

## New Perspectives on Imagology

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# New Perspectives on Imagology

*Edited by*

Katharina Edtstadler, Sandra Folie and Gianna Zocco



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# Axiological Foundations of Imagology

*Davor Dukić*

## Abstract

Images, the main object of imagological analysis, are by nature value-charged. Despite this fact, previous research has neglected the axiological foundations of imagology. This article discusses in brief some fundamental axiological questions of imagological investigations. The here analysed corpus includes an eighteenth-century visual-textual source (the so-called *Leopold-Stich*), and a famous imagological handbook (*Imagology*, by Beller and Leerssen). The analysis starts with the problem of value connotations of the signifier of geocultural spaces and continues with a cluster of questions concerning the nature of value of imagotypical representations. The final part examines two relevant imagological phenomena—diachronic changes in evaluation of certain geocultural spaces and a somewhat opposite phenomenon of evaluative apriorism.

## Keywords

geocultural space – axiology – imagotypical representation – evaluative apriorism – value ambivalence

## 1 Introductory Remarks: Why Value?

For the purpose of this discussion, it is worthwhile to start with a more general definition of *image*, which is a core concept of imagology. Hence, *image* is a representation of a certain geocultural space (hereinafter GCS) consisting of its name and distinctive attributes. An image does not contain all attributes of the concerned GCS in the observed text or textual corpus; rather, it contains only typical characteristics, which make it different from other GCSs and construct its identity. The existence of images is not objective nor can it be reconstructed through some prescribed mode of analysis: it is subjective, recognizable

through previous knowledge. In other words, image is not anchored in the text but in the minds of the sender and the recipient.<sup>1</sup>

The above proposed definition needs to be fine-tuned with an additional condition, essential for our discussion. Namely, distinctive attributes, or some of them, have to be charged with a value. The evaluative dimension of representations of GCSS (images) seems to be self-evident: a value-neutral representation will probably not be recognized as an image. Even common, decontextualized metonymic signs—such as clogs for Holland, Emmental cheese for Switzerland, or pizza for Italy—generally connote value, which, in respect of the mentioned examples, lies somewhere in the sphere of congeniality. In brief, the imagological subject matter is inevitably value-charged. Its carriers of values are particular GCSS, that is, some of their aspects, and its value potential is realized by representative attributes ascribed to them. The value-charged representativeness of GCSS is sometimes termed *imagotypicality*, which, on the one hand, enables an even more concise definition of image as “an imagotypical (re)presentation of a certain GCS,” and, on the other, provides a distinction between historically rooted *imagotypes* and uncritically accepted and widespread *stereotypes* (Fischer 1979, 34, 36–42; Syndram 1991, 186).

But, at the same time, imagology as a branch of literary scholarship is basically not value-neutral. Its mission could be defined as a critical analysis of national representations/stereotypes. In other words, image is understood as an essentially negative phenomenon, a typical product of *national thought*—the main ideological target of imagology—which is suspected of understanding and classifying the world according to the criterion of national differences. A traditional imagological analysis starts from the assumption or comes to the conclusion that every imagotypical representation of some GCS is a discursive construct with a very limited cognitive value, that *image* and *national stereotype* are almost synonyms. As a critical deconstruction of European nationalisms, imagology is a concretization of political criticism, such as, for example, feminism, postcolonial studies, or new historicism.<sup>2</sup> In political criticism the foundations of one’s own values are generally not questioned—only the values of the (constructed) opponent have to be deconstructed.

The negative connotation of *image* in imagology is therefore a consequence of the negative evaluation of modern European nationalisms in that branch of

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1 An image is comparable but not identical with the Leibnizian *complete individual concept* (CIC), defined as a set of all attributes that are attributed to an individual entity (cf. Mates 1968, 509–510; Look 2013). In that sense, an image is a subset of CIC.

2 For more on political criticism, cf. Pavel (1993, 124–126).



literary criticism. Apart from the “political condemnation” of image—in the sense of the inclination of imagotypical discourse toward political incorrectness or even toward hate speech—there is also a “cognitive” or “scientific disqualification” of image (arguably the other side of the coin). Namely, because of its restrictive nature—that is, its focusing on the essential attributes of some GCS—image as a mode of representation is at the same time exposed to subjective manipulation as well as to criticism for its historical/geographical inaccuracy. The latter does not concern the notion of image in (traditional) imagology because it deals only with (fictional) representations of (historical/geographical) reality and not with (nontextual) reality itself. Moreover, the modern European imagologists, both the Aachen and the French schools, refuse to include the concept of verisimilitude in their research agenda, which would require comparing literary and scientific representations of the same GCS in the same historical period. It is admittedly legitimate to restrict imagological investigations to fictional representations of GCSs, but it does not guarantee cognitive persuasiveness of the results of the performed analysis. As Wellek rightly argued, psychological or sociological research of hetero-stereotypes often provides more convincing insights (1953, 3–4). But, after all, the same imagological research methodology could be applied to nonfictional representations as well, for example to historiographic or geographic sources.<sup>3</sup> Such an expansion of the research area beyond the boundaries of “literariness,” which was unacceptable to Wellek, seems in our time to be justified for two reasons: (1) the thematic/semantic level of some literary genres, and sometimes even their formal procedures, rely on nonfictional discourse, for example in the genre of historical fiction; (2) if imagologists want to preserve a critical or even socially engaged function of their discipline, they must take into account the recipient’s point of view and that usually implies relativizing the boundaries between fictional and nonfictional texts, such as, for example, in the potentially inspirational critical discourse analysis applied by Ruth Wodak. To sum up, the negative relation of imagology to its object of study can be explained as a consequence of the declared political mission of the discipline and of the undeclared neopositivistic desire for the objective (re)presentation of reality.

In previous imagological investigations the axiological aspect—that is, the examination of the phenomenon and the causes of positive or negative value of some images—has largely been neglected. The reason may be found in the above shortly discussed value of the discipline and of its object of study.

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3 Such sources are considered by several articles in this volume. While Joep Leerssen (part 1, chapter 1) considers historiographic material, Daniel Brandlechner (part 5, chapter 18) investigates geographic sources.

One can assume two other explanations: (1) the alleged cognitive triviality or an easy interpretability of the value of a particular image is not worth studying in detailed manner; and (2) the presumption that the valuation of a particular GCS is rooted in ideology. Although in some cases these two explanations can satisfy the requirements of research, I tend to reject them for methodological reasons. First, the value of a particular image is not always easily explicable, especially not in the two phenomena discussed at the end of this article: the diachronic value changes of imagotypical representations of the same GCS, and evaluative apriorism. And second, it is also advisable for a researcher to assume the possibility of a pre-ideological valuation of a particular GCS, in order to avoid aprioristic explanations in cases of value ambivalences and value contradictions.

This article discusses in brief some fundamental axiological questions of imagological research. For the purpose of this discussion, the notion of axiology has been restricted to the basic dichotomy of positive and negative (e)valuation and not to specific contents of cultural values. The here analysed corpus includes an eighteenth-century visual-textual source (the so-called *Leopold-Stich*), and a famous imagological handbook (Beller and Leerssen 2007). The analysis starts with the problem of value connotations of the signifier of GCSs and continues with a cluster of questions concerning the nature of value of imagotypical representations. The final part examines two relevant imagological phenomena—diachronic changes in evaluation of certain GCSs and the in some ways opposite phenomenon of evaluative apriorism.

## 2 Toward an Axiological Analysis of *Image*

### 2.1 *The Value Connotations of the GCSs Signifiers*

Decontextualized names of GCSs like “Vietnam,” “China,” “North Korea,” and “Iran” are basically value-neutral. But the official names of the same states—the “Socialist Republic of Vietnam,” “People’s Republic of China,” “Democratic People’s Republic of Korea,” and “Islamic Republic of Iran”—contain some value connotations due to the semantic potential of the first constituents in the complex names that can be interpreted as *ideologemes*. They constitute distinctive parts of self-designation with unambiguous positive connotations in the original/primary context—from the point of view of their creators. In a secondary context, such as the Eurocentric one, the same attributes will probably be interpreted as negative, whereas formally similar names such as the “Federal Republic of Germany” or “Swiss Confederation” will be considered as neutral in spite of the awareness of historically confirmed and imaginable

contexts in which the attributes “Republic” and “Confederation” would not function exclusively as neutral classification terms. In any case, the official names of countries can, at best, figure as the most concise signifier of a specific auto-image/identity. The value potential of metaphorical periphrases in some nicknames of countries, which are widely acknowledged irrespective of figurative language—such as “The Land of the Rising Sun,” “Perfidious Albion,” “Mother Russia,” “The Holy Land,” and similar—is certainly significantly higher. And in line with the anthropocentricity of the imagotypical discourse, it is possible to expect an even bigger value potential in the set of ethnonyms, especially in pejorative names for other peoples or ethnic groups (the so-called ethnic slurs), for example “Piefke” for a German in Austria or “Chefur” (*čefur*) for the Serbs and Bosnians in Slovenia. The existence of extremely negatively connoted designations of GCSS and other peoples seems to be normal in periods of crisis and conflict, for example in war propaganda, and in everyday communication of the lower cultural strata. But even simple, common names can bear a strong evaluative potential in specific historical contexts. An example from South Slavic cultures can be used to illustrate this point. In his literary oeuvre Ivo Andrić used the ethnonym “Turks” for Bosnian Muslims, which was in accordance with the traditional, negatively connoted usage by Christians in the Balkans.<sup>4</sup> In the edition of his collected works from the 1960s the author justified his incorrect designation in a note at the beginning of the glossary of rare words: “The terms *Turks* and *Turkish* are also often used in narration to denote Bosnian Muslims, of course not in a racial or ethnic sense, but as a misnomer, which, however, was habitual for a long time.”<sup>5</sup>

One can conclude that the act of naming of GCSS can already be an act of attributing, that is, that the mere names of some GCSS can contain value attributes. The value potential of the names of GCSS should not be overestimated, but—still—an imagologist has to take it into consideration.

## 2.2 *The Value Nature of Imagotypical Representations*

The names of GCSS—official and historical names of states and countries, official and local names of provinces, and all other similar designations of territorial entities—with the exception of purely fictional ones, such as Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha County or Márquez’s Macondo—belong to the real/actual world. Their attributes, that is, their identities, are created through

4 The cultural antonym, the pejorative Muslim name for Balkan Christians, is *kaurin*, “giaour.”

5 “Naziv *Turci* i *turski* upotrebljeni su često u toku pričanja i za bosanski muslimanski svet, naravno ne u rasnom i etničkom smislu nego kao pogrešni ali od davnina uobičajeni nazivi” (Andrić 1963, 375, translation mine).

the process of conceptualization, mainly within different discursive practices. From the axiological point of view the key classification criterion is a distinction between factual (mere descriptive) and value attributes. Indeed, many attributes can gain a positive or negative value in a certain context, but for the sake of this discussion, those that possess intrinsic value potential are of primary interest.

A further question in the axiological approach to imagotypical representations of GCSs concerns the possibility of a systematic classification of their value attributes. In an attempt to give an affirmative answer, one can distinguish three objects of evaluation: (a) natural environment, (b) people, and (c) culture. A wild, uninhabited, and unexploited natural environment can be defined geographically, but by definition it is not a cultural space. Nevertheless, even unhumanised nature is not resistant to cultural semantization/evaluation, for example for tourism purposes. Moreover, the theory of climate, an important aspect in the early history of imagotypical thought, rests on the assumption that natural environment influences people's character (thus connecting the first two abovementioned objects of evaluation). According to the nature of this classification, the category of people, as mere psychophysical entities, refers exclusively to physical appearance and mentality, which evokes "racial" rather than "national thought." The nonbiological aspect of human life—material and nonmaterial products of human activity—is covered by the broader category of culture, which allows further subdivisions, as well as synchronic and diachronic approaches. This broader category of culture includes ideologies (great ideas) and (great) historical figures, which are sometimes important constituents of imagotypical representations of GCSs.

At this point it is worthwhile to consider the relationship between textual representations of people (figures/characters) and their spaces. For this purpose, the concept of GCS embedded in the definition of image at the beginning of this article is taken as a given. In the meantime it has become clear that it refers to geographic/historical spaces of the real/actual world inhabited, produced, or imagined by people.<sup>6</sup> But what is more important for the present discussion is the (methodological) preference of space over people in the concept of GCS: a space is considered the most abstract category of the thematic

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6 In an earlier imagological case study I proposed this definition: "The term geo-cultural space refers to any real existing geographical space that is shaped by human beings, be it through physical intervention in space (construction of settlements, tillage) or through a semantic act, i.e. through giving meaning to untouched nature. The Hungarian Puszta and the Arabian Desert are in this sense geo-cultural spaces, but the geopolitically indefinite blue of the sky without planes or the blue of the sea without ships are not" (Dukić 2014, 165).

world of a (literary) text, while a character/figure is defined as a function of space. That, however, is not in line with the anthropocentric tradition of literary scholarship—which typically prefers anthropomorphic categories like character, narrator, or lyrical subject—or with the nation-centric orientation of imagotypical thought and its imagological analyses. Accordingly, the most famous monument of European imagotypical thought is called the *Völkertafel* (Tableau of Nationalities) and not *Ländertafel* (Tableau of Lands/Countries), while the most important imagological handbook (Beller and Leerssen 2007) contains in its subtitle the phrase “national characters.” From fifty entries in its second part, titled “Images of Nations Surveyed,” thirty even belong to peoples proper<sup>7</sup> and twenty to geographic spaces (*ibid.*, 79–258).

In a synchronic imagological approach, the preference of space over people/characters seems to be reasonable. But as soon as one considers the diachronic aspect—despite modern theories of nation and nationalism and a kind of fetishization of the concept of hybridity in contemporary theory—ethnic groups are generally understood as more stable entities than geographic/political spaces that change names and boundaries—even if one assumes that it is precisely the nationalist discourse that contributes to that impression. Finally, the arguments for the central position of human beings in the systematic approaches to the actual/real world can be noticed both in the Christian tradition (the central place in the Earth’s environment in The Great Chain of Being, after God and Angels but before Animals, Plants, and Minerals) as well as in modern axiology (Krzyszowski 1997, 63–74; Edwards 2010, 40–41).

The relationship between peoples and spaces can be briefly examined using three examples from the handbook by Beller and Leerssen. Two examples essentially represent historically nomadic peoples and “diaspora nations” (“Gypsies” and Jews), and one refers to a unique territorial community of different peoples (Switzerland). The article “Gypsies” (single quotations used in the original text) includes a note about its title, which emphasizes the value aspect of the ethnonym: “the term ‘gypsies’ is widely considered inappropriate and derogatory (the more neutral terms being ‘Roma’ and/or ‘Sinti’); it is used because it is the operative term in the stereotyped discourse which is addressed here” (Kommers 2007, 171). Kommers does not mention space anywhere in his paper. The text does not discuss the early modern belief that Gypsies originated in Egypt or the modern assumption of their Indian origin. Neither is the symbolism of the official Romani flag addressed. The historical

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7 Six of them (Dutch, English, French, Irish, Portuguese, and Swiss) have a primary neutral meaning—relating to a given geographic space and to its inhabitants—and a secondary meaning relating only to people.

dimension of the image of the Gypsies is equally lacking. As expected, their value attributes, both negative and positive, signify the presupposed essential character of the concerned people (“threatening vagabonds,” “impostors,” “lazy,” “immoral,” “thieves of children,” “cannibals”/“penitent pilgrims,” “romantic wanderers,” “free”).

A counterexample is the article “Swiss” (Schnyder and Beller 2007) wherein the historical dimension is much more emphasized and almost all value attributes are explicitly or implicitly related to space (“jealously-guarded independence and military prowess,” “placid cowherd,” “morality of the frugal peasant’s life,” “regenerative environment and sublime scenery,” “cosmopolitanism”/“political and moral isolation,” “nostalgia,” “xenophobia”).

The article “Jews” (Gans and Leerssen 2007) is a special, “mixed” example. In describing the image of the “diaspora nation *par excellence*,” the diachronic dimension is even more emphasized than in the previous one. Consequently, the attributes from the time of diaspora differ significantly from the attributes from the period of existence of the State of Israel: the first are related to the character of the people (“plutocrat,” “greed-driven treason,” “duplicity,” “con-ning,” “untrustworthy,” “plotting,” “conspiring,” “infiltrating”/“dignified and heroic endurance of persecution,” “admirable in their endurance,” “clear moral judgement,” “high-minded morality that transcends religious differences,” “long-suffering victims,” “special talent for the arts”), while the second imply a relation of the people to their own space (“strength,” “youthful vigour, robust resistance,” identity symbol of “prickly cactus or ‘Sabra’”).

The analysis confirms what one would expect: the absence of the category of space in the imagological description of nomadic people/diaspora and its strong presence in the description of a multinational political entity.

The Styrian *Völkertafel* (Tableau of Nationalities)—an oil painting representing ten European nations by male figures in traditional costumes and with a table of their features/characteristics in seventeen columns—is probably the best-known and best-studied imagological source from the eighteenth century. The author of the Tableau is unknown and the creation date is not certain, approximately 1730–1740 (for more on the *Völkertafel*, see the introductory chapter in this volume: Edtstadler, Folie, and Zocco 2022, 15). Several copies of the Tableau have been preserved and the most accessible one is in the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art in Vienna (*Österreichisches Museum für Volkskunde*). The so-called *Leopold-Stich* (Figure 2.1), a copper engraving from Augsburg named after the author Friedrich Leopold (1668–1726), is a somewhat lesser-known work of the same type, despite the fact that it is considered older (dated between 1719 and 1726). From the slight differences in the texts of the tables, it can be presumed that it represents the main

source for the *Völkertafel*. Therefore, the following short analysis concerns only the *Leopold-Stich* (hereinafter LS).<sup>8</sup>



FIGURE 2.1 *Leopold-Stich*, Augsburg, between 1719 and 1726. For a transcription and translation into English, see Table 2.1.

Two insights should be mentioned immediately no matter how banal or expected they may seem. First, the LS focuses on people, not on space—the first row of the table contains eleven ethnonyms (ten figures) in the following order from left to right: Spaniard, Frenchman, Italian, German, Englishman, Swede, Pole, Hungarian, Russian, and Turk or Greek. However, the category of space is explicitly or implicitly present in the picture: the title of the LS contains the word “land-peoples” (*Land-Völcker*) and not just “peoples” (*Völcker*, as in the title of the *Völkertafel*) and one of the seventeen columns is labelled with the phrase “Their land” (*Ihr Land*). The unexpected combination of Turks and Greeks in the last column can only be explained by their belonging to the same space of the Levant, and finally, the order of peoples suggests, though not perfectly, the movement from West to East. Another fulfilled expectation is the absence of the diachronic dimension, which is typical for stereotypical thought—it signifies an eternal present.

Therefore, only one of the seventeen terms for a comparative description of the European peoples belongs to the category of natural environment (“Their land”). Seven terms fall under the category of people (“Manners,” *Sitten*; “Nature

8 For an English translation of the *Völkertafel*, see Dalbello (2011, 155).

and character," *Natur u. Eigenschaft*; "Mind," *Am Verstand*; "Properties," *Der Eigenschaft Anzeigung*; "Vices," *Untugenden*; "Diseases," *Kranckheiten*; "Comparison among animals," *Vergleich unter den Thieren*), and nine under the category of culture ("Knowledge," *Wissenschaft*; "Costume," *Tracht der Kleidung*; "Preferences," *Lieben*; "War virtues," *Kriegs Tugenden*; "Religion," *Gottes Dienst*; "Recognize as their ruler," *Erkennen für ihrem Herrn*; "Have plenty of," *Haben Überfluß*; "Pastime," *Verzehren die Zeit*; "In life and in death," *im Leben und grab*<sup>9</sup>). However, the proposed division into seventeen categories is not quite consistent. Namely, some of the terms, according to the given criteria, have a hybrid character; that is, some of their attributes are more compatible with other categories, for example "Preferences" may contain connotations of individual characters ("pleasures," *Die Wollust*, for Englishmen; "beating," *Den Prügel*, for Russians; "selfishness," *Selbst eigene Liebe*, for Turks or Greeks) and the same applies to all attributes in the row "War virtues."

Do some categories indicate a higher tendency for more explicit valuation? The answer is affirmative: value-charged attributes are located in the rows "Manners," "Nature and character," "Mind," "Vices," "Their land," "War virtues," "Religion," and "Pastime," while the prevailing neutral attributes can be found in the columns "Knowledge," "Diseases," "Recognize as their ruler," "Have plenty of," "Comparison among animals," and "In life and in death."

The last question in this quick axiological survey concerns the evaluation of represented peoples. In all cases one can notice value ambivalences, but certain value tendencies allow the classification and creation of a complete table of values, from the most positive to the most negative European people according to the LS. However, for the purpose of this article, the simplest tripartite axiological classification will suffice:

1. predominantly positively evaluated nations (Spaniards with five positive attributes [2, 3, 6, 11, 12]<sup>10</sup> and one negative attribute [1], and Germans with six positive [1, 2, 3, 4, 11, 12] and three negative attributes [6, 15, 17]);
2. neutrally evaluated (Frenchmen with three positive [2, 3, 12] and three negative attributes [1, 6, 15], Englishmen with four positive [1, 2, 3, 11] and four negative attributes [6, 8, 12, 13], and Swedes with three positive [2, 11, 12] and three negative attributes [1, 3, 4]);

9 In the *Völkertafel* (VT) this column is marked with the phrase "Ihr Leben Ende" (Their end of life). About the phraseological differences between LS and VT see more in Tatzreiter (1999).

10 The numbers refer to the columns of the LS. The attributes that are not unambiguously positive or negative are marked with italic font. The columns 7 (Vices), 9 (Diseases), 10 (Their land), 14 (Have plenty of), and 16 (Comparison among animals) are not taken into account because of the constant negative (7) or indeterminate evaluation (9, 10, 14, 16).



TABLE 2.1 Text of the Leopold-Stich. Transcription: [Manuela M.] Reiter / [Franz K.] Stanzel. Source: Stanzel 1999, 40. English translation by Davor Dukić

**Aigentliche Vorstell- und Beschreibung der Fürnehmsten in EUROPA befindlichen Land-Völcker**

	SP	F	W	T	E	
	Nahmen	Spanier	Franzöß	Wälscher	Teütscher	Engelländer
1	Sitten	Hochmüetig	Leichtsinnig	Hinterhaltig	Offenhertzig	Wohlgestalt
2	Natur u. Eigenschaft	Wunderbahrlich	Holdselig u. ansprächig	Eyffersichtig	Gantz gut	Liebreich
3	Am Verstand	Klug u: weis	Fürsichtig	Scharffsinnig	Witzig	Anmuthig
4	Der Eigenschaft Anzeigung	Männlich	Kindisch	Schier wie man will	Überal mit	Weiblich
5	Wissenschaft	Schriftt-gelehrt	in Kriegs Sachen	in Geistlichen Rechten	in Weltlichen Rechten	Welt-weiß
6	Tracht der Kleidung	Ehrbar	Unbeständig	Ehrsam	Nachaffer	Auff Frantzösisch
7	Untugenden	Hoffärtig	Betrügerisch	Geilsichtig	Verschwen-derisch	Unruhig
8	Lieben	Ehr-Lob und Ruhm	Den Krieg	Das Gold	Den Trunck	Die Wollust
9	Kranckheiten	Verstopffung	An Aigner	A böser Seüch	Am Podagra	An der Schwindsucht
10	Ihr Land	ist fruchtbar	Wol gearbeitet	Ergötzlich u. wollüstig	Gut	Feucht
11	Kriegs Tugenden	Großmüthig	Arglistig	Fürsichtig	Unüber-windlich	Ein See-Held
12	Gottes Dienst	Der allerbeste	Gut	Etwas besser	Noch andächtiger	Veränderlich wie der Mond
13	Erkennen für ihrem Herren	Einen Monarchen	Einen König	Einen Patriarchen	Einen Keyser	Bald den bald jenem
14	Haben Überfluß	An Früchten	Am Wahren	An Wein	An Getrayd	An Vieh weiden
15	Verzehren die Zeit	Mit spielen	Mit Betrügen	Mit schwätzen	Mit trincken	Mit arbeiten

S	P	U	M	TG
Schwed	Polack	Ungar	Moßcowtter	Türk oder Grich
Starck u: Groß	Bäurisch	Untreü	Boßhafftig	Wie das Aprill Wetter
Grausamm	Noch wilder	Aller grausamste	Gut Ungarisch	Ein Lügen Teüfel
Hartnäckig	Gering-achtend	Noch weniger	Gar nichts	Oben nauß
Unerkentlich	Mittel-mässig	Blutbegierig	Ungehobelt	Zärtlich
in freyen Künsten	in unterschiedlichen Sprachen	in Lateinischer Sprach	in Griegischer Sprach	Ein falscher politicus
Vom Leder	Lang-Röckig	Viel färbig	An Peltzen	Auf Weiber Art
Aberglaubisch	Praller	Verräther	Noch ärger	Noch betrüglicher
Köstliche Speisen	Den Adel	Die Auffruhr	Den Prügel	Selbst eigene Liebe
An der Wassersucht	An Schrätzlzoppfen	An der Fraiß	Am Keichen	An Schwachheit
Bergig	Waldicht	Frucht- und goldreich	Voller Eüß	Ein liebliches
Unverzagt	Ungestümm	Aufrührisch	Bemühsam	Gar faul
Eyferig in den Glauben	Glaubt allerley	Unmässig	Ein Abtringer	Eben ein solcher
Freye Herrschaft	Einem Erwehltten	Einem unbelibigen	Einen freywilligen	Einem Tyrannen
An Ertz- Gruben	An Peltzwerck	In Allem	An Ymen	An zart u. weichen Sachen
Mit essen	Mit zancken	Mit miessiggang	Mit schlaffen	Mit kräncklen

(continued)

16	Vergleich unter den Tieren	Einen Elephanten	Einen Fuchsen	Einen Luchsen	Einen Löwen	Einen Pferd
17	im Leben und grab	Im Bett	Im Krieg	im Laster	im Wein	im Wasser

### A real presentation and description of the most important land-peoples located in EUROPE

	Sp	F	I	G	E
Names	Spaniard	Frenchman	Italian	German	Englishman
1 Manners	haughty	careless	sly	frank	shapely
2 Nature and character	wonderful	charming and talkative	jealous	very good	amiable
3 Mind	smart und wise	careful	perceptive	witty	graceful
4 Properties	male	childish	opportunistic	always there	feminine
5 Knowledge	learned in Scriptures	in war matters	in Canon law	in Civil law	earth science
6 Costume	honourable	fickle	honourable	ape	after French fashion
7 Vices	Vain	fraudulent	lustful	wasteful	restless
8 Preferences	honour and glory	war	the gold	drink	pleasures
9 Diseases	constipation	syphilis	bad epidemic	gout	phthisis
10 Their land	is fertile	well cultivated	handsome and pleasant	good	wet
11 War virtues	magnanimous	maliciously	careful	insuperable	sea hero
12 Religion	The very best	good	somewhat better	more devout	changeable like the moon
13 Recognize as their ruler	a monarch	a king	a patriarch	an emperor	now this, now that
14 Have plenty of	fruits	goods	wine	cereals	cattle grazing
15 Pastime	with games	with fraud	with chatter	with drinking	with work
16 Comparison among animals	an elephant	a fox	a lynx	a lion	a horse
17 In life and in death	in bed	in war	in vice	in wine	in water

Einen Ochsen	Einen Beern	Einem Wolf	Einem Esel	Einen Hund
Auf der Erd	im Stall	Beim Sebel	im Schnee	im Betrug
Sw	P	H	R	TG
Swede	Pole	Hungarian	Russian	Turk or Greek
strong and tall	boorish	unfaithful	malicious	like the April weather
cruel	even wilder	most cruel	good Hungarian	a lying devil
obstinate	little appreciated	even less	nothing at all	aloft
inscrutable	mediocre	bloodthirsty	uncouth	tender
in Liberal Arts	in different languages	in Latin	in Greek	fraudulent politics
from the leather	long robe	multicoloured	fur	effeminate
superstitious	greedy	treacherous	even worse	more deceitful
delicious food	nobility	revolt	beating	selfishness
dropsy	diarrhoea	cramps	whooping cough	weakness
mountainous	wooded	rich in fruits and gold	iced over	lovely
fearless	impetuous	sedition	arduous	lazy
eager in faith	believes all sorts of things	immoderate	a renegade	the same one
free reign	an elected one	an undesired one	a self-willed one	a tyrant
ore mines	furs	everything	bees	delicate and soft things
with food	with quarrel	with idleness	with sleep	with sickness
an ox	a bear	a wolf	a donkey	a dog
on earth	in the stable	with sword	in snow	in fraud

3. predominantly negatively evaluated (Italians with three positive [3, 6, 11] and six negative attributes [1, 2, 4, 12, 15, 17], Poles with six negative attributes [1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 15] and without positive attributes in the considered columns, Hungarians with nine negative attributes [1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15] and without positive attributes in the considered columns, Russians with one positive attribute [11] and seven negative attributes [1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 12, 15], and Greeks or Turks with one positive attribute [4] and nine negative attributes [1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12, 15, 17]).

A few general conclusions can be drawn from this brief axiological analysis of the LS. The imagological thesis on the importance of national character in imagotypical discourse is generally confirmed: it is precisely the sphere of human character traits that is subjected to evaluation (“Manners”; “Nature and character”; “Mind”; “Vices”; “War virtues”; “Religion”; “Pastime”). Some parts of culture (“Knowledge”; “Recognize as their ruler”) and some natural phenomena (“Diseases”; “Have plenty of”) are neutrally evaluated. The columns “Their land” and “Comparison among animals” constitute special cases. The first includes only positive attributes, and the second requires interpretation because of its metaphorical potential. The attributes in the row “In life and in death” contain cultural/anthropological and characterological connotations that could be interpreted as value-charged, especially in the case of the comic punch line “in fraud” (*im Betrug*) for Turks or Greeks. Waldemar Zacharasiewicz (2010) has convincingly demonstrated that many of the attributes in the Tableau of Nationalities come from the traditional theory of climate. This brief axiological analysis of the older variant of the same kind of source—without any preliminary hypothesis—demonstrates another ideological background, namely, the dominance of a (Western) Eurocentric view of the peoples on the eastern periphery of the continent.

The LS exhibits some features of imagotypical representations of GCSS, that is, of their imagological reconstructions: representative attributes, value ambivalence (within a set of attributes ascribed to peoples), and irony (e.g. the attributes for the Hungarian and Russian in the column “Nature and character”). What distinguishes the LS from literary objects of imagological investigations is the absence of “empty cells” in the LS table, and the value ambivalence within the same column. In other words, descriptions of peoples in the LS are firmly structured and complete, no cell in the table lacks data, and attributes are either positive or negative or neutral.

In order to further consider the axiological foundations of imagology, it is necessary to return to the analysis of the Beller and Leerssen 2007 handbook, namely to the articles about the same eleven peoples that are presented in the LS. From a modern imagological point of view, the difference between the two

analysed objects seems to be ontological, as a difference between an imagotypical source and an imagological treatise. But in the original contexts both of them pretend to be a source of knowledge about the same topic, albeit on a different level: the older one about national characters, the younger one about their representations. However, for the sake of this discussion, some other differences of form and content are more important. The articles on peoples in the handbook are undersigned and written by various authors; descriptions include the diachronic dimension; they are, quite expectedly, far more loosely structured than the LS, but a certain descriptive pattern can be reconstructed from the contents of the articles; the sources of imagotypical attributes are transparent—they appear either as quotations or as the authors' generalizations (with or without quotation marks). Theoretically, the content of the articles could be presented in the form of a table, but that table would be far more complex than the LS, including a diachronic axis, references to sources, and the abovementioned “empty cells.” Due to the complexity of the problem, we will focus only on the following axiological-imagological insights relevant to our discussion:

- The semantic or value potential of the designations of peoples are discussed only in three cases, emphasizing the following: the different names for “Germans,” especially the Slavic forms with the etymological root *\*nēm*.<sup>11</sup> meaning “dumb” or “stammering” (Beller 2007a, 159–160); the supposed etymology of the English and French word *ogre* from the old French name for the Hungarians (*Hongre*) meaning “monster, men-eater frightening children in fairy tales” (Marác 2007, 175); and the recent substitution of “Greece” with the more prestigious name “Hellas” as the country's official designation (Paschalidis 2007, 170).
- The value of the key attributes of the here considered peoples—either directly quoted from the sources or synthesized by the authors of the articles—are obviously markedly indicative, even without a context, but there are still two exceptions. The personification of “John Bull,” the stereotype of “gentlemen,” and the notion of “phlegm,” that are all essential attributes of “Englishness” (Spiering 2007), contain certain value potential, which, however, strongly depends on the given context. And the same goes for the “social-democratic idea of *folkhem* (home of people)” (Rühling 2007, 248), which occupies a central place in the article “Swedes.”
- The degree of expression of the diachronic dimension in the analyzed articles may depend on the competencies and knowledge of their authors.

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<sup>11</sup> In historical linguistics the asterisk (\*) indicates a reconstructed, hypothetical form/word. Here it designates the presumed Proto-Slavic form.

However, a strongly emphasized diachronic structure implies changes in content or evaluation of representations of the given GCSS, while, on the other hand, a dominant synchronic structure indicates stability of the respective image. In that sense the Spaniards, Germans, Swedes, Hungarians, Greeks, and Turks are described as peoples with historically changeable imagotypical representations, whereas the attributes of the French and Italians are presented as historically far more stable.

- The natural environment occupies a relatively small share in the total value potential of the observed GCSS. Somewhat exceptional is France “as a privileged place: with a pleasant climate, neither too hot nor too cold, its topographical position ensuring fertility as well as variety—in short, an ideal location for its citizens” (Florack 2007, 154) and the attractive Italian scenery, although inseparable from the cultural, urban landscape (Beller 2007b, 196–197). On the other hand, in the articles on the Germans and Poles there is a complete absence of attributes about the natural landscapes of their countries.
- The frequency and distribution of the inherited (biological) character attributes is similar. Some such attributes can be noticed in the articles on the Spaniards (“cruelty,” “bestial rage,” “lustful,” “fierce and coarse,” etc.) and Germans (“robust stature, bravery in war, chastity among women, and a tendency towards hard drinking,” Beller 2007a, 160); however, in the articles on the Italians and Russians, such attributes are completely absent.
- It can already be assumed that culture is a more important object of evaluation than natural environment and biological character traits. This is particularly true for descriptions of the French, Italians, English, Swedes, and Russians.
- As already emphasized, the imagotypical aspects of culture may be different. In most cases, that is a cultural space, for example Paris, functioning as a value ambivalent metonymy for France as a whole (Florack 2007, 157–158). Art plays an important role in the positive evaluation of the Italians and Russians. Ideology and politics gain an imagotypical potential in the articles on the Poles, Russians, and Turks. (Great) historical personalities and literary figures function as national cultural metonymies in the articles on the Germans (Arminius, Siegfried, Faust, Barbarossa, Frederick II, Bismarck; see Beller 2007, 160), Poles (Copernicus, Chopin, Mickiewicz; see Gerrits and Leerssen 2007, 217) and Hungarians (Nicholas Zrinyi, Liszt, Kossuth; see Marác 2007, 175–176). Even food can have a powerful imagotypical potential, such as in the Anglo-French rivalry in the eighteenth century, more precisely the English preference for a steak over complicated French dishes (Spiering 2007, 147).

- The last point, which may be the most important aspect of culture as an imagotypical topic, are cultural character attributes, which are not always easily distinguished from innate, biological character traits, all the more so because they often come together in the same sequence. A good example is this sentence from the article on the French: “As tradition and popular wisdom will have it, the French are aristocratic, well-bred and hospitable, yet also changeable, fickle and profligate, according to the humanist Julius Caesar Scaliger in his influential *Poetices libri septem* (1561)” (Florack 2007, 154).

The first three attributes are undoubtedly derived from the sphere of culture, whereas the second set, especially the first two attributes, belong to the realm of nature. The largest number of cultural character attributes in the articles analysed here are linked to the French (“well-dressed,” “spirited,” “sexual liberty,” “civilized behaviour in eloquence, courtesy, gallantry, sociability, light-heartedness, self-expression and wit, in addition to love of their king,” etc., see Florack 2007), but they also play an important role in the images of the Spaniards (“lack of education,” “fanatical and intolerant Catholics, oppressors of civil liberties,” “colourful customs,” etc., see López de Abiada 2007) and Russians (“backward, sparsely populated realm of nobles and serfs, with little political organization and no cultural achievement,” “hegemonic threat,” “a temperamental disposition towards the anti-pragmatic, and meditative, moral and even mystical character,” see Naarden and Leerssen 2007).

The analysis of a representative sample of imagological articles on European peoples shows that most of the imagotypical attributes, both positive and negative, come from the field of culture. Natural environment, if mentioned at all, is mostly evaluated positively. The value nature of attributes of GCSs is usually clearly indicated and even classified as positive, negative, or ambivalent, but the causes of particular evaluations are rarely explained, especially when it comes to stable evaluations in longer time periods. There are some exceptions where the causes are sought in general ideological schemes (e.g. in the opposition “wild” vs. “civilized” in the imagotypical discourse about the Gypsies; cf. Kommers 2007, 171), in historical reality (e.g. in the Spanish military power for the anti-Spanish *leyenda negra*, cf. López de Abiada 2007, 243), or in the religious position of the “spectator” (e.g. the negative *hetero-images* of the Italians and Poles in English Renaissance literature and in Russian nineteenth-century literature, respectively; cf. Beller 2007b, 195; Gerrits and Leerssen 2007, 217).

### 2.3 *Diachronic Changes and Evaluative Apriorism*

The eleven articles analysed provide useful material in considering the important imagological phenomenon of diachronic changes in the evaluation of a specific GCS. The possible causes of such changes are included in this general



statement about the nature of representations of GCSS in the article on the Spaniards: “The main factors that played a part in the formation of these representations depended, then as now, on the geographical location, political projection and economic power of the nation in question” (López de Abiada 2007, 243).

Among the three mentioned factors the “geographical location” seems to resist most diachronic changes (although not completely). The factor of “economic power” can be broadened to include some other forms of power (political, cultural, etc.) or with a more abstract concept of “prestige.” And finally, under the factor of “political projection” one can understand the ideological position of the “spectator”—in the case of national stereotypes that factor often functions as “an affirmation of homegrown values” (Florack 2007, 156). Furthermore, it is also worthwhile to consider, that is, classify, some concrete examples from the analysed articles.

In most cases, changes of imagotypical representations of GCSS are explained as a result of political, social, and economic factors, that is, the factors in the actual/real world:

- After the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 the German image of France gained new key attributes: “old, over-refined and decadent” (Florack 2007, 156). At the same time the image of Germany as “the land of poets and philosophers” had turned into an industrial and military power” (Beller 2007a, 162).
- The long-standing Swedish auto-image (*folkhem*) became questionable in the 1980s due to immigration, “slowing economy and unemployment,” which caused “a veritable national identity crisis” (Rühling 2007, 249).
- The hetero-image of the Poles as “the ultimate idealists” became current after the three “Polish partitions” in 1772, 1793, and 1795 (Gerrits and Leerssen 2007, 217).
- The West European “romantic image of freedom-loving Hungary” changed after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 into the critical image of “Magyar Hungarians as brutal oppressors of the country’s other nationalities” (Marác 2007, 176).
- In the Western hetero-image of the Russians in the nineteenth century, Russia as a new military power became a “hegemonic threat”; on the other hand, in the second half of the century the West witnessed a growing cultural prestige of Russia due to its literature, music, and ballet (Naarden and Leerssen 2007, 228).

The analysed articles contain only two examples that emphasize cultural factors in changing imagotypical representations of GCSS:

- The contemporary hetero-image of Spain as “antitraditionalist, postmodern culture” was caused by architecture (Santiago Calatrava) and cinema (Carlos Saura, Julio Médem, Pedro Almodóvar) (López de Abiada 2007, 247).
- Greek films *Never on Sunday* (1960) and *Zorba the Greek* (1964) contributed to the construction of a new image of Greece as a modern, dominantly positive hetero-image of the country (Paschalidis 2007, 169).

According to the results of the analysis, fictional worlds obviously play a much smaller role in the changes of the representations of GCSS than factors in the actual/real world. There is also no example that demonstrates the full autonomy of the system of stereotypes from occurrences in the real world. At best, imagologists sometimes resort to an argument of the recurrence of old stereotypes in a specific historical situation, especially concerning explanations of the changes of images in the 1930s and 1940s:

- The Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) provides a model example: “Republican propaganda abroad invoked the image of the free people in arms, while the Nationalists deployed a mythologized version of sixteenth-century Spain, portraying themselves as ‘crusaders’ taking a stand against the infidel” (López de Abiada 2007, 246).
- The fate of Poland in WWII “reinforce[d] the older tropes of a victimized, suffering” country (Gerrits and Leerssen 2007, 217–218).
- The participation of Russia in the anti-Nazi alliance activated in the West “the trope of the long-suffering, patiently enduring Slav” (Naarden and Leerssen 2007, 229).

In all of the abovementioned examples, changes in the representations of certain GCSS are explained as consequences of changes in the real world, more often in its social-economic-political basis than in its fictional production. The opposite phenomenon of evaluative apriorism—that is, the resistance of images to contextual changes that should undermine the existing attributes of the given GCs—is far less, if at all, discussed in the articles analysed. The issue is implicitly included in the imagological key concept of the *national stereotype*, that is, in the concept of *stereotypes about national characters*. But as pointed out at the beginning of this article, since the concept of verisimilitude plays no role in modern imagology, each stereotype about national character is not in itself an example of evaluative apriorism. At this point of discussion, we are, therefore, limited to only a few principal/hypothetical remarks. First and foremost, in order to demonstrate evaluative apriorism, it is important to compare factual and imagotypical attributes. The principal causes of stable prejudices about GCSS can be sought in two slightly different aspects of evaluation. The first one seems to regard thinking along imagological lines

as a “normal” strategy in *national thought*, which prefers the position of the “spectator,” which means that the attributes that are similar to those of his/her/their *auto-image* will be positively evaluated and vice versa. According to this principle of similarity—which for the purpose of this bifurcation is considered more natural than ideological—a *hetero-image* is only a function of an *auto-image*. All other cases of the discussed phenomenon could be subsumed under the category of an ideologically conditioned evaluative apriorism. Even radical antinationalism as the opposite of national thought falls under that category. In any case, in this type of evaluative apriorism ideological coherence and stability is preferred over the real state of (geocultural) affairs. Evaluative apriorism is easily detectable by historically oriented imagological research, but the investigation of its manifestations and causes remains one of the basic tasks of the discipline.

### 3 Summary and Prospect

The value aspect of representations of GCSS should be the starting point of any imagological analysis: the value potential of the *image* has to be precisely described, which includes an explanation of a given (dominantly) positive or negative value, or value ambivalence. The analysis of the articles in the handbook *Imagology* (Beller and Leerssen 2007) showed that the explanatory context—at least in the cases of diachronic changes in the evaluation of GCSS—should be sought in historical reality rather than in a relatively autonomous *imagotype system*. Besides, to achieve a convincing result in an imagological analysis, it is advisable to define the abstract concept of geocultural space as a subject of study, which includes the here discussed dominant subject of *national character*. However, the analysis conducted here demonstrates that national/ethnic character is a focal point in the evaluation of GCSS. The conceptual system and terminology of the formal axiology (Hartman 1967; Edwards 2010) certainly cannot be directly applied to imagology, but it can inspire its systemic axiological foundation.

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