

Editorial Foreword

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The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies devotes the first half of this issue to novel social analyses and paradigms tailored on societies on the interference of pre-modernity and modernity. A well-known researcher of the phenomenon, especially as it is reflected in an East-Central European setting, Nerijus Babinskas maintains that feudalism, in contrast to the classical Marxist-Leninist interpretation that had become a canon during the Communist regime, “was not an inevitable stage of pre-modern development of all European societies”. By breaking apart of this ideological conception, Babinskas investigates the pros and cons of four Marxist alternative notions such as Asiatic mode of production, African mode of production, early Central European model or tributary mode of production, and a non-Marxist approach based on Max Weber’s patrimonialism. The author contends that a blending of these interpretations is the way out of the conceptual ossification which over the past decades has led social research in the matter into a deadlock.

A case in points is offered by Darius Žiemelis who undertakes the first comparative analysis to date between Lithuanian manorial-serf economy, a subject of his earlier published researches, and hacienda economic systems of Latin America of the modern age. With this investigation the author confirms the lack of theoretical ground of self-sufficient fossilised analytical systems as highlighted in Babinskas’s article. Žiemelis sets his research in a context dominated by the strengthening of manorial-serf economy in Lithuania and hacienda economy in Latin American as a result of the industrial revolution. The puzzle is augmented by the fact that the two cases belonged to self-supporting economic systems. Finding the clue to this analytical dilemma calls precisely for a breakup from traditional interpretations: the two systems were neither wholly feudal nor entirely capitalistic.

The author of this foreword approaches the Congress of the Representatives of the Lithuanian Military Officers of the Romanian Front (1917) as a meaningful post on the Lithuanian path to independence. After exploring the historical context and undertaking a conceptual and comparative research the author emphasizes the degree to which the Lithuanian soldiers and officers have grown into a pro-independence

action group not dissimilar in their options to the opinions circulated in the intellectual circles.

Bogdan-Alexandru Schipor devotes his article to the reflection of the German invasion of Norway of spring and early summer of 1940 in the Romanian mass-media, political and military circles. The author points out to the subordination of Romanian perspectives on this campaign to the overall developments in the West, in the end exploits in Norway being completely overshadowed by the German advance into France that entailed more serious consequences to Romania. Nonetheless, the opinions were generally favourable to Norway and sympathy was shown to this small nation facing a Goliath-like adversary.

This issue ends with a summary of the first ten years of our journal. This shall be regarded as a tribute to the many authors who have brought a consistent contribution to the growth of the periodical of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies.