Literary Canon Formation as Nation-Building in Central Europe and the Baltics

National Cultivation of Culture

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Literary Canon Formation as Nation-Building in Central Europe and the Baltics

19th to Early 20th Century

Edited by

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Nation-Building or Nation-*Bricolage*? The Making of a National Poet in 19th-Century Hungary

Gergely Fórizs

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The phrase "nation-building" is commonly used as a scholarly idiom: a search in Google Scholar for papers containing this word generates about 636,000 results. This high number already suggests that the phrase lacks a definitive meaning. Commonly, it has been used to describe the national movements of the past 250 years, regardless of where they appeared in the world. As a result of deliberate state policies, nation-building has been theorized upon as a structural process, whether it was top-down or bottom-up.[1] Yet, this central and narrative-constructing metaphor originally implied a more specific approach, and it was only from the 1970s on that the use of the term has become so widespread that it has given rise to the most contradictory explanations.

The phrase "nation-building" came into vogue through the works of a handful of historically oriented American political scientists of the 1960s, among others, Karl W. Deutsch, Reinhard Bendix and Charles Tilly. In the following decades it became commonly used in political and cultural history. In his introductory essay to the re-edition of Reinhard Bendix's 1964 *Nation-Building and Citizenship*, in 1996 John Bendix reconstructs the primary context in which the term came into general use. He stresses that Reinhard Bendix's "perspective has also been affected by where and how newly independent states have been created," adding that in the mid-1960s these new states primarily emerged in Asia and Africa, and that between 1957 and 1964, twenty-five new countries were established in sub-Saharan Africa alone. Referring to an essay by David E. Apter, John Bendix concludes that at that time the term "nation-building" was "a shorthand to understand the 'discontinuities in tradi-

1 For an overall account, see Harris Mylonas, "Nation-Building," *Oxford Bibliographies in International Relations*, ed. Patrick James (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), accessed October 15, 2018, http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199743292/obo-9780199743292-0217.xml.

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tion, culture, social organization, and material standards' newly independent countries were experiencing."[2]

The 1960s were not, however, the first time that the term gained currency: John Bendix himself mentions some earlier examples, including Nicholas Murray Butler's 1930 Cobden lecture "Nation-Building and Beyond."[3] Butler (1862–1947), an American philosopher, diplomat and educator, president of Columbia University and of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and recipient of the 1931 Nobel Peace Prize was an early-20th-century popularizer of the term.[4] In a series of political essays, including his 1916 *The Building of the Nation*, his 1923 *Building the American Nation*, his 1917 article "Have We an American Nation?" and the above-mentioned Cobden lecture in 1930, Butler defined nation-building as follows:

> There is not yet a nation but the rich and fine materials out of which a true nation can be made by the architect with vision to plan and by the builder with skill adequate to execute. The grave problem before the American people today is that of completing the process of nation-building. It is the problem of subordinating every personal ambition, every class interest and policy, every race attachment, to the one dominant idea of an America free, just, powerful, forward-facing, that shall stand out in the history of nations as the name of a people who conceive their mission and their true greatness to lie in service to mankind.[5]

In its early 20th-century usage, therefore, "nation-building" refers to the process of inventing a *new* nation. Based on a version of the melting-pot theory, Butler stresses that the creation of a radically new national identity requires the discontinuation of all previous traditions.

There is an even earlier example of using the term in reference to American society. In his 1883 popular *The Lives and Graves of Our Presidents*, Reverend George Sumner Weaver (1818–1908) defines "the great work of nation-building"

2 John Bendix, "Introduction to the Transaction Edition," in Reinhard Bendix, *Nation-Building and Citizenship: Studies of Our Changing Social Order: Enlarged Edition* (New Brunswick, London: Transaction Publishers, 1996), XI–XXVI. Here: XIII–XVI. Cf. David E. Apter, "Preface," in *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: The Free Press, 1963), V.

3 Bendix, "Introduction," XXIII [Footnote 5].

4 Cf. Charity Eva Runden, *Twentieth-Century Educators* (New York: Monarch Press, 1965), 77–79.

5 Nicholas Murray Butler, "Have We an American Nation?", *The Journal of Education* 85, no. 3 (January 18, 1917): 61–62.

in the founding period of the United States as "the construction of state, county, town and city governments," stressing how unprecedented this work was: "There were no models for the government they had to make. They had started a nation on a new plan; and they were to build it by the principles of righteousness and common sense, recognizing every man's place and right in the new structure." According to Weaver, "nation-building" did not merely raise new institutions, but also conceived a new (republican) ideology. As an instance of this, he mentions the state of Virginia: "To reconstruct such a state on republican principles required a re-making of all the laws and all the usages of society."[6]

The early occurrences of the phrase "nation-building" in Weaver and Butler show that what by the 1960s became a scholarly term had already been there before in the vocabulary of popular history and politics with a similar meaning, describing the cultural discontinuity typical of a "new nation." In this perspective, it is not surprising that American political scientist Karl W. Deutsch, in an introductory essay to an edited collection of studies entitled "Nation-Building" in 1963 talks about nation-building from a very similar point of view as Butler, despite shifting the genre from political essay to political science essay and writing at a more abstract level. Deutsch distinguishes three different viewpoints on the matter of nationalism and the rise and fall of nations. These concepts are: (1) national growth; (2) nation-building and (3) national development. The first and the third are both more or less organic concepts, portraying the slow "growth of a living thing" through certain fixed qualitative stages, while the second has mechanistic and voluntaristic aspects:

> nation-building [...] suggests an architectural or mechanical model. As a house can be built from timber, bricks, and mortar, in different patterns, quickly or slowly, through different sequences of assembly, in partial independence from its setting, and according to the choice, will, and power of its builders, so a nation can be built according to different plans, from various materials, rapidly or gradually, by different sequences of steps, and in partial independence from its environment.[7]

The way "nation-building" is described here reminds the reader of Weaver's and Butler's previous description of American nation-building: Deutsch's

6 George Sumner Weaver, *The Lives and Graves of Our Presidents* (Chicago: National Book Concern, 1883), 139.

7 Karl W. Deutsch, "Nation-Building and National Development: Some Issues for Political Research," in *Nation-Building* [First edition: 1963], ed. Karl W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz (New York: Atherton Press, 1966), 1–17.

builders (unifying Butler's "architect" and "builder" into one person and resembling the American Founding Fathers in Weaver) as central figures of nation-building are people who command mastery over all parts and circumstances of this process. They handle it consciously, according to their own vision and are free to choose their instruments.

This original meaning of "nation-building," as we have seen, implies a close connection with that of "state-building," corresponding to the fact that in the case of the USA and other ex-colonial states these two processes are closely linked to each other. This original context might be one of the reasons why the notion of nation-building later came close to that of state-building. Even if historians like Samuel E. Finer separate the two images (saying that "nation-building is not the same as state-building"), he emphasizes the "historical and logical connections" between the two and sees "nation-building" as a higher form of "state-building" where the population of a state forms "a community of feeling based on self-consciousness of a common nationality."[8]

In the course of the 1970s and 1980s, "nation-building" gradually moved away from its original context and became a phrase generally used for the rise of nations, and the term's architectonic imagery suggested henceforward that it is about a conscious "greenfield project." The term's implications in American political science, however, resulted in controversies wherever it was applied to cases different from the American type, that is, when the formation of a nation and a state did not occur simultaneously and in closely connected ways, or when confronted with beliefs in the primordial existence of nations. This is the case for most East-Central European countries, including Hungary.

The primary reason why it is difficult to apply the image of nation-building to East-Central Europe is that in the 19th century most ethnic groups in the region lacked their own independent state, but some could look back on a self-governed medieval state, as in Hungary; the existing traditions became part of the ideology of an ever-existing nation, and the wish for state-building also harked back to these memories. National literature, as a tool of "cultural nationalism,"[9] was occasionally felt to make up for a non-existing state, and

8 Samuel E. Finer, "State- and Nation-Building in Europe: The Role of the Military," in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, ed. Charles Tilly (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1975), 86–88.

9 According to Joep Leerssen, European cultural nationalism followed a separate dynamic and chronology from political nationalism. Cf. Joep Leerssen, "Nationalism and the Cultivation of Culture," *Nations and Nationalism* 12, no. 4 (2006): 559–578.

as such it came to play a key role in the national ideologies of this region.[10] Thus the narrative on the "awakening" of an (ever-)existing nation became a common pattern of East-Central European stateless literary cultures.[11]

In what follows, I want to tackle this dynamic as it operated in 19th-century cultural history; that is, I am less interested in the theoretical debates as to whether modern nations are modern social constructs (Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson) or are the results of centuries-long organic development (Anthony D. Smith).

Now, I will turn to two ideologues of the Hungarian national awakening and their interpretive interventions with regard to the works of a national poet. I will use their examples to demonstrate that in their efforts they in fact did not act as "builders," i.e., someone free to choose his tools and materials, but rather as *bricoleurs* ("handymen") of national culture. Claude Lévi-Strauss employed the term *bricolage* for describing the characteristic patterns of mythological thought.[12] Gérard Genette picked up this term in application to literary criticism on the whole, while Jacques Derrida extended it to all possible discourses. What they had in common was that for them the *bricoleur* was someone who constructed something new out of a diverse range of available materials and tools that were not intended for that particular end. The limits of his or her repertoire distinguishes the *bricoleur* from the engineer, "who (in principle) can any time obtain the tool specially adapted to a particular technical need."[13] Genette's take on the rules of intellectual *bricolage* conforms to Lévi-Strauss's definition: "always to make do with whatever is available and to use in a new structure the remains of previous constructions or destructions […] forming of these heterogeneous elements into a new whole in which none of the re-used elements will necessarily be used as originally intended."[14]

10 Cf. Virgil Nemoianu, "'National Poets' in the Romantic Age: Emergence and Importance," in *Romantic Poetry*, ed. Angela Esterhammer (Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2002), 249.

11 Cf. John Neubauer, "General Introduction," in *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, vol. 4: *The Making and Remaking of Literary Institutions*, ed. Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer (Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007), 1–39.

12 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* [1962] (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966).

13 Gérard Genette, "Structuralism and Literary Criticism," in Gérard Genette, *Figures of Literary Discourse*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 4–5.

14 Ibid., 3.

My first example of intellectual nation-*bricolage* comes from the three-volume critical edition of the oeuvre of the Hungarian poet, critic and aesthetician Dániel Berzsenyi (1776–1836), edited and published in 1842 by Gábor Döbrentei (1785–1851), who was a writer, and the first secretary of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Döbrentei's edition was a major step toward the canonization of Berzsenyi as a "national poet."[15] Recent research points at 19th-century scholarly text editions as ideological constructions and parts of the "nation-building process."[16] Editorial scholarship provides an "infrastructure of memory" by not only archiving and processing but also by producing cultural memories.[17] Döbrentei takes the power of editing to the extreme: often, he does not only reproduce and interpret Berzsenyi's works but intervenes in their choice of words and imagery. Döbrentei claimed to have been authorized to do so by his friend Berzsenyi himself. Defining editorial work – in accordance with 19th-century European philology – as the execution of the author's last will, Döbrentei never dares to erase anything from the poems, although, in one particular case, he suggests that the final two stanzas of Berzsenyi's famous ode *To the Hungarians* (*A magyarokhoz*) should be left out as they apparently contradict what Döbrentei considered the true ideology of nationhood. The first and the last three stanzas of the poem read as follows:

> Oh you, once mighty Hungary, gone to seed,
> can you not see the blood of Árpád run foul,
> can you not see the mighty lashes
> heaven unleashed on your dreary country? [...]
>
> Árpád, our Chief, the founder of Hungary,
> had braver troops to fight the Danubian shores,

15 Regarding this term, see Nemoianu, "National Poets," 249–255; John Neubauer, "Figures of National Poets: Introduction," in *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe*, vol. 4, 11–18; *Commemorating Writers in Nineteenth-Century Europe: Nation-Building and Centenary Fever*, ed. Joep Leerssen and Ann Rigney (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Marijan Dović and Jón Karl Helgason, *National Poets, Cultural Saints: Canonization and Commemorative Cults of Writers in Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

16 Joep Leerssen, "Introduction: Philology and the European Construction of National Literatures," in *Editing the Nation's Memory: Textual Scholarship and Nation-Building in 19th-Century Europe*, ed. Dirk van Hulle and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2008), 22.

17 Paula Henrikson, "Inventing Literary Heritage: National Consciousness and Editorial Scholarship in Sweden, 1810–1830," in *Free Access to the Past: Romanticism, Cultural Heritage and the Nation*, ed. Lotte Jensen, Joep Leerssen, and Marita Mathijsen (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010), 103.

how diff'rent were the swords of Hungary
Hunyadi used to repel the Sultan!

But woe – this is how everything perishes.
We bear the yoke of fickle vicissitudes;
the fairy mood of Luck has tossed us
playfully upward and down, while smiling.

The iron fist of centuries finishes
but all that man has built: gone is noble Troy;
gone are the might and pride of Carthage,
Babylon, Rome – they have all gone under.[18]

In his editorial note, Döbrentei argues that the poem should occupy a central position in the Hungarian national literary canon, but with the ending omitted: "All ninth-grade students should learn Berzsenyi's ode by heart in all the schools of the Hungarian Empire, regardless of their religious denomination, but without the last two stanzas. For pedigreed boys should not be disappointed by the prospect that Hungary might fall into the ranks of Troy, Carthage, Rome and Babylon, and be replaced by a Pan-Slavic or German province."[19]

In a striking example of intellectual *bricolage* Döbrentei recommends that the material under his editorship be used for purposes other than originally intended by its author, namely, for strengthening of what he saw as a *modern* national identity. His interpretation relied on two implicit presuppositions, *first* that Berzsenyi's view of the Hungarians in his poem is based on ethnic identity and *second* that his view of national history is an essentialist one, in which history is an organic process of the unrolling of a nation's potential.

Counter to the first presupposition, the phrase "Hungarians" that the first stanza addresses in no way defined an ethnic group different form the surrounding Slavs or Germans, but the community of Hungarian nobility, the *natio hungarica*, who claimed to have "the blood of Arpad" in their veins.[20]

18 Dániel Berzsenyi, "To the Hungarians (The First)," trans. Adam Makkai, in *In Quest of the 'Miracle Stag': The Poetry of Hungary*, vol. 1, ed. Adam Makkai (Budapest, Chicago: Tertia, Atlantis-Centaur, Framo Publishing, 2000), 207–209.

19 Dániel Berzsenyi, *Összes művei: Költelem és folyóbeszéd* [Complete works: Poetry and prose], vol. 1, ed. Gábor Döbrentei (Buda: Royal University Press, 1842), 245.

20 See the latest philological-based interpretation of the poem: Gábor Vaderna, *A költészet születése. A magyarországi költészet társadalomtörténete a 19. század első évtizedeiben* [The birth of poetry: A social history of poetry in Hungary in the first decades of the nineteenth century] (Budapest: Universitas, 2017), 435–449, 438.

(Prince Árpád was the founder of Hungary, who led the Magyar tribes to the Carpathian Basin.) This Hungarian nobility has consisted of all the noblemen in Hungary, with their various vernaculars, but it did not include the Hungarian-speaking serfs.[21] An analysis of the poem referred to this approach to nationhood as a special kind of "state nationalism," based on the Hungarian feudal-estate constitution.[22]

In line with the second presupposition of Döbrentei, leaving out the last two stanzas departs from the Stoic cyclical cosmology for an essentialist view of history. Originally, Berzsenyi's poem seemed to rely on the conviction that history takes a destined course, unaffected by human power, through events which were mere repetitions of previous ones. Unlike his Stoicism, Döbrentei claims that it is not pure destiny or "luck" that determines the history of nations but their own will to survive. As he emphasizes in his lengthy notes to the poem: "Nation! Do you want to stay alive? If yes, then get on your feet! Emerge from below! But if you do not even care about your downfall, you should fall even deeper."[23] In the light of this national essentialism, the last two stanzas, ending the ode with the chimera of the nation's death, are clearly inappropriate. Omitting them, the poem would end on the encouraging image of the 15th-century war-lord János Hunyadi, famously defeating the Turks at Belgrade. Despite their common voluntaristic aspects, Döbrentei's essentialism differs from the concept of nation-building as starting something *new* and relies more on the sustained continuity of national traditions.

However, ideologists of nation-*bricolage* like Döbrentei were convinced that there was a continuity between the national ideas of the past and the efforts of the present towards national self-identification. In this essentialist concept of nationhood, modern language- and ethnicity-based nations are God's creations and had existed since time immemorial. Döbrentei's editorial essay on *To the Hungarians* makes this explicit by alluding to the biblical myth of the Tower of Babel:

> God wanted nations to exist. If there were only one language in this world, the 900–1000 million different kinds of people would become

21 Cf. Leslie S. Domonkos, "The Multiethnic Character of the Hungarian Kingdom in the Later Middle Ages," in *Transylvania: The Roots of Ethnic Conflict*, ed. John F. Cadzow, Andrew Ludanyi, and Louis J. Elteto (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1983), 41–60.

22 Lajos Csetri, *Nem sokaság hanem lélek: Berzsenyi-tanulmányok* [Not multitudes, but souls: Studies in Berzsenyi] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1986), 61–64.

23 Berzsenyi, *Összes művei*, 234.

> nothing but a lazy crowd, always handing over the business to someone else. But the disjunction caused by the 3000 different languages and dialects, the difference of countries and constitutions has led to rivalries among neighbors and it comes to a perennial competition for gaining balance. […] This is the central force that makes relatives from the millions. And so these millions create in every inch of the world their own countries, which are named after them.[24]

Here Döbrentei seems to echo the 18th-century Neoplatonic dynamic version of the idea of the Great Chain of Being, recast in terms of nationality, inasmuch as in the cosmic order of increasing diversification "man's high calling was to add something of his own to the creation, to enrich the sum of things, and thus, in his finite fashion, consciously to collaborate in the fulfilment of the Universal Design."[25]

Another example of Hungarian nation-*bricolage* comes from the interpretation that István Széchenyi (1791–1860), the influential Hungarian statesman gave of Berzsenyi's poem. Széchenyi, an enthusiastic admirer of Berzsenyi's poetry, in his first major work *Hitel* [*Credit*] (1830) quotes the ode *To the Hungarians* so as to serve his own vision of a future-oriented nation: "What once was the keystone and the strength of our nation has gone to ruin and so the poet laureate of our fatherland is right: 'How diff'rent rang the thunder of Hungary / amidst the blood-soaked battles of Attila.' And what is gone, we should not want to bring back to life, because it's beyond possibility."[26] Instead of turning back to the past, according to Széchenyi, the nation should be reestablished on an another, higher level, as the next examples will show.

In 1829 Széchenyi translated Berzsenyi's ode into German for his future wife. With a remarkable gesture, he left out the last two stanzas, just as Döbrentei would suggest years later, but on different grounds. In a note added to his translation, Széchenyi explains that "I don't translate the two final verses. […] They want to say as much that 'this is how everything goes in this world,' 'one nation arises and another one descends,' etc. So everyone could believe in be-

24 Ibid.

25 Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), 296.

26 István Széchenyi, *Hitel* [Credit] (Pest: Trattner–Károlyi, 1830), 72.

ing corrupted by destiny, though the fault lies with himself."[27] For Széchenyi, therefore, the ending should be omitted not because of the necessity to glorify the nation's past, as it was for Döbrentei, but because the nation's self-recognition should not be influenced by the limits of its historical existence.

This demonstrates that even the intention of breaking with the past for the sake of the nation's future requires the work of a *bricoleur*, if the ideologist has a significant cultural inheritance at hand. Thus, again, it is misleading to name this undertaking as "nation-building," a term, which – as we have seen before – suggests the idea of a new beginning without precedents. On the contrary, what Széchenyi wanted was a *re-awakening* of the nation, its rise to a new self-consciousness, by surpassing, but not forgetting, the past. This aspect is stressed in the final paragraph of Széchenyi's *Hitel*: "The *Past* has slipped from our grasp forever, but we are masters of the *Future*. Let us not bother, then, with futile reminiscences but let us awaken our dear fatherland through purposeful patriotism and loyal unity to a brighter dawn. Many think: 'Hungary *has been*'; I like to believe: she *will be*!"[28]

As for Döbrentei, this approach to the nation's mission is also of Neoplatonic character, but with a greater emphasis on national self-criticism. For the idea of the awakening of the nation to a self-consciousness regained on a higher level by adaptation and reworking of elements of the national heritage, highly correlates with that of the "unity lost and unity regained," the "progress by reversion" and the "redemption as progressive self-education," which, according to M. H. Abrams, are among the prominent Neoplatonic developmental patterns of "Romantic" thought and imagination of the four decades after 1790.[29]

Perceiving the nation as a quasi-eternal entity, a platonic idea, the last thing the nation-*bricoleurs* wanted was to appear as builders of a *new* nation. In-

27 Idem, *Naplói, 3* (*1826–1830*) [Diaries of István Széchényi 1826–1830], ed. Gyula Viszota (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1932), 298 (Note on 10. March 1829). The original German text: "Die zwei letzten Strophen übersetze ich nicht [...] sie wollen so viel sagen 'Es gehet aber alles so in der Welt ... eine Nation entstehet, die andere fällt ... u[nd] s[o] w[eiter] – Auf diese Art ist jeder berechtigt zu glauben, dass ihn das Geschick verdorben hat, indes der Fehler in ihn[!] liegt.'"

28 Cited from: *A History of Hungary*, ed. Peter F. Sugar, Péter Hanák, and Tibor Frank (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 193. The original version: Széchenyi, *Hitel*, 270.

29 M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), 169–195.

stead, they used the elements of the past but made selections and combinations with them in a new way. There is a wide range of tools *bricoleurs* might use for this purpose. In the list below, I mention four significant types of it.

(1) *Forgery as mystification*. Forgeries of ancient national literary monuments like *The Manuscript of the Queen's Court* and *Green Mountain Manuscript* at the time of the Czech "national revival" were not anything unusual, and – according to Vladimír Macura – do not represent a unique case of classic literary forgeries, rather common and acceptable "mystifications," for "revivalist culture mystified (and could not but mystify) as a whole." Accordingly, Václav Hanka's forgeries became an integral part of a "mystificatory game" with the purpose of creating "an entire Czech culture" with its "traditions."[30]

(2) *Rearrangement of material found*. The Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg* (1850), compiled by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, was based on Estonian folklore, but the episodes from various sources are combined into a coherent narrative. The legends about Kalevipoeg are translated from prose into verse, and the hero (originally a giant) is depicted as a 13th-century Estonian king fighting against the German crusaders.[31]

(3) *Re-contextualization* of a preexistent work. In Theodor Körner's German drama *Zriny* (1812), the war-lord Miklós Zrínyi represents a hero of the Habsburg Empire, while the Croatian and Hungarian translations adapt the story of his heroic death to their own national narratives. In the Hungarian version of Pál Szemere (1826), Zrínyi becomes the defender of the Kingdom of Hungary against the Turks; in the Croatian version by Stjepan Marjanović Brođanin (1840) he is the forerunner of the Panslavic idea.[32]

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30 Vladimír Macura, "Mystification and the Nation," in Vladimír Macura, *The Mystifications of a Nation: "The Potato Bug" and Other Essays on Czech Culture*, trans. and ed. Hana Píchová and Craig Cravens (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2010), 9–11. Also see Pavlina Rychterová, "The Manuscripts of Grünberg and Königinhof: Romantic Lies about the Glorious Past of the Czech Nation," in *Manufacturing a Past for the Present: Forgery and Authenticity in Medievalist Texts and Objects in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. János M. Bak, Patrick J. Geary, and Gábor Klaniczay (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 3–30.

31 Ölo Valk, "Levels of Institutionalization in Estonian Folklore," in *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, vol. 3: *The Making and Remaking of Literary Institutions*, ed. Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer (Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007), 286.

32 Kálmán Kovács, "Zrínyi: National Recycling(s) of a Hybrid Material (1566–2000)," in *History as a Foreign Country: Historical Imagery in the South-Eastern Europe*, ed. Zrinka Blažević, Ivana Brković, and Davor Dukić (Bonn: Bouvier-Verlag, 2015), 83–100; Marijan Bobinac, "Theodor Körner im kroatischen Theater," *Zagreber Germanistische Beiträge* 11 (2002): 59–96.

Another well-known example for re-contextualization is the opening words of Adam Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* (1833). The words of the Polish national poet "Lithuania! My fatherland!" in the eyes of contemporary readers marked Lithuania as a region of the historical Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.[33] But in 1898 the Lithuanian poet Vincas Kudirka incorporated this line (modified to "Lithuania! Our fatherland!") into his poem, "The National Hymn," where the word "Lithuania" is already taken in a narrow sense as a national territory. This poem eventually became independent Lithuania's national anthem in 1919.[34]

(4) *Blacking out* those parts of the cultural heritage that seemed irrelevant or controversial from a nationalist point of view is yet another tool at the disposal of the nation-*bricoleur*. Széchenyi's diaries, cited above, were censored after his death by his secretary Antal Tasner, who deleted compromising passages from the manuscript in order to maintain an idealized picture of the man known as "the greatest Hungarian."[35] While Berzsenyi's two stanzas mentioned above and Széchenyi's passages were wiped out because of their problematic contents, in other cases it's the language that makes certain parts of an oeuvre insignificant. According to a previously prevailing view of Slovak literary history, the Slovak National Poet Hviezdoslav's (1849–1921) early unpublished attempts represent a "separate and closed chapter, from which the poet disavowed himself."[36] In this period, he also wrote Hungarian poems, among them a poetic composition of approximately 500 verses entitled *Tompakő* that was not published either by him or by his biographer, the literary historian Albert Pražák (1880–1956), and it had been unknown to the public until recently, when the manuscript was found in Pražák's familial legacy.[37] Sometimes a whole oeuvre is excluded from the national literary canon on the grounds of its language, like that of the Hungarian archbishop Johann Ladislaus Pyrker (1772–1847), who in the 1820s was well-known all over

33 Theodore R. Weeks, "Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855)," in *Russia's People of Empire: Life Stories from Eurasia, 1500 to the Present*, ed. Stephen M. Norris and Willard Sunderland (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 139–140.

34 Kevin O'Connor, *Culture and Customs of the Baltic States* (Westport, Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 2006), 123.

35 George Gömöri, "Széchenyi, István," in *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era, 1760–1850*, ed. Christopher John Murray (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn / Taylor & Francis Group, 2004), 1119.

36 Anna Zelenková, Ján Gbúr, "Unknown Hungarian First Fruits of the Slovak Poet Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav," *Neohelicon* 44 (2017/2): 469.

37 Ibid., 469.

Europe for his German-language epic poems.[38] Around 1830 young Hungarian nationalist authors criticized him and even the translator who dared to translate a German-language poetic work originally written by Pyrker, for, in their eyes, the Hungarian language was considered to be the only key to Hungarian culture. The leading figure among them was Ferenc Toldy, later known as the "father of Hungarian literary history."[39]

All these efforts of nation-*bricolage* seem to share the belief that although there might be some kind of reworking and selecting of traditions going on, this does not affect the authenticity of the process. The keyword here is "belief": the *bricoleur* and his public should believe that the transformation of the historical material found is not an arbitrary deformation but leads through some corrections to a just understanding of the original substance of the subject which actually represents the nation itself.

If we regard nationalism not as something that emanates from historical processes or social categories, but as a "cultural phenomenon,"[40] as a *discourse*, namely a practice that systematically forms the objects of which it speaks,[41] it is illuminating to take into account Derrida's reflections on the term *bricolage*:

> If one calls *bricolage* the necessity of borrowing one's concepts from the text of a heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined, it must be said that every discourse is *bricoleur*. The engineer, whom Lévi-Strauss opposes to the bricoleur, should be the one to construct the totality of his language, syntax and lexicon. In this sense the engineer is a myth. A subject who would supposedly be the absolute origin of his own discourse and would supposedly construct it "out of nothing," "out of whole

38 Ilona T. Erdélyi, "Deutschsprachige Dichtung in Ungarn und ihre Gegner um 1820–1830: Der Pyrker-Streit," in *Jahrbuch der ungarischen Germanistik 1997*, ed. Antal Mádl and Gunther Diez (Budapest, Bonn: Gesellschaft Ungarischer Germanisten, DAAD, 1998), 14–21.

39 István Margócsy, "When Language Became Ideology: Hungary in the Eighteenth Century," in *Latin at the Crossroads of Identity: The Evolution of Linguistic Nationalism in the Kingdom of Hungary*, ed. Gábor Almási and Lav Šubarić (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015), 34.

40 Joep Leerseen, "Introduction," in Joep Leerseen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 14.

41 Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* [1969], trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London, New York: Routledge Classics, 1989), 54.

> cloth," would be the creator of the verb, the verb itself. [...] [T]he engineer is a myth produced by the *bricoleur*.[42]

Considering that what on this general level is called the engineer, may be called in the special case of a nationalist discourse the nation-builder, we might add that nation-building is a myth originally produced by nation-*bricoleurs* of the likes of Weaver and Butler. The difference between the two notions can be understood only if one takes their close relationship into account. Both belong to what Joep Leerssen called the "cultivation of culture," that is, both are re-contextualizing and instrumentalizing the elements of cultural inheritance for modern needs and values,[43] with the difference that nation-building produces a nation-builder first, who is supposed to be the origin of the discourse, while nation-*bricolage* rearranges the material found and produces new constructions, like the "national poet," within the existing discourse.

In sum, I suggest that we should use the terms "nation-building" and "nation-*bricolage*" in the field of cultural history as follows. "Nation-building" should be used for describing nation-making processes when discontinuities in tradition are to be emphasized; "nation-*bricolage*" when the goal is to reestablish a continuity between the national past and the present in order to acquire control over the future. "Nation-building" might be the proper phrase in cases when there is a close connection between political and cultural nation-forming endeavors, thus state-building makes up a defining part of the whole process, while "nation-*bricolage*" is a process that often lacks any connections to political institutions. "Nation-building" is a term describing the American type of discourse on the "founding" of a new nation, while "nation-*bricolage*" alludes to the narrative on the "revival / rebirth / awakening" of an (ever-)existing nation, which is a common pattern in East-Central European literary cultures. Nation-building is based mainly on the will of the builder, while nation-*bricolage* consists of organic and voluntaristic aspects at the same time – the individual nation-forming will of the builder is in the latter case replaced by a collective will shared by the *bricoleur* and his national community. The authenticity of the nation-*bricolage* is secured by and valid to this national community, while nation-building is based on authen-

42 Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," [1967] in Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 285.

43 Leerseen, "Nationalism and the Cultivation of Culture," 568.

tic and iconic builders of the nation. Nation-building is connected to the idea of starting something anew, while nation-*bricolage* represents a middle course between innovation and tradition. Finally, I would like to draw attention to the fact that the *bricoleur*'s grasp of nationhood (which, in the last instance, embraces the nation-builder's discourse, too) follows the patterns of Neoplatonic thought. This relationship awaits further investigation.[44]

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