Hommage to M. Hroch

National Romanticism

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As a homage to Miroslav Hroch (who turned 90 in 2022), the editorial board of SNM has decided to republish Hroch's article dedicated to the subject of 'National Romanticism' (published by Central European University Press in 2007), thereby promoting readers (as Hroch has stated too in the interview conducted with him) to go beyond his influential work Social Preconditions *and also pay attention to his later work which further developed and nuanced his earlier research.*

Introduction

The end of the eighteenth century and first decades of the nineteenth were in many respects a watershed period in European history. The dramatic convulsions of the French Revolution revealed, and opened, viable as well as unviable roads for the future development of European society. In connection with the ideas of the Enlightenment it shattered the old bonds and cast doubt upon the established moral and social norms that continued to stem from the basis of the old corporate society. The Napoleonic wars integrated Russia once and for all into the political and, indirectly, cultural history of Europe. The steam engine and other technical achievements signalled the advent of the industrial revolution. In arts and culture, a new trend, Romanticism, was successfully asserting itself against Classicism. At the same time, though with less success, it had pretences also of becoming a new 'way of life.' The civil service was

rationalized and bureaucratized. And, above all, a new group identity was announced, which, partly on the basis of the existing structure of the European states, partly in opposition to it, elevated the nation as the supreme value and fundamental 'centrum securitatis.'

Was it only coincidental timing or was there a causal relation, direct or indirect, that linked together all these changes? Our chief interest here will be the relation between Romanticism and national identity, even though, as we shall see, these two notions or, if you like, evolutionary trends cannot be understood without the context of the other great changes of the period. A consideration of the relationship between Romanticism and national consciousness suggests from the beginning two questions that we need to consider first if we wish to avoid misunderstanding and superficial models:

1. What is national about Romanticism?
2. What is Romantic about the nation?

These clearly are questions that cannot be answered without some preliminary consideration of terminology. One cannot think of Romanticism solely as a literary trend; in the main it is an approach to life, which was projected also into a value system and into conduct as well as into works of art. What was the nature of that approach to life? Usually, by 'Romantic approach' one understands a strong emphasis on emotion, the subjectivization of attitudes, an attempt to be unconventional, the absence of a realistic approach to the world, and so forth. There is, however, no generally accepted definition of Romanticism, and when we do come across a consensus about it among experts, it tends to be in the negative definition: Romanticism is labeled a reaction to Enlightenment rationalism and cool, restrained Classicism. Although even that is not an entirely unambiguous characterization (we find the emphasis on emotion even in the Sentimentalism of the eighteenth century), it is evident that it tends to apply more to art than

to approaches to life. And it is the latter that are of particular interest to us for our topic, the relationship between national identity and Romanticism.

I believe that what constitutes the common denominator of so-called Romantic approaches to life can be called a sense of social alienation, a feeling of loneliness, which stems from a sense of insecurity, from the disrupted harmony of the world. This feeling was not widespread: it was shared chiefly by men and women of letters, philosophers, and the educated on the whole. They sought a different way out of the situation and it cannot therefore be characterized without a certain, though probably simplistic, typology. We can distinguish at least five roads to a new sense of security, to a sense of belonging. These roads, which were meant to become ways out of the crisis, were not mutually exclusive; they may, depending on the case, also be complementary, and we do not therefore encounter them in pure forms. Nevertheless, we can usually say that in the approaches and views of this or that author, or this or that great figure, some of these ideas dominated and others occupied a secondary position, and though they do not appear in a pure form, some tended usually to predominate.

The fundamental road that was meant to lead the Romantics to a new sense of security was the road of individualization and subjectivization: one could find this sense of security in a deep, intense personal relationship — in love, often unrequited, for someone of the opposite sex, who was usually idealized, and in friendship with someone of the same sex. The search for personal security by turning to love merely seemed to be a safe, unproblematic road: on the contrary, it often became the source of new insecurities. That search for new individualized values and relationships concerned the inner self and therefore ran opposite to the search for the great new community, the 'nation.'

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No less complicated, but socially more relevant, was the search for a stability of relationships by turning to the past: from the gloomy reality of the present the Romantic turned to an idealized picture of ages past, of which the Middle Ages enjoyed the greatest popularity, whether as a counterweight to the Antiquity so beloved of Classicism, or as a model of high-principled valor, the certain virtue of knights so different from the complicated people of the present. The historicism of the Romantics, however, also had another aspect: the individual sought continuity, a connection with previous generations, at the levels of both the individual and the community that he or she identified with.

This historicizing component of the search for security could strengthen the group identity, which either already existed or had been rediscovered, by searching for a common fate, shared heroism, or the suffering of the national community in the distant or recent past. It was in this historical context that the relationship to the community, 'the nation,' moved, as we shall see, to the fore. It would, however, be an over-simplification if we reduced this turn to history to a Romantic approach. What is called the 'historicism of the nineteenth century' had deeper, more complex roots.

Another search for new stability led the Romantics to the common people, and was not infrequently connected precisely with those elements of historicism or, more precisely, with that component of the turn to the past, which was fashioning the myth of the 'Golden Age,' a time when people were still sincere, selfless, and unspoiled by civilization. More often, however, it was a search for the ideal of the common people in the present day—among the simple country-folk (and therefore in folk art too) on the one hand, and among the natives of distant lands on the other; it was in this context that the popular construct of the 'noble savage' was born. This context also includes, however, the idealization of the common man, usually a peasant or

countryman, as the vehicle of elementary, universally human, national values.

The feeling of being uprooted sometimes led also to a rejection of society and to a revolt against it. In the mental world of all revolution and revolutionaries in the first half of the nineteenth century, views and approaches appear which are usually called expressions of Romanticism and Romantic utopianism: faith in man and his sound moral core, criticism of the world that was based on selfishness and the exploitation or oppression of others, and hence a desire for a new, better world. Many a time, the radical, that is to say, violent, methods and means used by revolutionaries to achieve their ends are called 'Romantic.'

For our context the most important search for a way out of the crisis of values and identity was the search for a new community in which the individual who was freed from the bonds of corporate society and stripped of a sense of security could put down roots, a community with which he or she could identify. The search for a new collective spirit need not necessarily have the character of a revolutionary dream of a new society: it can lead to a community of a new kind — namely, the nation. The term 'nation' was itself already part of the vocabulary of the educated at the time (as a designation of inhabitants of a state and as a designation of an ethnic community), but it now acquired a value connotation and emotional charge, which was allied to both the Romantics and, to some extent, their works.

We are now coming to the answer to our first question, which asked what was national about Romanticism. At the time of its creation the national movement, national consciousness, had much in common with Romanticism, though not in the sense of a direct causal connection. It was more a matter of the shared roots of the two phenomena. The turn to national identity also grew out of the crisis of identity, which was brought about by changes at the dawn of the modern era: the loss of

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religious legitimacy and also therefore the loss of axiomatically formulated principles, the weakening of the old traditional feudal and patriarchal bonds, and, from that, the loss of security.

We can with relative ease demonstrate empirically that national movements, seeking to achieve a new national identity, were making their appearance in a period of serious cultural, social, and political convulsions. In the German, Czech, and Hungarian cases these convulsions stemmed, on the one hand, from the impact of Enlightenment reforms and, on the other, from wars against the French Revolution, and especially from the experience of Napoleon's triumph. The national movement in the Baltic began in the period of internal crisis in the Tsarist empire and the great reforms of Alexander II; the Flemish movement began as a reaction to the creation of the Belgian state; the Finnish as a reaction to separation from Sweden in conjunction with the autonomous status of the country; the Serbian and Greek movements of national liberation began in the period of internal cri-sis in the Ottoman Empire after the reforms of Sultan Selim III (1761– 1807) (and, in the Greek case, also in response to the French Revolution), and so forth.

We can therefore answer the first question by saying that each of the national and Romantic approaches had similar social roots, and preoccupation with the nation was logically one of the roads the Romantics set out on in search of new security and new community.

What does this entail for our second question, which inquired into what was Romantic about the nation? It would definitely be a gross error if, without deeper thought and empirical verification, we inferred from a certain concurrence of the coordinates along which the national and Romantic approach moved that the modern nation as a large social group was a product of Romanticism. It is first necessary to distance oneself from an idea which the selection of authors in this Reader could lead us to — namely, that at a certain phase in the formation of the modern

nation it was the Romantic approaches that were decisive. What phase exactly are we talking about? And which nations?

For a better understanding of these complex social processes we must distinguish between them. This general rule of scholarly inquiry applies fully also to the subject of the formation of nations. This process cannot be considered at the level of the 'nation in and of itself' or at the level of the nebulous, ambiguous term 'nationalism.' We must first make clear for ourselves the typological, spatial, and temporal differences.

The modern nations, which are today known mostly as nations with their own states, came into being essentially by two roads. In one case, the state was, at the start of the national formation, an established continuity of political independence, at least from the Early Modern Age onwards, but more often from the Middle Ages. These were states with their own, to a large extent linguistically homogeneous, 'national elites,' with a mature culture in the vernacular, which was also the language of the state. The road to the modern nation led, by means of an internal transformation of the state or of its society from a corporate to a civil society that began to define itself as a national society. This road led from state to nation, and the term 'nation-state,' a new concept, therefore seems to be justified.

The struggle for the modern nation defined as a community of equal citizens took place mainly as a political struggle and was therefore quite remote from Romanticism. To be sure, here and there we encounter engagé Romantics of the Victor Hugo type in the role of champions of the democratization of the national society, but this was mostly a pragmatic power struggle, in both the nation-state and its relationship to neighboring states or nations. Romantic outpourings about love for the nation or language tend not to appear in France, Great Britain, and the Netherlands till the later phases of the fully formed national society.

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It must be said that this type of development towards the modern nation was absent in Central and Eastern Europe. A different type was typical of this part of Europe, with its political basis and platform being in most cases a multi-ethnic empire — the Russian, Habsburg, or Ottoman — inhabited by many non-ruling ethnic groups. A sub-variety had its basis in the form of a literary 'national culture,' which was not connected to the state (the German, Italian, and Polish cases). Leaving aside the fact that the ruling élites in each of these three multi-ethnic empires searched for their national identity only gradually, we note that development towards a modern nation in this area assumed the form of a national movement, that is to say, a struggle to achieve the attributes considered necessary for national existence. In the German, Italian, and Polish cases the national movements took the form of a struggle for one missing attribute, that is to say, political independence, a nation-state that was meant to embody the otherwise culturally and socially formed modern nation.

Lacking not only statehood, but also a complete social structure and a tradition of their own culture in their own national language, the non-ruling ethnic groups in the multi-ethnic empires were in the most complicated situation. Their national movement pursued the aims of cultural and social emancipation and also, albeit sometimes with a considerable time-lag, political emancipation, which was often far from taking the form of clamoring for statehood. The national movements cannot, however, be seen as currents that remained the same from their beginnings. Like every other social movement, they too went through three phases, which we may distinguish according to the degree of mobilization achieved by a given group and according to the type of discourse promoting the idea of the nation.

The earliest phase was the period when — usually owing to the thirst for learning of the men and women of the Enlightenment — the ethnic group, its culture, past, state in nature, customs, and so forth, became a

subject of academic interest. In this phase, basic linguistic norms were sought and formulated and historical contexts were traced; in short, the potential nation was defined in a scholarly fashion according to the individual features that distinguished it from other groups. The Enlightenment scholars did not, however, necessarily come from the ranks of the *ethnie* for which they had sympathy and in which they took an interest.

Although Enlightenment rationalism predominated in this scholarly interest, one cannot rule out certain emotional factors. Very often, researchers so identified with their subject of inquiry that they assumed an emotional relationship to them. Among the national movements that experienced this phase later, in the course of the nineteenth century, we know of cases when, by contrast, the emotional relationship to the nation or, more precisely, the *ethnie*, became the motivation to do scholarly work. Blood ties, however, were not decisive: many scholars studied an *ethnie* from which they did not originate and whose language was not their mother tongue.

Not until the emergence of social and cultural conditions that we characterized as a crisis of identity did a group that saw national identity as the most natural response to that crisis and the nation as a value in itself begin to break off from the ranks of patriotic intellectuals. The leading actors of the national movement, in the proper sense of the word, resolved to sell their fellow citizens, members of their ethnic group, on this idea. The phase of national agitation began, of resolute efforts to convince members of the potential nation that their national identity should be a source of pride. The nation was meant to become the basic security that they could turn to for protection, but also an obligation, a group for which it was necessary to work, whose members it was necessary not only to identify with but also, indeed mainly, to be in solidarity with.

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Among the writings of the intellectual propagandists for the national cause we come across a number of Romantic approaches, but also a number of rationally argued demands espousing Enlightenment ideals. Hypothetically, one may assume that the approaches of each of the propagandists included rational Enlightenment or realistically pragmatic elements, which were more or less strongly represented together with approaches that have conventionally been called 'Romantic.' For that matter, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), who is usually mentioned as the source of ideas and inspirer of Romantic approaches to the people and the nation, is not included among the Romantic philosophers and, given his dates, belongs clearly to the Enlightenment. Some of his ideas, however, would later be in accord with the approach of the Romantics, and would serve to strengthen their arguments. We know also of other cases, of course, when 'Herderian' ideas appear in the works of authors who had not read him.

A similar cross-fertilization appears in the works of the leading propagandists of the nation. Let us consider several examples. Certainly, the enthusiasm of Josef Jungmann (1773–1847) for the Czech language and its spreading may reasonably be considered a reflection of Romantic influences, even though inspired by the pre-Romantic Herder. Jungmann's argument, that mere knowledge of Czech put members of the Czech *ethnie* at an extreme disadvantage, is, however, for the most part rational and modern. Mihail Kogălniceanu (1817–1891) could, on the one hand, weave Romantic dreams of the past of the Romanian nation, but also, in the wholly modern spirit, push for agrarian reform. The same is true of the 'Westernization' of Greece called for and proclaimed by the 'Romantic' Markos Renieris (1815–1897). The program of Karel Havlíček Borovský (1821–1856) of Czech national identity is an explicit argument against the Romantic conception of nationality. Similarly, one can probably not unambiguously include in

the 'Romantic' category figures who had meteoric political careers, such as Ioannis Kolettis (1774–1847).

In sum, as it is impossible to draw a sharp, generally valid line separating the Enlightenment approach from the Romantic, it is also impossible to set Romantic approaches and modernization ones against each other, though in some cases it would really be possible to find historical figures symbolizing the counterpart of Romanticism and modernism.

By contrast, it holds that Romanticism in relation to the nation can neither be limited to the first half of the nineteenth century nor located in the second, propaganda phase of the national movement. We encounter conspicuously Romantic approaches not only in the phase of national agitation, but also, much later, in the third phase of the national movement, which is distinguished by the modern nation already being fully established and national identity achieving mass acceptance. The cult of language, the Romantic idealization of the past, and the cult of the common people were stereotypes that accompanied the national movement also to the time when it was fully formed and national existence was assured—not infrequently in the form of the nation-state.

Our question concerning what is Romantic about nation-promoting activity is still not answered by this relativizing statement. The approaches we characterize as Romantic had, to be sure, their own special place in the forming of the nation. In order to determine their role we must, however, ask what roads the processes of forming the modern nation actually took. For this we need also to reflect on the actual concept of nation or, as the case may be, the relationship between nation and 'nationalism.'

So far I have ignored a term that appears often in the 'Reader'—namely, 'nationalism.' Unlike the term 'nation,' which is documented in most European languages in the period before the actual beginning of the

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formation of modern nations, 'nationalism' emerged as a new concept in the political discourse, which loaded it from the beginning with evaluative political connotations, usually negative. Not till the period between the two world wars did it begin to be used—actually only in the United States—as an instrument of scholarly historical analysis. Particularly after the Second World War, when the term became common, the tension between the concept 'nationalism,' with its negative connotations, and the organically originating term, 'nation,' with its positive connotations, became fully apparent.

Confusion is increased by the fact that 'nationalism' is in various languages interpreted in connection with how 'nation' is understood in any particular language. If, in English, 'the nation' is very close to 'the state,' then 'nationalism' is also understood mainly as efforts aiming one way or another towards statehood. If in German '*die Nation*' is defined chiefly by culture and language, the term '*Nationalismus*' found itself in an inherently contradictory position, because it can mean precisely this exaggerated emphasis on the linguistic and cultural designation of nationality, as politically defined opposition to this sort of conception of nation. Added to this is the conscious or subconscious linking of nationalism with negative expressions of national consciousness and struggles 'in the name of the nation.'

Some authors have tried to forestall this confusion by differentiating between various kinds of nationalism. Thus, for example, in the period between the two world wars Carlton J. H. Hayes (1882–1964) differentiated between six types of nationalism (including Liberal, Jacobin, and integral). Hans Kohn (1891–1971), writing later, was satisfied with two: progressive 'Western' nationalism derived from the ideals of the French Revolution, which he called the counterpart to the reactionary nationalism of the 'non-Western' (that is, German) kind, which was focused on language, culture, and consanguinity. Similarly,

Liah Greenfeld discusses positive nationalism (English and American) and negative (German and Russian).

It seems under these circumstances that it is inappropriate to project the term 'nationalism,' which is anyway nebulous and has various connotations, to the past and talk about the 'nationalists' of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries or even the Middle Ages. If the term can be applied to all activities oriented to the existence of the nation, it seems more appropriate to employ the term 'national consciousness' or 'national identity' for this wide range of activities. Moreover, the terms 'identity' and 'collective identity' have the advantage of enabling one to work with combinations of several group identities (the nation, country, region, state, town, and so forth) and with the transformative nature of relations between these identities within some hierarchy.

The difficulties with 'nationalism' have another, today possibly more relevant, component. Increasingly in current research the view is promoted that the nations in general and the small nations in Central and Eastern Europe in particular were 'constructed' solely (or chiefly) as the creation of intellectuals trying to attain positions of power, dispel frustration, or work out the subjective problems of an identity crisis. In other words, the nation is presented as the product of nationalism. From this point of view, the authors of the 'Romantic' texts presented in this volume may appear as the 'creators' or 'inventors' of the modern Czech, Bulgarian, Serbian, and other nations.

From the point of view of causal explication, the thesis about the nation as the product of specific nationalists or abstract nationalism contributes nothing at all. Causality is merely shifted onto another level: one must ask why this 'nationalism' emerged and why this particular one succeeded but another not. To be more specific: why was 'nationalism' of the Czechs and Slovaks successful, but the officially, zealously promoted, Czechoslovak 'nationalism' not? Why was Serbian, Croatian

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and even Muslim 'nationalism' successful but Illyrian not? Why was Ukrainian 'nationalism' more successful than Belarusian? Why did neither the 'nationalism' of intellectuals from the ranks of the Lusatian Sorbs, so active in their time, nor that of the Kashubians result in the creation of a modern nation? Why later did the construct of the Šariš nation fail? Was it perhaps a matter of how enthusiastically the individual propagandists made their speeches and how devotedly they worked? Another possibility is that we, in agreement with Ernest Gellner, shall say that nationalism is a result of the great social shocks and transformations, which he sums up as 'industrialization.'

One must bear in mind the inadequacy of the interpretation of the nation-forming processes from simple 'nationalistic' activity, which also relativizes the importance of Romanticism as the nation-forming force from which nationalism seems to have drawn its inspiration. The role of Romanticism— providing that we mean by it increased emotionality, the search for new security, and growing subjectivization—was manifested rather in verbalization and stylization, which functioned as commentary or catalyst. Yet it was not only a matter of commentary and an approach to objective processes, but also one of the articulation and form that the rationalization of these activities and efforts assumed, which aimed at the mobilization of the masses of the nation.

That is why it is important to place the 'Romantic' approaches into the context of factors that determined the formation of modern nations, especially in the conditions of the national movements. In the current debate between the 'Constructivists' and 'Essentialists' (or 'Primordialists') it makes sense to avoid polemical biases. Despite the differences of opinion, which are intensified by an attempt to come up with ever new, more inventive solutions, there is a certain, albeit not always admitted consensus: all the relevant authors acknowledge that for the formation of the nation, or for the road to a modern nation, five factors, or contexts, must be taken into account.

1. Every nation, every national movement, sought and found a certain temporal dimension in its existence, or, more precisely, an historical dimension of the life of its members. The past was presented by the national movement at two levels, which cannot be placed in opposition to each other: on the one hand, objectively existing institutional remnants of the past (for example, the provincial high court, the diet, the frontiers, the capital city, castles and manor houses, urban architecture); on the other, 'collective memory,' the construction of national history, which sometimes also included tales of national heroes and national adversaries. At this second level, the level of collective memory and the creation of national myths, Romanticism could to a certain extent also be employed.

2. The nation-forming processes usually had their own linguistic and ethnic component, whether a vernacular, which sought the road to codification, or the rationalistic linguistic unification of state territory. Linguistic homogenization was anyway a process that ran in parallel with the formation of modern nations, where both processes often penetrated each other and also clashed. Here, as well, we must differentiate between two levels: the level of objectively existing linguistic ties and markers of ethnicity, and the level of the subjective perception of language, the glorification of language. The cult of folk customs and folk art, which is usually linked with Romanticism, was often strikingly employed here.

3. The formation of nations proceeded roughly in parallel with the processes of modernization, which, however, cannot be reduced to industrialization, as Gellner would have it. The changes brought on by modernization, therefore, include increasing social mobility and migration, as well as the introduction of rational administration, universal education, and the expansion of communications. Without a certain level of education among

the public, without a certain level of social communication, any national propaganda was doomed to failure. Here lies the boundary that even the most enthusiastic Romantic could not break through.

4. National agitation, the national idea, could only be comprehensible to the masses and acceptable to them if it corresponded to some extent with their everyday experience: in that case, it was the experience of conflict, in particular, which most stimulated each social movement. In short, the generally recognized factors of national mobilization include the existence of nationally relevant conflicts of interest. By those I mean the kinds of conflicts where the groups clashing are differentiated not only by their interests but also by their language, ethnicity, or nationality. It could be, say, a conflict between a peasant whose mother tongue was Estonian (or Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Slovenian) and a German or Polish-speaking landowner, or a conflict between ethnically different groups of officials over posts in the civil service. Ultimately, the struggle for political power among the politicians of various nationalities was also of this nature. The contribution of Romanticism and of the Romantics to the verbalization of these conflicts, or in the 'translation' of a conflict of interests into the language of nationalist conflict, could sometimes be considerable.

5. Socio-psychological factors, which aimed at the feelings of people, were employed in national agitation, and could, under certain circumstances and over a certain period, become the domain of the Romantics. This is true of national celebrations, funerals of important people, and public protests. Here, however, one must also take into account manipulation, the cool calculating use of emotional elements in education for nationhood. One must bear in mind, however, that this emotional form of national movement and national aims could be effective

only on the assumption that the individual movements had already reached a mass level, that is to say, when there was no longer any doubt about the successful culmination of the nation-building process.

Differences between the individual authors, or the individual theories of nationalism, are usually the result not of the rejection of some groups of denominators, but of how much importance the authors ascribe to each of the five factors. An interpretation of an historical transformation process as complex as the formation of the modern nation which considers only a single cause, must be consigned to the realm of wishful thinking.

The place of Romanticism in national ideology and its influence on the factors of national agitation must therefore be judged soberly. Certainly, we come across expressions that can clearly be classed under Romanticism (disregarding the fact that the term is used with different accents for different cultures). Mostly, however, the approaches of the propagandists at the inception of the national movement and also of those during its mass phase are marked by a combination of rational and emotive arguments, a combination of idealistic declarations and pragmatic politics, and also by personal engagement.

Consequently, it is important to determine who the leaders of the national movements were in the propaganda phase, and who formulated the 'national program' and national demands. Without wanting to contrive a primitive direct link between the social standing of an author and his ideas, we would argue that it is clear that a national movement whose leaders come mainly from the ranks of the aristocracy will, in its forms and demands, be different from a national movement whose leaders are connected chiefly with the farmers or pen-pushers. It would, of course, be interesting to analyze the relationship between the social

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composition, or social bases of the leaders of the national movement, and the proportion of Romantic feeling and arguments in their propaganda.

Another aspect of the problem is the question of the audience to whom the national agitation was directed. Who were the texts addressed to, who were the readers of the texts that we have before us? Here it will again be useful to differentiate between a once-existing audience (the actual initial readers of these texts) on the one hand, and the intended audience (those whom the author considered to be his audience, who imagined them as his national public) on the other. One can, at the same time, also trace a certain stereotype of 'national reader' or, rather, the ideal type of 'patriot,' the pioneer of the national movement.

What qualities were projected into the figure of this ideal patriot? The fundamental character trait of the patriot was, understandably, devotion to the nation, to the country, a willingness to sacrifice oneself for the nation, that is to say, for the members of that nation. Devotion to supra-personal national values and interests was of course contingent on a certain amount of knowledge: the patriot knew, or was convinced that he knew, who belonged to the nation and what demands served the national interest. In relation to this definition two questions arise:

First, in what relationship were these patriotic virtues to Romanticism? One frequently hears the opinion that the decision to sacrifice oneself for one's nation, to work in its interest, is a sort of quintessence of the 'Romantic' approach. Was it not, after all, the Romantic heroes who sacrificed themselves for their nation in Poland, Hungary, or Bulgaria? This generalization, however, has a serious drawback: to sacrifice oneself for one's country (*pro patria mori*) was a crucial virtue of classical antiquity, communicated to young people by Classical education dating in Europe from the period of Humanism. We could therefore in the best case say that the humanist tradition of education used to give the Romantics certain moral norms, which could be applied also in the

national interest. Moreover, work and sacrifice for the nation were requirements of many later political movements, which could definitely no longer be identified with Romanticism.

Second, the idea of who constitutes the nation and of which specific persons, strata, groups and classes belong to 'my' nation was not coherent, and was to a decisive extent conditioned, on the one hand, by the social composition of the ethnic group that the national movement came out of, and, on the other, by who formulated the idea. Evidently, we cannot unconditionally include in the same category both the patriotic 'Romantic' statements of the rich aristocrat or leading politician, and the patriotic statements of a provincial teacher or self-taught farmer. Here, too, it is a matter of an important corrective in the study of the relationship between the mental world of Romanticism and the mental world of 'nationalism.'

The question of author is only one side of the coin. The other side comprises the addressee. Here, too, one must carefully differentiate. The national argument, which turned to the educated upper-middle classes and to people who had already gone through the political schooling of a corporate or even constitutional monarchy, could employ abstract concepts from the vocabulary of the civil movement, liberalism, democratism, Jacobinism and so forth. Concepts such as 'freedom of the press,' 'the right to petition the government,' 'the right peaceably to assemble,' and so forth were, on the other hand, not attractive enough (and often probably unintelligible) where national propaganda turned to members of an ethnic group, who were of the common people or had no opportunity to gain political experience, and for whom the reference to a shared language, customs, or shared king and country were more comprehensible.

If we consider the structure of the demands of the individual national movements, the difference stands out among the national movements

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that were first oriented towards cultural and linguistic demands (the Czechs, Slovaks, Lithuanians, Estonians, Finns, and Slovenians) and those which as early as the phase of national propaganda emphasized political autonomy, sometimes aiming towards the creation of the nation-state (the Serbs, Greeks, Magyars, and Poles). This difference cannot be explained by the different levels of progressiveness of this or that nation or by 'national character.' Nor will reference to Romanticism or Herder help us much. We can find Roman-tic elements in the loving cult of language amongst the Czechs and the Finns, as well as in the rebellious heroism of the Poles and Magyars.

We achieve a more convincing interpretation if we take into account the social background of individual national movements. It will then be clear that political aims were prioritized at the beginning of the national movement mainly by those movements that could base themselves on the non-ruling ethnic group with a complete social structure, that is to say, with its 'own' elite, ruling classes, such as the nobility in the Polish and Magyar cases and the Phanariots in the Greek case. There is, of course, also a certain parallel here with the German and Italian national movements. By contrast, in the conditions of the ethnic groups with an incomplete social structure, the national propaganda was aimed at strata that lacked political experience and political education, strata for which it was simpler to talk about language as the fundamental link that united the nation against its enemies, who were, however, characterized not only ethnically but also socially. It is also symptomatic that the social demands came into the national program beside linguistic demands more strongly and intensively than in nations where the national movements were dominated by the ruling classes.

This substantial difference, which stems from the clear correlation between the structure of the national program and the social structure of the members of the ethnic group, must also be considered in the selection and analysis of patriotic texts. Certainly the Romantic elements

in the cultural-linguistic program were of a status and form different from those (providing there were any at all) in the political program. Emotional propaganda stood a greater chance of having an impact in a milieu that was already imbued with Romantic education.

In sum, it is reasonable to say that the possibilities of explaining the formation of the modern nation by looking at the effects of Romanticism are clearly limited. In conditions of political repression, Romanticism took a form different from the one it assumed in the period when the national movement — independently of the ideas of the Romantics — came into the context of the revolutionary struggle for social emancipation, as was the case, for example, in Central Europe in 1848. The successes or failures of the national movement depended neither on the strength of the Romanticism of the leading actors of the nation or the national movement nor on the influence of Romanticism among the ruling élites.

The idea of Romantic nationalism or the Romantic stage in the development of national ideology is a construction based on the idea that a certain irrationality and strong emotionality is present in both Romanticism and nationalism. But, as I have argued here, the designation 'Romantic' hardly covers all the characteristics of the national thinking and national platforms of this period, and is certainly not the predominant designation. That is why I believe that the opposite construct is more correct, less removed from reality — namely, the construct of national Romanticism as the designation for that branch of Romantic approaches that sought a way out of the crisis and a solution to its conflicts in the fact that they would be affiliated with the new community, the nation, which was easy to endow with a certain emotional attractiveness.

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