

The Naming of Characters in Ivo Andrić's *The Bridge on the Drina*

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Introduction

It is well known that Yugoslav Nobel prize writer Ivo Andrić (1892-1975) had a strong interest in personal names. In an interview given in 1972, Andrić admitted that collecting people's names was his longtime hobby and said:

It is one of the few ways to become acquainted with the past of our region. (...) I think that we can learn a lot of Bosnian history by observing surnames. (...) Here you can see people's origin, ancestry, and profession. The whole structure of development, customs, heritage—all of them can be found in surnames ... Whenever I needed a name and surname for a hero in a story or novel, I leafed through my notebooks. (Јандрић, 90)

After Andrić's death, several notebooks full of proper names were discovered. A collection of given names, surnames, and place-names are transcribed, which are supposed to be taken from Bosnian-Herzegovinian newspapers; for instance, from a death notice or marriage announcement (“Андрићева презимена,” 7-9). Andrić's personal belongings have not yet been fully surveyed, and there might be other undiscovered notebooks. At this stage of the research, we cannot claim to understand the function of proper names in Andrić's work in its entirety (“Андрићева презимена,” 7). The focus of this article concerns principally the naming of characters in his masterpiece *The Bridge on the Drina*.

The Bridge on the Drina was published in 1945, but the novel was written between June 1942 and December 1943 according to the date marked at the end of the novel (Андрић, 361)¹. Andrić was appointed as the envoy at the embassy in Berlin in 1939, but his diplomatic career ended in 1941 when the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was occupied by Nazi Germany. Soon after the occupation, he came back to Belgrade, and in the following years, he wrote the so-called Bosnian trilogy: *Bosnian Story*, *The Bridge on the Drina*, and *The Woman from Sarajevo*. It could be said that these works were written during his internal-exile, during which he was geographically at home but lived as a stranger².

The Bridge on the Drina is a historical novel that portrays the Balkan Peninsula from the 16th

century to the beginning of World War I. The story is told through the eyes of people living in a small town in Eastern Bosnia, Višegrad, where Andrić spent his childhood. There are more than one hundred character names in *The Bridge on the Drina*, which can be tentatively classified into three categories: firstly, names taken from eminent figures in Balkan history; secondly, names of local people who really existed; and finally, names invented by the author.

Names Taken from Eminent Figures in Balkan History

Regarding the first category, eminent historical figures are especially present in the opening chapters. The narrator mentions names that recall rich epic traditions, such as Prince Marko Kraljević in Serbian epic poetry or Alija Đerzelez in Bosnian Muslim epic poetry³. Furthermore, throughout the novel, names based on real people are mentioned, such as Mehmed Paša Sokolović, who ordered the construction of the bridge. We can cite other names like Karađorđe or Austrian prince Frantz Ferdinand. Considering that the subtitle of *The Bridge on the Drina* is *Višegrad Chronicle*, Andrić seems to seek historical accuracy as well as the richness of oral folk tradition.

In terms of historical accuracy, however, the name of the bridge architect is a problematic matter. Historically, it is presumed that Mehmed Paša Sokolović, Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire, gave the order to Mimar Sinan, prominent architect of the period, to build a bridge in Višegrad. But in the first chapter of the novel, the narrator mentions a collective memory that the bridge was built by Rade Neimar, the legendary Serbian architect.

They knew that the bridge had been built by the Grand Vezir, Mehmed Pasha, who had been born in the nearby village of Sokolovici, just on the far side of one of those mountains which encircled the bridge and the town. Only a Vezir could have given all that was needed to build this lasting wonder of stone (...). It was built by Rade the Mason (...). (Andrić, 15)

Concerning this reference to Rade Neimar, the late professor Muhsin Rizvić of Sarajevo University once gave a harsh critique in his book *Bosanski muslimani u Andrićevu svijetu (Bosnian Muslims in Andrić's World)* in 1995. Rizvić accused Andrić of emphasizing the negative image of Muslims. One such example is the abovementioned replacing of Mimar Sinan, who is widely known as the architect of the bridge, with Rade Neimar. Rizvić wrote:

Skillfully interweaving the legend of the building of the bridge into the common children's psyche (...), Andrić simultaneously revealed his thought: he considers Bosnia as one of the Serbian lands, and he considers the bridge as a work of Serbian masters,

which could not be built and survive without the sacrifice of Serbian children and the violence of Turks (Rizvić, 162).

In other words, Andrić is accused of stealing the architectural achievement from Turkey in honor of Serbia.

To examine this criticism, we must first discuss where Andrić heard the oral tradition about the bridge. Andrić stated that he “took the title of *The Bridge on the Drina* from a Muslim oral song. (...) I once heard it from an old lady from Višegrad, then I found it later, if I remember correctly, in the work of Hörmann” (Јандрин, 87). This statement can be partly confirmed in a song “Zidanje ćuprije u Višegradu,” published in *Narodne pjesme muslimana u Bosni i Hercegovini* by Hörmann.

Kad ti Mitre Đurđev danak dođe
A ti idi gradu Višegradu,
(...)
veće hjde gradu Višegradu,
da se gradi na Drini ćuprija (Hörmann, 69)

Here, one verse contains the same expression “na Drini ćuprija” (the bridge on the Drina), yet the name of the architect is Mitar, not Rade. Based on this citation only, one might conclude that Andrić purposely praised the legendary Serbian architect. However, the song of Višegrad bridge was also recorded in the middle of the 19th century, and that song contains the name of Rade Neimar as the architect of Višegrad bridge (Петрановић, 531-549). A similar song was also published in a Bosnian-Herzegovinian literary magazine *Босанска Вила* in 1888 (Богдановић, 174-175). Almost at the same period, in 1889, in the first issue of the journal *Гласник земалјског Музеја у Босни и Херцеговини*, Kosta Hörmann wrote an article about the bridge, saying “people talk and sing about Neimar, whose name can be either Mitar or Rade” (Херман, 80). All this evidence suggests that the “Rade version” continued to be sung when Andrić moved into Višegrad⁴.

Moreover, following the previous part of the novel, the narrator in *The Bridge of the Drina* quickly adds the following note:

It was built by Rade the Mason, who must have lived for hundreds of years to have been able to build all that was lovely and lasting in the Serbian lands, that legendary and in fact nameless master whom all people desire and dream of, since they do not want to have to remember or be indebted to too many, even in memory (Andrić, 15-16).

Thus, the narrator explains that it is not possible that Rade Neimar actually built the bridge. In other words, *The Bridge on the Drina* doesn't emphasize national tradition but rather demythologizes it. In the form of the historical "Chronicle," the process of constructing the bridge is described in detail in chapter 3. In this chapter, the origins of the folk tales of Rade Neimar are revealed⁵. One of the key characters here is a certain Tosun Effendi from Istanbul, who appears as the architect of the bridge. In saying this, Tosun Effendi might be seen as a fictitious name for Mimar Sinan, but it is not. Tosun Effendi is "(...) a small, pale, yellowish renegade, born in the Greek islands, a mason who had built many of Mehmed Pasha's requests in Stambul" (Andrić, 29). Mimar Sinan was born in 1489 in the middle of Anatolia in a Christian family (Sözen, 13-30). When the bridge was built in the 1570s, he would have been 80 years old. Thus, the image of Tosun does not match that of Sinan. Why did Andrić create another image of the architect, Tosun Effendi? Historians of architecture generally assume that Sinan himself did not visit all of the 472 buildings ascribed to him. According to the architectural historian Goodwin, Sinan's works can be classified into four groups, depending on the degree of Sinan's involvement. The bridge in Višegrad belongs to group B, which refers to buildings constructed in compliance with a design by Sinan and under his supervision from a distance (Goodwin, 122). This means there must be another architect who locally supervised the construction. It was probably one of Sinan's pupils or someone influenced by him. The presence of Tosun Effendi seems to be based on this historical reality. We don't know what kind of archives and documents Andrić used when he wrote the novel. Nevertheless, we can say that the case of Tosun Effendi offers plausible evidence that Andrić was very concerned with historical facts.

Names of Locally Known People

The Bridge on the Drina consists of 24 chapters and describes the history of the bridge over four centuries. However, each period is not told in the same length. Chapter 6 starts with the first Serbian uprising in 1804, and the following chapters—more than three-quarters of the novel—take place 100 years from the beginning of the 19th century. Many characters in this part of the book are based on people Andrić knew or had heard of in his childhood. During this period, from the early 19th to the early 20th century, Višegrad was under the rule of Austria-Hungary. Immigrants from other parts of the empire, such as Hungary, Poland, and Czech, had come and settled in Višegrad. In the town, new names like Šrajber, Gutenplan, Šperling, and Cvehel began to be heard, mingling with the old names.

Among these newcomers, a young widow Lotika plays an important role in the novel. Lotika, her sister Debora, Debora's husband Caler, and their daughters Mina and Irene were Jewish migrants from Tarnów, Galicia. They opened a hotel. The hotel was formally owned by Caler but

was actually managed by Lotika. Local people called it “Lotika’s Hotel,” rather than its official name “Hotel zur Brücke.” Lotika successfully hired the right employees in the right place, such as Gustav, Malčika, and Milan, and the hotel became a center of sociability for local men. These names, Lotika, her family members, and her employees, are all taken from people who actually lived in Višegrad⁶. Of foreign origin, Lotika or “Aunt Loti” was a favorite among local people.

There are other names that carry the memory of inhabitants of Višegrad. For example, Salko Ćorkan, the character who walks across the bridge rail on a cold winter morning (chap. 15), is based on a certain Salko Mehić, who was always drunk, as in the novel⁷ (Симовић, 16-17). Another example is the central character in chapter 12, Milan Grasinčanin from Okolište. He indulges in gambling and goes insane after a phantasmagoric experience of betting. This young man also really existed⁸. These people were notable in the town, which means it is not difficult to suppose that Andrić developed literary images from these persons. It is not only these notable people but also their contemporaries who appear with real names, such as Santo Papo, David Levi (Васић, 99-100), Suljaga Osmanagić, Ragib Borovac, Mujsaga Muapdžić, Fuso Kokošar, and more (Branisavljević, 6).

However, some people appear in the novel with their names changed. For example, Alihodža died in 1914 when the bridge was destroyed. His family name was Kladnjak in the draft, or the so-called “Proto-bridge” version (“Пра-хуприја,” 42). In the final version of the novel, his family name becomes “Mutevelić.” This name, Mutevelić, is derived from a noun, mutevelija, which means the manager of a common property (in this case the bridge). In the text of “Proto-bridge,” there was no mention of Alihodža’s death. This fact suggests that Andrić added the episode of his death and gave him a particular name that symbolizes a destiny closely linked to the bridge. Though there are many episodes that appear in both “Proto-bridge” and *The Bridge on the Drina*, it should be pointed out that Alihodža is the only character whose last name was changed between the draft and the final version.

There is another example of changing surnames. One of Alihodža’s friends, Nailbeg Turković, is Turkish (that means “a local Muslim” in the novel) as his surname indicates. According to Andrić’s contemporaries, however, there was a model for Turković, and his name was Nailbeg Tvrtković (Branisavljević, 6). The name Tvrtković derives from tvrtko, which means stubborn. Thus, Turković and Tvrtković are similar in pronunciation but completely different in the word’s derivation. In other words, Andrić chose the name Turković so that his religious affiliation would be clearly identifiable. In the novel, the character’s affiliation is sometimes unspecified simply because his/her name already denotes the character’s identity. Turković, which has already been mentioned, is one example. We can cite other examples like Mihailović and Stevanović, which are derived from the Christian name Mihailo and Stevan. Jewish names are also present, like David Levi, though Gypsies are only mentioned by their given names and their surnames are omitted.

Names connect the story here and there. In most of the cases where the characters are identified with the real people, those characters belong to Andrić's parents' generation. It could be said that these characters, whose names carry subtle connotations, embody Andrić's Višegrad.

Names Invented by the Author

On the contrary, the names of Andrić's same-generation friends are hardly seen in the novel. There is a clear contrast to the previously mentioned group of characters that is often identified by various sources. In a detailed biographical study on Andrić in his younger days, we can find many names of Andrić's close friends, such as Milutin Popović, sisters Trifkovički, Kalmi Baruh, and Levi Baruh (Karaulac, 37), but these names do not appear in *The Bridge on the Drina*. Instead, in the novel Janko Stiković, Velimir Stevanović, Jakob Herak, Ranko Mihailović, and Nikola Grasinčanin appear. This generation of characters represents the third category of personal names. They do not have direct links or one-to-one correspondence with people who actually existed. They nonetheless represent a group of typical young men born in a Bosnian town under Austro-Hungarian rule. They go to study law or medicine in cities like Prague, Zagreb, and Vienna—except Grasinčanin who stays in Višegrad. When they spend their holidays in Višegrad, Stiković and Grasinčanin compete for the love of Zorka, a female teacher in the town. She was formerly intimate with Grasinčanin, but she becomes attracted to Stiković because he appears to be more sophisticated.

That afternoon he (Stiković) had had his first rendezvous with the schoolmistress Zorka, an attractive girl with a full figure, pale face and fiery eyes. (...) They had met in her school which was deserted at that time because of the holidays. He had gone in from one street, through the garden, and she from another by the main entrance. They had met in a dimly-lit, dusty room piled almost to the ceiling with benches. It is thus that the passion of love is often compelled to look for remote and ugly places. They could neither sit nor lie down. Both of them were embarrassed and awkward. Too full of desire, too impatient, they embraced and mingled on one of those benches which she knew so well, without looking at or noticing anything around them. (Andrić, 237)

After this episode, Stiković immediately loses interest in Zorka, though Grasinčanin, despite assuming the situation, continues to devote himself to her. This unrestrained love affair contrasts clearly with the episode involving Fatima, who threw herself from the bridge as a way to flee a marriage forced on her by her father (chap. 8). This opposition is reinforced in a scene in which Grasinčanin blames Stiković for his narcissism and vanity, and they hear a drunkard singing "Thou art wise as thou art lovely, Lovely Fata Avdagina!" (Andrić, 254) Free love represents a new

era, but libertinism does not necessarily lead to happiness. In this context of increasing freedom, Andrić possibly wanted to avoid obvious references to existing people.

Among this generation of characters, we would like to turn to Tome Galusa. Galus had already emerged as a hero in Andrić's short story "Zanos i stradanje Toma Galus" in 1931 and later in his short story "Na sunčanoj strani" in 1952. In these stories, Galus is arrested during World War I without reason, an experience that reflects Andrić's own suffering. He is, as has already been pointed out⁹, a character with whom Andrić identifies. Further similarities emerge between the trajectories of Galus and Andrić. Toma Galus's father was from Burgenland. He came to Višegrad as a government official when Austria had occupied Bosnia. He then married the daughter of a local notable. One of their children, Toma, had just graduated from Gymnasium in Sarajevo and was an attentive reader of Reklam Universal Bibliothek, especially German philosophy. He was intelligent and calm, yet an active member of a revolutionary and nationalist student organization.

These traits bear many resemblances to Andrić. Most important of all is that Andrić was, like Galus, surrounded by different ethnicities. In Višegrad, Andrić grew up in his aunt's family. Her husband Matkovčik was from Poland. Matkovčik worked as a "Wachtmeister" (policeman) and mainly spoke German¹⁰. In the Višegrad days, Andrić was known as Ivo Matkovčik. This multi-ethnic experience is certainly reflected in the character of Toma Galus. As a typical young student under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Galus passionately talks about independence with his Muslim friend Bahtijarević. Galus desires individual emancipation for all oppressed people. It is precisely by their personal names that these people are incarnated.

But when we finally achieve our national freedom and our independence, then our money and blood will be ours alone, and will stay with us. Everything will be solely and uniquely for the improvement of our own national culture, which will bear our mark and our name (...). (Andrić, 244)

Galus's passion certainly represents the sentiment that underlies *The Bridge on the Drina*. But we also have to be cautious about another way of seeing things. The author carefully introduces a harsh criticism of Galus into the thoughts of his interlocutor, Bahtijarević. The latter silently narrates that Galus's wish is ephemeral, his glorious discourse contains vanity, and that surface waves of water do not affect the bottom of a river. Here we follow the author's stream of thoughts. He was imprisoned during World War I, he observed the fever of independence, and finally, he saw his country occupied again. It is clear that Rizvić's previously mentioned criticism is at least questionable. In the novel, Andrić in his old age speaks through the mind of a young Muslim, whose maturity invites introspection about the author's other self.

Conclusion

Thus far, I have discussed the names of the characters in *The Bridge on the Drina*. Summarizing the main points discussed here, it becomes clear that, for Andrić, names are the junction of history and memory, both collective and personal, and as a writer, his imagination is also involved. As has already been mentioned, Andrić wrote the novel in Yugoslavia under German occupation. Andrić refused to support the Nazis and even declined to reprint his works under Nazi rule. If Yugoslavia was not emancipated, Andrić's novels would never have been published. In fact, he was not sure of his survival (Јандрић, 127). In such a pessimistic situation, he reconstructs the history of his native land from his memory using limited materials. In October 1943, while writing the novel, Mehmed Paša Sokolović Bridge was destroyed again, this time by the German army¹¹. Maybe because of this event, the novel ends with the scene of the bridge's explosion¹². Writing the novel in a state of "internal exile," the memory of multi-ethnic Višegrad might have been present in the mind of the author. Andrić's *The Bridge on the Drina* represents neither a utopia nor a hell. It describes the lived reality of a small town in a small country where rich traditions are nourished. That reality comes from the everyday life of ordinary people whose names would never have been recorded if the writer hadn't written them down in his novel. As Toma Galus says, he wanted to sustain his people's names.

Notes

1. Tvaranovič offers an interpretation of this dating: it means not only the period of actual writing but also the period of agony under Nazi occupation (Тваранович, 199). This date appears in the first edition, but it is not always present in later editions or in the English translation.
2. Regarding the concept of internal exile, we can refer to an article by Susan Rubin Suleiman. Writing about Hungarian Jewish novelist Imre Kertész, Suleiman provides a definition of exile “as a condition where one is ‘not home,’ or ‘far from home,’ whether by choice or because one is condemned to it.” She also says “In what I am calling internal exile, by contrast, one can be geographically at home and still feel like a stranger” (Suleiman, 368). In a voluminous study on Andrić, Žaneta Đukić Perišić, too, regards this period as internal exile (unutrašnje izgnanstvo) (Perišić, 367).
3. It is notable that the narrator in the novel mentions Marko Kraljević and Alija Đerzelez together on several occasions. We can see the author’s sense of balance in a multi-ethnic region.
4. Andrić arrived in Višegrad in 1894 accompanied by his mother.
5. Even in this chapter, Rizvić intensifies his accusation citing Kurtović, who previously criticized Andrić. Kurtović affirms, “People refused the historical fact that the builder was Sinan. Whether he was Orthodox or Muslim, he was an architect of notorious Empire. There is a saying that Sinan was Slav and he involved Rade Neimar. Andrić knew and mentioned this story, but he did not long for people’s fraternity and reinforced solidarity. On the contrary, he stimulates and accelerate the antagonism through new psychological factor, fake explanation, inaccurate but historical ‘controversy’”(Rizvić, 182). Whether the architect was Serbian or Ottoman origin, Rizvić do not attenuate the allegation because the criticism becomes its own goal.
6. According to Vašić’s study on the Jewish population in Višegrad, Lotika Celermajer was born in 1860 as the eldest daughter of three sisters. Her younger sisters’ names are Debora and Adelaida. Widowed early, Lotika came to Višegrad with Debora, Dehora’s husband Abraham Ciler and their daughters Helena and Ina. She died in 1938 and was buried in a Jewish cemetery at Okolište (Вашић, 96-99). Concerning Lotika’s employees, one of Andrić’s contemporaries affirms that their names are taken from people who really existed (Branisavljević, 6).
7. Andrić himself said that Ćorkan’s model really existed (Јандрић, 162). Ćorkan appears in several short stories of Andrić such as “Ćorkan and the German Tightrope Walker,” beside *The Bridge on the Drina*. This reiteration suggests that Ćorkan was one of his favorite characters.
8. According to Perišić, Grasinčanin in his real life was hospitalized in a mental institution for an unidentified reason (Perišić, 104).
9. Branisavljević, 6; Perišić, 326. Galus is presented as Andrić’s other self on the Andrić Foundation website. http://www.ivoandric.org.rs/html/na_sunčanoj_strani.html (accessed December 10, 2015)
10. According to Karaulac, Matkovčik could also speak the local language (Karaulac, 31).
11. Four pillars and five arches fell down (Čelić, 185).
12. According to Tartalja, the note that Andrić prepared for *The Bridge on the Drina* “contains information about mass killing of Serbs at that time in a small Bosnian town and the surrounding villages” (Tartalja, 8). Though living in Belgrade, Andrić at this time was especially concerned with the situation in Bosnia.

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イヴォ・アンドリッチ『ドリーナの橋』における 名前の意味

奥彩子

ユーゴスラヴィアのノーベル賞作家イヴォ・アンドリッチ（1892-1975）の『ドリーナの橋』は、『ボスニア物語』、『サラエボの女』と合わせて、ボスニア三部作と呼ばれる。三部作はいずれも、第二次世界大戦中、ナチ・ドイツの占領下にあるベオグラードで執筆された。アンドリッチは、いわば「内的亡命」の状況下で、故郷のボスニアを創作のなかに甦らせたといえる。

アンドリッチが名前に強い関心を抱いていたことはよく知られているが、その全貌を明らかにするためには、さらなる遺品の調査などが必要とされている。そこで、本論文では、『ドリーナの橋』に着目する。『ドリーナの橋』はボスニア南東部の町ヴィシエグラードを舞台に、16世紀から第一次世界大戦までのバルカン半島の歴史をたどっていく。橋の建造はボスニアの寒村で生まれたオスマン帝国の大宰相ソコロヴィチの命令による。橋が完成するとさまざまな人々が往来し始めた。ムスリム、正教徒、ユダヤ人、ジプシーにくわえて、19世紀後半にボスニアがハプスブルク帝国の支配下にはいるや、村にはハンガリー、ポーランドなどの出身者が移り住む。

『ドリーナの橋』の登場人物の名前は、歴史上の人物の名前、実在した地元の人々の名前、そして、アンドリッチによって創作された名前の大きく三つに分類できる。登場人物の名前は、アンドリッチの歴史的正確さへのこだわりを示すとともに、ヴィシエグラードの民族的多様性を示すことに寄与している。さらに、執筆時にまさに暴力に晒されていた人々の名前や生きざまを記すことは、占領下に沈黙を貫いたアンドリッチの、文学による抵抗の証でもあった。アンドリッチが『ドリーナの橋』において描きだしたのは、理想郷でも地獄でもない、小さな町の現実に宿る、豊かな伝承と人々の日常の暮らし、名もなき民衆の、名前のある暮らしであった。