to her husband's religion, which Tijana does not. On the other hand, interfaith marriage was quite common at the time the novel was written. In fact, it was a particular socialist-era Bosnian phenomenon, one that was "not only common in Titoist Yugoslavia, but in fact supported by the state" as a strategy to undo national separatism (Jakiša 2009, 252).

tacky adoration, especially evident in his infantilizing descriptions of Tijana. For instance: "It was an eternal pity that I couldn't buy presents every day, all sorts of presents, just to see her eyes gleaming with delight like a child's[204]" (Selimović 1999, 91) or "Her eyes were moist with sleep, her lips swollen like those of a child[205]" (ibid., 199). Šabo has moments of telling self-awareness with regards to his feelings for Tijana when her image before the reader is self-critically revealed as the narrator's own construct:

> I needed this woman, my entire world, to admire and to feel my power over her. I'd created her, as a savage creates his idol, to stand above his cave fire, his defense from thunder, enemies, wild beasts, people, the heavens, and loneliness, from whom he might seek the usual things but also demand the impossible, feel ecstasy, but also bitterness, whom he might both thank and scold, ever aware that, without it, his fears would be unbearable, his hopes without foundation, his joys without permanence[206]. (Ibid., 164)

Šabo's idealizations were oftentimes uncritically reproduced in the literary reception of the novel, with Tijana figuring as the center of Šabo's domestic bliss, a sanctuary from the deprived outside world, his "fortress of familial love" (Prohić 1988, 72). Similarly, Enver Kazaz (2004) noted that *The Fortress* "retouches the *Dervish's* bleak vision of the world through a lyrically elated story about love" (198). Aldijana Šišić's (1997) feminist reading, however, purposefully introduced a distinction between "Tijana as a real woman" and "Šabo's vision of Tijana" in order to circumvent the novel's idealizations and focus on the ways in which Tijana remains subdued by the patriarchal social system:

> As a real woman, Tijana is an impoverished Christian woman married to an impoverished Muslim man. Responsive to the reality of their life and its difficulties, Tijana works and earns money to support her husband and herself. Even though she is the breadwinner, according to her traditional role, she continues to please her husband

[204] "Vječna je šteta što ne mogu da kupujem poklone svaki dan, svakakve, zbog njenih očiju obasjanih oduševljenjem, kao u djeteta" (Selimović 1988, 84).
[205] "Crna kosa joj je rasuta po jastuku, oči joj vlažne od sna, usne nabubrile kao u djeteta" (ibid., 165).
[206] "Ova žena, cijeli moj svijet, potrebna mi je da joj se divim i da nad njom osjetim svoju moć. Stvorio sam je kao divljak svoga kumira, da mu stoji iznad pećinske vatre, zaštita od groma, neprijatelja, zvijeri, ljudi, neba, samoće, da traži od njega obične stvari ali da zahtijeva i nemoguće, da osjeća oduševljenje ali i ogorčenje, da se zahvaljuje i da grdi, uvijek svjestan da bi mu bez njega strahovi bili preteški, nade bez korijena, radosti bez trajanja" (ibid., 139).

> by making sure that their troubles do not trouble him. And all of that in order to save his "muško dostojanstvo [male dignity]". (Šišić 1997, 126)

Once disinvested from Šabo's idealizations, Šišić demonstrated, Tijana can be read as a hardworking and opinionated woman who, nonetheless, voices her dissatisfaction with her marital life only once. In one of the novel's most revealing and arguably most beautiful passages, Tijana reveals the thoroughly alienating and confining nature of her everyday existence. Far from being happy in what Šabo thinks of as their domestic haven, Tijana's thoughts and feelings are marred by suppressed anger and profound sadness caused by isolation and her husband's disinterestedness. Instead of taking her complaints about feeling lonely and neglected seriously, "Šabo instantly feels under attack. His reaction immediately unmasks a traditional, patriarchal man who is very unsympathetic to his wife's complaints" (ibid., 127).

More recently, Zvonko Kovač (2016) has argued that Šabo's and Tijana's love story is framed as the relationship between the implicit author and the implicit reader. This framework is most visible, according to Kovač, in instances in which the novel thematizes the establishment of trust between Šabo and Tijana. One such situation is when Šabo tells Tijana about the wartime rape he witnessed as a young soldier:

> It is as if the narrative as a representation of a love story (as an event or a series of events), and not just love as the novel's motif or a theme … contains a certain duality, a certain inner contradiction within which the complex issues of love and friendship are viewed from a dual perspective – that of the implicit author and that of the implicit listener, reader (for the most part positioned in the female character). (Kovač 2016, 108)

While Šišić argued that Tijana functioned as yet another in a series of Selimović's voiceless female characters, I also want to explore the way in which Tijana's takeover of the responsibility of materially sustaining her husband enables the novel's self-avowed central theme – Šabo's allegedly intact morality – to completely develop. And unlike Kovač who ultimately sees their marriage as a proper love story, I want to argue that *The Fortress* can also

be read in a much darker way. Specifically, the novel continually voices Tijana's critique of Šabo's actions and allows Šabo to overwrite them before the reader's eyes. Moreover, the novel ends with Tijana increasingly isolated and house-bound, exposed to Šabo's irrational jealousy and possessiveness. My argument here is that the marriage story reveals the same contradictory and unreliable aspects of Šabo's storytelling that I have analyzed in the first section as being part and parcel of his attempt to preserve his moral high ground. From a broader perspective, the dynamics between Tijana and Šabo illustrate two specifically gendered aspects of the novel. First, in the rest of this section, I wish to focus on the connection between Šabo's renegotiation of his masculinity following his social ostracization and his material dependence on Tijana. This will allow me to move to the other point in the next section, namely the constraints male camaraderie promises to impose on women and queer men, as exemplified by Tijana's destiny.

Tijana oftentimes reassures her husband's masculinity threatened by his inability to procure a steady income or a nicer home, despite herself being somewhat disillusioned with their circumstances. Although Šabo, as we have previously seen, espouses poverty as an ethical way to live, Tijana seems more realistic. Šabo goes to great lengths in order to convince himself (and the reader) that they are both at peace with their growing destitution, proclaiming succinctly at one point that both Tijana and him "were unfitted for life, but in a lighthearted way that caused us no worry[207]" (Selimović 1999, 165). However, he is also (at least implicitly and partly, or even unconsciously) aware that Tijana is not as at ease with "their" inaptitude for life as he would have it. For instance, as much as Šabo romanticizes their poor apartment, Tijana is sometimes profoundly unsettled by the squalor they live in, yet decides not to upset her husband by complaining. For instance, unlike Šabo, Tijana is repeatedly upset with their home being infested by cockroaches, but readily makes up unconvincing excuses for her dismay:

[207] "I Tijana i ja smo nesposobni za život, ali na nekakav lak način koji nas ne zabrinjava" (Selimović 1988, 140).

Sometimes I'd wake up and find her sitting up in bed, embracing her knees.

"What's the matter?"

"Nothing."

"Are you in pain?"

"It's nothing. Go to sleep."

"You're in a funny mood tonight."

"I'm happy tonight."

I accepted her reason, because I wanted to go to sleep, but the next day I wondered: Does happiness keep one awake[208]? (Ibid., 50)

Moreover, it is Tijana who, among other things, does all the grocery shopping, cleaning and cooking, fights bugs, mends clothing, and survives a miscarriage. This contradicts her being as "inept" for life as her husband thinks, the same husband who loses a job, misguidedly invests and then loses all their money and destroys their joint prospects of economic independence by falling into a trap set up by Džemal at the reception. Not only does Tijana try to warn him about his often erratic actions, but subsequently also becomes the household's sole provider, first as a handmaid to a local wealthy woman, and afterwards as a self-taught seamstress, all the while reassuring her husband's challenged sense of masculine self-worth:

"It's not your fault," she'd comfort me. "And I'm not working for somebody else, but for us"

Or she'd scold me whenever I hung my head in depression. "Oh dear, how terrible, his wife has to feed him! Come on, don't be silly. It's not as if I'm doing something bad[209]." (Ibid., 160)

[208] "Budio sam se ponekad, i zaticao je kako sjedi u postelji, obuhvativši koljena rukama.
- Što ti je?
- Ništa.
- Boli li te štogod?
- Ne boli. Spavaj.
- Čudna si večeras.
- Sretna sam večeras.
Prihvatio sam taj razlog, jer mi se spavalo, ali sam se sutradan pitao, zar se i od sreće ne spava" (Selimović 1988, 53).

[209] "- Nisi ti kriv - umirivala me. - A ne radim za tuđina, nego za nas.
Ili me grdila kad bih objesio nos, pokunjen:
- Eh, bože, velike li nesreće, žena ga hrani! Hajde, molim te, ne budi smiješan. Radim li štogod ružno?" (ibid., 136).

Finally, whereas Šabo's intellect and wits are constantly questioned by his friends and enemies alike, Tijana is often marveled by others for her intelligence. Šabo's benevolent crooked business partner, Mahmut Neretljak, points out at several instances that Tijana is smarter than her husband. She is also brave, opinionated and vocal. She is the only character that stands up to the nosy inspector Avdaga, alongside Džemal, the novel's principal antagonist, and brings up the taboo topic of her father's politically motivated execution.

Thus, as Šabo disavows and disengages from intellectual strategizing, labor and political conflict, Tijana is left with no choice but to take over these, as the novel would have it, unappealing and worldly aspects of life. It is here that the novel inadvertently provides the reader with its own potentially oppositional reading. Instead of only celebrating the morality of Šabo's antisocial cocooning and disengagement with power structures, we are also witnessing Tijana engaging out of necessity with the very spheres of social life her husband seeks to distance himself from. Tijana is thus not only the breadwinner, but assumes a tacit political role inasmuch as she, as we have seen, talks truth to power. This is, of course, not to say that the novel allows for her role to come across as proto-feminist or even emancipated. She is ultimately depicted primarily by her willingness to care for Šabo, and more often than not this entails hiding away her true opinions and subduing her resistance. Her speech is mostly glossed over by Šabo's banal patriarchal reinterpretations of her dissent, and her point of view is, finally, never made central, and is instead eclipsed by her husband's perspective. However, Tijana's underlying qualities, like her hardworking nature and intelligence, fundamentally enable the novel's central thematic axis to unfold: Šabo's project of keeping his morality intact by retreating from the irredeemably corrupted world. Therefore, Šabo's project is hinged upon what we could call *de-hegemonizing* his masculinity. However, the novel also runs a parallel process of Šabo's increasing reliance on a male camaraderie. This process, as we will see in

the next section, ultimately reframes Šabo's relationship with Tijana. Importantly, Tijana provides a telling critical account of this camaraderie. When she complains about her isolation and loneliness, and just before Šabo writes off her concerns as a pregnant woman's whim, the novel voices Tijana's worries as follows:

> She'd given up everything that she was, forgotten her family, put aside everything to which she was accustomed, lost contact with friends and acquaintances, and all for my sake. I'd given up nothing. I could go out, I had my own friends, my own worries that were not hers, since I hid them. I was away all day, heaven alone knew where I was and what I was doing. I kept and observed all my customs. … Why hadn't she said anything? Did she have to say everything? Couldn't I see for myself? I cared about Mahmut, about Ramiz, about Shehaga, but I didn't care about her[210]. (Ibid., 264-265)

6.4. The Solace of Camaraderie

It has been noted that Šabo's vocabulary explicitly sets up an "us" and "them" differentiation in delineating the world of corrupted power by using third person plural and animalistic terms such as "beasts" or "wild animals" when describing the powerholders (Dedović 2012, 137). In the following, final section of this chapter, I will focus on the homosocial dynamics between a group of characters that form the "us" from Šabo's perspective. Alongside him, these men are Mahmut Neretljak, Šabo's borderline kleptomaniac business partner, a benevolent con artist and jack-of-all-trades, specializing in often comedic attempts at earning money fast; Šehaga Sočo, an immensely rich local merchant and a bereaved father of a son executed for military desertion; and Osman Vuk, Šehaga's rugged, beautiful, and undyingly devoted foreman. Together, I argue, these characters spearhead the novel's politically utopian horizon by

[210] "Odrekla se svega što je bila, zaboravila rodbinu, zaturila sve na što je navikla, pogubila prijatelje i poznanike, a sve zbog mene. Ja se nisam odrekao ničega svoga. Ja izlazim, imam svoje društvo, svoje brige koje nisu njene, jer ih krijem, nema me po cijeli dan, bogzna kuda lunjam i što radim, sve svoje znam i držim … Zašto nije rekla? Zar mora sve da kaže? Zar ne mogu sam da vidim? Ja se brinem o Mahmutu, o Ramizu, o Šehagi, a o njoj ne vodim računa" (ibid., 214).

opposing the violent powerholders through a formation of a chain of solidarity or, in other words, a veritable camaraderie.

I use the term "camaraderie" for two reasons. First, I find it necessary to differentiate the kinds of male bonds established in this novel from other homosocial relations analyzed earlier in the thesis. First and foremost, I find it indispensable to differentiate it from the kind of male friendship that has been the focus of my previous chapter on Selimović's *Death and the Dervish*. Unlike the tumultuous, intellectual, and at times dangerously homoerotic friendship between the main characters in the *Dervish*, the linkages established between *The Fortress'* male characters arise mostly out of necessity and remain safe from murky desires and overbearing intimacy. Whether during traumatic wartime experiences or in a joint attempt to survive the disappointing reality of postwar poverty, Šabo and men surrounding him forge bonds of mutual solidarity and help. These bonds aim not only at enabling survival in dire circumstances, but also at transforming the social and political fabric at large. It is within this context that their relative homosocial horizontality – or, in other words, deliberate non-hierarchical structure – actively opposes the hierarchical, vertical structure of the political elite. Most poignantly embodied, as we have seen, by the unscrupulous and perverted social climber Džemal Zafranija, the acceptance of the hierarchy's logic entails a voluntary compromising of masculine virtues and, at times, sexuality. *The Fortress'* horizontal homosociality, on the other hand, is a form of camaraderie that, as I will demonstrate, exempts itself from the power corruption, preserves male self-esteem and mutual acceptance, and anticipates a post-corruption world.

The second reason for using the term "camaraderie" is that it echoes back to Selimović's own life and times. As discussed earlier, the tropology of Communist sexual politics is recognizable in the novel's differentiation between the excesses of power and perversion on the one hand, and self-restrained and sacrosanct virility on the other. In this sense,

"camaraderie" points both towards the kind of collective guerrilla-style, makeshift tactics of survival, and the deep sense of respect Selimović held for the many selfless, grounded and self-sacrificing Partisan fighters he met during WWII (*see more* Selimović 1976, 110-166).

I will now focus on the specifics of normative men's interconnectedness and relations that launch camaraderie as a political countercurrent to the elite. This ostensible homosocial countercurrent is based in mutual solidarity that is all the more subversive when considering the fact that it occasionally blows heavy hits to power structures. The utopian character of male relations was first noted by the critic Miodrag Petrović (1981) who described Šabo, Mullah Ibrahim and Mahmut Neretljak as forming the novel's "humane social space, a possibility of such a space":

> This space constantly buckles and cracks under the pressure of social repression, yet each time it regenerates anew, drawing its strength from a constant human necessity to dream about dignified life. This humane social space – outside every sanctioned norm – is at the same time both real and utopian. All the world's class powers aim to extinguish this seed of human hope. (151)

Petrović also read their interconnectedness as representing passive resistance or resilience arising from a sort of emasculated position: "Unable to resist it as men [na muški način] yet convinced in the truthfulness of their own vision of justice, they [Šabo, Ibrahim and Mahmut Neretljak] stand their ground" (ibid.). While preserving the notion of resistance, what I want to emphasize in my reading, however, is the *active* nature of mutual help and solidarity between men, rather than their unyielding passivity. Furthermore, as I will analyze below, camaraderie also implicates people of significant means, such as Šehaga, rather than being characteristic only of impoverished men.

A crucial example of male solidarity is Šabo's relationship with Mahmut Neretljak. Once he overhears Mahmut teaching a group of local children gibberish instead of Arabic, Šabo, who actually knows the language, offers his help to Mahmut for free. On the other hand,

it is Mahmut who finds Šabo beaten up and soiled by Džemal's thugs after the reception, brings him home and helps Tijana wash and bandage him. After Šabo recounts how another passerby had just left him wounded in the ditch, Mahmut replies:

> Nobody likes to get involved, my dear Ahmet. It's easier to run away than to help. Why should one waste time having to go to court and be a witness? To be honest, they're right. Come on, lean on me. There, you see, that could be another bother: taking those you find on the street home.[211] (Selimović 1999, 69)

Following his ostracism from the community, both Šabo and Tijana, despite her work, begin to rely increasingly on Mahmut's help. Although he has a kleptomaniac habit of stealing insignificant stuff from their home, Mahmut provides indispensable help to Šabo and Tijana by bringing them food, money, and clothing for which they are immensely grateful.

The novel's chain of mutual male solidarity continues in unexpected places, and oftentimes transforms previously established relationships. For instance, Osman Vuk, Šehaga's magnetic and volatile strongman, exhibits uncharacteristic softness after witnessing Mahmut being shamed for his odd jobs and threatened with extortion by his disrespectful son. Although at earlier instances Osman spoke of Mahmut as an unimportant fool, following this scene he immediately helps Mahmut out by offering him a steady job in Šehaga's grain warehouse. Startled by Osman's generosity, Šabo warns him about Mahmut's knack for stealing. Osman, however, replies that one always needs to calculate human weaknesses when doing business, making Šabo realize his help to Mahmut was provided wholeheartedly (ibid., 307). Finally, Mahmut does steal from Šehaga's grains, but not to feed himself nor to resell the stocks, but to help other people in need. And although at first claiming he had kept a list of debtors, Mahmut in fact had not written down a single name. Thus Mahmut, the often ridiculed teacher of

[211] "Nitko ne voli petljaniju, moj Ahmete. Lakše je pobjeći nego pomoći. A i što će mu da ide po sudu, da svjedoči, da gubi vrijeme? Ako ćeš ljudski, nije ni pravo. Hajde, nasloni se na mene. Vidiš, i to bi mogao biti posao: voditi kući one koje nađeš na ulici" (Selimović 1988, 67).

gibberish and a master of faulty commerce, generalizes the gift of help by extending it to the community at large.

Within this alternative network of male homosociality, or a circle of solidarity opposing the prism of the elite's hierarchy, the wealthy Šehaga Sočo functions as the ringleader. Out of the novel's cast of characters, Šehaga is the only one in the position to actively, although covertly, oppose and sabotage the political edifice of corruption. Šehaga's actions are driven by a vindictive rage over a family tragedy. His only son, lured into partaking in an armed conflict by war propaganda and peer pressure, ends up executed for desertion. This trauma turns Šehaga into a bitter man who flaunts and exaggerates his disdain for his country and its people, yet also exhibits a lot of heartfelt compassion and care for ex-soldiers.

What enables Šehaga's actions is his wealth. Described by Mullah Ibrahim as a man who was "stinking rich and held all the high-placed officials in his pocket by means of loans and bribes (ibid., 37) [212], Šehaga's trump card lies in the fact that the city's vali (the Ottoman governor), a great spender and lover of luxury, owes him a great deal of money. Šehaga uses this debt to drive a wedge between the vali and the city's elite, first and foremost the *kadi* and his assistant, Džemal Zafranija. As Osman Vuk explains Šabo, "If it weren't for this, God help us! If they held together, they'd eat us to the last bone. What saved us was their mutual hatred, may God bless it!" (ibid., 260)[213]. He also makes clear that there is no true friendship between Šehaga and the vali: "there was no friendship between the powerful. They both claimed they were friends, they had to, but they weren't. To be a friend was something different, he didn't know what, but it was not this[214]" (ibid., 261).

[212] "Bogat i prebogat, sve visoke činovnike drži u džepu pozajmicama i mitom." (Selimović 1988, 43)
[213] "Da nije tako, jao si ga nama! Da su složni, pojeli bi nas, ni koščicu nam ne bi ostavili. Spašava nas njihova međusobna mržnja, bog je blagoslovio!" (Selimović 1988, 211)
[214] "Nema prijateljstva među moćnima. Obojica tvrde da su prijatelji, tako im treba, ali nisu. Prijatelj je drugo, on ne zna što je, ali nije ovo. Valija je dužnik Šehagin." (Selimović 1988, 211)

In a stark contrast to this interest-driven, politically motivated relationship based in debt, Šehaga also engages in what can only be described as para-institutional or pre-institutional (given the novel's historical setting) social welfare care. His efforts at undermining the local elite's grip on the populace is supplemented with his partly secret and unrecognized work at keeping those in need away from hunger and total despondency. This is first made apparent to Šabo by Mullah Ibrahim who recounts how he sought out Šehaga's help and got more than he ever hoped for. Following his disillusioned return from war and trying to realize his plans for opening a notary's office, Mullah Ibrahim asked Šehaga for a loan. To his surprise, the wealthy merchant not only lent Ibrahim the money, but also did so with no obligations or interest fees. Šehaga is also revealed to have been helping out Muharem the beggar for a long time, the same Muharem the sight of whom enraged Šabo as a symbol of everything wrong with the war veterans' destinies, just before the doomed reception party with the city's elite.

Šehaga is arguably the system's biggest victim. Not only was his son lured into a foreigner's war, only to be executed for fleeing the conflict, but his best friend gets murdered by the political elite after voicing a dissenting opinion. Šehaga is also the system's biggest enemy. Apart from sustaining impoverished war veterans through loans, employment and donations, he also blows heavy strikes against the powerholders. For instance, in a secret mission, operated by Osman Vuk, Šehaga sets free the dissident student Ramiz, the powerholders' main political enemy. He also has inspector Avdaga, the powerholders' main agent, killed, and plans to arrange for Džemal's downfall. This bold move, however, will claim Šehaga's head. During a trip to Venice, Šehaga falls ill and dies, presumably after being poisoned by Džemal. The very last journey of Šehaga Sočo in this context can be interpreted as his final gift to Šabo. As Šabo recounts the reasons Šehaga gave for taking him to Venice:

> Since a young man should see some of the world, since then he would not be on his own, and because he wanted to take me into his service. Should I now want to be taken

> into his service, even though it was high time I got myself a job, the journey would do me no harm. It would make it easier to face life in this misery[215]. (Ibid., 371)

And, indeed, the voyage makes Šabo realize his rootedness and infuses him with a healthy suspicion towards the fabled progress of Venice. However, it also reinvigorates Šabo's patriarchal grip over his wife. With Šabo's horizons broadening because of Šehaga's help, Tijana's are narrowing. She is left pregnant, confined more than ever to the domestic sphere, solidified into a beacon of comforting domesticity upon Šabo's return. Most importantly, she is transformed into an object of his increasing jealousy and possessiveness because, for some reason, he cannot shake off the thought of Osman visiting her while he lay sea-sick upon the return from Venice. During a bout of fever, Šabo thinks he hears "her whisper and, Osman's laughter" and "their heads drawn together":

> "'No' I cried. 'I'll kill you!' I cried out, and when the high fever had passed, I felt a heavy tiredness in my body that was drained of strength … He'd been there all right. It was not a delusion brought on by the fever. Had I rightly remembered all the rest of it? It was impossible, it was a creation of my fevered brain, in its fear. Impossible! Yet I didn't dare to ask[216]. (Ibid., 395)

Šehaga's death also seems to usher in a new sense of insecurity for the likes of Džemal who sniffs his yellowed corpse at the funeral to make sure he has really passed away (314). While remembering that, just before dying, Šehaga mentioned his enemies to Osman, Šabo realizes this could be an omen of a bloody vendetta to come:

> "He called you to make you swear to avenge him."
>
> "For goodness' sake, what do you mean avenge him? He called me to discuss business." He said this with an icy, spiked smile, ever on the watch, ever defensive: a closed fortress.

[215] "Zato što mlad čovjek treba da vidi svijeta, zato da on ne bi bio sam, zato što bi htio da me primi u službu. Ako ne želim službu, mada je vrijeme da se nečega prihvatim, neće mi škoditi ovo putovanje, lakše ću poslije živjeti u ovoj čami" (Selimović 1988, 293).

[216] "vidio sam njihove glave kako se približavaju jedna drugoj, ne! – vikao sam, ubiću! – vikao sam, a kad je teška groznica prošla, ostao je mučan zamor u tijelu bez snage. … Dolazio je, nije to bolesna utvara moje groznice. Jesam li i sve ostalo zapamtio? Nemoguće, moj užareni mozak je sve izmislio, u strahu. Nemoguće! Ali se nisam usudio da pitam" (ibid., 312).

> I said this to him and he laughed. "Like everyone else. And thank God. Why should we remain defenseless? The enemy's all around us."
>
> Had Shehaga left him the task of vengeance? If he had this apparent peace would soon be shattered[217]. (Ibid., 398)

Indeed, Šehaga's demise seems to signal the prospective resistance of those whom he sustained, both materially and spiritually, and anticipate their possible intervention into a world of vertical corruption, perverted hierarchies, futile wars and stolen futures. Finally, the possibility of a cut with the repeating pattern of history is announced as the novel ends with Šabo watching fresh troupes of young men paraded to war:

> No matter what their names, their fate was the same. No matter whether they were sad or falsely cheerful, they'd not return. My comrades hadn't returned. They perished to a man. And would my children tread the same miserable path when they grew up? Would they live as stupidly as their fathers did? In all probability they would, but I refused to believe it. I refused to believe, but I couldn't free myself from apprehension[218]. (Ibid., 400)

6.5. Conclusions

Centered around the narrator and main character Ahmet Šabo, this chapter has read Selimović's novel *The Fortress* from the vantage point of male homosociality and queerness in order to highlight the way in which (non)normative gendered relations among men poetically structure and resolve the novel's central political themes. The novel's ultimate solution to the verticality of corrupt political power, this chapter has argued, lies in a horizontal, solidarity-based camaraderie of normative men and its capacity to facilitate social and political change.

[217] " 'Zvao te da ti ostavi u amanet osvetu'.
'Bog s tobom, kakvu osvetu! Zvao me zbog poslova.'
Rekao je to hladno, s ledenim i šiljatim osmijehom. Uvijek je na straži, uvijek u obrani: zatvorena tvrđava. Rekao sam mu to, a on se nasmijao:
'Kao i svatko. I hvala bogu što je tako. Na što bismo sličili da smo razvaljen obor? Neprijatelji su oko nas.'
Da li mu je Šehaga zavještao osvetu? Ako jest, uskoro će se rasprsnuti ovaj prividni mir." (Selimović 1988, 314)

[218] "Svejedno kako im je ime, sudbina im je ista. Svejedno da li su tužni ili lažno veseli, neće se vratiti. Ni moji drugovi nisu se vratili. Izginuli su, svi. Hoće li i ova moja djeca ići tim istim žalosnim putem, kad odrastu? Hoće li živjeti glupo kao i njihovi očevi? Vjerojatno hoće, ali u to neću da vjerujem. Neću da vjerujem, a ne mogu da se oslobodim strepnje" (ibid., 316).

However, while accounting for the utopian potentialities of male camaraderie, I have also paid attention to the ways in which its formation entails a reinvigorated turn towards patriarchal domination over queer men and women.

The Fortress thus presents a complex literary version of the relationship between normative and non-normative masculinity. On the one hand, it introduces a new modality of homosociality that differentiates it from the ones Selimović previously portrayed in *Death and the Dervish*. Unlike the tumultuous friendship between Ahmed and Hasan, as analyzed in the previous chapter, *The Fortress* opts for a nominally more horizontal line of homosocial bonding founded in mutual help and solidarity. *The Fortress'* camaraderie is based on gender and sexual normativity, yet itself remains politically dedicated to transformative and future-oriented goals. From Šehaga sustaining poor war veterans to Mahmut feeding the community with free grains he was supposed to safeguard – *The Fortress'* camaraderie repeatedly provides sustenance for a community under political autocracy. This camaraderie also positively transforms relations between men, strengthens their empathy towards each other and continually underlines the invaluable importance of being there for one another.

On the other hand, while this camaraderie emerges out of horizontal homosocial ties and, furthermore, attests to the capacity of male normativity to function as a vehicle for transformation at both individual and communal levels, it is also crucially dependent upon a more general homophobic cut between male heterosexuality and queerness. This homophobic splitting of male homosociality is also a novelty with regards to *Death and the Dervish* where, as we have seen, male queerness is addressed in a much more sinuous way. In *The Fortress*, male queerness, much like female autonomy, ultimately gets overwritten by the advancement of male camaraderie. While paving the way to a corruptionless world, the linkages established between Šabo and his comrades tentatively rely on reinvigorated practices of domination over

women and queer men, thus reverting their utopian mutual horizontality into a new normativity or, in other words, a new *verticality* for everybody else.

Conclusion

As a whole, my thesis has argued that literary renditions of male homosociality and queerness expose the modality in which male-authored novel-writing is centrally dependent upon the semantics of both normative and non-normative masculinity. Each chapter provided a close reading of a specific way in which the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion between these two orders of masculine relations formed the stage upon which the drama of wider sociohistorical change took place. Furthermore, each chapter explored this poetic dependence by analytically refracting the ubiquity, complexity and variety of masculinities in Ivo Andrić's and Meša Selimović's historical novels through the analytical lens of male homosociality and queerness. All my analyses thus entailed a two-pronged inquiry into both the poetic construction and the narrative importance of masculine queerness and normativity. On the one hand, I have brought into the limelight the previously critically sidelined or overlooked significance of gendered and sexualized aspects of male characters and their dynamics. On the other hand, I have explored the creative processes and strategies poured into the construction of these literary representations and the demonstrable centrality they play in the narrative overall. Jointly, my chapters provided elements for solidifying the grounds for what we could call an *anti-antinormative* or *post-antinormative* queer theoretical thinking about masculinity in/and literature. In the following concluding remarks, I take a closer look at these elements and the contributions they make to the fields of queer theory and masculinity studies and South Slavic literary studies.

With regards to masculinity studies and queer theory, I have started from the recent critical debates surrounding the limitations that antinormative approaches bestow upon the ways in which normativity appears as an object of study within masculinity studies and queer

theory. Taking as axiomatic the growing evidence that antinormative approaches tend to conjure up a simplified and passivized notion of "normativity", I have proposed an anti-essentialist conceptual usage of "the normative male author". With an aim to counteract antinormativity's reductive tendencies without abandoning the central tenets of queer thought, "the normative male author", as I have proposed it, refers to the normative sexualized and gendered framework that is attached to a figure of the author and prefigures gender-centered aspects of his reception in literary criticism. This prefiguration, I have argued, is partly conditioned by the structural invisibility of the gendered nature of masculine normativity. With regards to Andrić and Selimović, this invisibility was evident in the absence of critical perspectives on the specifically gendered and sexualized terms in which masculinity appeared in their writings. Both Andrić and Selimović have been read from feminist and non-feminist perspectives focusing on women, gender, and sexuality. As we have seen throughout, these perspectives have illuminated Andrić's and Selimović's depiction of female characters, misogyny, patriarchal violence, but also love and devotion, as well as sporadic instances in which patriarchal constraints imposed on women got subverted. Although none of these readings reflected on it, they were undoubtedly fueled by the normative sexual and gendered framework in which the analyzed authors appear as an object of study. In other words, the importance of what these authors had to say about patriarchy is inextricably linked to a normative masculine gendered and sexual context they themselves have epitomized and represented. In a nutshell, "the normative male author" was always-already prefiguring the specific topical relevance that gender and sexuality assumed in critical readings. My intention with this dissertation, of course, was not to take away any of these readings' argumentative strength. To the contrary, as evident in all my readings, my thesis has been profoundly indebted to feminist scholarship on Andrić and Selimović. However, the nuanced richness and overall extremes in which both authors depicted male homosociality and queerness invited a

perspective that inevitably pointed towards queer theory and masculinity studies. At the same time, this perspective had to move beyond these fields' tendency to lean on the antinormative paradigm that dissolves the figure of "the normative male author" if it was to account for masculinity's narrative significance.

The running idea behind the concept of "the normative male author" was to dynamize male normativity as an object of study through a reaffirmation of its poetic agency, productivity and stability. In this way, my dissertation sought to overcome the theoretical nexus between literature and normative masculinity that has either posited normativity as backward-looking or static in comparison to queerness or, similarly, contained normative masculinity within the framework of the "social document". With regards to the latter especially, although interested in normative authors, the framework of the "social document", prevalent in masculinity studies, seemed to flatten the authorial figure by isolating the literary text primarily as an archive of social ideas around gender and sexuality. What my readings wanted to account for were portrayals of normative and queer masculinities that upon close reading evinced that the normative male author behind them was neither passively indexing cultural ideas about masculinity nor transposing in literary terms his own anxieties around sexuality and gender. The normative male author was neither too close to queerness to have nothing to say about normativity, nor was he so obsessed with normativity that he had nothing to say about queerness. To the contrary, once disconnected from the antinormative injunction, the normative male author revealed himself as a figure whose relationship towards masculine gender proved to be productive, creative and mutable. In this way, the overall approach of my dissertation opened up an anti-antinormative or post-antinormative perspective that undoes the conceptual invisibility of the male author not by challenging the gendered consensus around his authorial figure, but by spotlighting this figure's demonstrable authorial creative engagement with – and poetic usage of – male gender and sexuality.

If the framework of "the normative male author" conceptually provided a building block for a more general anti-antinormative or post-antinormative critical position within queer theory and masculinity studies, this dissertation's particular casting of Andrić and Selimović as "normative male authors" contributed to our understanding of these two canonical authors in two interconnected ways. For one, as each of my chapters illustrated, retelling the novels from the vantage point of male homosociality and queerness also opened up themes that are poetically marked or structured by these gendered relations. Chapter 2 analyzed the drama of hegemonic and complicit masculinity in Andrić's *Bosnian Chronicle*, but has also shown how these masculine conflicts, solidarities and forms of gendered (non)belonging inform the novel's staging of competing generational and imperial conflicts. In Chapter 3, von Paulich's physical magnetism accompanied by a voluntary disentanglement from heterosexual liaisons and male friendship also marks a radical rupture with forms of social belonging that the novel has set prior to his arrival. Von Paulich's soldierly persona and mechanistic implementation of a bureaucratized system of governance anticipates the approaching modernity of Habsburg rule in Bosnia. This modernity traverses von Paulich's gendered and sexual being, hinging the novelty of his thoroughly modern and modernizing subjectivity upon his capacity to remain inviolable to established modes of homosociality and heterosexuality. In Chapter 4, I have analyzed how Kostake Nenišanu's gender and sexual ambiguity gets split between culturally specific discourses of male deviancy in Andrić's *Omer Pasha Latas*. Instead of emblematizing the modernizing aspirations of the Ottoman field marshal Omer Pasha Latas, Kostake becomes split between culturally distinct discourses on male perversion and emasculation. In the cases of both von Paulich and Kostake, the thematic of destructive and transformational nature of modernity and modernization assumes meaning by positioning male figures askew with regards to gender and sexual normativity and thus causing ruptures in conventional systems of social belonging. In chapter 5, focusing on Selimović's *Death and the Dervish*, I have traced

and analyzed the gendered aspects of Ahmed's and Hasan's friendship, including their contrasting characterizations, a shared experience of war and their attempts to transform the society by healing men wounded by trauma and injustice. I have also focused on Jusuf, the war orphan Ahmed saves and brings up, who ultimately collapses the novel's politics of friendship through his own queerness. These gendered dynamics between the *Dervish's* lead male characters, I have argued, signal a theme that intertextually connects the novel with Selimović's memoirs and, furthermore, frames its utopian horizon. This theme is the disappointment in male camaraderie that Selimović describes in his memoirs in the context of his brother's tragic execution by his comrades. Hasan's idealized image as the regenerating friend opposing death and decay spread by the corrupt powerholders can thus be read as a literary reversal of that disappointment. In chapter 6, I have argued that *The Fortress* represents a continuation of Selimović's attempt at redressing the utopian potentialities of male homosociality. This time, however, Selimović supplants the *Dervish's* highbrow take on friendship with a deliberately more simpleminded notion of horizontal camaraderie as a utopian force capable of standing against rogue powerholders.

The second way in which analyzing Andrić and Selimović through the combined lenses of masculinity studies and queer theory contributed to our knowledge of these two authors was the reconstruction of creative strategies that they had relied upon in creating their normative and non-normative male characters. With their queer characters in particular, this dissertation has shown that Andrić and Selimović have drawn from various sources in order to create a whole plethora of differently queered male characters. Pepin's inversion, von Paulich's inviolability, Kostake's perceived emasculation, Omer Pasha's dangerous effeminacy, Jusuf's unsettling queerness and Džemal Zafranija's opportunistic homosexuality: what all these different characters have in common is that their authors assembled them by drawing from various literary and cultural registers about male non-normativity. Each chapter uncovered

these characters' semantic ingredients in tropes of classical literature and modern intertextual references, knowledge derived from modern sexual sciences, representations of male non-normativity found in Western European travel writings about the Orient, and the Yugoslav Partisan sexual ethics.

When it came to normative bonds between men, by carefully orchestrating conflict, solidarity, kinship and devotion among men, Andrić and Selimović channeled some of their most important novelistic themes through a literary version of what will subsequently become known in gender studies as hegemonic masculinity and male homosociality. By abandoning antinormative presuppositions and symptomatic or paranoid modes of reading, my thesis aimed to account for two things with regards to male homosociality. On the one hand, I wanted to show the way in which the literary texts attested to an agential poetic usage of male homosociality. On the other hand, I wanted to account for the politically transformative potentialities the novels occasionally ascribed to normative masculinity. With regards to the first point, Andrić's and Selimović's novels reflect their authors' keen understanding of the complexity and nuances governing male homosociality as they portray it in a variety of intricate models. The takeaway from all these readings is that male homosociality in and of itself does not seem to amount to any single repeatable model. In each case, sociohistorical change took place through an instantiation, amplification or dissolution of relations between men. The internal ideological strife and overall European imperialisms in the wake of the French Revolution, the anticipation of Habsburg rule and institutional modernization in Bosnia, and the modernizing efforts of the Ottoman Empire in Andrić's Bosnian *Bosnian Chronicle* and *Omer Pasha Latas* were all predicated upon the drama of hegemonic masculinity, inviolate manhood and the discourses of sexual deviancy and Orientalist image of the eunuch. And Selimović's portrayal of the very possibility of social change as dependent upon the transformative capacities of male friendship and camaraderie evinced, in turn, the way in which

Death and the Dervish and *The Fortress* were themselves dependent upon the poetic construction of male homosociality and queerness.

With regards to the second point, the takeaway from my dissertation is that literary texts seem to imbue normative male homosociality with a lot more transformative potential than it is usually reflected in theory. We have seen the utopian hope Selimović's novels place into the hands of male camaraderie and friendship. And we have also seen the detrimental effects the realization of such hope has on non-normative men and women. While I have analyzed the poetic role these politically transformative forms of male homosociality play in the narrative, there is also a general point here that opens up for potential further research. Distinctions such as those between internal and external hegemonic masculinity or horizontal and vertical homosociality fall short of fully explaining literary imaginings in which specific forms of male homosociality appear as being capable of ushering in a radically new futurity or halt social decay. Of course, such distinctions were introduced in social sciences and were, therefore, never meant to, for example, account for Selimović's portrayal of male camaraderie or curative male friendship. If we are to further explore anti-antinormative or post-antinormative approaches to normativity, it would seem that we need a broader reconsideration of the specifically gendered terms in which social transformation coincides with normative masculinity. Because of its vast pliability, capaciousness and applicability, the concept of "homosociality" seems like a perfect starting point for such an exploration.

There are two other main avenues for further research that stem directly from my research. Given Andrić's and Selimović's canonical standing in the whole of South Slavic literature, it seems reasonably safe to assume that the gendered aspects of their poetics exerted significant influence over the decades. It would thus be interesting to see future research tracing and analyzing intertextual references and possible reiterations of characters and tropes my thesis has brought into focus. For instance, has Andrić's poetic utilization of hegemonic

masculinity and queerness radiated into contemporary South Slavic historical novels? What are the dis/continuities between Selimović's and the post-1990s literary discourses on male homosociality and its capacity to serve as a vehicle for social justice and healing wartime trauma? How were male homosociality, friendship and queerness used by normative male authors in the decades marked by the experience and legacy of the 1990s wars, the collapse of socialism, competing nationalisms and repatriarchalization, but also by the rise of regional civil rights movements, including the LGBTIQ+ movement?

Queer thinking through anti-antinormative or post-antinormative optics remains an area in need of much further exploration. This dissertation was an example of a research in which the object of study simultaneously invited queer theory's perspective and conceptual apparatus yet deflected its antinormative presuppositions. As a way out of this theoretical conundrum, I have defined "the normative male author" as the public consensus around the normative gendered and sexualized modality of the authorial persona which, furthermore, should be preserved, rather than opposed or undermined, if we are to explore the capacity in which male homosociality and queerness poetically structure literary fiction. This definitional logic behind the concept could be transposed onto the figure of the queer author. For instance, we could ask what is the overlooked poetic role of normativity in the works by queer authors? How does the frame of an author's queerness condition what their readership expects to receive from them in terms of gender and sexuality? Are there unacknowledged or unrecognized ways in which queer authors poetically utilize depictions of heterosexuality that cannot be accounted for in antinormative readings? Is there a parallel literary history of normative gender and sexuality to be uncovered in works most often read for what they had to say about queerness?

In some ways, this was a dark dissertation to write. Undoubtedly, it must have been at times a dark reading as well. The focus on male homosociality and queerness also meant analyzing homophobia, femicide, suicide, murder, war, torture, social ostracism, political persecution, mourning, betrayal, and trauma. And yet, it would have been all too easy to write off the many explicitly queer plotlines, characters and tropes as reflecting Andrić's or Selimović's personal homophobia or crises, celebration of reactionary patriarchal worldviews or extreme machismo. By abstaining from anachronistic condemnation of some of the more indelible depictions of masculinity in its many guises, this project aimed to show that the entanglement of male homosociality and queerness ultimately reveals itself as an indispensable reservoir of meaning for literary imagination of even the most normative of authors, pointing towards an ever-fraught, yet still discernible poetic gendered connection between the men telling and the men being told.

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