HUNGARIAN-CROATIAN WATER-PAINTING: 
THE RICHNESS OF NUANCE 
IN THE IMAGE OF HUNGARIANS IN THE CROATIAN 
PUBLIC IMAGINATION FROM THE 16TH CENTURY 
TO THE 19TH 

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This paper presents the image of Hungarians in the Croatian lands from the 16th century to the 19th on the basis of examples from literary (fictional) and journalistic (non-fiction) texts in Latin, Croatian and German. The image was very complex. It varied from an extremely positive perception – in the first centuries of the period under consideration – to clearly expressed negative perceptions and intolerance – that were most prominent during the revolutionary years 1848–1849, and most frequently, one can encounter a combination of positive and negative stereotypes existing in different ratios and with numerous transitional nuances.

Keywords: image of Hungarians, Croatia, literature, journalism, Habsburg, Revolution of 1848

It is an ancient and wide-spread phenomenon that specific characteristics or even characters are attributed to different societies, nations, or races. In the course of the 19th century, such understanding was included in a comparative-historical paradigm that prevailed in the humanities. Perceptions of foreign peoples and countries – perceptions of Others – are a research topic in which interests and research methodology of different social sciences and humanities overlap. In the 1960s, imagology emerges (from Latin imago – image, perception, idea; and Greek lógos – speech, word, concept, thought, reason) as a separate discipline of comparative literature whose primary task is to research literary perceptions of foreign countries and peoples (hetero-perceptions) and of one’s own country and people (auto-perception). Perceptions of other nations are not objective and complex but are mainly highly subjective and simplified, marked by exaggeration.
of some characteristics on the one hand and by downplaying or omitting other characteristics on the other. Most often, they are based on certain stereotypes and ingrained views. Stereotypes are imagological constructs, petrified identification points of sorts, which come into being as a result of a (long-lasting) process of shaping ideologies and identities.

When researching national perceptions, it is necessary to determine the intertext of a given national perception as a trope, in other words determine its place and function within a text in which it appears, place it in a broader historical context and also take into consideration its pragmatic-functionalist perspective, i.e. research its reception in the target audience and similar.

The stereotypical image of Hungarians in the Croatian public and in Croatian literature was shaped under the influence of a number of factors: personal contacts and family ties, political, ideological, social, military, economic, cultural, and religious factors in changing combinations and with varying intensity. It was first shaped and disseminated in fiction, in prose and poetic literature. Different strategies were used in the process of shaping stereotypes about Hungarians in the country of their neighbours across the Drava River: imagination (thinking an idea of Self/Own versus Other/Foreign), totalisation (thinking individual images of Oneself and Others as absolute wholes), these images are then naturalised, they are declared to be the actual essence of a nation and are generalised and are attributed to all members of a nation. Discrimination, or rather denigration or exclusion of Others, is closely connected to generalisation. The ultimate goal of the process of building modern identities is to establish domination of one’s Own over Others. Contrastings (juxtaposing auto-perceptions and hetero-perceptions), analogy (determining mutual similarities), inversion (conscious attribution of one’s own, mainly negative characteristics to Others) and other procedures are used in the process of building one’s own identity in relation to the identity of Other.

The image of Hungarians in the Croatian lands from the 16th to the 19th century was hardly ever exclusively positive or negative, it was not black and white, but was most often a combination of positive and negative national perceptions in different ratios and in a wide range, with Hungarophilia and Hungarophobia being its opposite poles. In the 19th century, the process of shaping national stereotypes was, in addition to the already mentioned factors, also influenced by at the time contemporary achievements in natural and social sciences, and the humanities, but most of all by current ideology and practice of politics. One can distinguish two imagological aspects in the Croatian public’s perception of the neighbour across the Drava River: the one is an image of a common state – the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom, in other words of Hungary; the other is an image of Hungarians as a nation or individuals. More material on the first imagological aspect has been preserved from the early Modern Age. In the 19th century, voluminous
material came into being that enables research of the perception of Hungarians as a nation. In the earlier periods, literature most effectively shaped, preserved and disseminated national stereotypes about Hungarians in the Croatian public, whereas from the beginning of the 19th century onwards, this function was to a large extent taken over by periodicals, brochures, leaflets, etc., even though the role of literature is not to be neglected in that period either.

This paper will demonstrate how stereotypical perceptions about Hungarians were shaped, what their function was, and what factors they depended on. The basis for this will be examples of Croatian literary texts written in Croatian and Latin, and non-fiction texts published in the 19th century Croatian press in Croatian and German.

In 1102, Croatia lost its independence having entered a state union with Hungary. From then on, it became an arena for different political pretentions and divisions, which resulted in the fragmentation of the Croatian ethnic territory. For this reason, it was almost impossible to standardise and unify the language of the people, Croatian, and Latin was therefore the official language of the Croatian Sabor (Diet) all through to 1847 as an aspect of defence against foreign influences and at the same time a demonstration of patriotism. Literary works too were more or less written in Latin. In the context of imagology, this fact makes a slightly unusual situation: one speaks of Other in a foreign, but not one’s own language. Positive and, very frequently, negative ideas and images of Other were expressed in the language that did not belong either to the one or the other people, or vice-versa it belonged to both. Thus, the Latin language as a supraregional language served as a language of mutual communication and a language of the intellectual elite but it also became an indispensable factor in shaping Croatian national identity.

Using representative examples of Croatian literature in Latin, this paper will attempt to demonstrate in what way the image of Hungarians changed in dependence of the political circumstances of the time and the status of mutual relations between Croats and Hungarians. Three authors to be discussed represent three periods, the imagological procedures they use writing about Hungarians are diverse and their views on Hungarians vary from positive to slightly negative and to extremely negative and discriminating. The selected writers are Ludovik Crijević Tuberon (15th–16th century), Juraj Rattkay (17th century) and Tit(uš) Brezovački (late 18th century). They belong to different historical periods and differ from each other with respect to the genre they write in. In this regard, Tuberon and Rattkay are somewhat more similar: both write historiographical prose, the former in the genre of commentarii, and the latter in a specific kind of biography – banology, in the genres that were characteristic of the period in which they wrote. Brezovački, on the other hand, wrote poetry – a political occasional réveille, also typical of the period in which it was written. One can assume that they, having selected a
customary genre and Latin (in particular in the case of Brezovački), imparted (or at least wanted to impart) to their works – in addition to universal intelligibility and broader spread – a certain dose of objectivity, in particular with respect to the attitudes about Hungarians and Other in general.

The humanist Ludovik Crijević Tuberon (1458–1527) from Dubrovnik was the first who, in his work Commentarii de temporibus suis – Commentaries on My Time (that may have been written between 1522 and 1527, and was first printed in 1603) described events from 1490 to 1522 (from King Matthias Corvinus’ death to the election of Pope Adrian VI) with many episodes from recent and remote past.9

In his Commentaries, Tuberon has for the most part a positive opinion about Hungarians: they are courageous, adaptable, and sharp-witted (solerti ingenio atque ad succumbendum tempori, maxime quum res urgent adversae, haud imparati)10, dedicated to Christianity and consequently enemies of the Turks (Turcis per se essent infensi et Christiano nomini deditissimi)11, and these very characteristics make them positive. Nevertheless, they are not popular with their neighbouring nations, especially Czechs and Poles, who hate them as invaders of foreign lands (Quapropter Hungari perinde ac alienae terrae invasores a finitimis odio habentur, praeertim a Boemis Polonisque)12. Like other mortals, they too crave for money (ut sunt Hungari veluti plerique mortals pecuniae avidi)13, and as for Hungarian temperament, Tuberon claims that it has much wolfish in itself since they are a nation that has not yet discarded their innate savagery and smacks of Scythian barbarity. Thus, Bishop of Oradea, Ivan (John) Filipec, giving King Vladislaus pieces of advice on how to rule, says:

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\text{Est igitur tibi noscendum Hungarorum ingenium, moresque eorum penitus animadevertendi, qui quidem multum lupi in se haud falso dicuntur habere, atque ita his imperandum, ut te amando simul et timendo venerentur, admirationeque dignum putent. /.../}
\text{Enimvero gens illa Scythicam adhuc redolens barbariem nondum ingentiam exuit feritatem. Atque iccirco omnia, prae viribus ac divitiis, caeterisque externis bonis, humana contemnit, nec prorsus quemquam venerandum putat, cuius maiestas nocere nequuit. Quin etiam, non tam qui benignie cum Hungaris faciunt, quam qui non sinunt esse injurios admirationi apud eos sunt. Illa enim immanis feritas vi quidem frangi potest, comitate vero nunquam fere mitescit.}^{14}
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On the one hand, Tuberon attempts to objectively define the relationship between Croats and Hungarians through the state and legal relationship based on the law of inheritance, and emphasises that Dalmatians (in other words Croats) were not forced into the common state union with the force of arms (neque enim vi ut armis coacti, sed cognitionis iure in Hungaricam concessere ditionem)15.
Generally speaking, the works from that period clearly display an awareness about “sharing the same destiny” in the struggle against Turks. On the other hand, however, a subjective component occasionally prevails in Tuberon’s writings and he writes that Hungarians and Croats quarrel over courage (Hungari nimirum et Chrovati perpetuas de virtute controversias inter se habent)\(^\text{16}\), adding, however, that the Turkish enemies appreciate the courage of Hungarians, Croats and Moldavians and hold them their equals (Tametsi ferocissima nation solos fere Hungaros, Chrovatos et Moldavios sibi virtute pares ducat)\(^\text{17}\). There are as many as 867 references to Hungari and Hungaria in Tuberon’s work (as opposed to 149 references to Dalmatae or, as expected, just a dozen references to Croatae / Chrovati).\(^\text{18}\) In accordance with the usage in humanism, Tuberon uses ethnonyms taken over from Antiquity and thus more often uses the term Dalmatae meaning by this the Croatian population.

Tuberon’s “disinclination” towards Croats was noticed by another author whose examples will be presented here: Zagreb canon Juraj Rattkay (1612–1666) in his banology Memoria regum et banorum Regnorum Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Sclavoniae (Memory of Kings and Bans of the Kingdoms of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, printed in 1652).\(^\text{19}\) He writes that “Tuberon seems to me suspicious whenever he writes about Croats, since he takes every opportunity presenting itself to rebuke the people impolitely and gratuitously (Demum suspectum se mihi Tubero reddit cum de Croatis scribit, cum semper fere oblata occasione, sine causa hance gentem inurbane perstringat).\(^\text{20}\)

Although it may at first sight appear that Rattkay writes against Hungarians and the union with them and that he praises “his” Croats, things are still not as simple as that. As shown by Sándor Bene in his introductory study accompanying the work Memoria,\(^\text{21}\) Rattkay approved of the Pannonian-Illyrian state union, which is evident from the following examples: in his speech in honour of the election of Ivan Drašković to the office of Palatine, Rattkay refers to Drašković as the fifth in a succession who, following the honour of Croatia’s Ban (Vice-Roy), was elected Palatine and of whom our “entire Illyricum” is proud, since he is “ours most” (the other four being Nicholas Garai/Garay [Miklós Garai/Garay – Nikola Gorjianski], Imre/Emerik Perényi, Toma Nádasdy / Tamás Nádasdy and Emerik Zapolja / Imre Zápolya who are partly of Hungarian origin).\(^\text{22}\) The speech also cites an epitaph from the gravestone of Drašković’s father which one certainly cannot interpret as Rattkay’s “misohungria”, i.e. as his negative attitude to Hungarians: “O Drascovicios dent saecula postera multos / Gloria prisca Hunni Martis et artis erit.”\(^\text{23}\)

Some polemical notes in Memoria directed against Hungarians (the issue of the border between Slavonia and Hungary, or a conflict between Hungarian peers with Ivan Drašković), which are not based on Rattkay’s general opinion about Hungarians, but are his criticism of some individual cases, resulted in the percep-
tion of Rattkay in part of Croatia’s older technical literature as a “counter-Hungarian agent” (as dubbed by Bene). This position certainly needs to be revisited and redefined in the light of more recent interpretations.

A change in the political circumstances in the late 18th century, characterised by a response of the Croatian and the Hungarian political elites to unconstitutional policy pursued by Joseph II, marked by centralist and Germanising tendencies, ruling by means of patents without convening the Hungarian and the Croatian Diet, and the beginnings of the Hungarian National Movement which looked across the Drava River as well and strove to make the southern neighbour accept the Hungarian language as official – which was in Croatia understood as a Hungarianisation tendency – resulted in the introduction of new negative elements in the image of Hungarians in the Croatian public. Since that time, resistance to such tendencies grew more prominent and found response in poetry too, in the genre of political occasional poems. One of the most well-known poems of the genre written in Latin is a poem by Tituš/Tit Brezovački (1757–1805) of July 1790 addressed to Ban Ivan Erdödy (1733–1806), who was in March 1790 appointed Ban of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia by Leopold II and who, in September of the same year, coined in the Croatian Diet the famous catchword: *Regnum regno non praescribit leges*. The poem is an attack on the Main County Head of Zagreb, Nikola Škrlec Lomnički (who appears in the poem under the recognisable nickname of Scaliger), and his proposition that Croatia and Hungary should in the future be connected by an inextricable bond in defence against potential future onslaughts of the executive power. Somewhere along these lines, the Croatian Diet proposed and the Hungarian Diet adopted the conclusions LVIII and LXIX of 1791 that the Hungarian Vice-Regency Council should be accepted as a common government for Croatia and Hungary (until the time when Croatia would restore its control over the areas that were at the time under Turkish and Venetian rule) and that Croatia’s contribution should be discussed at the Hungarian Diet, however, separately from Hungary’s military contribution. Brezovački also attacks the Bishop of Zagreb, Maksimilijan Vrhovec, and the Main County Head of Križevci, Aleksandar Szécsen, who, together with Škrlec, betray their own homeland and want to sell it to Hungarians (*His tamen, ah! miseris nos vendere Scaliger optat. / Impius, et patriae prodictor usque suae;*). The poem *Dalmatiae, Croatae et Slavoniae trium sororum recursus ad novum prorregem comitem Joannem Erdoedy* is told by three sisters (personified Dalmatia, Croatia, and Slavonia) who hope that the Ban will rescue them from “a godless company” – of Hungarians (*impia turba*) who are called (again following the inherited humanistic usage) Scythians who wish to obliterate the Croatian name and language (*... atque Croatorum nomen gentemque abolere. / Nullus abhinc Slavinus, Dalmata nullus erit, / Sed genus in Scythicum linguamque immutariet ipsam, / Hirsutos mores inque statuta placet*). Brezovački then compares Hungarians
with Austrian Germans (the former he dubs Huns, the latter Teutons, after the ancient Germanic tribe), and the comparison finishes in favour of Austrian Germans: *Credite, nulla datur toto truculentior orbe / Gens Hunno; Teuto suavior ipse fuit.*30 After several verses, Brezovački continues his comparison with the reference to imposition of the Hungarian language which, he believes, is barbarian and for which nobody cares, except perhaps the inhabitants of the North Pole (*Barbara praeterea lingua est, quam respuit omnis / Ni extremit Lappon incola forte poli*).31 In conclusion, he hyperbolically concludes that there is no alphabet in the world that could take down Hungarian words (*Ac merito, nam alphabetum non extat in orbe, / Hunnica quo possis scribere verba bene*)32 and poses a rhetorical question: *Theuto fuit durus, quod vos peregrine iubebat / Verba loqui: quanto durior Hunnus erit?*33, and answers it in the following verse: *Ille tenet cultos mores et se excolit ultro, / Hic revocat barbis barbar a saecla suis.*34

Thus, in Brezovački’s opinion, the Habsburgs wanted to carry out Germanisation but Hungarians in their Hungarisation will be even worse. Equally so, the Austrian rule is rated cultured, whereas Hungarians are wild. This is emphasised with a trope stating that Hungarians invoke barbarian centuries with their beards (a symbol of savagery since the ancient times: even Cyclops is trying to become more civilised by cutting off his beard with a sickle in order to seduce beautiful Galatea). Brezovački ends his poem with a couplet, which through its lascivious, humorous, and slightly misogynic statement expresses the utmost contempt for Hungary, but at the same time its readiness not to shrink from anything in order to achieve its aspirations (*Hungara, da veniam, ardens quid sit femina, nosti /, Illam dum caro vis spoliare viro*).35

The perception of Hungarians in this poem is very negative and is a reflection of the then topical bilateral political relations between the two peoples separated by the Drava River. Part of the Croatian public, and Brezovački was obviously one of them, did not support close links between Croatia and Hungary at the administrative level, *i.e.* a new political course charted by the Croatian Diet, and considered such policy to be a treachery of Croatian interests. The subsequent decades would demonstrate that the mentioned conclusions of the Diet had grave political consequences for Croatia, since its position was weakened in the forthcoming conflicts with Hungary riding the wave of an upsurge in national movements in both states.

As this example of a political réveille in Latin shows, the traditional, predominantly positive image of Hungarians in the Croatian public is increasingly gaining negative elements after 1790. This is particularly obvious since the 1820s as a consequence of the strengthening of the Hungarian National Movement and ever stronger pressures exerted on Croats to accept gradually the Hungarian language in public services. In their motto coined by Ljudevit Gaj, members of the Croatian National Revival36 pointed to the important link with Croatia’s neighbour across
the Drava River being common constitutionality (*Da Bog živi konstituciju ugarsku, Kraljevinu Hrvatsku i narodnost ilirsku*). To them, Hungarians served as a role model for modernising society and economy, promoting one’s own language, developing national culture and building national cultural institutions, shaping social programmes, and in many other fields. Janko Drašković especially highlighted Hungarians as a role model in a number of areas. In spite of all this, as early as the 1830s, Illyrians started to consciously introduce some negative elements in the perception of Hungarians in the Croatian public. This procedure was a consequence of deteriorating bilateral political relations, and it served to mobilise and homogenise the domestic public around the cultural and political programme of the Croatian National Revival. From then onwards, Hungarians were perceived as oppressors of Croats (and other Slavic peoples) in the national sense and as assimilators (starting with a brochure by the Slovak author Samuel Hojč *Sollen wir Magyaren werden?*, which, due to strict censorship was not printed in Slovakia, but in Karlovac in 1833). The Croatian public perceived them as enemies who wanted to destroy the Croatian people. A poem by Pavao Štoos *Kip domovine vu početu leta 1831. [The Picture of the Homeland at the Beginning of the Year 1831]* clearly reveals the fear of the death of one’s own people: (*Ar več tjam Dunaj z slapmi v zrak diple, / Hoče da Savu z blatom zasiple; / Some vre z mustaći gizdavo miže, / Lampe prot savskem ribicam zdiže, (...) Vre i svoj jezik zabit Horvati / Hote ter drugi narod postati.*). The same is true of a speech by count Karl Sermage in the Croatian Diet on 15 November 1832. In a slightly paranoid way, he depicted the policy of the Magyar political elite towards Croatia in utmost negative terms: *I doista, ako ne ćemo da sami sebe zavaravamo, moramo priznati, da sva nakana Mađara ide zatim da sve naše pradjedovske običaje i zakonito stečena prava i privilegije, što smo ih nastojali kroz vjekove utvrditi i sačuvati, svojom nama dušmanskom premoći na saboru dokinu, kraljevstvo naše mnogo starije negoli Ugarska razvale i da mu ostave samo prazno ime, da stanovnici ove zemlje što jače osjete propast svojih prava, da osjete sramotu i svoju potištenost.*

In the Croatian society of the time, the perception of Magyars as an Asiatic element in European culture was quite common. The Asiatic element as one of the determinants of Hungarian identity can be found in the aforementioned poem by Tituš Brezovački from 1790. Ljudevit Gaj, Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski and other authors also made references to it, and it was especially frequently exploited in the revolutionary years of 1848–1849. The negative elements in the image of Hungarians were noticeable in different public appearances by members of the Croatian National Revival, in brochures, newspaper articles and in Croatian literature of the Revival period, in particular in *budnice* (réveilles – popular songs aiming at awakening national feelings) and *davorije* (patriotic/battle songs), which at times could not be printed due to censorship but were disseminated...
orally. Emphasis on the negative stereotypes about Hungarians in these poems can be explained by the fact that they had the strongest mobilising potential in the Croatian society of the time where an overwhelming majority of the population was illiterate. Several verses from an anonymous poem *Davorie dobrovoljacah spremanjućih se na Magjare [A Battle Song of Volunteers Preparing for a Fight against Magyars]* printed as a leaflet, most probably from September 1848, serve as an example of the utmost negative perception of Magyars: *Dugo Magjari nami vladahu / Našu slobodu satârt hotjahu: / Poraz vama o barbari, / Poraz vama o Magjari! / Hajd na vraga do Budima, / Smârt Magjarima!*\(^4^3\) Since the early 1830s, more precisely ever since a satirical poem *Palma [Palm]* by the Slovak author Juraj Rohony was printed in Zagreb in 1832, the image of Hungarians in the Croatian public was expanded by a further element of denying the genuineness of the Hungarian language and culture, which were called barbarian. This stereotype would later be used, especially during the time of major escalation in Croatian–Hungarian political relations. In other words, during the Illyrian Movement, the former allies of Croatia’s classes in their struggle against Viennese absolutism – Hungarians – were gradually turning into enemies. The way Hungarians were perceived in the Croatian public was, to a large extent, consciously changed by Croatian nationally conscious intellectuals in order to mobilise and homogenise the domestic public and contribute to it accepting the cultural (and political) programme of the Illyrian Movement.

Nevertheless, even at the time of gradual escalation in Croatian–Hungarian political relations in the 1830s and 1840s and, as a result, a deterioration in the perception of Hungarians in the major part of the Croatian public, there was still a sizeable group in Croatia that retained the traditional positive image of Hungarians, and perceived them as brothers in constitution, defenders of the same traditional social values, comrades-in-arms in the century-long armed struggle against Turk conquerors, and collaborators in their common resistance to germanising and absolutist-centralising tendencies of the ruling circles in Vienna. This group of people was called Magyarones, *i.e.* members and supporters of the Croatian-Hungarian Party (Horvatsko-vugerska stranka), which was established in 1841. They retained the extremely positive image of Hungarians until the revolution broke out in 1848, when they ceased to exist as an organised political group in Croatia due to the pressure of Croatian policy opposed to the Hungarian revolutionary government. This policy was pursued by members of the National Party headed by Ban Josip Jelačić.\(^4^4\)

The strong aversion to Hungarians, even Hungrophobia, in most of the Croatian active and attentive public\(^4^5\) culminated during the revolutionary years 1848–1849, when all negative elements in the perception of Hungarians became most severe. In Croatia, the Magyars were accused of having oppressed non-Magyar peoples and having tried to abolish Croatian autonomy, they were
rebuked for not choosing means to achieve their ends, for being perfidious and cunning. In line with the then contemporary accomplishments of social sciences, stereotypes about a clash of civilisations were applied to the relationship between Croats and Hungarians, and mutual differences were highlighted on the basis of a contrast between the West, represented by Croats, and the East, represented by Hungarians. As representatives of Western culture, Croats were considered culturally and biologically dominant vis-à-vis Hungarians, and their right to domination in Hungary was consequently challenged. Luckily, they did not apply extreme interpretations of differences in civilisation and did not use the stereotype of racial inferiority of eastern peoples in relation to western, obviously aware of the fact that the application of this stereotype to the differences in the relationship between Croats and Hungarians was indeed unacceptable. Differentiation by religion as a distinguishing element between Croats and some Hungarians was in the background. However, Magyars were connected with Turks and Mongols, and in this context, savagery, cruelty and similar characteristics were attributed to them. A myth about the Illyrian origin of Croats, which emphasised their indigenesness and belonging to the circle of Western civilisation, was juxtaposed to a myth about the Hunnic origin of Magyars who were called “a Turkish tribe”, “barbarians”, “Asiatics”, “Mongols’ fellow tribesmen” and “Oriental arrogance” and “Hunnic aristocratism” were attributed to them. The Croatian/Austrian-Hungarian War of 1848–1849 was accompanied by a propaganda war on both sides. Typical of it was its black-and-white perspective and belittling of the opponent. Thus, there were talks on the Croatian side that Hungarian leaders were blinded by the idea of Hungarian linguistic and national supremacy, the Hungarian army was dubbed “Magyar gangs” and there were attempts at discrediting it by alleging that its members had perpetrated war crimes (actual or fictional). Cowardice was attributed to them and it was said that they needed alcohol to boost their courage. Such accounts were not consistent though, since there were some positive elements in them too: “Arpadic courage” and concord. Denial of the genuineness and beauty of the Hungarian language and culture reached their peak at that time.46 All the negative stereotypes about Hungarians are sublimated in the following quotations from the then newly established paper Slavenski Jug [The Slavic South] of liberal orientation. The first denies the genuineness and beauty of the Hungarian language and culture reached their peak at that time.46 All the negative stereotypes about Hungarians are sublimated in the following quotations from the then newly established paper Slavenski Jug [The Slavic South] of liberal orientation. The first denies the genuineness and beauty of the Hungarian language and consequently the ability of Hungarians, using their language as a tool, to civilise their neighbouring peoples: Vaš jezik bez snage i bez izvornosti, bez bogatstva i liepote, ima biti nosiocem izobraženosti europejske? Znate li da je jezik, kojim govorite kineski zid, dieleći vas od svih narodoh, koji vas okružavaju, zid, kroz kojega stimulacija nikada nije mogla prodrijeti, taj je obustavio trake izobraženosti europejske; pa jezikom ovim, koji niti imade duševne kakve potencije, niti ga itko izvan pustaruh vaših razumie, hoćete vi da po zapadnom usku izobrazite tolike milione Slavjanah kojih narav nije majmunstvo
(...) ovaj narod hoćete Vi da civilizirate?\textsuperscript{247} The second citation stresses the Asiatic character of the Hungarian people and condemns attempts at Hungarisation directed against other peoples living in Hungary: Kako su Magjari, suplemenici Mongolah, duh ovoga vriemena sхватили, видите je iz toga, da narodom u Úgar-skoj živućim, ne samo da nisu ništa u obziru njihove narodnosti popustili, da pače su ih u tomu jošte više nego prie dušili, i utamničili sve, koji su počeli o svetih ovih pravih narodah govoriti. (…) Oni su dakle i dalje nakanili u duhu barbar-skih viemenah raditi i gospodariti nad narodi. Pogérdan je onaj jaram Magjarski za Slavene, i veoma škodljiv (...).\textsuperscript{48}

The bloody crushing of the Hungarian Revolution and, in particular, the execution of Hungarian military commanders of Pest and Arad on 6 October 1849 provoked shock, outrage and unanimous condemnation in Croatia,\textsuperscript{49} and again some positive elements were introduced into the image of Hungarians – compassion with the defeated opponent.

The absolutist regime of the Habsburg Monarchy in the 1850s marked by centralisation, strengthening of bureaucracy, imposition of the German language, tightened police controls, absolute restriction of civic and political rights and freedoms, and the impossibility of the opposition to act publicly weighed heavily both on Croats, Hungarians, and other peoples as well. The pressure exerted by Vienna pushed into the background again disagreements between the two peoples separated by the Drava River. The Croatian public sympathised with Hungarians’ “passive resistance”, Hungarian dances were again performed in Zagreb, Hungarian folk costumes were popular, and there were voices calling for reconciliation with Hungarians for the sake of protection of common interests.\textsuperscript{50} The path to reconciliation was not easy. In proportion to the ups and downs in the process of improving mutual relations, there was also a gradual process of introducing positive elements in the perception of Hungarians in the Croatian public.

The Croatian–Hungarian Settlement of 1868 was a new important milestone in Croatian–Hungarian relations. The major part of the Croatian political elite strongly condemned it while a minor part supported it. In line with their political views and attitude to the Settlement, the major part of the Croatian public, except the Unionists, perceived Hungarian political (and economic, social, cultural) influence as, more or less, hegemonic. From then until the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy, the perception of Hungarians in Croatia was very complex with a broad range of elements – from a very negative image in the oppositionally minded press and public opinion in Croatia, to partly or predominantly positive in the Unionist and, from the early 1880s, in pro-regime circles – and was under the strong influence of the political parties’ propaganda and press.\textsuperscript{51}

The Hungarian–Croatian political and economic relations in the second half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century had a substantial influence on the image of Hungarians in Croatian literature of the time as well, which was predominantly negative but complex.\textsuperscript{52}
There were some cases where poor mutual relations of the time were projected to the remote past when Croats and Hungarians had struggled in concert against their common enemies and when the image of Hungarians in Croatian literature had been predominantly or exclusively positive. Some extreme examples of the procedure occurred at the turn of the 19th into the 20th century when even the heroic defence of Szigetvár under the leadership of Nikola Šubić Zrinski [Zrínyi Miklós] was used, in literary interpretation, to express anti-Hungarian sentiments (Osman Beg Štafic in the epic poem *Vjerne sluge [Loyal Servants]* and Higin Dragošić in the play *Siget [Szigetvár]*).53

A gallery of predominantly negative Hungarian characters was opened by August Šenoa in his historical novels. Foreigners – Hungarians and Germans – and their local assistants were the source of all evil in his novels *Diogenes* (1878) and *Kletva [Curse]* (1880). In his novel *Seljačka buna [The Peasant Revolt]* (1877), the main negative character was a haughty and rapacious Hungarian nobleman Franjo Tahi who cruelly exploited his serfs and became a negative symbol of Hungarian domination over Croats in the second half of the 19th century, since there is no doubt that the account of his conduct towards serfs was supposed to associate readers with the status in the Croatian–Hungarian relations of the time.54 In the novel *The Peasant Revolt*, the image of Hungarian soldiers was negative as well, and they were depicted in an even worse light in the novel *Kraljica Lepa [Queen Lepa]* (1902) by Eugen Kumičić. In that novel, the Hungarian kings Ladislaus and Coloman were depicted as incapable army leaders: Ladislaus was a coward and incapable, and Coloman managed to defeat the Croatian army led by Petar Svačić with the assistance of Croatian traitors. The Croatian king Zvonimir was represented as a servant of Hungarians and his own wife (a sister to the Hungarian King) since he was prepared to sacrifice Croatia’s independence. This hides implicit criticism of the writer’s contemporaries, Unionists, who were prepared to make concessions to Hungarians at the detriment of Croatian interests. Here, Eugen Kumičić’s political views become prominent, Kumičić being a member of the Croatian Party of Rights. Queen Lepa was depicted as a femme fatale who did not shrink from anything striving to achieve her goals. In Kumičić’s another novel *Olga i Lina [Olga and Lina]* (1881), the chief characters were Hungarian women – femmes fatales of questionable morals. Such Hungarian female characters appeared in the works by Ksaver Šandor Gjalski and Antun Gustav Matoš. In the novel *Melita* by Josip Eugen Tomić, Hungarian characters were depicted in a less negative light and more neutral, and the major female character – a Croatian Melita – was a prototype of a femme fatale guided by her pleasures.55

Hungarians were presented in a satirical tone in the writings of Ante Starčević, member of the Croatian Party of Rights, in the humorous-satirical paper *Zvekan [Simpleton]* (Starčević created a stereotypical image of a Hungarian named Pišta with his round, red cheeks, and a large moustache) as well as in the satirical feuil-
letons by Ante Kovačić Iz Bombaja [Out of Bombay] and Iz egipatske tmine [Out of the Darkness of Egypt], published in the paper Sloboda [Freedom] (1879-1884), and in the work Peštanski stipendiste [Scholars of Pest] (1878), where he criticised Croatian deputies in the joint Diet who had been bribed by the Hungarian Prime Minister Kálmán Tisza.

The image of Hungarians and their supporters in Croatia in the novels and stories by Ksaver Šandor Gjalski is much more complex and more differentiated – criticism and irony are combined with liking. In the novel U noći [In the Night] (1886), Gjalski described Hungarian harmful economic policy pursued towards Croatia and arrogant conduct of Hungarian soldiers in the middle of Zagreb. He criticised excessive Hungarophilia among members of the Croatian Magyarone nobility (similar to a story Illustrissimus Battorych from 1884). The stereotypical image of arrogant Hungarians who fanatically love their own people and despise all the others was given in the novel Osvit [Daybreak] (1892). The major character in the story Žitomirski gospodin [A Gentleman from Žitomir] (1891) was a femme fatale, a Hungarian woman Ilona. In this work, one can find a stereotype about the passionate and hot-blooded Hungarians that was common at the time of Romanticism in other European literatures as well, and it was created as an auto-stereotype by Hungarians themselves. In the story Znanstveni heureka Mazalji Mikša [A Scholarly Eureka by Mazalji Mikša] (1896), Gjalski ridiculed Hungarian megalomania and their striving to prove their priority in everything (an Old Croatian charter written in the Glagolitic script was interpreted as an Old Hungarian document and a proof that the Croatian Zagorje region had originally been inhabited by Hungarians). In his story Izlet Grinczinger Pála na Magyar tenger [Pál Grinczinger’s Excursion to Magyar tenger] (1902), he ridiculed Hungarian claims on the Croatian Littoral.56

The stereotypical image of Hungarians as oppressors, arrogant masters, suppressors of Croatia’s independence prevailed in Croatian poetry of the second half of the 19th century, which condemned their domination. In this context, assistance was sought in a symbolic way from Ban Josip Jelačić, who became a symbol of the struggle for Croatia’s rights against Hungarian onslaughts. Such atmosphere prevailed in the poems by Ognjeslav Utješenički, Petar Preradović, Ivan Trnski and other authors. Poetic work by Silvije Strahimir Kranjčević represents an exception in this respect, since he disregarded everyday political turmoil and conflicts.57 Antun Gustav Matoš was very critical of Hungarians in his journalist writing and poems on national themes due to many violations of Croatia’s rights by the Hungarian side. The image of the neighbour across the Drava River was extremely sinister, and his symbolism was plain and recognisable. Matoš depicted economic misery of Croatia and blamed for it Hungarians and other foreigners (Germans and Jews), who were economically exploiting Croatia, with massive Croatian emigration being a consequence. In his pamphlet Mađarska kultura [Hungarian Culture] (1904), he painted an ex-
tremely negative image of Hungarian culture, even though he did not know it nor desired to know it.58

In the second half of the 19th century, a negative perception of Hungarians prevailed in the entire Croatian literature. A more differentiated image of Hungarians was introduced to Croatian literature by Miroslav Krleža’s works at the time of Croatian Literary Modernism at the beginning of the new century. Krleža, unlike Matoš, was very knowledgeable about Hungarian culture and held it in high esteem.

The image of Hungarians in the Croatian lands from the 16th to the 19th century was complex, made up of different positive and negative elements in different ratios. While it was mainly positive in the earlier centuries, allowing its characterisation even as Hungarophilia, in the mid part of the 19th century, Hungarophobia was present in most of Croatia’s public, featuring most prominently during the revolutionary turmoil in the Habsburg Monarchy. Apart from strong personal and family ties between Croatian and Hungarian nobility (to a lesser extent in the middle class), Hungarophilia in Croatia was conditioned by common political, economic, and social interests. Many Croatian intellectuals, being unable to make a distinguished career in politics, church, literature, or science in their homeland, left the country crossing the Drava River and were active at the courts of Hungarian kings and noblemen. Through their positive attitude to Hungarians, they showed their allegiance and loyalty to their “employers” or Maecenas. Furthermore, Hungarians were allies in the struggle against Turks and in the resistance to the Habsburg centralism and absolutism, which also had an impact on their positive perception in Croatia. A predominantly negative image of Hungarians in the Croatian public in the second half of the 19th century, which was primarily a reflection of the political and economic relations of the time and dissatisfaction of the major part of the Croatian intellectual and political elite with frequent violations of Croatia’s rights by the ruling circles in Hungary, was improved by some positive elements, but it would never again approximate the predominantly positive image of the earlier periods.

Summary

This paper presents the perception of Hungarians in the Croatian lands from the 16th to the 19th century based on selected examples from literary (fictional) and journalistic (non-fiction) texts in the Latin, Croatian and German languages. The perception ranged between Hungarophilia – in the first centuries of the period under consideration – and Hungarophobia – most prominent in the mid-19th century – and was most frequently a combination of positive and negative stereotypes existing in different ratios. Material from the earlier centuries represents an image of the
common state – the Hungarian–Croatian Kingdom, whereas material from the 19th century allows research in the perception of Hungarians as a people. In the earlier periods, literature most effectively shaped, preserved and disseminated national stereotypes in Croatia, whereas from the beginning of the 19th century on, this function was to a large extent taken over by periodicals, brochures, leaflets, etc.

The highly positive image of Hungarians in Croatia in the earlier period was linked with, on the one hand, personal and family ties, and on the other with common political, economic and social interests of the two peoples. From the early 19th century onwards, negative perceptions were introduced into the image, and an outspoken aversion to Hungarians culminated in the revolutionary years 1848–1849, when all the negative elements in the perception of Hungarians culminated. Hungarians were at the time perceived as oppressors of Croats in the national sense, as assimilators, as Asiatic element in European culture. The Hungarian language, one of the more important elements in the process of building national identity, was perceived as barbarian and unintelligible. A good image of Hungarians in Croatia was restored following the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution, but never to the extent of the earlier periods.

Notes


Joep Leerssen, “Imagologija: povijest i metoda”, 179–180. This author differentiates between two types of statements about nations: factual-report type and stereotyping statements about nations. The latter are characterised by pointing out typical distinguishing characteristics of some nation and are object of imagological research. More on that see in Joep Leerssen, “Reterika nacionalnog karaktera: programatski pregled”, 99–124; Davor Dukić, “Predgovor: O imagologiji”, 17–18.

Dubravka Oraić Tolić uses examples to explain these strategies of shaping stereotypes and modern identities in her paper “Hrvatski kulturni stereotipi. Diseminacije nacije”, 31–34.


Commentarii (commentaries, notes) as a genre inherited from Antiquity (Gaius Julius Ceasar and his Commentarii de bello Gallico and Commentarii de bello civili) are nominally less demanding than what is understood to be other historiographic genres in Antiquity – historiae and annales. This is truly merely nominal, at least as far as Tuberon is concerned, since his commentaries comprise 11 volumes, in other words over 300 pages of text. Commentaries were also written by Enea Silvio Piccolomini (better known as Pope Pius II) Commentarii rerum memorabilium quae temporibus suis continguerunt; Paolo Giovio Turricarum rerum commentarius and Ferenc Forgách Rerum Hungaricarum sui temporis commentarii. Banology is a specific historiographic sub-genre focused on the institution of ban, which emerged in the 17th century (with Juraj Rattkay and Franjo Ladány as its representatives) and developed during the 18th century (with Pavao Ritter Vitezović, Franjo Zdelar, Baltazar Adam Krčelić, and Josip Mikoczi as its representatives).

Ludovik Crijević Tuberon, Commentarii de temporibus suis (the Latin text prepared by Vlado Rezar) and Komentari o mojem vremenu (translation and introductory study by Vlado Rezar) (Zagreb, 2001).
10 Cf. L.C. Tuberon, *Commentarii*, 70: “of bright mind and ready to adapt to the moment, especially when they are depressed by misery”.

11 *Ibid.*, 165: “... and by themselves were in hostility with the Turks, and in addition to it dedicated Christians”.

12 *Ibid.*, 11: “Therefore, the neighbouring peoples, especially Czechs and Poles, hate Hungarians as invaders of foreign lands”.


14 *Ibid.*, 33–34: “You have, thus, to get to know Hungarian nature, and observe well their temperament, for which it is rightly said that it has something wol[...]
15 *Ibid.*, 100: “since they did not come under Hungarian rule under armed coercion, but that happened by law of kinship”.

16 *Ibid.*, 100: “Croats and Hungarians are constantly quarelling over courage...”.


18 The Latin text was put on the Internet within an electronic collection of texts by Croatian writers in Latin entitled *Croatae auctores Latini (CroALa)* (http://www.ffzg.unizg.hr/klafil/croala/, last access on 3 June 2014).


21 Sándor Bene, “Ideološke koncepcije o staleškoj državi zagrebačkog kanonika” [Ideological concepts of the Standesstaat by a Zagreb canon], introductory study in: *Spomen na kraljeve i banove*, 4–103.


23 *Ibid.*, 235: “Oh, may the next centuries give many Draškovićs, / Restoring the old glory of the Huns, Mars and arts.”


25 Scaliger is the earlier form of the family name Škrlec originating from Italy.


27 Tituš Brezovački, *Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae trium sororum recursus* vss 39–40; “Nevertheless, Scaliger, this godless man and traitor of his homeland, wants to sell poor us to them (Hungarians)”.

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29 Tituš Brezovački, Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae trium sororum recursus vss 13-16; “(The godless lot is about) to obliterate the Croatian name and people! There will be no more Slavonian or Dalmatian, but (this godless lot) wants to change both the people and the language into Scythian, and wild customs into laws”.

30 Ibid., vss 21-22: “Believe, there are no people in the world more fierce than the Huns; one prefers even the Teutons”.

31 Ibid., vss 29-30: “Moreover, (their) language is barbarian and everybody despises it except perhaps Lapps, inhabitants of the North Pole”.

32 Ibid., vss 31-32: “Rightly so, since there is no alphabet in the world that could correctly write down Croatian words”.

33 Ibid., vss 33-34: „’Teuton was horrible when he ordered you to speak a foreign language; how much more horrible will Hungarian be?’”.

34 Ibid., vss 35-36: “That (sc. German) is cultured and is further becoming more civilised, and this (sc. Hungarian) is invoking barbarian centuries with his beard”.

35 Ibid., vss 93-94: “You know, pardon me, how hot a Hungarian is, when you want to seize her dear husband”.


37 “Long live the Constitution of Hungary, the Kingdom of Croatia and the ethnicity Illyrian!”

38 Janko Drašković, Disertatia iliti razgovor darovan gospodi poklisarom zakonskim i budućim zakonotvorcom kraljevinah naših, za buduću dietu ungarsku odaslajanem, držan po jednom starom domorodcu kraljevinah ovih [Dissertation, or Treatise, given to the honourable lawful deputies and future legislators of our Kingdoms, delegated to the future Hungarian Diet; by an old patriot of these Kingdoms] (Karlovac, 1832; reprint Karlovac, 1991)

39 The poem was printed in Hrvatski narodni preporod [Croatian National Revival], vol. I., ed. Jakša Ravlić (Zagreb, 1965), 245–250. “There, the Danube springs into the air with its waterfalls, it wants to cover the Sava with mud; the catfish struttingly moves its moustache, it takes a look at the small fish in the Sava, (...) Oh Croats, do you want to forget your own language, do you want to become another nation?”

40 “And indeed, if we do not want to delude ourselves, then we have to admit that Magyars, at the Diet and with their hostile superiority, aim at abolishing all of our ancestral customs, and legally acquired rights and privileges, which we strove to enforce and safeguard through the centuries, at destroying our kingdom that is much more ancient than Hungary, and at leaving just an empty
name of it, at leaving the inhabitants of this country with a stronger feeling of the ruin of their rights, a feeling of shame and their depression.” Quoted after Fredo Šišić, Hrvatska povijest, Treći dio: Od godine 1790. do godine 1847. [Croatian History: Part Three: From the Year 1790 to the Year 1847] (Zagreb, 1913), 172.

41 In Hungarian literature of the period of Romanticism, one can notice an awareness of a different nature of Magyars who trace their origin to Asia and do not speak an Indo-European language. There is also awareness of the isolated position of the Hungarian state and nation resembling an island in the sea of other nations. Csaba Gy. Kiss, “Dodaci uz nacionalnu zemljopisnu simboliku (primjeri iz mađarskog i hrvatskog romantičarskog pjesništva” [Additions to National Geographic Symbolism (Examples from Hungarian and Croatian romantic poetry], in Hrvatsko-mađarski odnosi 1102.-1918. Zbornik radova, [Croatian-Hungarian Relations 1102–1918. Collected Papers], editor-in-chief Milan Kruhek (Zagreb, 2004), 236.


45 This was a group of (mainly educated) people who had an active influence on shaping the public opinion through their own articles, either literary or non-fiction, as well as a broader circle of readers for whom these articles were intended. For different types of the public cf. Walter Lippmann, Javno mnijenje [Public Opinion] (Zagreb, 1995) and Vesna Lamza-Posavec, Javno mnijenje: teorije i istraživanja [Public Opinion: Theories and Researches] (Zagreb, 1995), 22–23.


47 “Should your language, being without force and genuineness, without richness and beauty, be an instrument of European education? Do you know that the language you speak is the Great Wall of China, which separates you from all the peoples that surround you, and through which Western civilisation could never penetrate and which stopped the ways of European education; Do you want with this language, which has no spiritual potential whatsoever, and which is utterly unintelligible to anyone outside your puszta, do you want to educate so many millions of Slavs whose nature is not apishness (...) with this language to Western taste? Do you want to civilise this people?” Editorial, Slavenski Jug (SJ), issue No. 3 dated 11 August 1848.

48 “How Magyars, Mongols’ fellow tribesmen, understood the spirit of the time can be seen in the fact that they did not make any concessions to peoples living in Hungary with respect to their
ethnocracy, but rather oppressed them even more than before and incarcerated all who began to speak about the sacred rights of the peoples. (...) Thus, they further intend to work in the spirit of barbarian times and rule over peoples. This Hungarian yoke is for Slavs abusive and very harmful (...).” Anonymous article without title, SJ, No. 3 dated 11 August 1848.


Dinko Šokčević, Hrvati u očima Mađara, Mađari u očima Hrvata, 264–265.

For more details on the image of Hungarians in Croatian literature of the second half of the 19th century see: Dinko Šokčević, Hrvati u očima Mađara, Mađari u očima Hrvata, 171-190; Jasna Turkalj, “Zvekan – humor, satira i karikatura kao sredstvo pravaške političke propagande” [Zvekan – Humor, Satire and Cartoon as a Means of Political Propaganda of the Party of Rights], Povijesni prilozi, 18 (Zagreb, 1999), 121–160; ibid., “Pravaški humorističko-satirički listovi kao prenositelji političkih poruka 80-ih godina 19. stoljeća” [Humorous and Satirical Papers of the Party of Rights as a Medium for Transmitting Political Messages in the 1880s], Časopis za suvremenu povijest [Journal of Contemporary History], 32, No. 3 (Zagreb, 2000), 463–472.

More on this in: Dinko Šokčević, Hrvati u očima Mađara, Mađari u očima Hrvata, 261–291.

Ibid., 288.

Dinko Šokčević, Hrvati u očima Mađara, Mađari u očima Hrvata, 268–269, finds anti-Hungarian views in the plays by Franjo Marković Karlo Drački, Benko Bot and Zvonimir from the 1870s.

Dinko Šokčević, Hrvati u očima Mađara, Mađari u očima Hrvata, 270–272.


Dinko Šokčević, Hrvati u očima Mađara, Mađari u očima Hrvata, 277–279.


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