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EMBLEM AS HANDWRITING ELEMENT AND LITERARY GENRE  
IN THE POETRY OF FRANO GUNDULIĆ (1587-1629)

A collection of poems by the Dubrovnik writer Frano Gundulić (1587-1629) exists in manuscript under the title *Francisci Gondolae carminum et Junii Antonii Restii orationum liber* and is kept in the Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb (I a 55). Written in Latin, the manuscript is dated 1607 and as well as the poems of Frano Gundulić contains orations traditionally ascribed to Džono Rastić. In the collection of poems by Gundulić there are fifteen examples of emblematic poetry, ten of them composed in Phalacean hendecasyllabics and five in elegiac couplets. Each of the poems has a tripartite structure. It consists of title and explanation of the main motif of the Christian subject matter, devoted to the Virgin Mary, then a drawing (an emblem in the strict sense) and verses (between six and eight) which elaborate on the given motif. These emblems are specific in that alongside the title they give instructions to the author of the drawing about what has to be drawn.

The emblem is first defined in terms of genre, the founder of which is reckoned to be Italian humanist Andrea Alciato, the many editions of whose *Emblemata* (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1531) influenced all the later writers. Although in European terms the emblem was very popular in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the emblematic poems of Frano Gundulić are probably the first example of it in the region of Croatia, particularly among the meridional Croatian writers, who were more inclined to more traditional forms. As genre, the emblem can be compared with some other poetic forms, such as the anagram or the riddle, the main proponent of which in Croatian is Pavao Ritter Vitezović.

All the poems are transcribed and their forms and contents briefly described. Since emblematic poetry impinges on the field of the fine arts, it is interesting to consider from the formal side the relation between text and drawing in the manuscript and to compare it with the relation between text-author and drawing-author (most frequently not the same person). The question of the drawing as element within the codicological description is raised as well.

The emblems of Frano Gundulić have remained to date in manuscript, and as objects for transcription and codicological description are a challenge to philologists. But since they are a very rare example of this genre in Croatian Latinist literature they are also a stimulus to literary historians to describe their genre and then determine them both diachronically and synchronically.

**Keywords:** Frano Gundulić, 17<sup>th</sup> century, emblem, Marian poetry, codicology