



HUNGARIAN INQUIRIES
I

A Different Look at Trianon.
Discourse, Culture,
History

Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures
Adam Mickiewicz University
POZNAŃ 2022

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DISCOURSE, CULTURE, HISTORY

INNE TRIANON.
DYSKURS, KULTURA, HISTORIA

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Contents / Spis treści

From the Editors	7
Od Redakcji	9
DISCOURSE / DYSKURS	11
<i>Csaba Zahorán</i>	
Egy nap – 2020. június 4.....	13
<i>Srđan Mićić</i>	
The Image of Hungarians in the <i>Narodna odbrana</i> Review.....	33
<i>Karolina Kaczmarek</i>	
Węgrzy w Siedmiogrodzie w latach 1918–1938. Walka o ziemię, język i tożsamość	49
CULTURE / KULTURA.....	63
<i>Zoltán Németh</i>	
The Status of Hungarian Literatures across the Border	65
<i>Grzegorz Bubak</i>	
Traktat z Trianon i jego późniejsze konsekwencje ukazane w węgierskim filmie fabularnym	77
<i>Júlia Vallasek</i>	
“A Strange, Chilly World...” Urban Spatial Compositions in Three Hungarian Novels Depicting the Regime Change of 1919	89
HISTORY / HISTORIA.....	103
<i>Ibolya Murber</i>	
Post-Trianon Border Changes between Austria and Hungary	105
<i>Adrienn Nagy</i>	
A nyugat-magyarországi lakosság mindennapjai a csempészet árnyékában.....	117

From the Editors

The year 2020 marks the centenary of the Treaty of Trianon, which for the Kingdom of Hungary put a disastrous end to World War I. The treaty signed with the victorious powers is one of the most important turning points in the history of Hungary and the Hungarian people, determining not only their later history, but also their mentality and culture. Since Hungary suddenly lost three quarters of its area, the word Trianon meant a breakthrough in the history of the whole of Central Europe, and was a seminal event for Slovaks, Romanians, Ukrainians, Croats, Serbs, Austrians and Poles, for the latter marking the end of a thousand-year-long neighbourhood with Hungary. Changes in the fields of language, national identity, literature and law have permeated almost every area of life, permanently shaping the strategies of thinking and talking about Trianon.

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Trianon treaty, the Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures and the Faculty of Historical Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland organized an international conference entitled *A different look at Trianon. Narrations, memories, contexts*. The aim of the academic debate was to reflect upon the attitude of Hungarians and other nations inhabiting Hungary before 1920 to the content of the treaty and its implications. Several researchers from various countries presented their papers, which provided completely new insights into Trianon. The initiated debate focused not only on political issues and the history of the countries affected by this experience but also addressed questions that had not been asked before.

The present volume features a selection of those papers, which show us what we have to deal with when talking about the Treaty of Trianon, what questions still remain unresolved, and – last but not least – what lessons we learn from the experience of changing borders. We hope that you enjoy reading the volume!

Karolina Kaczmarek
Paweł Kornatowski
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Od Redakcji

W 2020 r. minęło 100 lat od dnia podpisania pokoju w Trianon, który dla Królestwa Węgier oznaczał fatalny koniec I wojny światowej. Podpisany ze zwycięskimi mocarstwami traktat stanowił jedną z najważniejszych cezur w dziejach Węgier i narodu węgierskiego, determinującą nie tylko jego późniejsze dzieje, ale również mentalność i kulturę. Z uwagi na fakt, że z dnia na dzień Węgry straciły trzy czwarte powierzchni kraju, słowo Trianon szybko stało się znakiem kluczowej zmiany w dziejach całej Europy Środkowej, zwłaszcza dla Słowaków, Rumunów, Ukraińców, Chorwatów, Serbów, Austriaków, a także Polaków, bo wraz z zatwierdzeniem traktatu kończyło się tysiącletnie sąsiedztwo z Węgrami. Zmiany w zakresie języka, tożsamości narodowej, literatury czy prawa przeniknęły do niemal każdej dziedziny życia, trwale kształtując strategię myślenia i mówienia o Trianon.

Z okazji setnej rocznicy podpisania traktatu Wydział Neofilologii i Wydział Historii UAM zorganizował międzynarodową konferencję *Inne Trianon. Narracje, pamięć, konteksty*. Celem naukowej debaty była przede wszystkim refleksja nad stosunkiem Węgrów oraz innych narodów zamieszkujących to państwo przed 1920 r. do treści traktatu i wynikających z nich konsekwencji. Międzynarodowe grono badaczy zaprezentowało kilkanaście artykułów, które pozwoliły zobaczyć Trianon z zupełnie nieznanymi punktów widzenia. Zainicjowana debata skupiała się nie tylko na kwestiach politycznych i historii krajów bezpośrednio związanych z tym doświadczeniem, ale także stawiała pytania dotąd pomijane.

Niniejszy tom prezentuje wybór tekstów, które pokazują nam, z czym musimy się mierzyć, mówiąc o traktacie trianońskim, jakie kwestie wciąż pozostają niewyjaśnione, a przede wszystkim: czego dzisiaj uczy nas doświadczenie zmieniających się granic. Gorąco zapraszamy do lektury!

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The Image of Hungarians in the *Narodna odbrana* Review

As Árpád Hornyák has rightly observed in his work on the image of Hungarians in Yugoslav foreign policy thinking, “it is not easy to offer a detailed, objective portrait of the image held by one nation on another, even if this portrayal is restricted to a clearly defined time-span” (Hornyák 2010–2014: 283). I will address the perception held by a particular social group associated with one organization and its official review. This stratum, consisting of a variety of people (politicians, officers, clerks, intellectuals, etc.), was concentrated on the idea of protecting national interests. Although I am focusing on a particular period and on one social group, it should be noted that it is not possible to present a definite image of Hungarians created by the group in question. Rather, I will address the issue in terms of the image created through the lens of the defense of national interests. I will focus on some of the main characteristics of this perception, namely, to what extent the creation of the image of Hungarians was influenced by the historical experience of the two neighboring nations, the development of relations between the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SCS)/Yugoslavia and Hungary – at the bilateral and multilateral level during the interwar period – and the organization’s standpoints on Yugoslav foreign and domestic policy. The analysis is based on the review *Narodna odbrana*, since the organization’s archive and members’ private correspondence have scarcely been preserved.

Yugoslavia’s and Hungary’s international positions after the First World War were significantly different from those of Serbia and

Austria-Hungary before 1914. Hungary was diminished from a co-state in the Habsburg Monarchy to a small state which had lost the war. Serbia was transformed – after a century of fighting for freedom – into the Yugoslav state, which constituted a regional power in the Balkans and had an important role to play in Central Europe. The Serbian elite had preserved a high position in the new state; therefore, the historical experience of coexistence and conflicts between the Serbian and Hungarian populations was an important factor in bilateral relations. Hungarians had a comparative advantage in the Habsburg Monarchy, particularly in terms of use of the mother tongue, educational opportunities, participation in government, etc. After 1918 the tables were turned. The Kingdom of SCS was mainly satisfied with the war gains – with the exception of the demarcation with Italy – while Hungary was dispossessed of a large part of its former territories and played a much diminished international role (Vinaver 1971: 19–187; Hornyák 2013: 1–115; Hornyák 2010–2014: 285, 286; Janjetović 2005: 86, 87, 91–94, 97, 121–126; Janjetović 2007b: 106, 107; Šajti 2010: 10–115).

The organization named National Defense (*Narodna odbrana*) was founded in 1908, as a Serbian response to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main aim was the preservation of the national identity and the promotion of national unity through cultural work. The organization's program, published in 1911, included several key aims: strengthening national consciousness, developing contacts with Serbs in Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, organizing humanitarian aid, supporting the activities of the Hawk (*Soko*) movement's national branch, and promoting the education of women. There are no preserved records on the exact number of the organization's members, but it has been estimated at 150,000 or even 300,000. Probably through the influence of the officers' secret organization, Unification or Death (*Ujedinjenje ili smrt*), known also as the Black Hand (*Crna ruka*), whose members had infiltrated the ranks of National Defense¹ (Dimić 1997 I:

¹ The president of National Defense, Božidar Janković, was a staunch opponent of the Black Hand. His father-in-law, then the Minister of the Army, General Milovan Pavlović, was killed during the *coup d'état* in May 1903 by Serbian officers who were later founders of the Black Hand (Kazimirović 2013: 20).

465, 466), the organization was shifting toward closer cooperation with revolutionary organizations. The most significant association was with the members of Young Bosnia (*Mlada Bosna*), which had been founded by national-revolutionists in response to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. National Defense encouraged the ideological work of Young Bosnia among the peasantry (Mastilović 2012: 118, 119). All of their efforts were interrupted by the outbreak of the First World War (Dimić 1997 I: 466).

Yugoslav foreign policy established cooperation with the Western Slavs through the Little Entente, and this was rivaled only by the friendly relations between Hungary and Poland. In the Balkans, collaboration among all South Slavs was hampered by the heavy burden of historical experience in Serbian–Bulgarian relations. Italy posed the greatest threat to the Kingdom of SCS (Krizman 1975: passim). During the 1920s, several organizations were founded with the aim of protecting national interests through political, cultural and economic agitation and work. The most notable of them were the Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists (*Organizacija jugoslovenskih nacionalista – ORJUNA*), the Adriatic Guard (*Jadranska straža*), both of which had their headquarters in Split, a port town on the eastern Adriatic coast (Gligorijević 1963: 331–346; Machiedo-Mladinić 2005: passim; Žutić 2010 I: 28, 29, 61–63),² and National Defense.

The National Defense organization was revived in 1926, under the presidency of the celebrated Field-Marshal Stepa Stepanović. The main task on the agenda was cultural revival among the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the promulgation of cultural integration with the Bulgarians (Dimić 1997 I: 466–469).³ The organization's work can be

² The Adriatic Guard pursued a broader ideology of Slavic brotherhood and established a board in Prague for the mutual Yugoslav–Czechoslovakian defense of the “Slavic” Adriatic Sea (Istorijski arhiv Niš, Fond Oblasni odbor Jadranske straže Niš (1923–1939. g.)–1941. g., Zapisnik III sjednice Glavnog odbora Jadranske straže održane u Splitu dne 11 i 12 oktobra 1930: 3, 4). Their review *Jadranska straža* focused mainly on publishing articles on professional issues, especially on military matters (ibid.: 13).

³ Година II. „Pravila Narodne obdane“ („Правила Народне одбране“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 16, 16. август 1927: 285–295.

divided into three stages: 1) from 1926 until 1932 it was focused on the cultural revival of the nation; 2) from 1932 until 1935 it was engaged in defending the ideology of integral Yugoslavism, which was proclaimed during King Aleksandar Karađorđević's dictatorship, and simultaneously conducting vigorous anti-German, anti-Italian and anti-Hungarian propaganda; 3) from 1935 until 1941 it returned to its previous cultural work and conducted anti-communist propaganda (Dimić 1997 I: 469, 470). In its cultural activities, National Defense opposed supporters of cultural Europeanization, as the organization sought to protect the Yugoslav people from Hungarian–Jewish mediation in the cultural field (Dimić 1997 I: 482–484, 492–494). From 1928, National Defense paid particular attention to developments in Vojvodina.⁴ The main goal was to assist in the founding of influential press outlets and the development of a radio station which could counter the propaganda of the minorities, particularly the Hungarian minority. Besides that, National Defense supported the reorganization of educational policy and colonization with South Slavic populations (Dimić 1997 I: 495–497). As part of its broader anti-irredentist and anti-revisionist efforts, whose main focus was on Italy, the organization kept a watchful eye on Hungarian intentions (Dimić 1997 I: 505, 506).

The National Defense organization began publishing its review *Narodna odbrana* (National Defense) fortnightly in 1926, and it was transformed into a weekly review in 1928.⁵ Since the organization defended the Cyrillic script as an original creation of Slavic culture (Dimić 1997 I: 474), the review was initially published in that alphabet. However, the editorial board respected authors' cultural heritage and published manuscripts in the alphabet of their choice. The review's header was changed from the Cyrillic to the Latin script in 1928,⁶ but the policy of publishing manuscripts in their original alphabet remained unchanged. In the ranks of National Defense, it was noted that there

⁴ The term Vojvodina, at the time, was used for the territories of Banat, Bačka and Baranja.

⁵ Godina III. *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 1, 1 januar 1928.

⁶ Ibid.

existed greater tolerance towards the two alphabets in Belgrade than was the case in Zagreb (Dimić 1997 I: 474).

In the context of the struggle against changes in the established international order and the strengthening of the South Slavic position in Vojvodina, the image of Hungarians presented in the review *Narodna odbrana* emerged from two viewpoints. The first was the general Serbian perception of Hungarians, while the second derived from the organization's proposals for Yugoslav foreign policy. The elite in pre-war Serbia had not paid any special attention to the Hungarians as a nation, as it had greater concerns – the German threat and the struggle for liberation from Ottoman rule. Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy were reluctant to state openly their view of the Hungarians. Nevertheless, mutual intolerance had been evident since the 17th century. The general Serbian perception of Hungarians was more vividly expressed after 1918. Here, the image derived from the pre-war belief that Hungarian culture was imitative and their mentality megalomaniacal (Janjetović 2007a: 120, 121); one of the mainstream ideas in the interwar period was that they were originally Huns who had been cultivated by the Slavs. The Yugoslav elite was focused mainly on the Hungarian minority, and there was a genuine lack of interest in comprehending Hungary. The greatest concerns regarding Hungarians were based on two essential questions: the loyalty of their minority to the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia, and Budapest's eagerness for a revision of the Peace Treaty of Trianon (Hornýák 2010–2014: 288; Janjetović 2007a: 128–131).

The members of National Defense had a similar viewpoint (Dimić 1997 I: 505, 506). Their perception of Hungary and Hungarians was furthermore derived from their proposals for Yugoslav foreign policy. National Defense was promoting Slavic solidarity, with cooperation in the ranks of the Little Entente and between the Balkan states as the main instruments of Yugoslavia's defense against the Italian and German threat.⁷ As one of the most important tasks of the organiza-

⁷ Година II. „Naš međunarodni položaj“ („Наш међународни положај“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 1, 1. јануар 1927: 1–3; Година I. „Savez Naroda i Savezi između naroda! Italija i Balkan“ („Савез Народа и Савези између народа! Италија и Балкан“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 1, 1.

tion was to counter the irredentist propaganda of numerous Italian organizations (Dimić 1997 I: 501–504), and it also had a watchful eye on Hungarian organizations (Dimić 1997 I: 505), it is no wonder that Hungary was seen as a partner of Italy in the pursuit of a revision of the international order in Central and Southeastern Europe. The general image of the Hungarian elite was also based on the historical experience of the Kingdom of Serbia and the South Slavs with the

јануар 1927: 5–7; Година II. „Zbijamo redove“ („Збијамо редове“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 3, 1. фебруар 1927: 33–35; О. М. Година II. „Nove forme međunarodne saradnje. Bratimstvo između Čehoslovaka i Jugoslovena“ („Нове форме међународне сарадње. Братимство између Чехословака и Југословена“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 5, 1. март 1927: 73–74; Година II. „Misija Južnih Slovena“ („Мисија Јужних Словена“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 8, 15. април 1927: 113–115; Година III. „Povodom izjava g. Musolinija“ („Поводом изјава г. Мусолинија“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 15, 15. април 1928: 258; Година III. „Европа је остарела“ („Европа је остарела“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 19, 19. мај 1928: 305, 306; Ђ[урђевић] др Ч[едомир]. Година III. „Šta se postiže Carinskim Savezom Balkanskih (Goranskih) Država?“ („Шта се постиже Царинским Савезом Балканских (Горанских) Држава?“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 25, 17. јун 1928: 403, 404; Година III. „Академија у славу Стамболијског“ („Академија у славу Стамболијског“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 26, 24. јун 1928: 418; Ђ[урђевић] др Ч[едомир]. Година III. „Међусловенски језик. Sveslav“ („Међусловенски језик, Свеслав“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 37, 9. септембар 1928: 599–601; Година III. „На добром путу“ („На добром путу“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 43, 21. октобар 1928: 691, 692; Б[ожано]в Б. Година IV. „Значај варошких избора у Бугарској“ („Значај варошких избора у Бугарској“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 8, 24. фебруар 1929: 142; Година IV. „Kongres zemljoradničke stranke u Bugarskoј“ („Конгрес земљорадничке странке у Бугарској“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 9, 3. март 1929: 155; Година IV. „За balkansku solidarnost“ („За балканску солидарност“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 14, 7. април 1929: 225, 226; В. Б. Година IV. „За балкански институт“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 16, 21. април 1929: 262–264; В[ожино]в В. Година IV. „Politika balkanske solidarnosti i naši odnosi sa Bugarskom“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 21, 27. мај 1929: 347–349; Година IV. „Srbi i Bugari“ („Срби и Бугари“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 33, 18. август 1929: 545, 546; Illyricus. Година IV. „Pаневропа и Jugoslovenstvo“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 33, 18. август 1929: 550, 551; Ђ[урђевић] др Ч[едомир]. Година IV. „Konstruktivno rešenje odnosa između Jugoslavije i Bugarske“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 37, 15. септембар 1929: 616, 617; Година V. „Европско превирање“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 3, 19. јануар 1930: 33, 34.

Habsburg Monarchy. They were depicted as the former oppressors of Slavs, who had rightfully lost part of their national territory and sought to regain dominant positions in Yugoslav territory through an irredentist policy conducted in cooperation with Italy.⁸ In 1929, the

⁸ Година II. „Međunarodna kooperacija“ („Међународна кооперација“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 2, 15. јануар 1927: 23, 24; Година II. „Југославија и Мађарска“ („Југославија и Мађарска“). (Народна одбрана), Број 14, 15. јул 1927: 228, 229; Никић др Федор. Година III. „Мађарска и ревизија Тријанонског мировног уговора“ („Мађарска и ревизија Тријанонског мировног уговора“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 22, 27. мај 1928: 363, 364; Година III. „1908–1928“ . *Narodna odbrana*, Број 23, 3. јун 1928: 369, 370; Година III. „Revizija Trijanonskog ugovora“ („Ревизија Тријанонског уговора“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 24, 10. јун 1928: 386, 387; Воџанов В. Година V. „Италија и Mala antanta“ . *Narodna odbrana*, Број 6, 9. фебруар 1930: 82–84; Година V. „Обруч се затвара“ („Обруч се затвара“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 7, 15. фебруар 1930: 97, 98; Воџанов В. Година V. „Југословенско-бугарски односи и Musolinijeva politika. Italijanski imperijalisti protiv ‘Narodne odbrane’“ . *Narodna odbrana*, Број 9, 2. mart 1930: 130–132, Ђ[урђевић] др Ч[едомир]. Година V. „Balkanska unija i grčki predlozi I“ („Балканска унија и грчки предлози I“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 9, 2. mart 1930: 132, 133; Ђ[урђевић] др Ч[едомир]. Година V. „Balkanska unija i grčki predlozi II“ („Балканска унија и грчки предлози II“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 10, 9. mart 1930: 149, 150; Ђ[урђевић] др Ч[едомир]. Година V. „Balkanska unija i grčki predlozi III“ („Балканска унија и грчки предлози III“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 11, 16. mart 1930: 168, 169; Ђ[урђевић] др Ч[едомир]. Година V. „Balkanska unija i grčki predlozi IV“ („Балканска унија и грчки предлози IV“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 12, 23. mart 1930: 181; Горански. Година V. „Италија, Југославија и Бугарска“ („Италија, Југославија и Бугарска“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 13, 30. mart 1930: 191–201; Вуловић Данило. Година V. „Za slovensku uzajamnost“ („За словенску узајамност“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 14, 6. april 1930: 210, 211; Ђурђевић др Чед[омир]. Година V. „Бугарска, Југославија и Narodna odbrana“ („Бугарска, Југославија и Народна одбрана“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 33, 16. август 1930: 517, 518; Година V. „Акција за међубалканско зближење“ . *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 39, 27. септембар 1930: 609, 610; Номо balkanicus. Година V. „Problem Balkana“ („Проблем Балкана“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 42, 18 октобар 1930: 658, 659; Ђурђевић Др. Чед[омир]. Година V. „Putevi saradnje i zblizenja među Slovenima“ („Путеви сарадње и зближења међу Словенима“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 38, 18. септембар 1930: 591, 592; God. X. „Mi i Bugari“ („Ми и Бугари“). *Narodna odbrana*, Вр. 27, 7. јули 1935: 425, 426; Ђурђевић Др. Чед[омир]. God. X. „Problem mira na jugoistoku Evrope“ („Проблем мира на југоистоку

Hungarians were even considered to be the most prominent revanchist nation in Europe.⁹ The collective memory of the former conduct of the Hungarian elite in the Habsburg Monarchy, combined with the contemporary cooperation between the governments in Rome and Budapest, overshadowed objective analysis. Hungarian statesmen were compared to Benito Mussolini and to the Italian fascists in general. No wonder, then, that István Bethlen was seen as a “degenerate” who was merely tolerated by his countrymen and neighbors, while members of the Hungarian elite were depicted as insolent and imperious.¹⁰ From these assumptions it was inevitably concluded that Budapest’s foreign policy was a result of Hungarian arrogance, which was seen as an answer to Yugoslav indulgence.¹¹

There was one important feature of the image which was created in *Narodna odbrana* – a clear distinction was made between the ruling class and the rest of the population. Ordinary people were seen as victims of the established internal order and the social hierarchy, as well as of the aristocracy’s disrespect and greed. The authors were

Европе“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 29, 21. јула 1935: 462–464; Год. XII. „Ugovor o večnom prijateljstvu Jugoslavije i Bugarske“ („Уговор о вечном пријатељству Југославије и Бугарске“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 5, 31. јануар 1937: 67; Год. XII. „Posle zaključenja jugoslovensko-bugarskog pakta“ („После закључења југословенско-бугарског пакта“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 6, 7. фебруар 1937: 81, 82; Год. XII. „Saradnja Jugoslavije i Bugarske“ („Сарадња Југославије и Бугарске“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 7, 14. фебруар 1937: 97, 98; Год. XIII. „Bugarsko-jugoslovensko prijateljstvo“ („Бугарско-југословенско пријатељство“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 1 и 2, 9. јануар 1938: 5, 6.

⁹ Б[ожано]в Б. *Godina IV. „Ženevska većanja i politika svetskog mira“* („Женевска већања и политика светског мира“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 38, 22. септембар 1929: 634.

¹⁰ Година II. „Izbori u Mađarskoj“ („Избори у Мађарској“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 3, 1. фебруар 1927: 45; Година II. „Jugoslavija i Mađarska“ („Југославија и Мађарска“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 14, 15. јул 1927: 228, 229; Никић др Федор. *Godina III. „Mađarska i revizija Trijanonskog mirovnog ugovora“* („Мађарска и ревизија Тријанонског мировног уговора“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 22, 27. мај 1928: 363.

¹¹ *Godina V. „Druga haška konvencija. Likvidacija rata i osiguranje mira“* („Друга хашка конвенција. Ликвидација рата и осигурање мира“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 4, 26. јануар 1930: 54.

convinced that the thin aristocratic layer in the social stratification had a dominant position and oppressed the rest of the nation. Accordingly, the Hungarian elite was depicted as a protector of misguided tradition and past glory, unadjusted to the reality and the spirit of contemporary times. In that regard, the authors ascribed numerous demerits to the elite, and went so far as to say that their conduct in foreign policy was shrouded in mysticism, particularly when analyzing requests for revision of the Treaty of Trianon and the restoration of the Habsburgs. Some of the attributes ascribed to them (for example, that they were forgers and fraudsters) were based on international scandals: counterfeiting of French francs, the concealment of railway vehicles from the successor states, or arms smuggling.¹² The creation of allegedly nervous and irritated feelings among the Hungarian public was ascribed to the results of the state policies conducted by the elite.¹³ The proposed restoration of the Habsburgs and irredentism were seen as representing an aristocratic tendency to intoxicate ordinary people, particularly the peasantry, with

¹² Година II. „Mađarska borba protiv mira“ („Мађарска борба против мира“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 14, 15. јул 1927: 229–232; П. М. Година II. „Kasno su se setili“ („Касно су се сетили“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 14, 15. јул 1927: 246; Година II. „Mađarska borba protiv mira II“ („Мађарска борба против мира II“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 15, 1. август 1927: 254, 256; Година III. „Тajно наоружање Мађарске и задаци Друштва народа“ („Тajно наоружање Мађарске и задаци Друштва народа“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 6, 5. фебруар 1928: 97; Година III. „Vlada i мађарска странка“ („Влада и мађарска странка“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 7, 12. фебруар 1928: 124; Година III. „Mađžari osnivaju своје поморско паробродско друштво уз припомоћ Италијана – сједиште би му била Ријека“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 17, 17. април 1927: 284; Никић др Федор. Година III. „Mađarska i ревизија Тријанонског мировног уговора“ („Мађарска и ревизија Тријанонског мировног уговора“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 22, 27. мај 1928: 363, 364; Година III. „Revizij Тријанонског мировног уговора“ („Ревизија Тријанонског уговора“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 24, 10. јун 1928: 387; Година IV. „Покушај другог претендента на мађарски престо“ („Покушај другог претендента на мађарски престо“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 9, 3. март 1929: 154; Година V. „Betlenov put u London“ („Бетленов пут у Лондон“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 25, 22. јун 1930: 399.

¹³ Година III. „Revizija Тријанонског уговора“ („Ревизија Тријанонског уговора“). *Narodna odbrana*, Број 24, 10. јун 1928: 386.

false promises so that they would not scrutinize their miserable position in the existing social order.¹⁴ This image outlived Bethlen's downfall.¹⁵

Certain features were not often emphasized in *Narodna odbrana*. Based on the historical experience of the Habsburg Monarchy, the authors indicated that the Hungarian elite was continuing the "magyarization" of the Slavic minorities even after 1918. Therefore, Hungarian demands for the fulfillment of successor states' obligations toward minorities were considered hypocrisy, which was seen as one of the characteristics of their elite.¹⁶ One of the negative characteristics attributed both to statesmen and to the aristocracy was their alleged cooperation with the Jews in conducting state policy.¹⁷ As an overall conclusion, the authors of *Narodna odbrana* were convinced that sincere bilateral relations were unachievable as long as the aristocracy held a firm position in Hungarian society. A democratically elected govern-

¹⁴ Божанов Б. Година V. „Mađarska politika i svetski mir“ („Мађарска политика и светски мир“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 28, 12. јул 1930: 441; God. X. „Podunavski pakt“ („Подунавски пакт“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 33, 18. avgust 1935: 531.

¹⁵ God. X. „Podunavski pakt“ („Подунавски пакт“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 33, 18. avgust 1935: 531; God. X. „Austriski i mađarski 'Kuku Todore'“ („Аустриски и мађарски 'Куку Тодоре'“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 34, 25. avgust 1935: 541; God. X. „Konferencija Male antante“ („Конференција Мале антанте“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 34, 25. avgust 1935: 568; God. XII. „Srbi i Mađari“ („Срби и Мађари“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 5, 31. januar 1937: 70; God. XII. „Res Hungarica“ . *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 11, 14. marta 1937: 161.

¹⁶ Стипић Лазар. Godina III. „Sudbina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca u Mađarskoj“ („Субина Срба, Хрвата и Словенаца у Мађарској“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 45, 4. novembar 1928: 725, 726; Godina III. „Parade i pretnje na mađarskoj granici“ („Параде и претње на мађарској граници“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 47, 18. novembar 1928: 768; Godina IV. „Pitanje manjina pred Društvom naroda“ („Питање мањина пред Друштвом народа“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 10, 10. mart 1929: 172, 173; Godina IV. „Pitanje manjina pred Društvom naroda“ („Питање мањина пред Друштвом народа“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 11, 17. mart 1929: 188.

¹⁷ Година II. „Međunarodna kooperacija“ („Међународна кооперација“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 2, 15. јануар 1927: 23; Година II. „Mađarska borba protiv mira“ („Мађарска борба против мира“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 14, 15. јул 1927: 230.

ment in Budapest was considered a precondition for friendly relations. This conclusion was the result of the comparison made between the Hungarian elite and the rest of the population, and the two contrasting images of the social strata.¹⁸

The image created on the basis of the Hungarian minority had some attributes which were ascribed to the whole nation. Their business, financial, agricultural and cultural assets were imputed to the former mentality of the invading hordes. In the case of the minority, an analogous differentiation between the elite and ordinary people was made as was the case with Hungarian society. The members of the Hungarian party and successful businessmen were depicted as unreformed, insolent chauvinists who conducted their affairs in the same manner as they had in the former Habsburg Monarchy. The rest of the minority was perceived as potentially loyal subjects of the Yugoslav Crown who yearned for a peaceful life and for freedom from the old regime's oppression. Alongside the elite, the former clerks of the Habsburg Monarchy were seen as a disruptive factor in Vojvodina.¹⁹ Furthermore, political leaders

¹⁸ Никић др Федор. Godina III. „Mađarska i revizija Trijanonskog mirovnog ugovora“ („Мађарска и ревизија Тријанонског мировног уговора“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 22, 27. мај 1928: 364; Godina III. „Parade i pretње na mađarskoј граници“ („Параде и претње на мађарској граници“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 47, 18. novembar 1928: 768.

¹⁹ National Defense presented a view on the Hungarian minority which was usually in agreement with the general opinion among the Yugoslav public (Godina III. „Nacionalizacija Vojvodine“ („Национализација Војводине“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 3, 14 januar 1928: 61; Godina III. „Vlada i mađarska stranka“ („Влада и мађарска странка“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 7, 12. februar 1928: 124; Godina III. „Bez komentara“ („Без коментара“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 11, 11. mart 1928: 181, 182; Godina III. „O savremenom nacionalizmu“ („О савременом национализму“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 14, 1. april 1928: 225, 226; Табаковић др Александар. Godina III. „Stanje naše nacionalne privrede u Vojvodini“ („Стање наше националне привреде у Војводини“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 15, 8. april 1928: 248; Милошевић Љубомир. Godina III. „O nacionalnoj politici“ („О националној политици“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 15, 8. april 1928: 250; Ђорђевић Драгослав П. Godina III. „Još jedna Južna Srbija“ („Још једна Јужна Србија“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 16, 16. april 1928: 264; Суботичанин. Godina III. „Naša pitoma Vojvodina i Narodna odbrana“ („Наша питома Војводина и Народна одбрана“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 23, 3. jun 1928: 373; Godina III.

were presented as fraudsters and liars, while reports that some of them were Jews were used to underline those attributes. In the colorful palette of alleged characteristics, the minority's elite was depicted as consisting of hypocrites and corrupters whose main goal was to undermine and to decompose the national spirit, pride and integrity of South Slavs in Vojvodina. *Narodna odbrana* publicly criticized the Yugoslav government for its associations with the Hungarian party during elections.²⁰ In specific cases, for instance, at the beginning of Lord Rothermere's press campaign in 1927, the differentiation between the elite and ordinary people was abandoned and the Hungarian minority in general was depicted as a peaceful community alien to revisionism and irredentism.²¹ Distinctions between prominent politicians and businessmen, on the one hand, and the rest of the minority on the other were fading during the second half of the 1930s, due to the ongoing activities aimed at the national awakening of the Hungarian minority, which were comparable to the strengthening of the nationalist aspirations of the German minority. In the ranks of National Defense those activities were, as could be expected, quite negatively perceived, and some authors went so far as to say that there were symptoms of mental disorder among the Hungarian population.²² However, in this period the organization was shifting its attention back to cultural work and was focusing on anti-communist propaganda (Dimić 1997 I: 470). Within this framework, the image of Hungarians thus slowly faded into the background.

The image of Hungarians formed by Serbs had emerged largely after 1918. Therefore, it was primarily based on the outcome of the First World War. Hungarians were depicted through their aspirations for revision of the international order and for the restoration of the Habsburgs, and

„Vojvodina protiv Rotermira“ („Војводина против Ротермира“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 25, 17. jun 1928: 413.

²⁰ M. M. A. Godina III. „Uvek vladini ljudi“ („Увек владини људи“). *Narodna odbrana*, Broj 21, 20. maj 1928: 342, 343.

²¹ Година II. „Engleski Don Kihot“ („Енглески Дон Кихот“). *Narodna odbrana* (Народна одбрана), Број 17, 1. септембар 1927: 303.

²² God. XII. „Srbi i Madari“ („Срби и Мађари“). *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 5, 31. januar 1937: 71; God. XII. „Res Hungarica“. *Narodna odbrana*, Br. 11, 14. marta 1937: 161, 162.

through the loyalty of their minority to the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia. The image that emerged in the ranks of National Defense coincided in many aspects with the general image that existed among the Yugoslav public. One important difference was the constant emphasis that the Hungarian elite, particularly the aristocracy, industrialists and agrarian magnates, should not be identified with the rest of the population, especially the peasantry. Therefore, Hungarian foreign policy, and in particular requests for revision of the Treaty of Trianon and the restoration of the Habsburgs, were seen as futile attempts by the elite to regain lost influence and wealth, and as an endeavor to maintain their dominant position in post-war Hungary. The image of society in Hungary was transferred to the perception of the Hungarian minority in Yugoslavia. It was only in the second half of the 1930s that the clear distinction between the elite and the rest of the population faded, and Hungarians as one community were perceived as adventurous and disloyal people.

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the image of Hungarians created in the ranks of the National Defense organization, based on articles published in the *Narodna odbrana* review during the interwar period. The perception of Hungarians and their minority was formed after 1918, because before the First World War, Serbs had not publicly shown much interest in the neighboring peoples from the Habsburg Monarchy.

Keywords

Hungarians, minority, Trianon, Habsburgs, Yugoslavia

Bio

Srđan Mičić (1983) is a research associate at the Institute for Recent History of Serbia. His main fields of interest are the foreign policy, formal and informal diplomacy, diplomatic-consular service and propaganda of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Kingdom of Yugoslavia during the interwar period. He focuses on the bilateral and multilateral relations between Yugoslavia on the one hand, and the Balkan and Central European states and the European Powers on the other. He often addresses research problems regarding the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente. This research has recently come to include Yugoslav multilateral diplomacy in the framework of the League of Nations' activities.