

DISSENT VERSUS CONFORMISM
IN THE NORDIC, BALTIC AND BLACK SEA AREAS.
THE TENTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
NORDIC AND BALTIC STUDIES IN ROMANIA
(Dissent&Conformism)
Constanța, 6-8 June 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Past conferences	3
Aims of the Conference	4
Submission Guidelines	6
Keynote addresses	6
The Conference Schedule and Deadlines.....	6
Organizing Committees	6
Organizing committee.....	6
Scientific Committee	7
Program Committee	7
Secretary of the Scientific Committee.....	7
Publication.....	7
Venue	7
Contact	7
Webpage of the conference	8
Organizers.....	8
The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies	8
Faculty of History and Political Sciences of Ovidius University of Constanța, Romania	9

Past conferences

The conference continues and develops a project that the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies (ARSBN) initiated in 2010, aiming at investigating, comparing and describing the relations, encounters, intersections, confluences, mutual influences and/or parallels between the Nordic and Baltic Sea areas, on the one hand, and the Black Sea Region, on the other hand. The project was structured in annual international conferences. Thus, the first conference, entitled "Romania and Lithuania in the interwar international relations: bonds, intersections and encounters" was held on 19-21 May 2010 in Târgoviște and concentrated, as the title suggests, on the present and historical relations between the two countries belonging to these two areas. The following editions of the annual ARSBN conference enlarged their scope, being entitled "The Black Sea and the Baltic Sea regions: confluences, influences and crosscurrents in the modern and contemporary ages" (Târgoviște, 20-22 May 2011), "European networks: the Balkans, Scandinavia and the Baltic World in a time of economic and ideological crisis" (Târgoviște, 25-27 May 2012), "Empire-building and region-building in the Baltic, North and Black Sea areas" (Constanța, 24-26 May 2013), "A piece of culture, a culture of peace, re-imagining European communities in the North Sea, Baltic Sea and Black Sea regions" (Târgoviște, 17-19 August 2014), "Historical memory, the politics of memory and cultural identity: Romania, Scandinavia and Baltic Sea Region in comparison" (Constanța, 22-23 May 2015), "Good governance in Romania and the Nordic and Baltic countries" (Bucharest, 24 November 2016), "Finland, Romania, Roma integration - Learning from each other" (Bucharest, 9 October 2017) and "100 Years since Modern Independence and Unification in the Baltic Sea Region and East-Central Europe" (Târgoviște, 15-16 November 2018).

During its previous nine editions, the ARSBN conference addressed fundamental problems within the current agenda of the Nordic, Baltic and Black sea states and contributed with fresh ideas and innovative research results to the general knowledge in the scientific field. Moreover, the conference advanced draft proposals useful to the European decision-makers of different fields.

While the participants to the first two editions of the conference concentrated rather on the historical dimension of the relations, the following editions brought together specialists from various fields (political science, economics, international relations, minority studies, cultural studies, mnemonic studies, etc.) and addressed, besides the historical aspect of relations, other aspects relevant to the present time, i.e. the global economic crisis, the Balkan organized crime in Nordic Europe, region-building processes, the minorities in the Baltic Sea area and in the Balkans, the Roma minority integration, the remembrance of 1918, etc.

Aims of the Conference

The theme of the 2019 conference was crafted with our regretted colleague and distinguished academic Leonidas Donskis. In the meanwhile, conformism seems to have pervaded larger categories of public in East-Central Europe and beyond and new “illiberal democracies” evolved. A composite of authoritarian leader and godfather have taken the reins of power in the area. Populist parties and movements are on the rise. Resurgent nationalisms are again offered as a substitute to solutions. The refugee crisis lingers on and no common decisions have been adopted within the EU to solve it on the basis of the European values. The EU institutions are in need of reform and decisions on the course of the organization and its future enlargement process are still pending.

The conference aims at analyzing two often interrelated phenomena: dissent and conformism. Already from the mythological creation of Europe and the Ancient Greeks and Romans dissent and conformism acted as a key factor in structuring the institutions and shaping the people’s attitudes. Dissenting from the underlying Athenian social values led Socrates to death by hemlock poison, while conforming to Roman values turned many foreigners and strangers into citizens and defenders of the Roman Empire. The Christians had initially been ostracized and martyred despite their obedience and allegiance to the political institutions of the Roman Empire. However, their revolutionary religion and devotedness to a single God unleashed against them the hatred of the patrons of the Roman symbolic manipulation of power, especially of the emperors or priests. Eventually, the monotheistic Christian or Muslim religions would be not less harsh with the non-believers and dissidents. Conformism seems to have been the norm of any political system and at the same time the cause of its decay. In the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars nationalism and eventually modern political ideologies became the main competitors for power and control in Europe. Nationalisms unleashed the forces of destruction during the world wars while the clash of ideologies set off ahead of the French Revolution shaped the destiny of Europe during the 20th century. Dictatorships and even more so totalitarian regimes required unwavering conformism and full devotedness from their subjects, while encouraging dissent in the competing camp.

Conformism has shown many faces from the Antiquity to Contemporary Age, from pretense to obedience, and an individual person could evolve between the two extremes during his/her lifetime. Sometimes, as many dystopian novels reveal, the conformist grows into dissident and even becomes a major target of his former patrons. Conversely, former dissidents can return to loyalty and often the prize to be paid is betrayal of former affined spirits. The archives of Scandinavian, Baltic and Black Sea regions preserve numerous documents of such instances.

Conformism can also take the form of what Zygmunt Bauman and Leonidas Donskis called “liquid modernity”, the situation of an individual who flows from one attitude to another, from one perspective to the other, from one set of values to an opposing one:

The liquid modern variety of adiaphorization is cut after the pattern of the consumer–commodity relation, and its effectiveness relies on the transplantation of that pattern to interhuman relations. As consumers, we do not swear interminable loyalty to the commodity we seek and purchase in order to satisfy our needs or desires, and we continue to use its services as long as but no longer than it delivers on our expectations - or until we come across another commodity that promises to gratify the same desires more thoroughly than the one we purchased before. All consumer goods, including those described as 'durable', are eminently exchangeable and expendable; in consumerist – that is consumption inspired and consumption servicing – culture, the time between purchase and disposal tends to shrink to the degree to which the delights derived from the objects of consumption shift from their use to their appropriation.

Zygmunt Bauman, and Leonidas Donskis, *Moral Blindness: The Loss of Sensitivity in Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Polity, 2013), p. 15.

Dissidence also embraces a great spectre of attitudes from simple acts of disloyalty to open resistance as it happened in Norway or Denmark during World War II, in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and the Black Sea region during the dictatorial, totalitarian and occupational regimes, etc. Again, the boundary between these extremes is narrow and simple disloyalty can grow into acts of armed resistance. The archives in the region are filled with documents regarding dissident movements, samizdat literature and transborder cooperation of dissidents, which can offer fresh empirical, methodological and conceptual perspectives to this issue.

The conference welcomes proposals from a variety of angles and disciplines, i.e. history, literature, cultural studies, political sciences, philosophy, social sciences, semiotics, European studies, etc.

The conference approaches the Nordic&Baltic&Black Sea areas but is not limited to perspectives such as:

- Dissidents and conformists during totalitarianisms and dictatorships
- Dissenting views in Nordic, Baltic and Black Sea region literatures
- Utopias and dystopias in Nordic, Baltic and Black Sea region literatures
- *Enemy at the gate*: dissent and conformism during the two world wars
- Conforming to or resenting the Nordic values
- Rethinking conformism in the Nordic societies
- 21st century dissenters in the Black Sea area
- Europeanists and nationalists: a remodeling of dissent and conformism
- Ideologies without ideals: on moral blindness and apathy

- Education reforms in the Nordic, Baltic and Black Sea countries and cognitive autonomy
- Nordic, Baltic and Nordic-Baltic cultural cooperation

Submission Guidelines

All papers must be original and not simultaneously submitted to another journal or conference: full papers discussing the dissent and conformism in their multifarious manifestations during the dictatorial and totalitarian political systems, wars, etc. or the way they reflected in literature, newspapers, education, etc.

Submission web page of Dissentism2019 is: <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=dissentism2019>

Keynote addresses

To be decided

The Conference Schedule and Deadlines

- Publication of the call for papers: December 6th, 2018
- Proposals for panels and roundtables (approx. 500 words): February 15th, 2019
- Abstracts for individual papers (approx. 300 words): March 1st, 2019
- Notification of acceptance: March 15th, 2019
- Publication of the conference program: March 20th, 2019
- Conference: June 6th-8th, 2019
- Deadline for submitting the conference articles: June 30th, 2019
- Publication of conference articles: September 1st, 2019 and December 15th, 2019.

Organizing Committees

Honorary Chairs of the Organizing Committee

H.E. Ms. Päivi Pohjanheimo, The Ambassador of Finland in Bucharest

Prof. Dr. Sorin Rugină, Rector of Ovidius University of Constanța

Organizing committee

Prof.Dr.Hab. Silviu Miloiu, The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies & Valahia University of Târgoviște

Lecturer Dr. Alexandru Bobe, Deputy Rector of Ovidius University of Constanța, Honorary Consul of Estonia in Constanța

Assoc.Prof.Dr. Emanuel Plopeanu, Ovidius University of Constanța

Assist. Dr. Costel Coroban, The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies & Ovidius University of Constanța

Assist. Dr. Gabriel Stelian Manea, Ovidius University of Constanța

Assist. Dr. Adrian-Alexandru Herța, Ovidius University of Constanța

Assist. Dr. Georgiana Țăranu, Ovidius University of Constanța

Scientific Committee

Prof.Dr. Florin Anghel, Ovidius University of Constanța

Dr. Bogdan Schipor, A.D. Xenopol Institute of History of the Romanian Academy & The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies

Program Committee

Prof.Dr.Hab. Silviu Miloiu, The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies & Valahia University of Târgoviște

Lecturer Dr. Crina Leon, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași & The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies

Assist. Dr. Costel Coroban, The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies & Ovidius University of Constanța

Assist. Dr. Adrian Herța, Ovidius University of Constanța

Secretary of the Scientific Committee

Assist. Dr. Costel Coroban, The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies & Ovidius University of Constanța

Publication

Dissentism2019 proceedings will be published in The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies, vol. 11 (2019).

Venue

The conference will be held in Constanța, Romania, at Ovidius University of Constanța, Aleea Universității, no. 1, Campus, building B, Amphitheatre A2..

Contact

All questions about submissions should be emailed to baltoskandia@gmail.com or editorial@arsbn.ro.

Webpage of the conference

<https://balticnordic.hypotheses.org/conference2019>

Organizers

The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies

(**Asociația Română pentru Studii Baltice și Nordice/ARSBN**) is the leading Romanian organization involved in the advancement of Scandinavian studies in Romania. ARSBN organizes, starting with 2010, a yearly international conference of Baltic and Nordic Studies, publishes the bi-annual peer-reviewed *Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies*, edits monographs, volumes of documents, translates Scandinavian and Baltic authors into Romanian, coordinates the Summer School of Nordic and Baltic Studies in Romania. It also organizes various events, exhibitions, conferences, meetings and book presentations with subjects related to Nordic area studies. It offers grants and prizes in order to encourage the development of Scandinavian research in Romania. It has also set up a small library of Baltic and Nordic studies which is continuously enhanced and updated. Thus, ARSBN has an extensive web of partners within research institutions and universities in Scandinavia and around the Baltic Sea area, which it seeks to develop by networking and engaging in common ventures. The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies has already achieved a large number of research and educative projects in the field of Scandinavian and Baltic Studies. ARSBN has so far organized with its partners nine editions of the Annual International Conference of Nordic and Baltic Studies (2010-2017):

It has also organized three sessions of the Nordic and Baltic Summer School whereby 50 students from Romania and Republic of Moldova have been taught Scandinavian, Finnic, and Baltic languages, history, culture, the last two sessions being funded from the EEA Grants

- <https://balticnordic.hypotheses.org/summerschool2>

ARSBN has been successful in achieving finance for projects dealing with Romania's relations with Nordic and Baltic countries and has the most valuable expertise in this field. The results of its researches have been twice chosen as the Book of the Month by the Romanian Foreign Ministry and once by the Latvian Foreign Ministry:

- <http://www.mae.ro/node/12161>

- <http://www.mae.ro/node/17530>

- <http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/news/press-releases/2013/may/31-1/>

Accomplished research projects in this respect are the volumes dedicated to the Romanian-Lithuanian relations, Romanian-Latvian relations, the histories of Finland and Lithuania, the diaries of Marshal Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim and General Titus Gârbea, etc.

ARSBN has also organized a large number of conferences, seminars and exhibitions dedicated to Romania's relations with Nordic and Baltic nations and cultures. For instance, it is highly relevant that ARSBN has cooperated in the celebration of the playwright Henrik Ibsen, the painter Edvard Munch and has organized a Norwegian Culture and History Week.

Furthermore, the ARSBN has been a partner in a project designed by the Romanian Embassy in Oslo to mark the 50th anniversary of the opening of diplomatic relations between Romania and Norway at the embassy level.

Faculty of History and Political Sciences of Ovidius University of Constanța, Romania

Ovidius University of Constanța (OUC) is a multidisciplinary public institution of higher education, institutionally accredited and having been awarded the High Level of Trust, by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The University bears the name of the Roman poet Publius Ovidius Naso, who lived the last years of his life in Tomis, a former Greek colony that later became the city of Constanța.

The mission of the university is to promote the creation and dissemination of knowledge through education, scientific research and artistic creation at European level standards of performance. The university is an institution in the service of the regional community and it also has a profound international impact in the Black Sea area and beyond.

Organized on the principles of university autonomy, academic freedom, ethics, fairness and transparency, Ovidius University aspires to become a center of culture and creation, open to a dynamic world, characterized by ethnic and religious diversity.

Some of the values that guide the university are inspired by the life and works of Ovid, who showed creative freedom and the desire to leave a permanent and unique trace, capable of enduring the passage of time.

Ovidius University of Constanța aspires to be recognized as the European University of the Black Sea. In this context, the university has been conducting an intense activity of establishing bilateral partnerships, showing an active involvement in the regional university networks. OUC is a founding member and holds the General Secretariat of the Black Sea Universities Network (BSUN) and is a member of the European Universities Association (EUA), etc.

The International Relations Office deals with the development of international partnerships in education and research, the preparation and implementation of joint programs or joint degrees and aims at making study programs compatible with those in other universities.

The Community Program Office has facilitated an increase of academic and student exchanges, an

aspect which has been constantly developed at Ovidius University of Constanța and, at present, the institution has concluded more than 400 agreements for various partnerships involving mobilities and scientific cooperation, academics, guests and visiting scholars' mobilities.

The Foreign Students Department is in charge of recruitment, admission and completion of documents, offers assistance in solving various social or health problems faced by the international students and the grantees of the Romanian state.

Faculty of History and Political Sciences develops through its programs the general mission of the university and is involved in numerous research and educational programs.

Faculty of History and Political Sciences co-organized the Fourth Conference on Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania in May 2013 and the Sixth Conference on Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania in May 2015.