Auto- and Hetero Stereotypes in Julia Clara Byrne's *Pictures of Hungarian Life*

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1. Introduction

Julia Clara Byrne was born in 1819 as the daughter of the Welsh poet, Hans Busk. She was a British author and was well known for her most famous work *Flemish Inferiors*. She visited Hungary in 1867, with her friend, and two years later she shared their experiences in the form of a travelogue titled *Pictures of Hungarian Life*, which was illustrated by her. In the travelogue, she shares her observations about the Hungarian people and their lifestyles, discusses Hungarian history and local legends, and describes significant historical places and building in great detail. Byrne, being a Christian woman, put great emphasis on religious places, buildings, and figures, and throughout her travels, she managed to visit several historical and religious locations, and met local religious figures.

As the title suggests, *Pictures of Hungarian Life*, this travelogue captures little moments of Hungarian people's everyday life, their culture and history. "For nineteenth century women whether, classed as a traveler, explorer, "peripatetic spinster" of protected tourist, the emphasis of the occasion was on detail and on the intensity of the individual experiences" (Anderson, 16). Byrne's travelogue can be considered as a piece of art that puts an emphasis on the tiny and beautiful details of mundane life and creates a feeling that one is not only reading a simple travelogue but one is looking at pictures that capture the essence of a life of a nation:

> these pages are therefore capable of supplying what their title intimates; and – together with descriptions of the country, whether from a practical or aesthetic point of view, of its social moral, and commercial prospects, its advancement in education, its progress in art, science, and literature – of affording "sketches of life" in various ranks of society. (Byrne, ix)

With travel being more accessible to people, travel writing became more of a source of entertainment too. Albert Meier mentions that "it became increasingly an end in itself and a form of entertainment in the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the heyday of travel writing" (447). He also says that "what travelers experience, how they experience and how this is represented, is closely connected with their cultural frame" (448). Carl Thompson summarizes the definition of traveling in a simple way: "To travel is to make a journey, a movement through space" and he adds that "all travel requires us to negotiate a complex and sometimes unsettling interplay between alterity and identity, difference and similarity" and

traveling is basically "is the negotiation between self and other that is brought about by movement in space" (9). Thompson also discusses that because of the encounter between the self and other "all travel writing is at some level a record or product of this encounter and of negotiation between similarity and difference that is entailed" (10). He also says that "in most of its forms, travel writing's principal business has been to bring news of the wider world and to disseminate information about unfamiliar peoples and places" (62). Accordingly, in the Preface of *Picture of Hungarian Life* Byrne states that

> this volume, containing the narrative of recent experiences in West Hungary, interspersed with details of travel and personal incidents, will help to remove the formidable idea, generally entertained by the holiday tourist, of the difficulties attendant on a visit to that country. (vii)

Byrne also adds that this travelogue "will serve to shew what may be accomplished by the ordinary traveller" (vii). She wrote this travelogue with the intention to share her experiences and, just as Thompson said, to record her observations about the similarities and differences between her and others, in this case, Hungarian people.

Byrne, as a privileged woman, coming from a rapidly developing country can easily notice the backwardness in a country like Hungary, and can be easily influenced by the already existing negative stereotypes spread about the Hungarian people. While discussing stereotypes, Manfred Beller brings light to some important questions "Are we sure that we see what we think we see? Are our opinions about other persons or peoples true? And what do we know about the way we see ourselves?" (4). In the very beginning of the travelogue, Byrne already shares her overall opinion about her traveling experiences, being a privileged English woman, who has traveled in multiple countries:

> We confess to being in our own individuality somewhat blasé – to having wandered over England, France, Belgium, Prussia, Switzerland, Tirol, Italy, and even Spain. But with the exception perhaps of the latter country, no journey has left, on the whole, so fresh and pleasurable a reminiscence on our minds as our autumn visit to the Magyars and Magyar – land, and our exploration of the flourishing and attractive, though sequestered, cities it contains. (3)

Julia Clara Byrne, as a privileged Englishwoman encountered several cultural differences during her journey to Hungary, which left both positive and negative impressions on her about the people. She visited several places in the West of Hungary, both large cities such as Pesth and small, rural places such as Gönyö. Byrne, at first perceived Hungary as a dirty little place and described the Hungarian backwardness and the overwhelming poverty in the country. However, her journey took a positive turn, when she started interacting with the people and was greatly surprised by the difference between her personal experiences and the opinions of the Habsburgs. The aim of this paper is to look at how Clara Byrne's experience in Hungary was influenced by already existing stereotypes, what are the stereotypes that she herself spreads with her travelogue, and examine the possibility of breaking already existing stereotypes using this travelogue as a tool. In this paper, I will specifically analyze the auto- and hetero-stereotypes of three groups: the English people, the Hungarian people, and two groups of minorities: the Gypsies and Jewish people.

2. Auto and Hetero Stereotypes

The Oxford Dictionary defines a stereotype as "a fixed idea and or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is often not true in reality and may cause hurt and offense" (Oxford Dictionary). Stereotypes are general, fixed ideas of a group of people. Stereotypes can spread often harmful and false beliefs. Manfred Beller mentions that as "a result of their concentration on one-sided (and often false) information, stereotypes provide formulaic communication aids; but they obtain their strongest effects in the propagation of cross-national hate figures" (430). Considered by studies in imagology there are two main categories: auto stereotypes and hetero stereotypes. Joep Leerssen summarizes the difference between auto stereotypes and hetero stereotypes the following way: "A fundamental distinction is the one between *auto-image* (or 'self-image') and *hetero-image*: the referring to a characterological reputation within and shared by a group, the latter to the opinion that others have about a group's purported character" (343). He also mentions that "it has been observed that in some cases countries have exported their self-image and that these have been adopted abroad as hetero-images; or, in other cases, that countries have imported the hetero-image from hegemonic foreign sources and interiorized them as auto-images" (343).

According to Leerssen "historical contextualization is also necessary" (28) when analyzing stereotypes in a text. Byrne writes a lot about the history of Hungarian people, and she thinks that "Hungarian history reads like a romance" (131). The time in which she decided to visit Hungary is considered an important period of Hungarian history. The visit in 1867 was long after the defeat of the War of Independence (1848 – 49) and a little after the Austro – Hungarian Compromise. The War of Independence had a huge impact on Hungary that Byrne mentions in her travelogue multiple times, for example, one time, when she is talking about the history of Komorn[1]: "In 1848-9 the Austrian army made desperate but futile efforts to gain possession of the fortress of Komorn, but the Hungarians, under Klapka, resisted bravely and successfully, and the fortress continued to maintain its reputation" (94). The other time she mentions the War of Independence is when she meets a solder, who "answered with pride: Yes; I have fought as a soldier and a patriot, and, during the context of '48-'49, many a night did I sleep out under the starlit canopy of heaven, sometimes in camp, often with no other covering than my cloak" (59).

[1] In Hungarian: Komárom

This reveals the feeling of nostalgia and patriarchy is still incredibly strong in Hungarians, and further strengthens the positive hetero-stereotype created by Byrne.

Even though 1867 was an important year in Hungarian history because of the Austro – Hungarian Compromise, Byrne does not mention it in her travelogue, even though it was an event that was followed and greatly discussed in Great Britain. Instead, the year 1867 was mentioned in a different context, as Byrne emphasizes that in 1867 the Sultan passed through Pesth (222). Interestingly, in the travelogue, she mentions the history between the Turks and Hungarians multiple times. Hungarians are portrayed as a nation that "were perpetually harassed and worried by the continual and unexpected attacks of the Turks" (266), however, the Hungarian chivalrous spirit and their love for the fatherland always led them to victory, even after experiencing defeat: "Its people are patriots: the struggle they have made for their rights and liberties is meeting its reward, and their complete emancipation must soon be attained" (viii). This might be the reason why Byrne considers Hungarian history similar to a romance, and she embraces this side of the nation, by retelling parts of Hungarian history in great detail in her travelogue. By this, she unintentionally spreads a certain hetero stereotype about Hungarians which makes the nation generally characterized by bravery with a high spirit and an undefeatable love for the land.

2.1 Hungarian people

The image of the Hungarian people drastically changed over history. László Marácz summarizes the Hungarian image in the following way:

> The Western images and stereotypes of the (Magyar) Hungarians and the Hungarian self-images oscillate between two poles: the negative variant of Hungarians as inferior, backward, plundering Asiatic, barbarian intruders in Europe and the positive variant of Hungarians heroically fighting for the defense of Christian Europe and European liberal values. (174)

Even though after the War of Independence Hungarians "were celebrated as heroes in the West, especially in Great Britain and the United States" (Marácz 176), but in 1867, that it after the Austro – Hungarian Compromise the

> Western, in particular, British and French, sympathy for "liberal and constitutional Hungary' was replaced by criticism of 'Magyar Hungarians as brutal oppressors on the country's other nationalities. Hungary was seen as a threat to European peace and an obstacle to European progress. (Marácz 176)

Byrne and her traveling companion started their journey from Vienna, where they were warned by the Habsburgs about the different negative aspects of Hungary and its people. Habsburgs and Germans purposefully spread negative images about the Hungarian people, as a nation they were mostly characterized as barbarian, uncivilized, and dirty. Byrne was warned about the unfinished railways, unorganized conditions, crazy vehicles, and bad roads (5). People in Vienna asked her questions such as "why Hungary?" since there are many other civilized countries out there. Hungary was described as dirty and ugly, and Hungarians were described as people who think way too highly of themselves: "And then," chimed in another, "the habits of the people are so dirty. There is no decent hotel in the country. The inns are few, ill-supplied, exorbitantly dear, and kept by Jews. Civilization is at a low ebb, and the language is totally incomprehensible" (Byrne 5). She was warned about the possibility of getting murdered or robbed, because of how unsafe the roads are and how untrustworthy and sneaky the people can be: "by no means unusual for travelers to be decoyed into so-called inns, which prove to be the dens of assassins, where they are robbed and murdered" (5).

Byrne started her journey with these opinions in mind, and these hetero-stereotypes influenced her very first impressions of the country. As she crossed the border she instantly saw the ugly side of Hungary. She thought that Pressburg "is a dull, inactive-looking town, and has that depressed aspect which, whether in cities or in individuals, rarely fails to betray fallen greatness" (15). In this "lifeless old town" (15) she had a room secured in "an old, rambling and not very prepossessing hotel, called the "National Hof" or "Nemzeti Fogada" (16). For multiple instances, she compared Hungary to her experiences of traveling to other countries. Suddenly, Hungary seemed like an overly depressing and backward little country compared to other countries, such as Spain:

> in this description of provision, there can be no greater contrast than between Spain and Hungary, for while the commonest household bread provided in the barracks and workhouses of the Peninsula is of the finest and most delicate texture, and white almost

> as snow, the bread of Hungary, in common use, is of the roughest, coarsest, darkest description, made in enormous loaves. (52)

According to Byrne, poverty was quite visible in some places of Hungary, "the extremes of poverty and luxury are more apparent in Hungary than in Germany" (162), but she also noted that it is difficult to decide if poverty is more prominent in Hungary or in Austria (51). As she continued her travels in Western Hungary she passed "some abject-looking little hamlets, thinly peopled by weather-beaten peasants, half-clad children and women in field-labourers whose dwelling-places betokened the poverty of their resources" (54).

As Byrne collected experiences by interacting with a lot of different people in Hungary and as she saw more places, buildings, and lifestyles her initially negatively influenced opinion drastically changed, and, by the end of the travelogue she created an overly positive, an almost romanticized image of Hungary. One of the most pleasant cultural shocks occurred at Raab on a special market-day, when they held the great horse fair. She was amused by the atmosphere of the horse market, mainly because it was very different from the one she experienced back in London: "The coarseness and brutality, not to say depravity, supposed universally to disgrace the genus horse-dealer, are altogether absent from the Hungarian horse-fair" (80). She was glad to have witnessed this scene because she felt like she experienced a different and new phase of Hungarian life, and she added that "in riding, driving, and racing, the Magyar has not his equal" (79).

Every encounter she had with a Hungarian person resulted only in a positive outcome. In contrast to Habsburg's opinion, suddenly, Hungarians became one of the most welcoming and heartwarming nations. She not only had positive opinions about the upper class of Hungary, but she also admired the peasantry and generalized them as people characterized by a fine chivalrous spirit (44). In her travelogue, she keeps emphasizing that hospitality towards complete strangers and readiness to help is a national characteristic, which surprised her because in her opinion this is not typical of the English man. The auto-stereotype of the British emphasizes the difference between the fastly developing England and the less-developed Hungary: "It is difficult for an Englishman bred in the sophisticated atmosphere of modern civilization – conventionally so-called – to accustom himself to this primitive, but to him, novel state of society" (47). She admits

that an English person is suspicious of strangers, however, she admits that “we cannot help envying the almost Arcadian lived of this simple, honest, free-hearted and noble people” (47).

In terms of the environment and lifestyle, Byrne observes some similarities but also differences between the Hungarian style and the English style of living. After arriving at Füred, Byrne visited an English resident, Mr. Teasdale, who married a Hungarian woman. Byrne was able to differentiate between typical English elements from Hungarian ones in their intercultural lifestyle. She noted that Mr. Teasdale, who spoke perfect Hungarian, wore a cool undress costume, decidedly Hungarian. Their house was “though constructed in the Hungarian style, replete with English comforts, while the welcome with which we were met combined the heartiness of the two nationalities” (285). This part of the travelogue showed that two people from completely different cultures can still live in harmony together.

Another Hungarian characteristic she noted was that Hungarians smoke a lot. One of her very first observations about Hungarians was that they are “strikingly handsome people” however she can’t “overlook one objectionable habit, common to the whole nation, which they carry to an excess scarcely known out of Spain – that of incessantly smoking” (53). Later, during a meeting with Professor Rónay, he added that “you might as well deprive a Hungarian of the air he breathes as of the air he smokes: I verily believe he could not exist without it” (186). This is an example of how a hetero-stereotype can be an auto-stereotype too, because at first Byrne observed how Hungarians smoke a lot and formed a stereotypical image of the nation, which later was proven right by Professor Rónay.

Byrne was also fascinated by the Hungarian family life. She was amused by how Hungarian women raise their children. How the daughter “took the entire charge of the household and even gave an eye to the management of her younger brothers and sisters” (211). She added that “We heartily admired this sensible mode of training and secretly wished that English mothers entertained similar ideas on the subject” (212). Byrne even expressed her doubts about this method of teaching “could not help thinking that such a training useful as it is, must have interfered with the perfection which might have been attained by such a girl in the more elevated branches of her education” (212). However, immediately after these thoughts, she expressed that she was astonished when this young girl showed her talent for drawing and playing the piano (212). The young woman also had an excellent French accent and “spoke

English with tolerable fluency, being also well acquainted with many of our authors, whether in prose or verse" (212). This method of raising children, specifically young girls, was a cultural shock to her. She confessed that she was surprised, how this eighteen year old girl was already able to take the entire charge of the household. Byrne observed that this method of parenting is normal amongst Hungarian families, and every Hungarian mother's goal is to share "all the knowledge she likely to require as mistress of a family" (211). Domotor Ildiko talks about the issue of gender in her article. She claims that "there were certain limitations on what a respectable lady was allowed to do. In addition to genteel accomplishments, the pursuit of natural history, especially botany, was one area in the scientific sphere which was highly encouraged" (98). In contrast to this, Byrne met these women, who put more emphasis on acquiring different skills that could be useful around the house such as cooking or sewing, but at the same time, they also amused her by showing talent in drawing, music and languages.

Besides romanticizing the Hungarian people's life, she also presents Hungarian history in a tragic but beautiful and admirable way and even says that Hungarian "history is a romance, full of picturesque episodes" (viii). Byrne mentions countless historical events, which helps to emphasize how Hungarians as a nation are considered patriotic and, thus, reinforce an imagological portrait according to which "Hungarians are praised for heroism, bravery, stalwartness, and chivalry" (Leerssen, 175). Byrne highlights that Hungarians had to suffer, but they defended their country:

> The Hungarians are naturally jealous of any foreign interference with this most important of their defences, and foreigners are not encouraged to take up their abode here; the place is consequently almost entirely in the occupation of Magyars. In 1848-9 the Austrian army made desperate but futile efforts to gain possession of the fortress of Komoron, but the Hungarians, under Klapka, resisted bravely and successfully, and the fortress continued to maintain its reputation. (94)

As previously mentioned, Byrne's travels take place a little after the Austro–Hungarian Compromise, and even though, she does not mention this important event, she notes that "so powerful is the feeling of patriotism in Hungary, that hardly any of the rising generation can be persuaded to speak, read, or in any way recognize the German language" (212). She also observed that most of the population spoke little to no German. French and English were the

preferred languages to those who were able to afford to get their children to learn languages. She noted that "their antipathy to everything German" (81) was prominent and German was only spoken if it was absolutely necessary. This strengthens the hetero-stereotype that Hungarians have a chivalrous spirit and are patriotic.

Interestingly, at the end of their Hungarian visit, on the way back to Vienna, an Austrian man, who was curious about "how any one could visit Hungary unless obliged" (326). This man continued expressing his feeling about Hungarians: "The Hungarians, were a detestable race, proud and lazy and only fit for agricultural pursuits." (326). Here, Byrne clearly expressed her thoughts about Hungarians:

> Is it not rather, said we, that the chivalrous feeling which forms part of their nature, elevates them above the narrow notions of shop-keeping and money-getting, and inspires them with contempt for the petty propensities which trade often engenders and that therefore their primitive ideas, independent minds, and patriarchal tastes lead them to prefer the simpler and more patriarchal course of agricultural pursuits. (327)

After hearing Byrne's opinion the Austrian man stubbornly kept repeating the same thing, and he believed that Hungarians are lazy and can do nothing right. This is a great example to show how a once formed stereotype is nearly impossible to break and change without first-hand experience. Another example can further prove this point: in the beginning of Byrne's journey, people in Vienna warned her about the dirtiness and unsafety of the roads and railways, however after experiencing if for herself she says the following: "This, therefore, was our first experience of a Hungarian railway, and the impression was decidedly favourable" (91). Regardless of the previously acquired stereotype, she was able to formulate her own opinion which is different from what she was told.

2.2 English people

Stereotypes about English people were widely spread in Hungary and László Országh talks about this phenomenon in his study titled "Anglomania in Hungary". England was a rapidly developing country and several Hungarian aristocrats started to choose England as their traveling destination at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Due to this, many Hungarian people brought back

home several English ideas and local newspapers started to publish news about “that happy little country”,that it, England. A romanticized image of England and the lives of the English people quickly started spreading. Országh also mentions István Széchenyi’s name, because he traveled, to England and brought back five technical innovations that he planned to introduce to Hungary: rotary caps on chimneys, double doors swinging in both directions and closing automatically, rectangular over-pans into which bread-dough is squeezed before baking to give the bread a uniformly square shape, coal-gas lighting of streets and homes and last but not least water closets (27).

All these ideas came from England and were successfully implemented and used in Hungary. In the eyes of many Hungarians, Great Britain was “the perfect country.” Menno Spiering mentions that “the nineteenth century saw the imperial consolidation of Britain’s colonial power” (148). He also adds that the “impact of imperialism on the English self-image should be noted” and this can be observed in the adventure romances where the stereotypical English hero was formed who was “given the masculine ideal of physical stalwartness and nimble willpower” which is “in part the continuation of the gentleman-ideal, in part also given ethnic connotations of racial superiority” (148). He also mentions how the image of the English changed: “on the one hand, this led to European spread of the type of the dandy, and of the sporting gentleman”, however, on the other hand, “England’s industrialization led to a horror of laissez-faire capitalism, exemplified in the exploitation and pauperization of the working classes” (149). In the year 1867, when Byrne visited Hungary there was a drastic change in the general view on England. Országh points out that post-1850 the anglophily transformed into a pale and passive reflex of its earlier hey-day (34).

During her travels, Byrne met multiple people in Hungary who were able to visit England and spoke perfect English, which surprised her. One gentleman was open about his admiration towards English people and England and Byrne noted that as soon as the man learned that they are English, “his face glowed as he surveyed us with eager and respectful curiosity” (118). The man confessed that he “read about England”, but has “never seen any English people,” he followed by expressing his thought and feelings about them: “I thought they must be a fine, powerful, intelligent race” (119). Byrne later on during her journey met another Hungarian person who expressed his admiration towards England and the English culture: “their busy

commercial streets, and thriving aspect, their bustling thoroughfares, overflowing wharves, and brimming warehouses, their wealthy mansions, and luxurious environs" (241). This description provides a more complex picture of how a Hungarian person, who has visited England can be captivated and amused by England's development. Compared to a country like Hungary, which is less developed, England can be considered as a country that should serve as a model and that is the reason why the English lifestyle was idolized by many Hungarians.

Byrne noticed some differences and similarities between the Hungarian and English lifestyles and culture. For example, she was surprised by how "furs and skins form an important article of commerce all over Hungary, and many skins of great beauty, which have not yet been introduced into England, are in ordinary use here" (141). Another thing she noticed, was that in Pesth, omnibuses became a necessity, because of the size of the city, and "there are tram omnibuses, similar to those in use in Paris and Liverpool" (207), which was a positive remark from her. In a not so developed country like Hungary, she noticed technology that was comparable to those she saw in Paris and Liverpool, which were considered to be more developed countries. When she visited the National Opera-House she observed that "no one went out between the acts, and the intervals were less protracted than in England" and she expressed her dislike of the *mise en scéne* which "could by no means be termed elaborate, and exhibited no signs of the progression made by other countries in the scenic department of dramatic art" (231). In her eyes, not only the industry and the cities were less developed in Hungary than in England and other faster-developing countries, but she even expressed her dislike towards the arts, which shows that her standards are not always met. Even though her experiences with the people are mostly positive, the backwardness of Hungary compared to other countries is still very noticeable to her.

During her visit to Füred, one encounter with a Hungarian man made her laugh when the man said that he had already met three Englishmen who had visited the place that year. He said that one was from Dublin, one from Edinburgh, and one from New York. This made Byrne and her traveling companion laugh, and they corrected him: "Oh there is no mistake about us: we are of true English blood – Londoners of London, and of genuine Westend breed" (281). This shows how proud they truly are of their true English heritage, and they do not want to be mistaken for people from other English speaking countries. This can be considered as an auto-stereotype,

because Byrne, in this situation acts arrogantly, and believes that she is superior compared to other English-speaking nations.

However, one of the not so pleasant experiences of Byrne came precisely from the fact that she was an English woman. She encountered a Jew, and Byrne openly expressed her disgust "yes, no doubt and the English are supposed to be so rich. But there are poor English as well as rich we can assure you" (39). Byrne thought that the only reason the Jew approached her was because she was an English woman. This encounter proves, that the general hetero-stereotype about English people is that they must be rich, because they are from a rapidly developing country, therefore they have a higher quality of life. Byrne here is being aware of this stereotype, and immediately tries to deconstruct it, by saying that there are poor English as well.

2.3 Jews

The year in which Byrne visited Hungary, 1867, was not only important for Hungarians, as previously mentioned, but it was a turning point for the Jewish population too. Árpád Welker mentions that Jews achieved political rights by Act XVII of 1867, and were finally treated as equal members of the political community, however, he also points out, that during the period between 1867 – 1884, there was a rise of political antisemitism, and the "Jewish community as such was threatened by the activity organized by the relatively small antisemitic group" (Árpád). Meanwhile, Miklós Konrád says the following way:

> In the Hungary that regained a large measure of its independence in 1867 and impetuously embarked on the path of modernization, the Jews were indispensable to the traditional Hungarian ruling classes. Regardless of the feelings that individual politicians harbored toward Jews, Hungarian state nationalism in the Dualist era could not be anti-Semitic. (167)

Antisemitism, according to the Oxford Dictionary means "hate towards or unfair treatment of Jewish people" (Oxford Dictionary). Holocaust Encyclopedia calls it "the longest hatred" that has persisted in many forms for over two thousand years.

In the travelogue, there are two minorities mentioned, Jewish people and gypsies (or Zigeuners), however, their image is completely differently presented. Byrne and the Hungarian

people share similar opinions about the Jewish people and the gypsies. While Gypsies are presented in a romanticized light, Jewish people are the group of people that the traveler is encouraged to avoid. As previously mentioned, this travelogue aims to deliver a picture of the everyday life of the people living in Hungary. In this case, Jews are represented in a slightly negative way.

The negative representation of Jews might be traced back to Shakespeare's character, Shylock from the play titled *The Merchant of Venice,* as Leerssen and Gans mention in their imagological study. He was a Jewish moneylender and is the principal antagonist. They argue: "The Shylock type of the greedy, conniving, clever and untrustworthy Jew has remained operative ever since" (204). In Byrne's travelogue Jewish people are similarly presented:

> Here, as everywhere, the characteristics of the Jewish nationality are fully maintained and immediately recognized – untidy streets, dingy little shops, second-hand wares, flashily – dressed women, at one gaudy and slovenly, living outside their houses, and wearing that depressed expression peculiar to Oriental races. (18 – 19)

By saying that these characteristics are immediately recognized she gives the impression that she is already familiar with these characteristics and that she formulated her own, stereotypical opinion about Jewish people. Byrne also notes that "the number of Jews residing in Pesth exceeds that of any other city of Hungary," and that "they wear a distinctive dress here as in Vienna, they are readily distinguishable by their long beards, and long straight-cut coats" (188). "It is astonishing to see what numbers of Jews have settled themselves in Austria and Hungary" (75).

Throughout the travelogue, there are other occasions when she was warned about Jews. The hetero-stereotype created about the Jews seems to be the exact same in Hungary and in Austria. Habsburgs not only warned her about the Hungarian people, but they also emphasized that the inns are kept by Jews (5). The opinion about Jews is the same from the Hungarian people's point of view. One Hungarian gentleman warned Byrne at the beginning of her journey that the inns and hotels "most part kept by Jews, but that we had better have nothing to do with them" (47).

Later, in their journey, there is an actual example of this: “and then came the little wayside inn kept by a Jew, at which we had been advised on no account to halt” (257). Even though, in the travelogue, Jews are portrayed in a stereotypical way, and one is encouraged to stay away from the inns kept by Jews, Byrne never speaks with ill intent about their religion. She visits a synagogue in Pesth that was “newly built” and notes that the “exterior is extremely handsome, and designed with much taste, exhibiting sculptured moldings and marble panellings” (188). She even noted that in Pressburg, “there is apparently considerable intercourse between Jews and Christians, at least in a commercial point of view” (19).

The way Byrne writes about Jews in the travelogue, does support some antisemitic ideals. Jews were generally avoided by her, but also by Hungarian people, because they stereotypically were people considered to be greedy and untrustworthy. In contrast to this, Byrne does point out some positive aspects, such as their buildings or religion, but in most situations she stays negative or sometimes keeps a neutral point of view.

2.4 Gypsies

In the travelogue, gypsies are presented in a completely different way from the Jews. Jean Kommers explains that the images of gypsies “oscillated between positive (romantic) ideas and negative (felonious) representations” (171). In Byrne’s travelogue, it is apparent that the created image of the gypsies is romanticized, ideal, and even can be considered beautiful. Her first “encounter” with a gypsy occurred at Raab, before falling asleep. She was ready to rest, however, she was “startled by an outburst of melodious sounds, which came floating through the open window like a magical and mysterious spell” (76). She was mesmerized by this melody, even though she was not able to recognize the instrument, but she considered the sound sweet and claimed that “it was the poetry of music” (77): “The language it spoke told of a creative fancy, weaving the fairy fabric as it proceeded, for the stamp of originality was upon it, and the caprice of the unseen artist seemed to revel in the rainbow hues with which he tinted his inspirited theme” (77). The next day it was revealed to her, by a Hungarian gentleman, who proudly said that he is glad that they “have had an opportunity of hearing that singular and beautiful music, one of the peculiarities of our country” (82) and he revealed that it was a gypsy who played the music, on a traditional Hungarian instrument called the “Czimbalom[2]”. From this

[2] In Hungarian: Cimbalom – a type of instrument

it is obvious that gypsy music is a big part of Hungarian culture, and Hungarians are really proud of it and they welcome gypsy musicians.

"The term Hungarian-Gypsy traditions in art music implies many things, including folklorism, nationalism, exoticism, or a special virtuoso style of playing that alludes to Gypsy-band performance practices" (Loya, 38). Bálint Sárosi concluded that "it took the gypsies several centuries to establish themselves as musicians" and that "most of the gypsy musicians were introduced to Hungarian musical traditions by the upper strata of society" (18). He also says that "generally speaking, Hungarian gypsy musicians paid little attention to vocal popular music; instead, they learned what was needed to accompany dances" (Sárosi 18). Gypsy bands, playing and entertaining people is a picture that appears in the travelogue from time to time. There are multiple instances where Gypsy and Hungarian cultures interact and even merge with the help of music, dance, and entertainment:

> Every Hungarian has his favourite air, and sometimes a whole evening is passed in a café in calling upon the zigeuners for one tune after another, when their success in responding to the appeal is met with the most rapturous applause; and the popular Czárdács could not be danced without the sympathetic accompaniment of the Czimbalom. (87)

Jean Kommers says that gypsies are usually described in two different ways: there are "images of gypsies as penitent pilgrims" or "they are depicted as a romantic wanderer, symbolizing freedom" (171). Byrne characterized gypsies as being "reckless as a child, and wild as a beast of prey" (89), thus reinforcing the hetero-stereotype, that these people are free-spirited. Byrne further romanticized the image of a gypsy tribe, describing them as people who "will face the extremest cold and the extremest heat, without any other artificial preservatives", people who will "expose themselves bare-headed under the fiercest sun" (89). Later, the romanticized image of the gypsies merges with the image of the ugly side: "he knows no care for the morrow, and is always in need and squalid poverty" (89). Even the image of a gypsy child appears in two different ways: "For the first year or two it wears no clothes, grows up without instruction and without religion, generally in a state of considerable moral degradation, and if educated at all, only in the art of plundering to the best advantage" (98). The romanticized picture and hetero-stereotype created by Byrne are broken by Hungarian people. They inform her that first of all, not every gypsy is a musician, and they have other jobs like tinkering and horse-shoeing, and

“their women carry on an auxiliary business in dancing, fortune telling, and often earn more out of the credulity of the village maidens and village gossips, than their fathers, brothers, and husbands out of the domestic necessities of the population” (88). They also emphasize that “in the horse-trade, the zigeuners do not bear the best reputation,” because they “possess the art of patching up old or diseased horses,” selling them as beautiful and healthy animals, and when one “discovers the trick, and find that he has only purchased an old hack made ‘beautiful for ever,’ the cunning vendors are far away” (90). This hetero-stereotype proves that even though gypsies can be considered as a symbol of freedom, stereotypically speaking their image is still “dominated by elements of threat, crime and ugliness” (Kommers, 171).

For the rest of the travelogue, regardless of the previously mentioned hetero-stereotypes, Byrne continues to admire and praise gypsies for their musicality and talent to entertain people and capture emotions. She described the physical characteristics of the race the following way: “Their complexions were dark and swarthy, their hair, eyebrows, and beards, of a jetty black; they were none of them tall, but supple and well proportioned, and all had a more or less intelligent expression” (84). Later, during her travels, she encounters another gypsy tribe, from which one little girl approaches her, and starts to beg. Byrne describes this moment in a romanticized way that makes this action, begging, something that is mostly considered negative, and creates a desirable picture out of it. She starts describing that this “dark-eyed child” is one “wonderful type of her tribe, and who might have walked out of one of Gustave Dore’s pictures” (258). She gave her some coins and some lumps of loaf sugar and thought that “her delight was most amusing” and her expression “would have made a painter’s reputation” (258).

Conclusion

Byrne's travelogue *Pictures of Hungarian Life* is best described as a collection of little moments and experiences of Hungarian life. With this travelogue, Byrne breaks the already existing stereotypes. Overly positive, just like overly negative stereotypes can be equally harmful. The image she creates of Hungarian people is in high contrast with the one created and wildly spread by the Habsburgs. Hungarians are depicted as overly welcoming and always ready to help, as a nation that even though lives in a less developed country, leads a life that is presented in a way that is desirable and admirable. While this in itself is positive it can still be harmful to Hungarians and to the people visiting Hungary. Whether or not Byrne purposefully left out the negative experiences from her travelogue or she really was this fortunate to have not experienced negative encounters, it is obvious that Hungarian life is presented in an unrealistic way. It's not only a case about emphasizing the beauty of another culture, but also focusing only on the best parts of it, even creating a beautiful image out of poverty by emphasizing the fact that those people have high and admirable spirits. Gypsies in the travelogue are presented in a similar manner. Byrne loved the musical talent she saw in some of the members of this culture, and she took that and praised it thought the entire travelogue. While there is fundamentally nothing wrong with admiring talented people, this can lead to the generalization that every gypsy has a musical talent, just like how Byrne kept repeating and highlighting the Hungarian hospitality.

It can also be observed, that in the case of English people, the Hungarian people Byrne met were overly welcoming, and most of them knew English and have already traveled to England. Hungarians did look up to the English and found an interesting companion in Byrne and thought that it is a pleasure to meet a person coming from a rapidly developing country. Jews in the travelogue were not as fortunate when it comes to representation. Byrne even observed their unpleasant way of living and she recognized multiple characteristics unique to this minority group, which were not praised or romanticized like, in the case of Hungarians and Gypsies, moreover, it was seen as undesirable. It was recommended to try to avoid doing business with the members of the minority.

All in all, Julia Clara Byrne's journey is a delightful and overly positive experience, and while it highlights the beauty of another culture that is drastically different from the English one, with this travelogue she spreads a romanticized and stereotypical image of the life of the Magyar.

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