

## Editorial Foreword

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Volume 9, issue no. 1 (2017) of *Revista Română pentru Studii Baltice și Nordice / The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies* (RRSBN) is divided into three main parts. The first part deals with the Swedish perception of East-Central European 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments. The article bearing the signature of Paweł Jaworski of the University of Wrocław tackles the first two months *Solidarność* as seen from the perspective of the Swedish press. A very innovative article it details the imagology of the set up and evolution of the syndicate and investigates how the relations between this emerging independent civil society and the Communist Party evolved. The article corroborates press analysis with international relations and bilateral relations between Poland and Sweden and shows their impact on the rather privileged status enjoyed by Swedish journalists in the Communist country. The second article by Alin-Marian Dudoi focuses on Gustav Bolinder and Arvid Fredborg's accounts of Transylvania at the end of World War II. Although the original Swedish books and their significance have already been investigated by some authors, the article looks at their perspectives in relation to the Romanian national credo and adopts the stand of the former which supported the claim that Transylvania should belong to Romania mostly based on ethnography.

The second section of the journal is devoted to Norwegian and Baltic studies in Romania. Crina Leon, lecturer of Norwegian at "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași deals with the study of this language at the university starting with the academic year 2005-2006 when it was included in a Master's program "German Culture in a European Context" and when it began to be taught at the Centre of Foreign Languages of the oldest academic institution in extra-Carpathian Romania. The article follows the genealogy and evolution of Norwegian studies at "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași pinpointing at the landmark events which raised their status within her *alma mater*. Silviu Miloiu discusses the sources, beginnings and perspectives of Baltic studies in Romania, focusing in the latter part of his article on the academic courses of Baltic and Nordic studies introduced at Valahia University of Târgoviște in the academic year 2000/2001 and their developments afterwards. It also explores the activity of the

Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies as an organization expressly devoted to these fields of studies in Romania. The organization acts as an institute of Baltic and Nordic studies in itself but also as an umbrella for these researches in Romania and beyond. The scholarly, educational, editorial, dissemination of its activities constitute the core of the last part of the article.

The third section of the journal integrates the insightful analysis of Alexandru Ciocîltan of the Catholic communities in Valahia at the beginning of the Modern Age. The transformations suffered by these minority communities, including their discrimination, vanishing, resurrection and renewal stand at the center of this contribution.

Finally, this issue brings to the fore a Norwegian journalist and author, with a profound knowledge of Romania, Svanhild Naterstad, in a fascinating interview taken by Crina Leon. How she discovered Romania, her contribution to the Norwegian-Romanian relations and the cultural exchanges between the two states are very well mirrored in this interview.