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**THE ANATOMY OF A PARADOX
(ON IVAN LOVRENOVIC'S ESSAY *ANDRIC,
A PARADOX OF SILENCE*)**

Summary

Ivan Lovrenovic's essay, which won the „Midhat Begic“ Award for the best essay in 2008, is a pretentious attempt of the author to reevaluate the understanding of Andric's work and to reexamine the significance of the work in literary history. In the process, Lovrenovic places a special emphasis on the critic texts on Andric, which reveal and explain his ideological positions. However, Lovrenovic's essay is, in essence, inferior to the very critics of Andric's work he mentions and is, at the same time, methodologically inadequate in relation to Andric's work: Lovrenovic combines in his essay the methods which are incompatible, even contradictory, so it is seen throughout the text that the author is unaware of his own methodological contradictions – he creates a methodological galimatias by demonstrating methodological inconsistency and research incompetence and immaturity. In an attempt to reveal the so-called paradox in understanding of Andric's literary opus, Lovrenovic wrote an essay which is a paradox on its own, thus standing out as an example of methodological incompetence in understanding and valorization of a literary work.

Key words: *Ivo Andrić, methodological incoherence, literary history, paradox, Ivan Lovrenovic, orientalism, ideological approach, reception, positivism*

The word *paradox* in my title, besides the function of style, also has the task of indicating by its position the methodological and logical untenability of Lovrenovic's essay, which has that important word *paradox* in its title as well, and its aim is to present the paradox in the understanding of Andric's work by readers in former Yugoslavia. However, Lovrenovic's text is methodologically ambiguous in itself to such an extent that, in fact, it stands as a paradox on its own and as such fails to achieve the basic objective intended by the author.¹ The most important thing for every (scientific) research work, but also the somewhat more flexible genre of essay, is to be methodologically coherent and consistent, to be, so to speak, "bullet proof" in that sense, regardless of whether the method is valid or not, but also reversely – a work is untenable depending (proportionately to the extent) on the extent of its methodological incoherence.

There are several important reasons for analyzing Lovrenovic's essay. First of all this is a text which pretentiously tries to reevaluate Andric's work, but perhaps even more than that, the reception of that work over a long time span, primarily based on national-ideological criteria and classifications.

The second reason is, as I have already mentioned, the fact that the basic objective of Lovrenovic's essay is to evaluate and "arrange" in a special way the enormous body of literature on Andric's work, which means that he is trying, in the form of an essay, to validate the immense literary-historical material on an exceptionally important literary opus. Naturally, such pretentious objectives well surpass the limitations of the essay as a genre – and this is his first "genre-methodological" paradox – thus "judgments" in Lovrenovic's essay are passed as impressions, often "founded" on the fragmentation of texts they communicate with; as such they are unsubstantiated and as a result the essay is characterized by methodological inconsistency. Tackling the opus of Ivo Andrić, presenting details from his biography which Lovrenovic considers important for his interpretation and, especially, the revalorization of the immense literary-historical sources on that opus is possible in a study, not a single essay: it is exactly in this case that the essay shows its inadequacy to support the

¹ Ivan Lovrenovic's essay *Ivo Andric, A Paradox on Silence* won the first biannual award for a literary essay "Midhat Begić" for 2007 and 2008 presented by the PEN Centre BiH and the *Novi Izraz* magazine. The essay was published in: *Novi Izraz*, nr. 39, PEN Centre of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo, January-March 2008, p.3-44.

objectives of its author. Many problems of Lovrenovic's work stem from the fact that he uses some of the genre-defined characteristics of the essay, and "comes across" as an essay, while, at the same time, he entertains pretensions of writing a scientific, literary-historical study, something he is unable to consistently implement. Methodological inconsistencies are inevitable in such cases.

The third reason is the fact that it has been awarded by the recently established "Midhat Begic" Award, and it is because of this fact as well that it requires attention.

The fourth and final reason is the fact that the author – in his utter methodological inconsistency – comments on one of my works dedicated to the writing of Ivo Andric.²

One of the postulates of Lovrenovic's essay is that a work of literature should be read free of any ideological "contaminations" and projections, that the work should be approached outside the ideological context. He therefore focuses his criticism on the "national-ideological criteria" (p. 26) in the understanding of Andric's work and in that sense uses subtitles to structure his essay. The paradox is already present, because the author of the essay is developing and then promoting the same things he is fighting against: his subtitles *Turkish and Irrational*,³ *"Bosnian Hatred"*, *Andric and Muslims*, *Croat Understanding*, stylistically and in accordance with the fundamental understanding of the text, explicate the struggle of the author against the ethno-national and ideological understandings of Andric's work, but his fervor against such readings, which itself has been elevated to the level of becoming the basic task of the essay, represents an ideological position, because it would be at odds with logic to claim that the struggle against (certain) ideologies is not an ideological platform itself. It is Lovrenovic's objective – the title and subtitles of the essay make this immediately apparent – to primarily *settle scores* with the validations

² My work titled *Andric's Opus in the Wider Context of Eurocentrist Ideology* has been published several times, both in Bosnian and in English, and Lovrenovic cites the collected papers *Andrić and Bosniaks*, Preporod, The Bosniak Cultural Association – Municipal Association Tuzla, Tuzla 2000, p. 192-206.

³ Instantly, in the introductory segment of the essay, Lovrenović readily adopts the quote and relationship towards the *Turkish Irrational* (the Turkish in Bosnia) from Miroslav Karaulac, who describes the Turkish in Bosnia as "landscapes of dark" (from: *Novi Izraz*, p. 7)

and readings of Andrić's work that are different from his own, consequently Lovrenović's ideological positioning represents the soul of his text. He is right, in my opinion, when he delegitimizes the laying of claims on Andrić's opus (and literature in general) based on the ethnic affiliation of the writer, place of his birth and other extraliterary criteria, as literature – and I have written about this on numerous occasions – is a supranational system. In this respect, it is wrong for certain Bosniaks to reject Andrić's valuable literary art as an important segment of their heritage, an art in which – after all and with almost complete consensus – the model of Said's *Orientalism* has been established. Furthermore, I think that Andrić's opus is primarily Bosnian (and Bosniak, of course) when evaluated against all the valid criteria according to which the history of literature is created and studied, regardless of whether the world of Andrić's literary work is to their liking or not. Periodic attempts by certain Bosniaks to push that work "across the Drina River" are senseless because they are futile and unfounded in literary history. However, I wish to return to Lovrenović's disguised ideologization.

While Lovrenović condemns all "national understandings" and "valorizations" of Andrić's work, the reader of the essay will effortlessly realize that he does this to promote the *Yugoslav position* in the understanding of Andrić's work. He persists on this, siding – enduringly and firmly – with Andrić's articulation of *Yugoslavism*, only to say in the end (20/21), candidly and mournfully, that Andrić's ideal of Yugoslavism has fully collapsed in our time. It needs to be stressed at this point that it is irrelevant whether the idea of Yugoslavism is a positive or negative one. However, it is important to note that its positive contextualization in Lovrenović's essay emerges as a fatal methodological paradox. Namely, an author who refutes as erroneous ideological approaches to Andrić's work should be methodologically consistent and avoid creating another ideological platform as a replacement for them, be it Yugoslavism which – supposedly no further proof of this is needed?! - is an ideological category, even more than that, a political one. In the essay Lovrenović writes numerous pages on Andrić and Krleža to show that they are very "similar, especially ideologically", and concludes – again making a firm connection between the literary and the ideological, something he is, paradoxically, fighting against – that precisely this "biographic simultaneity on the one hand, and thematic compatibility in literary works on the other, allows for all impor-

tant *literary and ideological* (Italic by E. D.) differences between them to be made visible in a comprehensive comparative analysis” (15/16).⁴

In relation to this, the author’s next step also leads in the direction of methodological self-denial. Specifically, Lovrenović says, and rightly so, that it is “axiomatically clear that literature is not historiography, nor is Andrić’s work a history textbook” (36). This, of course, is clear to anyone who has any knowledge of literature. He is also right when he says that Andrić’s work is “distinctly historical in a special way” (36), that there existed a “firmly and consistently shaped relationship towards history in the writer’s conscience, which could be described as pessimistic vitalism, and which would in Andrić’s future works find expression in a whole spectrum of different concrete manifestations in an endless procession of characters, fates and situations” (10). Finally, Lovrenović mentions something, a fact that should be recognized already in high school, which he labels as *methodological falsification*: “...literary fiction is replaced by and confused with actual historicity and the words of the characters are deceitfully transformed into the writer’s ‘positions’, ‘statements’, ‘opinions’, i.e. Ivo Andrić the citizen...” (23). These are all indisputable literary-theoretical facts, but Lovrenović’s methodological problems begin exactly at the moment when – after having set these axioms – he denies an ideological dimension to Andrić’s opus. This much should be clear, in theoretically consistent thought at least, that a work that is “pronouncedly historical in a particular way” etc. invites an understanding of history regardless of the fact that it should not be identified with the (nonexistent) position of the author. It is methodologically incoherent to claim that a certain opus is “pronouncedly historical in a particular way” (especially in cases where history is full of ideological conflicts) and at the same time deny ideological deposits in that work and reject the correctness of “historical” readings of that work, which does not even have to mean that

⁴ Looking for a foothold in biographies of authors to analyze the *literary and ideological* aspect of their work is a paradox, not only because the author of this essay thus coordinates the *literary and the ideological*, something he claims to be against, but it is also a paradox because it introduces the *biographical* criterion, which, the author repeatedly stresses in the text, needs to be kept separate from the *literary*, and even goes as far to accuse Rizvić of positivism as a cardinal sin - however, this is something I will say more about later.

it is being read as a *history textbook*: the complexity of *such* understanding of *such* a work escapes the entirely simplified interpretation of Ivan Lovrenović. His text, in fact, points towards an unambiguous and an utterly simple conclusion: Andrić's work is "in a particular way also pronouncedly historical", but history must not be visible in it. The relationship of the fictional and the factual in a literary work is much more complex than the paradoxical relationship established by Lovrenović. A literary work is polyvalent and open in that aspect as well. Proving this point is also the fact – one which Lovrenović writes about, but incorrectly interprets – that since Andrić's work appeared so have its different understandings: "Muslim", "Croat", "Serb", "Yugoslav". And of course, the intersubjective academic understanding.⁵ Even readers with an academic approach to a literary work cannot reject with indignation equal to Lovrenović's all understandings different from their own, or from our academic understanding, because there are so many readers, not only among the (non-academic) population, but also people with an academic education who read Andrić's work exactly in the way Lovrenović is so disgusted by. This fact, which is so apparent that even Lovrenović dedicates an entire essay to it, tells literature researchers that the point here is not persistent stupidity or utter ignorance of the majority of the audience/audiences, rather that "there is something" in the work itself – in *this work* precisely! – which irresistibly lures even such interpretation. "The matter at issue" lies in the work, not the reader. Only a completely rigid reader of Andrić's opus can persistently deny this nuancing. However, Lovrenović does say (24/25) that the right to different readings of Andrić's work cannot be denied, but then immediately goes to ironize such readings reducing them to the understanding of a literary work as a "history textbook". The word *right*,

⁵ In this uneasy footnote – right on the margins of my text – it is perhaps worth noting that these "national understandings" on Andrić's work ("Muslim", "Serb", "Croat", "Yugoslav") have been "internationalized" in an almost morbid way. Namely, not only Radovan Karadžić used Andrić's work *A Letter from 1920* as a political argument at meetings with senior representatives of the international community, but it was also noted that many international dignitaries, before deploying to Bosnia and Herzegovina during the aggression against BiH and afterwards, were given Andrić's work *The Bridge Across Drina* as compulsory reading material, which was to help them better understand the essence of the "conflict" in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

which the author uses, also captures attention. What is at question here is not the *right* to something, because the readers have the *right* to do with books whatever they wish; the relationship towards it is entirely different, and by using the word *right*, however, the author of the essay irrevocably disqualifies any reading that is different from his own. What theoretical discourse should be about is the *validity* of an understanding, not the *right* to it. Finally, rigidity of this kind ignores the ancient premise that values (and interpretations) in literature cannot be discussed scientifically, in terms of the absolute and the so-called positive sciences, instead, the ideal in the science of literature remains at the level of the *intersubjective*. Naturally, I am not at all denying the validity of Lovrenovic's interpretation of Andrić's work, I am only expressing amazement by his (awarded) methodological inconsistency in discrediting all different interpretations. Lovrenovic's next paradox also illustrates well how his impassioned denial of the validity of the "Muslim understanding" of Andrić's work has been brought to a state of complete methodological contradiction and logical chaos. Namely, the author of the essay writes about "*alleged* (italic by E. D.) Anti-Muslim views in Andrić's work" (27), about "Andrić's *supposed* (italic by E. D.) negative attitude towards Bosnian Muslims" (37).⁶ Furthermore, as he deals with my interpretations of Andrić's work in the context of the ideologies of *Eurocentrism* and *Orientalism*, the author of the essay, almost immediately, feels "a great intellectual need – for Andrić to finally be understood in a way in which he has never been understood, one which we are still waiting for, one which would not run away from the correctness of some of the premises on which this understanding (my understanding) rests, even though, only several lines earlier he described this understanding as *eerie* and *ominous* (27). The author then tries to support his unsubstantiated views by quoting Enver Kazaz: "It is, of course, possible to also explore the negative aspects of the image of Bosniaks in Andrić's work, especially the image of the Orient...", then by quoting Zdenko Lesić: "At this point we cannot but remember Andrić and his images of the 'East' and 'Easterners', which undoubtedly represent our contribution to the

⁶ Lovrenović's inconsistent spelling of the word *M/muslim*, at one moment with a capital M and the other with a small m, perhaps means that with such spelling the author covers Muslims and muslims, both as a people and a confessional community.

West-European tradition of ‘Orientalism’” (28). I do not wish to dwell on the texts of Lešić and Kazaz (my text is dedicated precisely to damasking *Eurocentrism* and *Orientalism* in Andrić’s work), which Lovrenović draws out of their original context and then uses them, fragmented, to fit them as arguments into his own context, his own construction and methodological controversies, which the quotations do not have to hold in their textual integrity. So, the number of major methodological and logical mistakes made in Lovrenović’s text is unbelievable. Let us take a look at some more.

The author talks about “alleged Anti-Muslim views” and “Andrić’s supposed negative attitude towards Bosnian Muslims”, which unequivocally means that he denies such an attitude on the part of Andrić, hence considers every “Muslim interpretation” ignorance and falsification. But, since he is talking in this way – in fact since he is thinking in this way – how is it then possible, methodologically and logically, and practically on the same pages of the text, for him to confess that “some of the premises on which this interpretation also rests” are correct?! He immediately adds (27-28) quotes from Kazaz and Lešić who think that there are aspects of a negative attitude by Andrić towards Bosniaks and “Easterners”! Putting aside the fact that by doing so Lovrenović forces other texts to participate in his erroneous methodological and logical confusion, and to make matters even worse to stand as arguments, because the readers of his essay do not need to have access to integral texts from which the quotations were taken. Putting aside this, the real problem is that the author of the essay, in a very small space, offers his own and arguments of other authors against his own claim that a negative image of M/muslims in Andrić’s work does not exist.

The problem is deepened by the fact that Bosniaks represent a collectivity. This represents the introduction of the ideological criterion at the highest level, because what other meaning could there be in the acknowledgment that Andrić, in the end, expresses a negative view towards one *people*, an entire cultural-civilisational sphere – the Orient, if not the placement of his art in the field of the ideological?! This is equal to a methodological “hara-kiri” of this essay, which arrogantly attacks all Bosniak authors who have recognized in Andrić’s work this aspect as well (Šukrija Kurtović, Muhamed Filipović, Muhsin Rizvić, Esad Duraković): Lovrenovic builds the entire essay on how it is methodologically completely wrong to read Andrić’s work in a way that would recognize in it a negative

attitude towards M/muslims, only to then acknowledge that aspect of Andrić's work himself.⁷

In the further explication of consequences of Lovrenović's paradoxical acknowledgement that Andrić's work, ultimately, does provide a basis for claims on his negative attitude towards M/muslims it is necessary to look more closely at how Lovrenović writes – negatively of course – about the “Bosniak-Muslim national ideology” (26) in the understanding of Andrić's work, and then reaches for a quote from one of the cited authors on the “collectivization of understanding” (28). There is, of course, no such thing as a “collectivization of understanding” of Andrić's work; rather, there is a theoretically legitimate *intersubjective* understanding of a literary opus. On the other hand, if one acknowledges that there are elements in Andrić's work providing a basis for establishing his negative attitude towards M/muslims as an ethnos and a confessional community, and that it is from their ranks that works were created also identifying and explaining the negative attitude, then it is illogical to deny – rather affectively as the author of the essay does – even such interpretations of Andrić's work. In relation to this, Lovrenović's paradoxes pile up. Let us take a look now at how they culminate on only one page of his essay.

At the top of page 27, just before he “swoops down” on my text in which I write about the negativization of Muslims in Andrić's work, Lovrenović talks about the *supposed* Anti-Muslim attitude in Andrić's work. He then immediately “detains” a number of my qualificatives, from a

⁷ Concerning the names of Bosniak and Bosnian authors who studied Andrić and his work and whose names Lovrenović mentions, there is a specific kind of error in the text which hints towards an attitude of bias on the part of the author, and this contradicts argumentation and analyticity. Namely, when he talks about the works of Muhamed Filipović, Muhsin Rizvić, Esad Duraković, whose texts he criticizes, the author of the text only mentions their names without any other civil or academic title, and this is a common method in research texts. However, when he mentions the names of authors whose texts he uses to support his position, then he says, and this is uncommon: “professors Zdenko Lešić, Enver Kazaz and Nedžad Ibrišimović” (p.27). It is a fact, however, that the authors from “both groups” are university professors and Lovrenović's decision to differentiate them this way is unfair to say the least.

It is clear that he thus shows partiality in analyzing different interpretations of Andrić's work. And this now falls under the domain of academic falsification and basic courtesy.

relatively extensive text, “lines them up” in a very small space, as at an execution site, and they now – concentrated by this “stylistic trick” – produce a much different effect from the intended one when they are distributed through the “depth” and “width” of the original text. The author of the essay does not contest my views and positions with arguments, but affectively declares them *eerie* and *ominous*, thus leaving my views unscathed. We also see a paradox appear in Lovrenović’s essay at this point: with a complete lack of tolerance, even affectively, he condemns an (Bosniak) author because he thinks that Andrić demonizes Muslims in his work, while even Lovrenović himself describes the author of that text *eerie* and *ominous*.

Contradictories in the⁸ essay continue. In the second part of the same page Lovrenović states that there is a great “intellectual need – for Andrić to finally be understood in a way in which he has never been understood, one which we are still waiting for, one which would not run away from the correctness of some of the premises on which this understanding also rests”. The understanding he (moments earlier) described as *eerie* and *ominous* he now considers “intellectually necessary” admitting that some of its premises are correct. Thus refuting himself, the author fails to at least hint what those corectnesses and premises could be. Lovrenović’s sudden “benevolence”, opposed to his previous position, concerns my understanding of Andrić’s work within the context of Said’s *Orientalism*. Consequently, his thought again suffers in a cleft stick, caught between paradox and illogicality: since

⁸ Lovrenović continues by writing that he has become familiar with Said’s *Orientalism* fairly late. Namely, he says that at the time when he was writing one of his papers on Andrić (1982) “At that time we had still not heard of Edward Said; his *Orientalism* was already published in America (1978), but a lot more time would pass and horrific events would happen before his work would begin to be quoted on our pages...” (p.28/29). It remains unclear when did Lovrenović first get in touch with *Orientalism* (in any event it happened after “a lot more time passed”), and it is even more puzzling on whose behalf is he speaking,, who and with what right has he included into his “we didn’t know”. I, for example, have quoted Said’s *Orientalism* in my doctoral thesis (*Mahđar Poetics in U.S.A.*), which I defended at the Philosophical Faculty in Belgrade in 1981. Since I defended the dissertation in 1981, that means that I had studied Said’s *Orientalism* several years earlier in the research phase, in other words, I communicated with that impressive work while its first edition still carried a heavy scent of printer’s ink..

Orientalism in Andrić's work is being "diagnosed" here, the critic of such "diagnosis" cannot remain coherent with the claim that *Orientalism* first does not exist, then that it does exist – and what is an even greater paradox – it exists a little, then it doesn't, in fact it does in certain premises. A theoretically and methodologically consistent deliberation needs to make a choice: either there is *Orientalism*, or there is not, because *Orientalism* is not something that fluid that it can be there one moment and gone the next, that some of its premises exist in Andrić's work, while others do not. Such inconsistency and "analytical arbitrariness" are completely unacceptable in systematic deliberation, because – *Orientalism* is a "cunning" ideology which harnesses art and science in the fulfillment of its ideological objectives. On the other hand, if the author of the essay acknowledges the presence of *Orientalism* in Andrić's work, be it only in certain premises (!), then he also acknowledges his involvement in the mainstreams of an ideology, even though this is exactly what he denies so persistently in many segments of his essay. The fundamental intention of the entire essay is, in fact, to deny the validity of understanding Andrić's work in a way that would recognize a negative attitude towards M/muslims in it, claiming that that attitude is *supposed*, *alleged* etc. However, the analysis I have just presented shows that, after all, Lovrenović does admit the presence of *Orientalism* (and I reiterate that this is an ideology) in Andrić's work, and the author immediately substantiates this as the text continues (the entire page 28, which teems with paradoxes) by quoting Kazaz and Lešić. It is important in this context to remind of those quotations: Kazaz says that "it is possible to examine also negative images of Bosniaks in Andrić's work, especially images of the Orient, because neither Andrić, nor European modernism, had escaped what Said defined as Orientalism"; Lešić concludes, correctly, in a view similar to mine: "At this point we cannot but remember Andrić and his images of the 'East' and 'Easterners', which undoubtedly represent our contribution to the West-European tradition of 'Orientalism'". Shortly before, Lovrenović describes as a deadly sin the fact that I have "applied Said's paradigm of Orientalism" (27) to Andrić's work. Paradoxes have made Lovrenović's work methodologically and logically entirely impassable. It even remains unclear if Lovrenović has fully understood Said's *Orientalism* to this day.⁹

There are even more paradoxes and methodological conflicts in Lovrenović's work which confuse any serious student of literature. It is also

important to take a look at how Lovrenović inconsistently interprets the relationship between a literary character and its writer as a civilian (23), and that “the private and civilian life of an artist need to be strictly separated from his work” (12). What Lovrenović talks about has been clear in literary science for a long time: (relative) autonomy of the world of a work of art from the “civilian life of an artist”. However, the problem lies in the fact that Lovrenović dedicates most of his essay to examining the “civilian life” of Ivo Andrić, his biography, nonliterary correspondence, statement etc. in order to, with the aid of all this, interpret Andrić’s literary work. This is the positivism Lovrenović so objects, albeit declaratively. Lovrenović constantly violates in both directions the proclaimed principle on significant (Lovrenović says strict) separation of the writer’s “civilian life” from the world of his art. On one hand he methodically searches the artist’s biography, in which Andrić’s private correspondence has an important place, and deals with the “aspects of Andrić’s *personality*” (italic by E. D.) to shed light on his work and characters (p. 10 and on). This positivistic method, as I have already mentioned, is well known in history, and Lovrenović, almost indignantly, uses it to label Rizvić’s work on Andrić, even though he himself abundantly uses this same method. However, the positivists were at least, in most cases, methodologically consistent, while the most unsuccessful research is the one that is methodologically inconsistent and incompatible, as I have already said. This is exactly where Lovrenović’s essay faces its fatal setback, because he not only uses the “civilian life of the writer” generously in analyzing his works (even though he stressed the need for them to be “strictly” separated), but also goes in the opposite direction. This is truly shocking. Let us take a look at how the author of the essay does this.

“...From *Signs by the Roadside*, as well as from rare interviews, it is possible to clearly reconstruct some sort of a theoretical credo – that ‘everything is in the work’, that the private and civilian life need to be strictly separated from his work” (12). It is unbelievable what this sentence contains.

In the final part of the sentence its author stresses that the “private and civilian life need to be strictly separated from his work”, while in its first part he says exactly the opposite: from *Signs by the Roadside* (despite being a literary work), as well as from rare interviews, it is possible to clearly *reconstruct* some sort of Andrić’s theoretical credo! Lovrenović reconstructs

a *theoretical credo* from a *work of art*, the same Lovrenović who talks about the need for separating the “civilian life” of a writer from his literary work. Is a greater paradox and logical chaos even possible?! Even more, the literary work is used here for reconstructing a “theoretical credo”, which represents a chaotic confusion of entirely separate fields. In addition to all of this – and in order to make the methodological mess complete – Lovrenović introduces *interviews* at the same level and from them – in the same way as from Andrić’s literary work – he reconstructs Andrić’s theoretical credo.

Lovrenović confirms that this is no oversight with the next sentence on the same page as he talks about literary work: “these writings are *always sublime*, and yet (italic by E. D., as a warning of paradoxicality) they are able to clearly hint that they are not merely poetical-meditative generalizations, rather that they are firmly connected with the concrete circumstances of life” (12).

Just like in the previous sentence, we are stunned by the methodological rambling, because the author of the essay first strictly separates the artistic from the writer’s “civilian life”, but then moves from the “civilian” into the artistic and vice versa, “clearly hinting” all sorts of things from one thing in the other, all this in an unprecedented methodological construct.

Lovrenović’s essay, therefore, due to the methodological confusion fails to reevaluate Andrić’s work, or the voluminous literature on that work, which undeniably belongs also to Bosniak literature and whose artistic value refuses to be denied despite the ideological deposits in it, because – and this needs to be reiterated as a conclusion – there are no ideologically “innocent” texts.