



# Literary Canon Formation as Nation- Building

in Central and Eastern Europe  
(19th to Early 20th Century)

CONFERENCE PAPER ABSTRACTS

**Vilnius, 3–4 May, 2018**

Faculty of Philology  
Vilnius University  
Universiteto str. 5, Vilnius



Lietuvių literatūros ir  
tautosakos institutas

### ■ Marko JUVAN

(Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts)

#### **Peripheral Worlding: The Nexus of National/World Literatures**

The notions of national and world literature are historically interdependent: the late modern nationalizing of literatures was itself a transnational phenomenon, while the invention of world literature (whose elements were supposed to be national literatures) helped establish the authority of non-dominant national literatures such as German. In the wake of its late capitalist renaissance, Goethean idea of world literature has been interpreted in terms of intercultural dialogism or centre-periphery dependence within the world literary system. The lecture outlines the roles of dialogue and hegemony in the interrelated process of worlding and nationalizing the literature in Slovenian. At the end of the 18th century, it begins with the utopian picturing of a “Slovenised” literary system, which was allegorized as a peripheral transposition of the dominant Greco-Latin classic, and continues with the 19th-century aesthetic universalism as represented by the historicist dialogism of France Prešeren’s poetry. The romantic Prešeren was posthumously canonized as the Slovenian “national poet.” Such figures were invented in East-Central Europe to represent their respective nations to the gaze of world literature as an instance of the law-giving Other. In a secular parallel to the canonization of saints in the Catholic Church, worlding a national poet made an imaginary way for his universal recognition. In the ideology of cultural nationalism, the aesthetic recognition of the national poet represented a trope for a cultural/political recognition of an emerging nation. As may be inferred from the case of Prešeren, the actual worlding of a national poet from a periphery, however, depends on the world linguistic and translation systems, with global publishing and international scholarship as important factors of consecration.

### ■ Naglis KARDELIS

(Vilnius University)

#### **The Philosophical Metacriteria and Criteria of a Literary Canon: A Few Considerations from Lithuanian Perspective**

The problem of the formation of a literary canon that could do justice both to the logic of the general developmental process characteristic of a certain literary tradition as a whole and the whole body of literary works accumulated in a certain literary tradition and judged by their particular artistic merits can be approached from the philosophical point of view. In the course of our analysis, focused on the philosophical criteria that might be taken into account while thinking out the best possible form of a literary canon, we will present a few considerations of general nature that may be relevant to all discussions about what is most important and valuable in any local, or national, literature – or even in the discussions about what is of utmost importance in world literature, taken as a global corpus of literary creations produced over the centuries and millennia of human history, yet the primary concern of our analysis will be the specific problems of the formation of the canon of Lithuanian literature. Therefore, our analysis, though abstract and for the most part general in nature, will be conducted from Lithuanian perspective or at least will take it into account.

I. We will start off with the question of the overall purpose and particular addressee of the literary canon under discussion. This question will serve as a point of departure of our analysis and will help to delineate the basic contours of the canon. The answer to this question will present us

with the philosophical metacriteria, that is, with the most abstract and general criteria, that should be taken into account while thinking out the set of the particular, or concrete, criteria of our canon. The differentiating between the metacriteria, (that is, the most general criteria for choosing the particular criteria), on the one hand, and the particular, or concrete, criteria (that is, the criteria for the inclusion of certain literary works into the literary canon), on the other hand, is very important in that it compels us to spell out and thoroughly think out the basic values of aesthetic, ethical and political nature that are at the core of our attempt to establish the literary canon in the first place.

II. So what are these metacriteria? In our view, they are as follows:

MQ1. The set of particular criteria should be based on the overall understanding of the value of literature, its role in a particular society and in the life of an individual human being within that society and functioning as part of it (or taken as an independent moral, experiencing and thinking subject), as well as the purpose and addressee of the literary canon established according to these criteria.

MQ2. Having in mind that literature, as a form of art, has both intrinsic and extrinsic value (and, therefore, should be judged both from within and from without), the set of particular criteria should include both literary (aesthetic) and extraliterary (ethical, political, cognitive, and so on) criteria.

MQ3. The body of particular criteria should constitute a complete set, consistent and coherent both logically (formally) and conceptually (with respect to their concrete content).

MQ4. The particular criteria should be conceptually interrelated and organized hierarchically according to their level of relative importance (with respect to each other).

MQ5. The relevant instances of Classical Greek, Roman, Biblical, and other local or global, ancient and contemporary literary canons, as well as the known logic and criteria behind their establishment, should be taken into account as the source of possible examples that might be employed in the process of establishing the particular criteria of the national literary canon.

III. The particular, or concrete, criteria that we propose for the establishment of the national literary canon are as follows:

Q1. The literary canon should include all the most important literary creations from the body of national literature in terms of their absolute – inherent and intrinsic – artistic value, both their specific aesthetic merits and their potential to influence the formation of moral virtues of their readers as individual human beings and citizens of their country.

Q2. The literary canon should more or less equally (yet without compromising the criterion of absolute artistic value of literary creations) represent all historical periods of national literature (or, accordingly, all the major periods that are discerned in the process of the historical development of national literature).

Q3. The literary canon should represent all (or virtually all) generic forms existent in the corpus of national literature and illustrate the logic of change and transformation of these generic forms.

Q4. The literary canon should be established in such a way as to do justice both to the literary process as a whole and particular literary creations deemed most valuable from artistic (aesthetic) point of view.

Q5. The literary canon should present the body of national literature both synchronically and diachronically, that is, both in terms of particular “static” historical sections and the overall “dynamic” logic of literary development.



Q6. The literary canon should be constituted in such a way that the literary creations included in the canon are deemed more important than those literary theories that are employed in order to describe them and to explain the overall literary process; to put it negatively, the literary canon ought not to be established in such a way that the particular literary theories are taken as a point of departure and the literary creations of different epochs are employed as “explaining” or exemplifying certain theoretical standpoints of literary theorists and critics.

Q7. The national literary canon should constitute a meaningful narrative in terms of: 1) the nation’s political and cultural history; 2) the history of national literature and its scholarly reflection; 3) the history of moral development (in terms of the history of consciousness) of a particular human being as an individual moral subject and a citizen of his/her country.

Q8. The national literary canon should reflect both the generally accepted (and cherished) positive values of contemporary society and the negative value of critical thinking (to put it another way, the logic of inclusion of literary works into the canon and their critical evaluations should neither be made completely “value-free” by sheer dogmatic insistence governed by the rules of misconceived political correctness nor based on a certain dogmatic and unreflected understanding of positive values).

Q9. The literary canon should celebrate the most prominent and inspiring personalities of national history (yet without undue or excessive glorification) and include those literary creations that set forth the most memorable fictional characters as inspiring moral examples for the younger generations of readers.

Q10. The literary canon should also include those literary creations that bring to the fore problematic, emotionally stressful, ethically demanding, dismal, tragic, and “inconvenient” events of national history, such as the Holocaust.

Q11. At least a small part of the literary works included into the national literary canon should relate in one way or another to some literary texts included into the canon of Classical Greek and Roman literature, and/or the Biblical canon, and/or the canon (or the tentative versions of such a canon) of world literature or some other canons of local (national, regional etc) literary traditions.

Q12. The literary creations written in Lithuanian should constitute the core of national literary canon, yet some more important literary works written in other languages (Polish, Russian, Hebrew, Yiddish, and so on) and significantly related to Lithuania in one way or another, along with their translations into Lithuanian, might be included into the national literary canon (or its extension in the form of a sub-canon).

 **Radosław OKULICZ-KOZARYN**

(Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

## **Literary Canon and Reading Community. The Role of Dedication**

This paper focuses on the role of the reading communities in the process of literary canon formation. This role is essentially important when the cultural, literary institutions and the process of literature itself are controlled and restrained by censorship. In means of this perspective, this paper analyses multilingual literature from historic Lithuania (formerly Grand Duchy of Lithuania) and its existence in the Russian Empire in the fifth and sixth decade of 19th century, after the revolt of 1830–1831, in the conditions of tightened censorship.

In the middle of 19th century in Lithuania the Russian censorship limited strongly the possibilities of press publications that could ensure the spread of literature or to function as an intermediate between the writers and the readers, between literature and news. Partially it was compensated through the practice of literary (firstly poetical) dedications. We can find the origins of dedications in the tradition of “literary letter” that started in the Antiquity. The

dedications pay more attention to the utterances that are at some point private, but at the same time directed to the public sphere. The role of the genre of “literary letter” or literary dedication in a broader sense becomes more relevant when interpersonal contacts and friendly relations develop into a special, confidential network of connections which seems similar to underground or conspiratorial groups.

In the historic Lithuania this practice to write dedications was formed at the beginning of 19th century. It was developed by the students of the “republic of youth”, that is, the Philomaths and other relative fellowships that joined with the aims of self-formation and self-education, but afterwards they became active in the political sphere. In this environment of students and young professional intellectuals, the dedications of texts to each other was understood as circulation of ideas and readings, moreover, it established the intellectual background, i. e. participated in the formation of literary canon.

This role of dedications was especially developed in the middle of 19th century, it is common to the published texts and manuscripts of such artists and journalists as Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, Stanisław Moniuszko, Władysław Syrokomla, Wincenty Dunin-Marcinkiewicz, Mikalojus Akelaitis, Anatanas Baranauskas, Karolina Pranauskaitė and others. Literary dedications helped to maintain the reading public, which was united by personal creative connections, and without the existence of any possibility to form cultural institutions, it created its own peculiar form of literary canon. This canon in this interpersonal network was formed from the books that circulated between its members and from some specific texts (some of them, e. g. texts of Adam Mickiewicz, were forbidden by the censorship). This canon connected older and contemporary authors that belonged to the literary tradition, and it is important to stress that the value and spread of these contemporary authors depended severely on their acceptance in this half-private network. We can doubt the sustainability of this type of canon, but we have the example of Władysław Syrokomla who was canonized precisely in this manner and later entrenched in Lithuanian literary canon for a long time.

■ **Olga BARTOSIEWICZ**  
(Jagiellonian University of Kraków)

### **Is Romania a “French Literary Colony”? B. Fundoianu’s Contribution to the Discussion about Cultural Romanian Identity in the Early 20th Century**

B. Fundoianu (1898–1944; originally Benjamin Wechsler) was a Romanian Ashkenazi Jewish poet, publicist, critic, essay writer, philosopher, playwright, theatre director and an avant-garde filmmaker. After he emigrated to Paris in 1923, he became a French artist, known under the name Benjamin Fondane. But before leaving Bucharest, he participates in a very important debate on imitation in Romania (famous dispute between Titu Maiorescu and Eugen Lovinescu), whose aim was to establish a cultural, political and literary canon for the new-born country. However, the participation in the discussion of a young, inexperienced writer with a Jewish background, which in a way doubly excluded him from the dominant discourse at that time, is not so obvious but gives him the possibility to achieve a very valuable external point of view. Thus, the writer feels empowered to take a position at the breakthrough moment of Romanian history when the state faces national self- and cultural identification. In the “Preface” to his *Imagini și cărți din Franța (Images and Books from France)*, as well as in many other articles published in Romanian journals, Fundoianu points out some controversial arguments (*inter alia* the self-colonial aspect of Romanian culture) and presents all the problems that appear in the formation of national canon, combining them with his own concept of literature. The main aim of this paper is thus to present and to (re)contextualize Fundoianu’s ideas about Romanian cultural identity from a historical, cultural and literary point of view.

■ **Renáta BELIČOVÁ**  
(Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra)

### **Postmodernist Representation of the Central European Multi-ethnic Milieu. Marek Piaček: *Apolloopera* – a Melodrama about Bombing for the Choir, Actor and Trombone**

The need to remember and recollect belongs to the social functions of art. Art contributes to the creation of collective memory in that it transforms the fragments of events enshrined in individual memory into artistic forms, which then become part of collective memory. The content of memory, but also its selection and artistic transformation, is culturally conditioned. The present study examines the work with individual and collective memory in a postmodernist artwork. *Apolloopera* by the Slovak composer Marek Piaček is a mosaic made up of images of a small Central European town in the first half of the 20th century. The poetics of this piece is based on the use of literary and musical canon. The textual scrummage of extracts from the “Golden Fund” of various national literatures symbolizes the typical Central European multi-ethnic milieu. The libretto created from the iconic national texts is accompanied by the musical allusions to the archaic composition techniques. The literary and musical pastiche allows the hyperbolization or, conversely, marginalization of the meanings of events stored in individual and collective memory. The juxtaposition of the banality of everyday life and the pop-cultural cliché and artistic poetics of major national poets develops into postmodern semiotic games with the recipient through creative melodramatic gestures.

■ **Paweł BUKOWIEC**  
(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

## **Józef Baka and the Limits of a Literary Canon, or Why true Polish poet could not suffer alone?**

My paper will be devoted to an 18th-century Polish-language Lithuanian poet, Józef Baka, whose masterpiece, *Uwagi śmierci niechybnej* (*Notes of Inevitable Death*), was published in Vilnius in 1766. I am going to discuss the stand of an outsider he was occupying in the Polish literary canon through the whole 19th century (as opposed to quite elevated position he has taken in our literature recently).

My major research question can be formulated in this way: What aesthetical qualities and ideological premises, which were built in Polish Late-Enlightenment and romantic notion of a national literature, made Baka invisible (not to say leprous) to the most eminent Polish “canon creators” of the century and relegated his poetry “outside culture as such” (as remarkable contemporary Polish critic Maria Janion once put it)?

■ **Anna R. BURZYŃSKA**  
(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

## **Polish Theatre Canon and Comedy – a Difficult Relationship**

The National Theatre in Warsaw was founded in 1765 and its first premiere was Józef Bielawski’s comedy *The Interlopers* (*Natręci*) based on a play by Molière. At the very beginning, the repertoire of the Polish National Theatre was modelled on the repertoire of Comédie-Française and following the ideas of Enlightenment: its core consisted of comedies, both translated/ adapted and original. Staging comedies was thought to be the best way to shape citizens’ consciousness and help to build a modern, rational society. But the idea of the Polish theatre canon changed over the course of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Once valued and privileged, comedy-writers became suddenly unworthy of being able to build a national identity. In my paper, I’d like to look for an explanation of this process. I am going to situate comedy in a wider philosophical, political, and ideological context and try to find out what made Polish artists and intellectuals of the 19th century believe that comedy was not Polish enough: useless, suspicious, even dangerous.

■ **Jakub CZERNIK**  
(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

## **Heroes, Bards, Representative Men and the Formation of National Literatures**

This paper will focus on the idea of influence of prominent figures (great men, heroes, bards, representative men) on the rise and development of respective national literatures, as described by Adam Mickiewicz (during his lectures in College de France in Paris), Thomas Carlyle (*On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*) and Ralph Waldo Emerson (*Essays, Representative Men*). These writers have all believed that history can only be shaped by great individuals, and that the same mechanism can be attributed to national literatures, the canons of which are but a list of great men that played a part in creating them.

Although in all those cases the question of literature’s “nationality” is a prominent one, an equally important is the issue of transcending national dimensions. For Carlyle and Emerson, the key figure here is Shakespeare – the only element uniting all the nations using English as their mother tongue. Similarly, Mickiewicz tries to identify certain figures in Slavic cultures

and literatures that function as national poets, bards, but also influence other nations and are recognised as prominent figures outside of the Slavic world.

Interestingly, it would seem that the idea of the importance of “supranational” literary and cultural figures in establishing and developing national literatures as presented by Carlyle, Emerson and Mickiewicz, is not far from present-day theories of world literature as a canon of texts drawn out of national canons (Bloom; Casanova), or a group of texts easily transcending national boundaries, reaching for a universal dimension (Damrosch) and creating alternative canons.

■ **Judit DOBRY**  
(Slovak Academy of Sciences)

### **Formation of a New Literary Identity within a New State Hungarian Literature in Czechoslovakia**

This talk will deal with the process of formation and re-creation of Hungarian literature within the newly formed first Czechoslovak Republic, and also will attend to introduce the struggle of this newly established ethnic literature for creating a new literary identity in the first decade of its existence, as well as the attempt to define itself. The early 20th century was a very turbulent period especially for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe – the Central Powers were defeated in the First World War, the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy disappeared from the maps, new states were created. After signing the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 more than one million Hungarian people found themselves living behind the borders of Czechoslovakia. For Hungarians living in minority the establishment of specific culture was crucial. As the talk will present, the first decade of Hungarian literature in Czechoslovakia was defined by two different models of literary identity – the ethnic messianism and the identity maintaining the role of the “bridge” between the culture of the majority (Czechs, Slovaks) and the minority (Hungarians).

■ **Sándor FÖLDVÁRI**  
(University of Debrecen)

### **Reception of the Ancient Greek and Latin Literatures in the Canons of Hungarian, Lithuanian, Estonian Literatures: A Comparative Study**

We study the “national” texts with influence of the ancient ones, included into the literary canons – it is different from the significance of the antique cultures themselves.

The metrical poems by Estonian Gustav Suits (early 20th century) have not got into the canon but his accent-based tonic verses did; the antiquity gained its rank by Ain Kaalep in the 20th century. The Lithuanian canon contains far more pieces with reminiscences of Classical Antiquity, as those by Donelaitis in 18th (*Seasons* following the *Georgicon* by Vergilius), then Maironis in 19/20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and other ones, too.

Hungarian romanticism is rich in deep knowledge of the antiquity, as for D. Berzsenyi’s poems (early 19th century), written in complicated metric strophes of Sappho and Alkaïos, and his metaphors and motives were as well borrowed from the ancient mythology and history. He and his predecessor D. Baróti-Szabó (late 18th century, with Sapphic stanza) are parts of obligatory matter in secondary schools even nowadays. The prose of 19th century is also rich in the long sentences and in strictly-build paragraphs according to the classical rhetoric, also comparisons, symbols and pictures; it is understandable by the proficiency in classical antiquity.

The prosody is one but not the only determining factor. Hungarian and Estonian are similar by prosody but different by the character of the canon. The Indo-European Lithuanian has the very structure and prosody of the Ancient Greek (even the tonic stress is similar as ´ or ` and ~),



however, the Finno-Ugric Hungarian shows even more poems written in antique manner that were included into the canon. The role of the antiquity in the Hungarian national identification was great: Latin was the official language of the state administration and law until 1844, and Greek and Latin were obligatory subjects of the GCE in Hungarian secondary school until 1918 (Latin up to 1945).

■ **Gergely FÓRIZS**  
(Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

### **Nation-building or Bricolage? The Making of a National Poet in 19th-century Hungary**

The paper aims to unfold the historical meanings of the scientific metaphor “nation-building” in the 19th and 20th centuries and shows an example of canonization as *bricolage*: the transformation of Dániel Berzsenyi (1776–1836), a traditional neo-classical poet, into a national poet.

The scientific metaphor of “nation-building” was put into vogue by historically oriented American political scientists in the 1950s and 1960s, such as Karl W. Deutsch, Reinhard Bendix and Charles Tilly. I will argue that this term was originally rooted in 19th and early 20th-century texts on the American history of the founding period of the United States and on the later politics of unifying the American people. This phrase came into general use by historians in the second half of the 20th century, and it was also applied to the 19th-century history and literary history of Eastern Europe. However, I argue that in this latter case it is inappropriate to use this term because originally it implies the presence of a builder, who handles the process of nation-building consciously, according to his own vision, and who is free to choose his instruments and materials. Instead of this, we see among the ideologists of the “national awakening” of 19th-century Eastern Europe *bricoleurs* rather than builders or “engineers”. The *bricoleur* (a French term used by Claude Lévi-Strauss, Gérard Genette and others) is someone who constructs something from a diverse range of materials and tools that happen to be available and were not intended for the task in hand. My example for intellectual *bricolage* is the canonization of Dániel Berzsenyi as a Hungarian national poet in the middle of the 19th century. I will show how Berzsenyi’s oeuvre had to be selected and even one of his most important odes entitled *To the Hungarians* had to be abridged by the editor of his works to make it fit for the purposes of the new Hungarian national identity that was based partially on national literature.

■ **Beata KALEŲBA**  
(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

### **In Search of One’s Own Voice: the “Aušrininkai” and Polish Poetry of the 19th Century**

This paper explores the relations between the Lithuanian and the Polish poetry in the last two decades of the 19th century. It was a time of the Lithuanian National Revival, headed by writers and journalists gathered round the first national Lithuanian magazine *Aušra*, published in East Prussia between 1883–1886. The Aušrininkai, as they were commonly called, wanted to establish a national canon of Lithuanian literature, which must have been fully independent of the Polish literary tradition. Although the severing of historic links with Polish literature and language went far beyond mere declarations, their task involved the reformers in a paradoxical situation. The paradox, long since noted by the historians of Lithuanian culture and literature, was that in order to produce their own corpus they ransacked Polish literature for themes and motifs (especially those with a Lithuanian connection and a Romantic flavour) and translated a lot of Polish texts. The paper asks the question whether a similar appropriation took place in

the area of versification, i.e. if the poets of the Lithuanian Revival, when confronted with formal choices in their handling of meter, steered clear of the Polish model or fell in with it despite their programmatic commitments. In fact, they had yet another option – to get round the dichotomy of either picking up the thread of tradition or letting it go completely. The answer to these dilemmas is sought in the interpretation and analysis of a selection of poems published by the Aušrininkai, generally believed to be the founders of modern Lithuanian literature.

■ **Benedikts KALNAČS, Pauls DAIJA**  
(Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia)

### **Exploring the Space, Place and Literature: The Outcomes of Digital Analysis and Literary Mapping within the Context of Latvian Cultural History**

In the case of Latvia, the processes of nation-building were at their height during the second half of the 19th century. Principal texts created during this time period in retrospect provide the basis for literary canon formation as a part of the historical narrative of the rise of the Latvian nation. In our paper, we focus on both 19th and early 20th century prose texts and figure out the main preconditions of the canon formation in regard of representation of the space of a nation. In the introductory part we discuss the main paradigms which dominate the representations of space in 19th century Latvian fiction. The main body of our paper contains observations based on the outcomes of digital analysis and literary mapping of all novels written in Latvian and published between 1900 and 1914. In our 'distant reading' approach, which combines quantitative data with qualitative analysis, we discuss what are the most characteristic places represented in early 20th century Latvian novels and what dynamics is discovered along the time axis in comparison with dominant 19th century paradigms. We figure out whether early 20th century authors already had in their minds particular strategies on how to adapt to and follow the requirements of the established nation-building paradigms, or did these strategies undergo substantial transformations within the time period characterized by an intense appropriation of European culture, capitalist advances, growing urbanization, changing lifestyles, and the crisis of moral values preceding the First World War.

The research was prepared in the framework of the project "Empowering knowledge society: interdisciplinary perspectives on public involvement in the production of digital cultural heritage" (No.: 1.1.1.1/16/A/040) supported by EU ERDF.

■ **Eva KAPSOVÁ**  
(Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra)

### **Images as a Support of the Vision of Freedom. Literary vs. Art Canon and its Critical Reading**

The paper follows the relationship of the literary and artistic canon in the creation of the national identity of Slovaks in the period of national revival in the multinational state of Austria-Hungary, and its development and subsequent reinterpretation in the new conditions of the Slovak nation (Czechoslovakia, Slovak Republic). What is the role of visual art imagination in building the literary canon? What are the paintings / iconography that supported the creation of the national identity of the Slovaks?

Slavonic mythology, historical and contemporary events concurrently filled the subject of literature and visual arts. The paper focuses on the re/interpretation of the Slavic myth in the Alfons Mucha *The Slav Epic* and its current transcription in the monumental artwork of Jiří David (*Apotheosis*). Alfons Mucha relied on the Slavic myths articulated by the national needs of the Czechs and Slovaks in the 19th century.

He based his idea on the late-Romanesque notion of the important role of the multi-national “tribe” of the Slavs in history. Jiří David intervened in Mucha’s artwork. Through the Apocrypha, he confronts the visions of Romanticism with contemporary social political and cultural events in Europe. The critical reading of the Slavic myth updates the message of late Romanticism.

## ■ Katre KIKAS

(Estonian Literary Museum and University of Tartu)

### Village Tailor and National Epic: Defending Kalevipoeg at the Grassroot Level

Literary canon is not something fixed, but a constant process of (re)interpreting, (re)including and (re)excluding. There are works which are included only for a short period and then forgotten, and others which through constant reinterpretations manage to keep their position for a long time. The focus of my presentation is on one of these standouts of Estonian literary canon – the national epic *Kalevipoeg*.

Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg* was compiled by Fr. R. Kreutzwald in mid-19th century (published 1857–1861). At first it was considered a real folk epic – i.e. Kreutzwald was seen as a mere transcriber of an existing oral piece. By the end of the century, however, critics became suspicious about the oral origins of *Kalevipoeg*, and the work was regarded as a result of Kreutzwald’s own imagination.

Yet, in parallel to this critical stance towards Kreutzwald’s role, another process emerged, as laymen of little education came to defend Kreutzwald and *Kalevipoeg*. They started to produce evidence about its oral origins to stress that Kreutzwald was a real national poet who created proper literature (compared to the meagre literary achievements of the critics). In my paper I am going to take a closer look at the writings of those grassroot scholars.

## ■ Michal KOVÁŘ

(Masaryk University)

### The Kalevala’s Pattern in Foundations of Uralic National Literatures

Elias Lönnrot’s *Kalevala* followed Henrik Gabriel Porthan’s proposition on the Finnish national literature based in language and metric criteria. Lönnrot solved in the *Kalevala* not only the formal question of standard Finnish, but also the question of existence of the Finnish national history by etiology of national emblems. One of the main plots, the fertile contest between topographically indefinite masculine Kalevala and feminine Pohjola has served many Lönnrot’s followers as so to say unfilled valence – in a negative way as for delimiting a nation against others, or in a positive way as for depicting inner dynamics of a nation. It is feasible to construct a typology of kalevalaic works concerning the basic strategy in building of a national identity. The typological features may be the relationship to the Christianity, frequency of pretextual genres in the complexity of the epic, masculine and feminine voice etc. It is also feasible to make a basic periodization of such kalevalaism: immediate reactions (*Kalevipoeg*, *Päiven pardne*), 1920s and 1930s (*Peko*, *Bijarmija*, *Jangal-maa*, *Dorvyžy*), 1960s and 1970s (*Epose*, *Sijažar*, *Tjuštja*) and 1990s to the present day (*Liekku*, *Virantanaz*, *Jugorno*). From the periodization itself it is obvious for what purposes the genre of national kalevalaic epic has served in the history of particular Uralic literatures.

## ■ Aistė KUČINSKIENĖ

(Vilnius University and Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore)

### **Consecration and Canonization of Maironis at the End of 19th and Beginning of 20th Century**

Maironis (Jonas Mačiulis, 1862–1932) is considered to be the main Lithuanian national poet from the late 19th century till now. It is notorious that this position was conceded to him early and acceleratedly, in the very emergence of the Lithuanian literary field whose origination coincides with the first lyric texts of the author (from approximately 1891 to 1913). Due to the fact that the author's early writings and his reception in this period have already been investigated by many literary scholars, the aim of this paper is rather to reveal the different ways of consecration and canonization (in terms of Pierre Bourdieu) of Maironis as a national poet. We focus on the reviews of poet's texts in the early press, the reception of his pseudonym and author's figure, and the position takings in his own poems that also lead to canonization. It is essential that the duration between the first poet's consecrations and his firm canonization was very short (it took more or less a decade). The hypothesis is that not only the great literary power and value made an influence on the canonization of Maironis; although poet's texts are really one of the most resonant in the Lithuanian literary history, his canonization was affected by various non-textual reasons such as the structure of the literary field itself or the publication of his texts in textbooks for children or song books.

## ■ Helena MARKOWSKA

(University of Warsaw)

### **Classicists and Classics. Polish Literary Canon in Academia (1811–1830)**

In the wake of the loss of independence by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, reformulating the sense of national identity became a pressing necessity. A role of literature as means of education and modernization had to be rethought in the perspective of political and cultural change. Romantic tendencies in Europe provided a powerful impetus to reformulate the concept of literature, while placing value on the local and historical. Works on national literary canons were a natural consequence of those developments. They were carried out not only by young romantics, but most importantly by the establishment, prominent writers and literary scholars. In my paper I will describe the process of building a national literary canon as observable in academic lectures and related archive documents from two main Polish universities at the time – Warsaw and Vilnius. Since Vilnius University reopened its course on poetics and rhetoric (1811), and the University of Warsaw was formed (1816), academics (Słowacki, Borowski, Osiński, Brodziński) were selecting, analyzing and evaluating literary texts for students and the public. I will investigate the relation between their conception of literature (in principle either classicistic or sentimental) and their critical choices, a process which generated the classics of Polish literature for future generations.



## ■ Brigita SPEIČYTĖ

(Vilnius University and Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore)

### **The Concept of Lithuanian Literature in the 19th Century**

The presentation covers the development and the change of the concept “Lithuanian literature” in the 19th century, with regard to the general perception that the literary canon is being developed and serves (apart from other aspects) as a field for discussion on the literary concept and its cultural significance to the reader society, whereas the literary concept itself provides a meaningful framework for the process of canonization.

In the cultural discourses of the Prussian Lithuania and the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Russian Empire at that time), at the beginning of the 19th century a dual concept of “Lithuanian literature” was prevalent, with its different conceptual models that were referred to as a philological (L. Rhesa, S. Stanevičius) and a historical one (K. Bohusz, A. Mickiewicz, M. Baliński, E. Tyszkiewicz). The philological concept of the “Lithuanian literature” was shaped in the context of J. G. Herder’s cultural anthropology’s ideas by linking the Romantic expressive literary concept with the category of the ethnic nation. However, this model up until the end of the 19th century did not find its way into the cultural community of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania where “the Lithuanian literature” was perceived as the representation of the State history, the one that does not express “the spirit of the nation” but rather provides authentic access to the origins of the historical statehood as well as sheds light on the process of civilisation of the cultural community. Both models had different conceptual vocabulary that defined the “Lithuanian literature” functions and canonical values in the cultural community.

The concept of “the Lithuanian literature” is a case in point that in the process of development of the Central and Eastern European national literatures next to the expressive literary concept linked to the ethnic nation category there was an educative, “civilizational” literary concept linked to the historical (civic) nation. The latter was influential in the Lithuanian literary life up until 1870s. However, it was not conceptualised enough and had no favourable political institutional context, therefore it had no prospects in the development process of the modern Lithuanian nation, even though it remained as a persistent problem of the national and cultural identity not absorbed enough by the Herder’s cultural anthropology.

## ■ Vaidas ŠEFERIS

(Masaryk University)

### **The Borderland between Conflicting Canons: Kristijonas Donelaitis**

Kristijonas Donelaitis and his literary work are considered as cornerstones of the Lithuanian culture. Yet the significance of Donelaitis’ work is perceived in different ways. There are three main deciphering codes applied to Donelaitis in order to include his work into one of the cultural canons: a) Donelaitis as the representative of the classical Lithuanian language; b) as the representative of the classical Lithuanian literature; c) as the representative of the Prussian culture. These patterns of Donelaitis’ readings show interesting interrelations through the history and reveal different mechanisms of constructing and reconstructing the literary canon, may it be Lithuanian or Prussian. Donelaitis’ work becomes the symbolic “borderland”, where its readers are engaged in enthusiastic cooperation and passionate conflicts, trying to reveal its “true” nature. Our paper will inquire relations between those three reading patterns, their origin and their influence on the interpretative perspective.

■ **Viktorija ŠEINA**  
(Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore)

## **The Lithuanian Reception of Adam Mickiewicz from the Perspective of Nation-building (1883–1905)**

According to Pascale Casanova, Herder's idea that the spirit of the nation is reflected in its national language and literature became very popular in the 19th century Europe, and was used as a tool for liberation from cultural dependence, as well as for raising cultural and political rights by European nations that did not yet have their own statehood. Nationalization of literature created a connection between literature and politics. The institutions that formed the national literary canon including schools, cultural press, or book publishers, became the instruments of nation-building. The aim of this paper is to reveal this phenomenon with the example of Mickiewicz's reception in Lithuania.

The case of Mickiewicz was special because he could not be unambiguously named neither own nor stranger. As he wrote in Polish, linguistically Mickiewicz was alien; however, he was still considered as own due to his origins and Lithuanian themes in his works. Making Mickiewicz a part of the national Lithuanian culture was difficult mainly because his work was a literary representation of the Lithuanian-Polish identity, whose defense was one of the essential tasks of modern Lithuanian nationalism. Another obstacle for incorporating Mickiewicz into the Lithuanian literary canon was that by the end of the 19th century he had already become a central figure in the Polish literary canon. Shared literary heritage with the Poles became a big hindrance to the development of Lithuanian national and cultural autonomy.

■ **Jagoda WIERZEJSKA**  
(University of Warsaw)

## **State-building and Nation-building Dimensions of the Myth of the Defense of Lviv in the Polish Literary Canon, 1918–1939**

The presentation will be devoted to the analyses of the interwar Polish literature on the Polish-Ukrainian war (1918-1919), especially the defense of Lviv (November 1918), and its role in state-building and nation-building processes in the Second Polish Republic. The defense of Lviv, which contributed to the incorporation of Eastern Galicia to the II PR, was the first victorious fight in the period of the reconstruction of Poland, and as such it constituted one of pivotal threads in the Polish literary canon, between 1918 and 1939. The literature created its vision in such a way that in the Poles' common awareness it became the most important foundation myth of the Polish state and the Polish nation. The defense of Lviv was identified with the general fight for independence of Poland and it was meant to reconcile the Polish population, ridden with social and political divisions, in the bosom of one nation, so that all conflicting interests would have disappeared. It was unquestionably close to Poles; it did not, however, appeal to national minorities having lived in the country, especially Ukrainians and Jews. My objectives, thus, will be (1) to highlight how the myth of the defense, sustained by the Polish literary canon, served state-building and nation-building ideology of the II PR, and (2) how it excluded Ukrainians and Jews from the social community of Poland.

■ **Krystyna ZABAWA**  
(The Jesuit University Ignatianum in Kraków)

## **“Who are you? A little Pole.” – the Vision of the Nation and Nationality in Polish Literary Canons for Children on the Threshold of Independence (around 1918)**

The quotation in the title of the paper comes from the most famous and popular Polish poem for children, present in literary canons almost from its beginning (it was published in 1912) until now. Every Pole knows it by heart. The poem, written by Władysław Bełza in a form of catechism (questions and answers), includes a specific vision of the nation, state and being a Pole that has been imprinted in Polish minds for generations. Polish sociologist Maria Świątkiewicz-Mośny in her research proves “the relation between the construction of national identity in contemporary world and children’s literature”. In this paper I will discuss the vision of the nation and nationality in Polish literary canons for children that were valid in the turning point in our history that is the beginning of the independent state (after 1918). The main questions are: what are the literary works that created national identity of Polish children in the beginning of the 20th century? And what were the consequences of such constructed canons for Polish vision of the nation and being a Pole (not only a little one)?