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**Annual subscription:**
- Institution: Lei 80 € 20 £ 17 $ 28
- Individual: Lei 60 € 15 £ 13 $ 21
Online: free download (www.arsbn.ro/RRSBN.htm)

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**ISSN 2067-1725**
**E-ISSN: 2067-225X**
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Editorial Foreword

*Silviu Miloiu*

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Volume 8, issue no. 1 (2016) of Revista Română de Studii Baltice și Nordice/ The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies (RRSBN) gathers articles dealing with history, literary history and literary studies. The first group of articles engaged with topics related to Nordic and Baltic history from the early Middle Ages to the Modern Age. Such is the article which opens the journal signed by Costel Coroban. His thesis is that *Konungs skuggsjá* (King’s Mirror or Speculum Regale), the piece of work elaborated in 1250 under King Hákon Hákonarson (1217-1263) for his son, future King Magnús lagabœtir (1263-1280), emphasizes piety as one of the essential features of a good Christian. Cases of arrogance and individualism have to be chastened and that was one of the essential attributes and duties of a sovereign. Roxana-Ema Dreve tackles the national identity building in Norway following the separation from Denmark and the creation of a union with Sweden. The article addresses the 1830s’ developments especially with regard to the puzzling debate on the spoken and written national languages and the polemics of Henrik Wergeland and Johan Sebastian Welhaven. Henrik Ibsen continues to inspire inquiries in fields such as literature, social sciences, culture, philosophy as he did when he lived. Gianina Drută studies Ibsen’s masterpiece *Hedda Gabler* inspired by Gilles Deleuze’s concepts such as deterritorialisation, antigenealogy, rhizome or alliance. Dalia Bukelevičiūtė opens new perspectives in the field of social and welfare of Lithuanian population in Latvia during the interwar period and points out to the unbalanced situation between the two neighboring states of Latvia and Lithuania. While the number of Latvians in Lithuania who needed social protection was meagre, the number of Lithuanians in Latvia was considerable. This posed difficulties to the Lithuanian Government confronted, on one hand, with the needs of Lithuanians, the higher expenses of social services in Latvia and the desire to keep up the Lithuanian identity of the population across the border. This resulted into a wavering policy of the Lithuanian Governments which, however, always returned to the Convention on social assistance concluded with the Latvian counterparts in 1924.

This issue of our journal continues to tackle the perceptions of Nordic peoples on Romania, in this case Mihaela Mehedinţi-Beiean depicting the
Nordic and Russian travellers’ recollections of corruption and political instability imbedded into the Phanariot system of the 18th century Romania.

Finally, this issue brings to the fore a Norwegian personality with a significant role in the Romanian-Norwegian relations, author of chapters, articles and books dealing with this topic: Jardar Seim. Crina Leon successfully sails through the memories of Professor Seim’s first encounters of Romania and the developments of this interest into a research topic.
POWER, IDEOLOGY AND PIETY IN HIGH MEDIEVAL NORWAY: THE KING’S MIRROR

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Acknowledgements
This paper has been prepared with the financial support of the project “Quality European Doctorate - EURODOC”, Contract no. POSDRU/187/1.5/S/155450, project co-financed by the European Social Fund through the Sectoral Operational Programme “Human Resources Development” 2007-2013.

Abstract:
This paper explores the concepts of piety and power in the work entitled Konungs skuggsjá (King’s Mirror or Speculum Regale), a writing that dates from circa 1250 issued under King Hákon Hákonarson (1217-1263) of Norway and issued for the education of his son, King Magnús lagabœtir (1263-1280). Konungs skuggsjá is utilitarian and didactic, unlike other examples of literature such as saga. It is presented in the form of a dialogue between an authoritative “Father” and the “Son” and is presumably authored by one of the priests, monks or chaplains at the Norwegian court, given the extensive theological knowledge expressed in it. The text bears similar characteristics to other pieces of mirror literature that is characteristic to the High Middle Ages. Piety, which can be considered a universal value in medieval times, was also required of kings and of all men, as The Homily Book (Hómíliubók) of the time prescribed obedience as a vital ingredient for salvation. In his exploration of Norwegian kingship in the High Middle Ages, the scholar Hans Jacob Orning begins by highlighting the difference between Christian piety, in which nothing can be asked of God in return for servitude towards him, and the old pagan beliefs, wherein the gods were often addressed various requests at occasions such as sacrifices.

Rezumat:
Această lucrare explorează conceptele de pioșenie și putere în lucrarea intitulată Konungs skuggsjá (Oglinda regelui sau Speculum Regale), o scriere ce datează din jurul anului 1250 sub domnia regelui Hákon Hákonarson (1217-1263) al Norvegiei și scrisă în scopul educării fiului său, regele Magnús lagabœtir (1263-1280).
Konungs skuggsjá is an important source for researching the ideology of power in Norway in the High Middle Ages. It is a writing that dates from circa 1250, issued under King Hákon Hákonarson (1217-1263) and issued for the education of his son, King Magnús lagabœtir (1263-1280). Konungs skuggsjá is utilitarian and didactic, unlike other sagas. It is presented in the form of a dialogue between an authoritative “Father” and the “Son” and is presumably authored by one of the priests, monks or chaplains at the Norwegian court, given the extensive theological knowledge expressed in it. The text bears similar characteristics to other pieces of mirror literature that is characteristic to the High Middle Ages.

**Keywords:** power, ideology, medieval history, Norway, King’s Mirror

An important source for researching the ideology of power in Norway in the High Middle Ages is *Konungs skuggsjá*¹ (King’s Mirror or *Speculum Regale*), a writing that dates from circa 1250 issued under King Hákon Hákonarson (1217-1263) and issued for the education of his son, King Magnús lagabœtir (1263-1280). Konungs skuggsjá is utilitarian and didactic, unlike other sagas. It is presented in the form of a dialogue between an authoritative “Father” and the “Son” and is presumably authored by one of the priests, monks or chaplains at the Norwegian court, given the extensive theological knowledge expressed in it². The text bears similar characteristics to other pieces of mirror literature that is characteristic to the High Middle Ages.

*Speculum regis/principis* is the name given to these books intended for the education of the ruling class, most of them authored by clerics and elaborated during two main periods: the Carolingian renaissance and the High Middle Ages (most of them being written post-1250). Their source is

¹ The version I have used is L. M. Larson (translator), *The King’s Mirror*, New York, New York American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1917. The main manuscript is identified as the Arnamagnæan manuscript 243 Ba, folio, and is found in Copenhagen at the Kongelige bibliotek (Royal Library). For the Old Norse version I have used Oscar Brenner, *Speculum regale, Ein altnorwegischer Dialog nach Cod. Arnamagn. 243 Fol. B und den ältesten Fragmenten*, Christian Kaiser, Munchen, 1881.

classical and patristic tradition as well as the pastorals of Pope Gregory the Great, therefore emphasizing the “Christian ruler’s high moral responsibility to his people and to God”\(^3\). This is a clear difference to the kings’ sagas, which although authored by the same literate class of the priesthood, have the more secular purpose of portraying the lives of Norwegian kings (Sverris saga notably being the first to convey the biography of a single king in one book\(^4\)). Most of *speculum regis* literature takes monarchy as the given system of government and implies that good governance follows the reign of a morally good king\(^5\).

Structurally, Konungs skuggsjá is divided in three great parts. The first of these concerns matters such as trade and geography, which make it highly suitable for the study of the time’s culture, yet for the present research, the last two parts, dealing with the royal court (chapters 24-41) and, respectively, truth and justice (chapters 42-70), are of the most importance.

A major piece of scholarship dedicated to the King’s Mirror is Sverre Bagge’s monograph\(^6\), which extensively examines the politics embedded in the source in relation to the political thought of the time in Europe. Sverre Bagge establishes relations between the political philosophy of the author of Konungs skuggsjá and intellectual developments such as the Carolingian renaissance or the rise of Aristotelian studies in the High Middle Ages, in order to be able to discern what is original in the Norwegian speculum literature text. Sverre Bagge finds that, unlike other examples of speculum regis literature that discuss the principle of *rex justus*, Konungs skuggsjá implies that the purpose of God’s representative on earth should be the advancement of the independence of royal power, instead of supporting the supremacy of the Church.

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The Christian principle of *rex justus*, “righteous king,” was introduced by Saint Augustine and became a very productive concept during and after the reign of Charlemagne. The principle was used by Pope Gregory VII against Henry IV, arguing that the pontiff had the right, as Vicar of Christ, to determine whether a king had violated justice, and if the king did to depose him.7

Sverre Bagge argues that in the view of the author of Konungs skuggsjá, royal power consists in the king’s role as supreme judge in his kingdom, and provides advice to the monarch on how to issue correct judgment in the purpose of consolidating public law. Sverre Bagge concludes that Konungs skuggsjá produced a Scandinavian theory of divine right coupled to a rational governmental plan with the scope of reinforcing the emerging high medieval Norwegian state.

**Context: The consolidated Norwegian monarchy**

It must be stated from the beginning that the circumstances under which Konungs skuggsjá was written are entirely different from those under which our previous source, Sverris saga, was produced. The purpose of this sub-chapter is to compare and contrast the differences and similarities between the two sources in order to allow a better characterization of the structures of kingship in Norway in the 12th and 13th centuries.

The period Konungs skuggsjá was written, the later part of King Hákon Hákonarson’s reign (ca. 1240-1263), differs significantly from the troubled period of the Civil war. It could be argued that after the struggles of the Civil war Norwegian royalty has acquired new meaning given the growing influence of the Church and the push for state centralization. King Sverrir Sigurðarson, leader of the Birkibeinar, had fought a long war against Magnus Erlingsson, who was supported by the Church. That is why King Sverrir was keen on refusing to continue to grant benefits to the Norwegian king and sought to use the theory of divine power in his own benefit.8 As we have seen in the subchapter that examines Sverris saga, King Sverrir eagerly took advantage of the renown of Saint Óláfr portraying himself as the true champion of the saint and as his continuator.

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King Hákon Hákonarson, also called Hákon IV, is considered the son of King Hákon Sverrisson, who ruled Norway between 1202-1204 and was the illegitimate son of Sverrir Sigurðarson, former leader of the Birkibeinar. The struggle with the opposing political faction, the Baglar⁹, was mostly over the control of Østlandet (Eastern Norway), a desire of King Sverrir which materialized later, under King Hákon Hákonarson. The period witnessed Church interference in the country, dating back to the creation of the archbishopric of (Nidaros) Trondheim, with the approval of King Magnus Erlingsson. The Church’s position deteriorated when Sverrir became king, who in the Speech against the bishops (Varnaðar-ræða or Mote klerkom) published during his reigns laid out his vision on kingly authority in ecclesiastical matters¹⁰. The speech notably begins with the metaphor of the kingdom as a body, whose organs must function in complete harmony in order to avoid decline. In consequence, the king’s authority must be accepted by all, including bishops, and the king should be accountable to God alone¹¹.

In 1217, when Hákon Hákonarson was acclaimed king, the situation did not fare any better for the supporters of the Church, namely Jarl Skúli Bárðarson and his followers. The pro-Church faction had to be realistic and accept King Hákon, admitting that there would probably never be a time when ecclesiastical power was as high as in the days of King Magnús, whom Sverrir had deposed.¹² Skúli Bárðarson was slew on 24 May 1240 and on 29 July 1247 the coronation of King Hákon Hákonarson was organized, acclaiming the decisive victory of the Sverrir dynasty to the throne of Norway, these events taking place a few years before the writing of Konungs skuggsjá¹³. On the occasion of the coronation there were dispensations that

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⁹ The group was formed in Denmark, Skåne, and it represented the higher classes and the clergy in opposition to the impoverished Birkibeinar. Most often, the causes for the civil conflict between the two factions are unclear succession laws (the things of 1163-1164 had prescribed that the king ought to be elected by a national assembly with the bishops as influential advisors) and the conflict between royal and ecclesiastical power (Karen Larson, A History of Norway, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1948).

¹⁰ Knut Helle, op. cit., p. 375-378.


were made by the Papacy to the king, recognizing his illegitimate birth, in exchange for minor favours that were made to the Church\textsuperscript{14}.

**The Pious King**

Piety, which can be considered a universal value in medieval times, was also required of kings and of all men, as *The Homily Book (Hómilíubók)\textsuperscript{15}* of the time prescribed obedience as a vital ingredient for salvation\textsuperscript{16}. In his exploration of Norwegian kingship in the High Middle Ages, the scholar Hans Jacob Orning begins by highlighting the difference between Christian piety, in which nothing can be asked of God in return for servitude towards him, and the old pagan beliefs, wherein the gods were often addressed various requests at occasions such as sacrifices\textsuperscript{17}.

The first part of *Konungs skuggsjá* concentrates on how the king should behave in his role as a merchant but also provides advice regarding the king’s behavior in religious matters. The advice given is to “make it a habit to rise early in the morning, and go first and immediately to church wherever it seems more convenient to hear the canonical hours, and hear all the hours and mass from matins on. Join in the worship, repeating such psalms and prayers as you have learned. When the services are over, go out to look after your business affairs.”\textsuperscript{18} Therefore, before commencing trade, the Son is taught by Father to attend and participate in religious service from the earliest hours of the morning.

Similarly, King Sverrir shows reverence to the churches after he had successfully dealt with an army of yeomen at Bergen: “…many of the yeomen came to him, and he gave quarter to all who asked; and as he marched through the town he kissed all the chief churches.”\textsuperscript{19} The Kyrie is sung after a victory over King Magnus in Sogn\textsuperscript{20}. Overall, there is perhaps less piety shown in *Sverris saga*, as in the harsh civil war instances are described when rebels hiding in churches are brought out and executed:

\textsuperscript{14} Knut Helle, *op. cit.*, p. 380.
\textsuperscript{15} The collection of Old Norse sermons, also known as the Old Norwegian Homily Book, dates to circa 1200 (manuscript AM 619 4to), see Philip Pulsiano, Kirsten Wolf, *op. cit.*, p. 290.
\textsuperscript{16} Hans Jacob Orning, *Unpredictability and Presence: Norwegian Kingship in the High Middle Ages*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2008, p. 64.
\textsuperscript{18} *Konungs skuggsjá*, chapter III.
\textsuperscript{19} *Sverris saga*, chapter 40.
\textsuperscript{20} *Sverris saga*, chapter 93.
“Many took refuge in the churches, and were nearly all slain; no church was a safe refuge this time. Men were dragged out of Kristskirk and slain, a deed that had never been done hitherto. One old Birkibein named Eyvind Skrapit, a valiant warrior, tall and strong, was taken from the choir, and dragged out of Kristskirk. They placed him on a sledge, dragged him to the Eyra and slew him there.”

In the given fragment, King Magnús’s men desecrate churches when going after the defeated Birkibeinar following the battle of Nidaros where King Sverrir’s fleet of long ships was destroyed. It is perhaps the intent of the writer of the saga to portray King Magnús as a desecrator of holy places, which is considered unfit of any Christian. Later in the saga, when King Sverrir invades Sogn, in Soknadale, he delivers a speech to his men in which he encourages them to “Let not a cottage stand anywhere; take care only of the churches wherever you can,” and later “because the church was in danger from the fire, […] they stretched sails in front which they moistened”. This care for church property is an indication that the king considered respect for the church important.

Chapter 42 of Konungs skuggsjá is copiously dedicated to the ideal of kingly behavior before God, “who always loves justice and humility”. In the beginning, the Son is given the Biblical example of Patriarch Joseph who was sold into slavery in Egypt but was saved from imprisonment and made second in power next to the Pharaoh by God’s love of him. Next, the story of Queen Vashti in the Book of Esther is presented in such a way that the insolence and haughtiness of the queen is highlighted. Furthermore, the son’s instruction continues with the details that the new queen, Esther, was able to persuade King Xerxes to listen to her pleas only when she “…fell humbly at his feet…” and concludes that “God demands moderation and fairness, humility, justice, and fidelity as a duty from those whom he raises to honor.” This is reinforced with a further example of a purported Christian-Jewish synod held by Emperor Constantine and his mother, Empress Helena, where both illustrious leaders conceded their right to judge

21 Sverris saga, chapter 62.
22 Sverris saga, chapter 81.
23 Konungs skuggsjá, chapter 42.
24 Ibidem.
in the synod to lesser, more learned and wiser men. The Son is reminded in Konungs skuggsjá that “God holds in His hand the tiller with which He turns and moves the hearts of great lords whenever He wishes, and controls all their thoughts according to His will.”

This implies that the power of God ought to be respected and feared by the king – who though high as Emperor Constantine, must know his limits – as well as by his subjects – who, just like in the example of Esther – may rise to a great and noble position owing to their humility and piety.

The issue of the relationship between the ruler and divinity is also discussed in relation to the instance of Jesus telling his apostles “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”

Konungs skuggsjá ponders on this in two of its chapters, and the remark is made that:

 “…God, while He was on earth, wished to honor earthly kings and kingdoms rather than disparage them in any way; for He would not deprive the earthly kingship of what He had formerly given into the control of earthly lords; but God showed a perfect obedience to Caesar. You should also observe that, just as God commanded His apostle Peter to examine the first fish that he drew and take a penny from its mouth (and God did not want him to examine the second fish or the third, but the first only), similarly every man should in all things first honor the king and the royal dignity. For God Himself calls the king His anointed, and every king who possesses the full honors of royalty is rightly called the Lord's anointed.”

Therefore, not even God would not honor the rulers since, according to the author, he himself had invested them with their power and right to rule, and God holds kings above all others as the interpretation of the example of the coin in the fish’s mouth shows. The hierarchy of power is emphasized by the author who points out that Jesus had told Peter to retrieve the penny out of the mouth of the first fish and none other. This explanation of the theory of divine right ends with the account of the ritual of anointment and the statement that each monarch is rightfully God’s chosen and

26 Ibidem.
27 Mark 12:7.
28 Konungs skuggsjá, chapter 44.
29 Matthew 17:24-27.
anointed. The illustration of Jesus’s humbleness to the Caesar serves as an
eexample that humbleness and piety are qualities which should be
acknowledged and that have been demonstrated by the actions of God’s son.

In “The King’s Prayer”, Father continues with practical advice on
how to show devotion to God. It is recommended that prayer should take
place at night or in the early morning, and the Son is advised to take part in
the holy mass, much like all Christian men should, and to keep the words of
Psalm 16:8 in his head: “I shall ever see the Lord before my face, for He is
always at my right hand.” This means that the monarch is encouraged to
always act as if God himself would, as He is present at his “right hand.” After
this call for continuous meditation, Father instructs that prayer should
consist in four stages: confessing the true faith to God, acknowledging his
preoccupation for his kingdom, declaring his transgressions and
wrongdoings, imploring compassionate judgment and remission of sins and
finally recognizing himself as a servant of God, who had given him his
throne in his magnanimity. Prominently, the Son is taught to always
remember his wife, his bishops, his chiefs (hofdingia) and warriors (riddara)
“who assist him in the government,”30 and all his husbandmen,
householders and subjects. This mention of chiefs and warriors is almost
incongruent with the religious character of this section of Konungs skuggsjá
and is perhaps a remnant of the earlier times of instability, when the king’s
strength laid in his military entourage.

The prayer that follows after this advice to Son is written in Latin,
standing out from the rest of the text in Old Norse. Some other aspects also
point to a concern with the military, such as Jesus Christ being addressed as
“most honourable conqueror (strenuissime victor Jesu Christi),”31 but overall
this model of addressing God stands out as a monument of piety and
humility on behalf of the future king:

“Even though I should mount to heaven, Thou art there before me; and
though I crawl down into the lowest hiding places of hell, Thy spiritual
dominion is there; and though I were to fly upon the wings of the winds
and hide beyond the uttermost boundaries of the ocean solitudes, even
there Thy right hand would seize me and lead me back into Thy control.
For Thy mind has numbered the sands driven by the winds and by the

30 Konungs skuggsjá, chapter 54.
31 Ibidem.
power of the ocean about all the earth, and Thine eye knows all the drops of the dewy rain. Therefore, I implore Thee, Oh my Lord, do not enter into the seat of judgment with me, Thy servant, to search out my righteousness; and do not number the multitude of my sins, but turn Thy face away from mine iniquities and cleanse me from my secret faults and wash away all my guilt. For my sins are great and lie heavy upon my head; they are so many that they seem numberless to me in their multitude, - sins that I have committed in vain thinking, in foolish words, in neglecting Thy commandments and forgetting Thy holy law in every way, in indiscreet testimony and thoughtless oaths, in judging unjustly between men, in excessive avarice, and in all manner of useless and evil works. I acknowledge and confess to Thee, Oh Lord, calling all Thy saints to witness, that I am so guilty of misdeeds and evil works, that I am already condemned by the multitude of my transgressions, unless I may share in the benefits of the exceeding abundance of Thy mercy and of the good and meritorious intercessions of my Lady, the holy Virgin Mary, and of all the saints in whom Thou hast been well pleased since the world began.”

After the beginning of the prayer we notice this confession of the Son’s humility where the omnipresence of God is demonstrated. Hiding “in the lowest … places of hell” or mounting to “heaven” or flying “upon the wings of the winds… beyond the uttermost boundaries of the ocean solitudes” cannot escape God’s presence. Perhaps the geographic extremities mentioned by the author here to exemplify remote location where God’s
presence is still felt are similar to the remote voyages illustrated in the Eddas. For example, in Vafþrúðnismál, Oðin – in his hypostasis as Gagnrad (Journey-counsel) – asks Vafþrúðnir “Whence the wind comes,/ that over ocean passes...”33, to which he is told that “Hræsvelg he is called,/ who at the _end of heaven_ (emphasis mine) sits,/ a Jötun in an eagle’s plumage;/ from his wings comes/ it is said, the wind,/ that over all men passes”34. Here we can more clearly see the similarity between the “end of heaven (himins enda)” in the Poetic Edda and the place “beyond the uttermost boundaries of the ocean solitudes (extra metas marine solitudinis ultimas)” invoked in the king’s prayer in Konungs skuggsjá. The comparison is not surprising if we also take into consideration that sailing was such an important occupation for the Old Norse, so, for them, an unreachable destination would be somewhere beyond the oceans.

Furthermore, the power of omniscience that is attributed to God – who “has numbered the sands driven by the winds and by the power of the ocean about all the earth”35 – in order to show the king’s humility quite matches the wisdom of Odin, who went to challenge Vafþrúðnir on his knowledge of cosmogony.

The prayer continues with the king confessing his wrongdoings and asking for them to be blot out by God, which matches the rising importance of confession at the beginning of the high middle ages, owed to the spread of monastic orders and generally the better organization of the Church in the wake of the eleventh century reforms36. Next, the Son is instructed that when he prays he should admit that “mercy has appointed me to Thine office and has exalted me, though unworthy, to the royal dignity and the sacred chieftainship; and Thou hast appointed me to judge and to govern Thy holy people.”37 It is noteworthy that the Son was instructed in the theory of divine right in such a precise manner, whose model does not only act upon kingship but upon sacred chieftainship (“in sacro principatu,” in original) as well, decreeing that not only the rule of the king but of all chiefs derives from

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33 “Hvaðan vindr of kemr,/ svá at ferr vág yfir...”, stanza 36, Vafþrúðnismál in the Poetic Edda.
34 “Hræsvelgr heitir,/ er sitr á himins enda,/ jötunn í arnar ham;/ af hans vængjum/ kvæða vind koma/ alla menn yfir”, stanza 37, Vafþrúðnismál in the Poetic Edda.
35 Konungs skuggsjá, chapter 54.
37 Konungs skuggsjá, chapter 54.
God’s authority. In Konungs skuggsjá, on the one hand, the outcomes of prayer are spiritual, the Son is instructed to pray as in the above examples so that he is granted “right understanding, self-control and sense of justice, eloquence, purpose, and good intentions,” while, on the other hand, in Sverris saga, prayer often results in miracles. One very good example is the naval battle at Nidaros, where King Sverrir’s prayer to Saint Óláfr resulted in the apparition of a miraculous mist that delivered the king’s ships from danger. This incredible illustration of the effects of prayer in Sverris saga rather matches the pagan model of piety, in which devotion was supposed to be immediately rewarded by the gods. King Sverrir appals to Saint Óláfr, the patron saint of the kingdom he is trying to reclaim for himself, and his successful escape means that he is favoured both by God and Saint Óláfr, which is a double legitimacy.

Conclusion
This comparative analysis of piety and humility in Konungs skuggsjá has started from the principles set out in the Hómilíubók which acclaimed the mentioned qualities as essential for the salvation of any Christian. This consideration is important when looking at the ideology of power in high medieval Norway because earlier sources, such as Sverris saga, though include and depict acts of devotion to God, are less productive in this respect. The nature of devotion in Sverris saga is much more direct, and closer to the old Viking beliefs, in which gods were addressed different requests on the occasion of religious ceremonies or other devotional acts. To give one more example, at the launching of the long ship that he dedicated to the Virgin Mary, king Sverrir makes gifts of priestly robes to the archbishop and has relics fixed on the new ship in order to bring “help and good fortune to the ship and the crew, and to all who sail upon it.” Also, King Sverrir uses his piety – for example, the episode at the beginning of his campaign for the throne of Norway, when, after prayer, Saint Óláfr himself protected and delivered him from danger – as a mean of legitimization. In contrast, what Konungs skuggsjá recommends to kings stands out as much closer to the Christian European model of pious kingship. Perhaps due to the influence

38 Ibidem.
39 Sverris saga, chapter 32.
40 Sverris saga, chapter 80.
of Smaragdus of St. Mihiel’s *Via regia* or other earlier *speculi principiorum*\(^{41}\), the Son in *Konungs skuggsjá* is advised by his father to behave in the most pious way possible: he must attend church in the morning, recite the psalms, confess his faith, let God know of his continuous worry for leading God’s people the right way, confessing his own wrongdoings and begging for kind judgment before declaring himself a servant of God (it was King Magnús Erlingsson who had first called himself king by the grace of God, *dei rex gracia*\(^{42}\)). Having done this, the mind of the monarch must be preoccupied with examples of meekness and punishment of arrogance, such as those told by the commanding Father in *Konungs skuggsjá*: how Joseph rose from being a slave to becoming second in rank to the Pharaoh in Egypt, how Queen Vashti lost her position when she showed exceeding pride and humble Esther took her place and how the powerful Emperor Constantine and his mother, Helena, conceded their right to judge in a synod to less powerful yet wiser men. In the following subchapter the focus of the analysis will change to institutional relations between the king and the Church.

**References:**

**Primary sources**


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\(^{41}\) At Smaragdus of St. Mihiel (c. 760 – c. 840) the king appears as a semi-ascetic figure. Other similar writers are Sedulius Scottus (fl. 840-860, his work is *De rectoribus christianis*), John of Salisbury (c. 1120 – 25 October 1180, famous for his *Polycraticus*) and many others. Joseph R. Strayer, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. Vol. 7, *Italian Renaissance-Mabinogi*, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1986, pp. 264-269.

\(^{42}\) Hans Jacob Orning, *op. cit.*, p. 63.
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POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND CORRUPTION. 
THE PHANARIOT REGIME AS SEEN BY RUSSIAN AND NORDIC TRAVELLERS

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Acknowledgements
This paper was presented at the Seventh annual international conference on Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania. Good governance in Romania and the Nordic and Baltic countries, hosted by the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies and „Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, November 24-25, 2016.

Abstract:
The history of the Romanian Principalities was particularly tumultuous during the modern period, given that they were situated in a geographical area of great interest for three large empires: the Ottoman Empire, the Austrian Monarchy and Russia. As a result, the political regime established in Moldavia and Wallachia in the 18th century and which lasted until 1821 bore all the hallmarks of Orientalism as expressed by rulers, namely the most profound corruption at all administrative levels, an utter lack of interest regarding the people’s welfare and the unremorseful pursuit of their own interests.
The Nordic and Russian travellers were acutely aware of all these problems and considered that the Ottomans were the only ones to blame for this deplorable state of affairs. Unfortunately, with time, some of the shortcomings associated with the Phanariot regime became unmistakable traits of Romanian political behaviour which persisted well into the 20th century. Nevertheless, some of the travellers also remarked the adoption of a number of reforms with highly beneficial effects for the Principalities between 1711/1716 and 1821 and, at least apparently, the period when General Pavel Kiseleff was governor of Moldavia and Wallachia was an especially prolific one in terms of reversing some of the damage caused by the Phanariots.
However, one of the limitations of using travel literature as a source is that it needs to be treated with extreme care when it comes to establishing the boundaries between truth and fiction, as well as between innocent observations and decidedly dishonest interpretations. The aim of the present study is thus to present all of the above-
mentioned political evolutions as they were seen by foreign travellers, whilst also questioning and unravelling the latter’s motives for depicting a certain image of the Romanian Principalities’ political elite.

Rezumat:
Istoria Principatelor Române a fost deosebit de tumultoasă în perioada modernă, dat fiind că erau situate într-o zonă geografică de un interes major pentru trei mari imperii: Imperiul Otoman, Monarhia Austriacă și Rusia. Drept urmare, regimul politic instaurat în Moldova și Muntenia în secolul al XVIII-lea și care a durat până la 1821 purta toate semnele orientalismului exprimat de domnitori, mai exact cea mai profundă corupție la toate nivelurile administrative, o completă lipsă de interes față de bunăstarea poporului și urmărirea fără remuşcări a propriilor interese.

Călătorii nordici și ruși au fost perfect conștienți de aceste probleme, considerând că otomanii erau unii dintre vinoați pentru această deplorabilă stare de lucruri. Din păcate, în timp, unele dintre defectele asociate regimului fanariot au devenit trăsături inconfundabile ale comportamentului politic românesc care au persistat până în secolul XX. Cu toate acestea, unii dintre călătorii au remarcat și adoptarea unui număr de reforme cu efecte foarte benefice pentru Principate între 1711/1716 și 1821 și, cel puțin în aparentă, perioada în care Generalul Pavel Kiseleff a fost guvernatorul Moldovei și Munteniei a fost una extrem de prolifică în ceea ce privește anularea unora dintre daunele cauzate de fanarioti.

Totuși, una dintre limitările utilizării literaturii de călătorie ca sursă este că e nevoie să fie tratată cu maximă grijiă atunci când vine vorba de stabilirea granitelor dintre adevar și ficțiune sau dintre observațiile inocente și interpretările indiscutabil false. Scopul prezentului studiu este astfel de a prezenta toate evoluțiile politice menționate mai sus în maniera în care au fost văzute de călătorii străini, chestionând și scoțând în evidență în același timp motivele acestora pentru a prezenta o anumită imagine a elitei politice din Principatele Române.

Keywords: Phanariot regime, Romanian Principalities, political history, travel literature, 18th-19th centuries

Introductory aspects
Moldavia and Wallachia, also known as the Romanian Principalities, had a turbulent modern history that was mainly due to the fact that they were situated within the sphere of influence of several large empires.1 Within

1 Details about the political evolutions of the area in the 17th-18th centuries are available in Mihai Maxim, O istorie a relațiilor româno-otomane, cu documente noi din arhivele turcești. Vol. II: De la Mihai Viteazul la fanarioți (1601-1711/1716) (Brăila: Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei,
this context, the beginning of the 18th century brought about an intensification of the Ottoman pressure in the area that resulted in the establishment of what was to be labelled by historiography as the Phanariot regime.\textsuperscript{2} Thus, starting with 1711 for Moldavia and 1716 for Wallachia\textsuperscript{3} the rulers of the two principalities became members of the Ottoman Empire’s administration, being regarded as high officials who were equivalent to a pasha with two horsetails\textsuperscript{4} and were appointed by the Sultan in accordance with his own interests and with the sums of money offered by the future rulers.

As a result, most historians regard the inauguration of the Phanariot regime as a means by which the Porte intended to strengthen its political, military, economic, financial, social and cultural control over the Romanian Principalities, given that it had significant strategic interests in the area. Consequently, the replacement of local rulers with mostly Greek ones inhabiting one of Constantinople’s neighbourhoods, namely Fanar/Fener (hence the designation of the princes and, by extension, of the regime), was accomplished so that the new princes were aware of their most important assignments: “fulfilling the various obligations of the Romanian Principalities towards Istanbul, consolidating the Ottoman domination north of the inferior Danube, limiting the power and opposition of the Romanian-Levantine boyar class, modernising the Romanian political, administrative, financial, social, economic structures, through the adoption of adequate reforms, in order to adapt them to an efficient exploitation in the benefit of the Ottoman Porte”\textsuperscript{5}.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item 2013), pp. 18-56, the author’s pertinent and detailed analysis regarding the Ottoman Empire’s both external and internal politics.
\item Other synonymous phrases are “Phanariot period”, “Phanariot century” and “Phanariot rule”.
\item In reality, as Mihai Țipău, \textit{Domnii fanarioți în Țările Române 1711-1821. Mică enciclopedie} (Bucharest: Omonia, 2004), p. 9 points out, this chronological limit was not that obvious for contemporaries, the 1711/1716-1821 timeframe being set later on by historians.
\item Maxim 2013, pp. 434-435. Vasile-Mihai Olaru also supports this view: “The period under study [namely 1775-1831], corresponding to the last phase of the Phanariot period and the ‘indigenous princes’ (\textit{domniile pământene}), scattered with military occupations by Russian, Austrian and Ottoman troops, is hardly regarded as a period of modernization or development. Without constituting an object of analysis, the state was considered to consist of the body of venal officials, corrupt, inefficient and usually abusive in their relations with the common subjects. It was also the period when the Wallachia (like Moldavia) lacked an army and sovereignty, playing the role of temporary provider for various occupation armies”;
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
This epoch which lasted until 1821 was characterised by extreme political instability, a marker of Orientalism recognised as such by most foreign travellers. Hence, during 1711/1716-1821 the political regime from the Principalities bore all the hallmarks of bad governance: omnipresent corruption, disregard towards the people, decisions and actions that were aimed at enriching the ruling elite, bureaucratisation. Although some progress in terms of culture, education and even legislation was also noticeable (and noted by some travellers), it did not alter the overall negative picture of the Phanariot century, as the following pages will demonstrate.

Although the concept of governance is mostly present in the works of sociologists, political analysts and economists, historians can also make good use of it, despite the perils associated with applying modern terms to

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6 A very useful summary of foreign travellers’ notes on the Phanariot period was accomplished by Liviu Popescu, “Imaginea regimului politic în Principate. De la fanarioţi la mişcarea lui Tudor Vladimirescu”, in *Societatea românească între modern şi exotic văzută de călători străini (1800-1847)*, eds. Ileana Căzan, Irina Gavrilă (Bucharest: Oscar Print, 2005), pp. 27-92, many of the elements emphasised by the author being also present in the notes pertaining to Russian and Nordic voyagers. For example, I agree with Liviu Popescu’s affirmation that “Sketching short portraits of the Phanariot rulers highlights a series of their particular traits, which often merge in a predominantly stereotypical image, with political nuances nonetheless, whose main elements are: a good knowledge of several foreign languages, a superior culture, skilfulness in the political art and a superior knowledge and understanding of international relations. Alongside all these, two other defining traits that are a part of the larger spectre of Phanariot stereotypy can be added: cunningness and perfidiousness” (p. 43). Greediness, corruption or excessive bureaucratisation emerge as characteristics of the Phanariot regime particularly in Russians’ notes, but are also present in Northerners’ writings.

7 Ironically enough given that most Phanariot rulers were of Greek origin, the term “governance” is derived from a Greek word, namely “kubernân”, which means “to rule”, “to lead” or “to steer a ship” and it was used by Plato in relation to designing a governing system, particularly as, at first, the terms “governance” and “governing” were synonymous, the former receiving connotations concerning other actors than the state only during the 20th century. Within this context, “good governance” and, implicitly, “bad governance” were defined in the 1990s by the World Bank with reference to the administration of money lent to Third World countries. For more terminological details see Anne Mette Kjær, *Guvernanţa* (Cluj-Napoca: CA Publishing, 2010), pp. 1-3 and Alina Sorina Drăgan, *Frontiere, guvernanţă şi organizare politică. Regiunile ultraperiferice şi ţările şi teritorile de peste mări*, Ph.D. Thesis (Cluj-Napoca: Faculty of History and Philosophy, 2015), pp. 20-23.

8 By “bureaucratisation” I refer to “an excessive appeal to procedures, lack of efficiency, unreadiness, the refusal to take decisions, excessive personnel, etc.”; Liviu Radu, *Guvernanţă comparată* (Bucharest: Tritonic Books, 2013), p. 79.
past realities. In fact, discussing the Phanariot regime in terms of governance could be considered one of the elements of originality characterising this study, which consequently aligns Romanian historiographical works with foreign ones. Moreover, the thorough analysis of the sources, including some of the travellers’ ulterior motives for conveying a certain image of the political system applied in the Romanian Principalities, represents another distinguishing feature of this study. Although the overall picture of the Phanariots that stems from travel accounts is not surprising for researchers familiarised with the topic, an analysis that focuses strictly on Russian and Nordic sources represents a novel approach to the subject.

Sources

The present paper is based on the notes of Nordic and Russian travellers who have passed through the Romanian Principalities in the 18th-19th centuries. Apart from their unmatched value as contemporary testimonies of past social and political realities, these sources also entail a number of problems, particularly given that often the boundaries between truth and fiction can only be established with great difficulty. Moreover, many travellers resorted to exaggerations in order to create literary effects

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and they were not always objective (and/or they did not intend to be objective) when they were describing certain realities.

Beyond these general observations, the peculiarities associated with the visits of Nordic and Russian travellers in the Romanian area also pose some issues. In this sense it must be mentioned that Northerners’ interests in the area were almost irrelevant during the Phanariot period, whilst Russians were much more involved in the power struggles that took place above Romanians’ heads. One of the direct consequences of this state of affairs is that Nordic travellers are relatively infrequent, which stands in stark contrast to the constant Russian presence on Romanian soil, the latter being mostly due to the recurrent military conflicts between the Tsar and the Sultan. Moreover, whilst Northerners’ writings give a clear impression of objectivity (or, at least, of the authors’ intention of presenting objective opinions), most Russian accounts provide obvious clues as to some (barely) hidden interests that shaped the story and how it was told. Consequently, Russian travellers are not only more numerous, but they also seem more prone to make political comments than Nordic ones.

The statements sketched above are clearly supported by the distribution of this article’s sources. Thus, Russian travellers provide approximately 79% of the accounts that served as a foundation for this study, most of the Tsar’s subjects being officers in the army (roughly 45%) or diplomats (around 36%). Two thirds of the Nordic travellers were also army officers, whilst the liberal professions were also represented, but to a lesser extent, for both Northerners and Russians (roughly 33% and 18%, respectively). As for the accuracy of the observations in terms of direct contact with the realities that were described, only half of the foreigners’ visits took place prior to 1821 (with all of the Nordic voyages included in this category), whilst in the case of the other half of the journeys travellers could compare what they found out about the previous political regime with the subsequent evolutions (for example, the period when General Kiseleff’s was governor of the Romanian Principalities). The graphs below summarise the sources’ main characteristics.
Political instability and corruption. The Phanariot regime as seen by Russian and Nordic travellers

Figure 1: Distribution of accounts according to their author’s origin

Northerners
Russians

Figure 2: Distribution of accounts according to their author’s occupation

Officers
Diplomats
Liberal professions
Images of the political regime from Moldavia and Wallachia between 1711/1716 and 1821

Foreign travellers’ opinions on the Phanariot regime were mostly negative, some of voyagers being extremely keen on emphasising all the problems associated with the rulers’ manner of governing and with the Ottoman suzerainty over the Principalities. In this sense, they revealed a number of problems that directly affected the inhabitants’ living conditions.

Differences between the Principalities and Transylvania

According to the testimony published in 1778 by the Russian officer of German origin Friedrich Wilhelm von Bauer, the continuous state of insecurity from Wallachia strengthened its already powerful connections with Transylvania, connections that were motivated by “the large similarities in land, habits and language”. As a result, those who ran away from Wallachia because of the abuses that were inflicted upon them found a “new motherland” in the intra-Carpathian province, a motherland that had typically occidental political traits because the Transylvanian ruling system was “less subjected to violent changes with such fatal consequences”.¹⁰

Differences between possibilities and realities

A rather objective image of the Principalities’ situation during the Phanariot regime was provided by Louis-Alexandre Andrault de Langeron, who was convinced that Moldavia and Wallachia could be “Europe’s heaven” if they were ruled by “a powerful prince or if they were inhabited by a diligent and hardworking people”. But, sadly, history had been unfavourable to Wallachians and Moldavians and

“the appalling state of these unfortunate countries, destroyed by wars, pillaged by victors, pillaged by those defeated, subjected to a regime that extinguishes any sap and any idea of activity and prosperity towards a better state, drained by rulers who seek only to enrich their families and whose limited and uncertain education and authority neither presuppose nor permit any development of the spirit or of talents; the state of these countries – where the strictest minimum of life maintenance is enough for the ambition and perhaps the ignorance of the inhabitants - would need centuries of peace and work before nature could be aided by man’s handiwork so that both would bring the results that <people> admire in France, England and in the countries favoured by the advantages of a good rule and the fortune of a long-lasting peace”.11

Differences in time – worsening conditions

After his second visit, unfolded approximately two decades after the first, namely between 1806 and 1812, the same Langeron harshly criticised the Wallachian boyars’ venal nature,12 presenting it as a trait imported from the Orient and using such terms as “excessive immorality”, “heinousness”, attitudes that were “repulsive to humankind”, the boyars being “vile”, “greedy”, “cruel”, “slavish towards the Turks”, while “the notions of order, justice, honesty, honour are often forgotten in Wallachia. All offices are bought, meaning that you pay the right to commit any crime without being punished”. The government was “monstrous”, the high officials displayed “a luxury that is as impudent as it is tacky” and the “plundering, thefts, [and]
cruelty of the Romanian high officials are neither hidden nor justified by a certain pretext”. Even the chief of police in Bucharest was sometimes “the protector of thieves, the concealer of thefts”, whilst “judges or chancellors provoke both civil and penal lawsuits or accuse of a crime those who are rich, in order to strip them [of their possessions]”.\(^{13}\)

In 1827-1831, Ivan Petrovici Liprandi also affirmed that “the one who does not know the Moldavians and the Wallachians will never be able to have an image of the intrigues, schemes and cunning that are plotted on such occasions”,\(^{14}\) considering that after “more than two months at Jassy, I had the opportunity to observe the spirit of cunningness, intrigue, haughtiness and vileness of the majority of boyars. Their inconstancy in the present circumstances is unimaginable”.\(^{15}\) In fact, this emphasis placed upon the duplicitous behaviour of the elite\(^ {16}\) only confirmed the high degree of political instability in the Principalities and, within this context, although we can comprehend the Russian officer’s frustration, we also need to take into account the fact that the Russians were also not always defined by correctness and transparency in their actions.

**Blaming the Turks**

In this sense, the Russian officer of French origin Langeron admitted that some of the Russian functionaries were corrupted, but he laid all the blame for this situation on the Turks, whilst also giving examples of honest boyars and stating that Romanians had the potential of being civilised. Thus, “the imputations that I’m knowingly making to their morality cannot be addressed to all without exception”, because “I have met amongst them very estimable, very delicate, very correct people, in low numbers[, that is true, but nonetheless sufficient to save Nineveh. In fact, I would rather accuse the

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\(^{15}\) Gheorghe Bezviconi, Călători ruşi în Moldova şi Muntenia (Bucharest: Monitorul Oficial şi Imprimeriile Statului. Imprimeria Naţională, 1947), p. 261. Zaharia 2012, pp. 24-25 states that the boyars’ main characteristics during the Phanariot regime were vanity, laziness and disquietude, the latter being motivated by the extremely unstable political situation.

\(^{16}\) See Daniel David, Psihologia poporului român. Profilul psihologic al românilor într-o monografie cognitiv-experimentală (Jassy: Polirom, 2015), p. 40 where the author summarises the opinions of Dumitru Drăghicescu who asserted, amongst other things, that the Phanariot rulers played a very important part in accentuating Romanians’ duplicity and cunningness.
venal, oppressive and barbarous government under which the two countries, Moldavia and Wallachia, are moaning of the inhabitants’ immorality than the latter’s own inclinations. The boyars are sooner pitiful than blameable”. The Ottomans were the ones culpable for a “stupid and atrocious” despotism that prevented Romanians from “being entirely different from how they are” because “in general they have spirit, qualities for businesses, they are good, gentle, even too shy, which also has to be attributed to the fear of the Turkish sword that they always see hanging above their heads”.

The underlying causes of political instability

Frequent wars

Johann Christian von Struve, a Russian subject of foreign (presumably German) origin, reached a conclusion that was rather favourable to the Romanians after he had repeatedly travelled in the area between 1791 and 1794, namely that the diligence of Moldavians from Galați could bring them prosperity, “if a new destructive war will not put an end to the development of the small town once again”. The same negative effects of military conflicts on the province’s thriving were also remarked by the Russian traveller around Vaslui, given that “Moldavians cultivate their lands very well everywhere around here and of course they would do it even more if they were not driven out by the destructive wars”. The diplomat seemed extremely convinced of this interpretation of the situation, noting on several occasions that “the activity of good Moldavians” consisting in “vineyards, cultivated fields and pastures” was worthy of being admired, but that, unfortunately, “the country is alternatively devastated due to the Porte’s sad policy and by the bloody wars”. However, the “good and fertile land”, as well as the large number of “rivers and streams” repaid the inhabitants’ efforts in cultivating the land to such an extent that “even after only three years of peace villages and towns are revived again”.

Heinrich von Reimers supported this view as he considered that “Moldavia is a beautiful country which, although it was a theatre of war and the apple of discord for its neighbours several times during past centuries, as it is also nowadays, it nevertheless recovered rapidly from its sufferings and the fertile and rich land is generally well cultivated. How many times hasn’t it been the case that the cannons’ peal drove away the peaceful storks from their nests, storks whom have built here, in large numbers, their nests on the chimneys of peasant houses, and that it also drove them [the peasants] out of their tranquil homes”.  

**Ottoman suzerainty**

Unfortunately, the system of Phanariot rule with all its negative traits prevented any improvement in Moldavia’s situation, because as von Struve observed:

> “the country would amend itself very easily if it wasn’t the theatre of war all the time and if peace and tranquillity would reign more in it. But as the ruler, so to say, is not ensured of preserving his rule not even for one day, his policy, so harmful for the country, consists only in burdens and dues in order to support himself with the money extorted from the inhabitants even when he will have ceased being a ruler. Most of the times the Porte’s dragomans are raised to this office that is conferred to the ones that offer the most”.  

Dimitri Bantâş-Kamenski also described the system by which rulers were appointed and revoked, the reasons that motivated them to oppress the population, as well as the most frequent end result of their career. Thus he revealed that “the rulers were chosen from amongst the most notable Greek families”, “each of them, in their desire to get this position, accumulated large debts, in order to bribe the greedy Turkish high officials” and then they

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21 *Călători străini...*, Vol. X, part II, pp. 1140-1141. Indeed, most Phanariot rulers had acted as dragomans before being appointed as princes of the Romanian Principalities, this being the “highest office that could be occupied by Christians in the period’s Turkish political system”; Țipău 2004, p. 8. This implied that they pertained to highly cultivated environments and that they spoke well a number of different foreign languages.
22 A summary of the Phanariot regime’s manner of functioning that is strikingly similar to that provided by the Russian traveller is available in Zaharia 2012, p. 100.
habitually occupied the throne for “a very short timespan, two-three, at the most five years”, a period during which

“they sought to enrich themselves from the dues collected from the population. In this manner, they succeeded not only in paying their debts, but they also in returning with millions to Constantinople, where they attempted to seem very poor, for fear of being robbed by the same Turkish ministers to whom they owed everything. Often even the Sultan killed these rulers, in order to take possession of their wealth over which he, according to the laws from these countries, has an incontestable right. This right extends even over the highest Turkish officials, even over the vizier himself”.

Phanariot rulers

Vasile Ivanovici Kelsiev was even more incisive in his (retrospective) appreciations, the manner in which he described the Phanariots leaving no doubt about his opinions:

“this crossbreed of Greeks, whom the Greeks themselves hate, the Phanariots[,] ruled Moldavia in the past. You must see these people to understand through what they drew so much hatred upon themselves. They have no patriotic sentiment, no political principle and in general no aspirations that any man has. They sacrifice all for money, for a career; they sell not only their daughter, but also their wife and they can denounce their own brother for this. Amongst them there are people who have learned a thing or two, which is for the worst; the fact that they know how to keep alive a conversation in society, cognizance of foreign languages, knowledge and talents are not used in other purposes than to increase their incomes, to make their way in life. The Turks’ spies are Phanariots. The secretaries of the governors for

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23 During a century, namely between 1711/1716 and 1821, Moldavia and Wallachia were ruled by 31 princes belonging to 11 families. Some of these rulers occupied one or both of these thrones several times, the record being set by Constantine Mavrocordatos, who had 10 separate reigns in both Principalities (6 in Wallachia and 4 in Moldavia) totalising 20 years and one month between 1730 and 1769. More details on this topic are available in Ţipău 2004, pp. 15-16.

24 In fact, only three Phanariot rulers were murdered by order of the Sultan whilst they were still on the throne; Ţipău 2004, p. 16.


26 He visited the Romanian area in 1867 and thus his notes were not based on direct observations, but merely on information gathered from other sources.
connections with the foreign consulates are Phanariots. The political agents are half Phanariots”.

The accuracy of these representations characterising the Phanariot regime is worthy of note, although it is clear that we cannot attribute only altruistic reasons to their authors for revealing these political realities. The details provided, corroborated with allusions to Romanians’ Orthodox faith and with descriptions of the Principalities’ natural riches were probably meant, consciously or unconsciously, to motivate the anti-Ottoman Russian actions that were unfolding based on political, but also economic, religious and even humanitarian grounds.

Positive traits of the Phanariot regime

Johan Hedenborg remarked several favourable effects of the Phanariot regime, given that some of the rulers adopted reforms that were beneficial to the Romanian area. The example provided by the Swedish physician is that of Nicholas Mavrocordatos, ruler of Wallachia beginning with 1716, identified by the foreign traveller as “the first Greek who had attained this office”, namely that of “hospodar”. From Hedenborg’s viewpoint, the cultural progress achieved during that period was major, as

“Moldavia and Wallachia were at that time bare of any culture and civilisation, nine tenths of the land remaining uncultivated. The Greek hospodars have introduced instruction and culture into the country. Mavrocordatos was the founder of a printing house and of a school where the Old Church Slavonic language, old Greek and Latin were taught. His brother, Constantine, liberated the peasants from

27 Bezviconi 1947, p. 413.
28 A series of reforms with modernising effects in organising and storing administrative information promulgated by the Phanariots were thoroughly analysed by Vasile Mihai Olaru, “Trecut în conică”. Stocarea informaţiei şi puterea statală în Țara Românească în secolul al XVIII-lea”, Revista istorică, Tome XXV, No. 3-4 (2014): 323-348, two of the conclusions of his research being that these administrative improvements had as an effect the fact that the state started to be perceived as “an objective entity, both ontologically and morally” (p. 342) and that “during the second half of the 18th century the state has extended to a certain extent its infrastructural capacity, namely the capacity of acting at a distance and of imposing its will in the territory” (p. 347).
29 Information about the Phanariot rulers’ contribution to the development of education in various manners is available in Zaharia 2012.
bondage$^{30}$ and introduced maize (sic), which has now become the inhabitants’ most important aliment. The following hospodars ordered the translation of the Bible in the country’s language, as well as the churchly books from the Greek language. They also promulgated printed codes of law”. $^{31}$

Apart from adopting a number of reforms and supporting cultural advancement at large, Phanariot rulers manifested a general attitude of openness towards innovation$^{32}$ as demonstrated by an original observation pertaining to Leyon Pierce Balthasar von Campenhausen. This note that also

$^{30}$ More details about Constantine Mavrocordatos’ agrarian reform are available in Olaru 2013, pp. 155-180. The author argues that “By the agrarian regulations, the state becomes the third party arbitrating between landlords and tenants and it acquires the character of a necessary and ‘real’ entity” (p. 158). Moreover, “In 1741, Constantin Mavrocordat issued a large charter of reorganization in several domains (fiscal, judicial-administrative, social)” (p. 165). On the other hand, Zaharia 2012, pp. 34-35 considers that „Constantine Mavrocordatos’ reform had as a consequence the suppression of all the real advantages that the peasant enjoyed before 1746 and the transformation of the peasant into a taxpayer [...]. Now the landlords no longer have any obligation towards the peasant. Therefore the liberation of 1746-1749 was in reality nothing more than the liberation of boyars from most of the obligations towards the peasant, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, towards the state. As for the peasant, instead of one master he now has two: his old landlord and the State”. Ţipău 2004, pp. 22-24 also mentions Constantine Mavrocordatos “reorganisation” of the fiscal, administrative and institutional areas revealing that the Phanariot ruler posed as an Enlightened monarch on these grounds. 


$^{31}$ C. J. Caragea, ‘Păreri unui suédez despre țara noastră pe la începutul secolului al XIX-lea’, *Revista Istorică: dări de seamă, documente și notiţe*, VI, No. 1-2 (1920): 50. One of the Phanariot princes who issued an important code of law (in 1780) and implemented a series of fiscal, economic, administrative, juridical and educational reforms was Alexander Ypsilantis, who reigned for the first time in Wallachia between 1774 and 1782. Another Phanariot ruler who promulgated an important civil code was Scarlat Callimachi, whose third reign in Moldavia unfolded between 1812 and 1819. Details about these accomplishments are available in Ţipău 2004, pp. 30 and 41, respectively. Alexander Ypsilantis’ reforms were analysed by Nicolae Isar, *Din istoria politică a Principatelor Române. De la fanarioţi la domniile naţionale (1774-1829)* (Bucharest: Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2008), pp. 39-41. The last-mentioned author also provides some details about Scarlat Callimachi’s code of law (pp. 49-50). Moreover, the Phanariot rulers significantly contributed to the standardisation of measurements, as revealed by Vasile Mihai Olaru in two separate studies: ‘The ‘Juridist’ Fallacy. Methodological Aspects of the Study of Weights and Measures in Romanian Historiography’, *Philobiblon. Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in the Humanities*, Vol. XX, No. 2 (2015a): 434-446, and Olaru 2015b, pp. 200-220.

$^{32}$ The fact that receptivity towards new ideas characterised most of the Phanariot rulers is also noted by Zaharia 2012, pp. 58-59.
contains an indirect mention of Moldavia as a country belonging to the Occident referred to the fact that in the context of the Russo-Turkish war of 1787-1791 “the Turks have destroyed all the gardens and, especially, the only orangeries from Europe, which the ruler and the boyars possessed [and] where one could see orange, citron and laurel trees of an amazing height and thickness”.\textsuperscript{33} Thus, the Phanariots could successfully adapt foreign models to local realities and these innovations were sometimes unmatched in the whole of Europe.

\textbf{After the Phanariot regime – attempts at good governance}

The period when Pavel Dimitrievici Kiseleff was governor of the Romanian Principalities, namely 1829-1834, the elaboration of the Organic Regulations and particularly the implementation of the measures stipulated by them had salutary effects on Romanians, at least in the opinion of the just-mentioned Russian general. Hence, “the youth found means of education in its motherland’s schools”,\textsuperscript{34} whilst

\begin{quote}
“the internal civil governing system and the military administration receive a systematic development; the inhabitants’ confidence increases; incomes from concessions and general ones increase; theft, which here is a local custom, decreases day by day and the lower class starts to breathe more easily. The town police and the disastrous quartering commissions are on the way to reorganisation; keeping the records in the treasury (minister of finances), hospitals and commissions are being organised in accordance with severe and uniform rules; sowing, done with the participation of the government, will be vast; the quarantine line on the Danube, being an important thing for Russia, is being organised with the utmost attention and the adequate intensity of action; the local militia will be formed and the reorganisation committee is working incessantly, although it would want to maintain the detrimental privileges of boyars, against which I am fighting as an accomplisher of the Emperor’s will and Christian”.\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}
Nevertheless, despite all these progresses which represented clear steps towards good governance, there is still much left to do for the one who will have to rule this country, because one practically needed to reconstruct from top to bottom the entire edifice, on the way to crumbling, of the old institutions. But only in these conditions you could work effectively for the country’s good state and internal tranquillity.

The steps to be taken towards this total remodelling are also noted by the Russian General:

“to precisely establish the rights and obligations for inhabitants of all [social] classes, to eliminate abuses, respecting the earned rights, to abolish compulsory work on boyars’ plots and pay in kind, to simplify the collection of taxes, to organise the department of justice, by separating justice from administration, to found the gendarmerie for preserving internal order, to organise quarantines on the Danube and to give freedom to commerce”.

Russian interests: discourse and reality

On the other hand, it must be mentioned that, as an ardent patriot, Kiseleff admitted to his superiors that his true intention was “to earn [the Principalities’] wealth for Russia by means of trade and to submit Moldavians and Wallachians in the future, with the help of our education and by introducing our customs and mores”. The General even set forth a number of concrete measures in this sense, so that, in the end, “without causing any commotion in Europe, without expenses for the maintenance of our armed forces in this country, we will have our border on the Danube, with local measures of protection against the plague”.

Nordic opinions and interpretations

In 1835, thus shortly after the end of Kiseleff’s mandate as governor of the Romanian Principalities, Helmuth von Moltke, a Prussian officer of Danish stock, observed the manner in which some of the improvements envisaged by the Russian General were being put into practice. Although he overestimated the latter’s role and he did not give sufficient consideration to

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36 At the beginning of the 19th century, governance comprised two elements: “political power, still represented by the sovereign[,] and the structure that was then strictly subordinated to him, public administration”, a radical metamorphosis of these elements having occurred throughout the 18th century; Radu 2013, pp. 24 and 29, respectively.

37 Bezviconi 1947, p. 303.

38 Bezviconi 1947, pp. 289-290.
internal factors, von Moltke nevertheless acknowledged that Kiseleff’s position provided him with a series of advantages in comparison to Romanian rulers and that a long period of time was still needed for the consolidation of these reforms and of their effects:

“the peasants freed, their dues diminished, the taxes limited and fixed, the postal service established, the defence lines against the plague drawn, the town’s streets paved, 6,000 soldiers recruited and organised, almost all is due to the Russian occupation during the time of General Kiseleff. However, it is also fair to recognise that the Russian General had the power to do many things that the Romanian ruler cannot attempt; on the other hand, the time gone by is too short so that the situation of a country, which was tried for so long and so cruelly, to improve in a satisfying manner”.39

The aftermath of the Phanariot regime – persisting shortcomings

The fact that some defects of the Phanariot rule lingered on at least until the second half of the 19th century (although one might find enough arguments to assert that they are still present today in Romanian politicians’ behaviour) was certified by Grigore Petrovici Danielevschi. The Russian writer was informed by politician Nicolae Golescu of a number of abuses and corruption acts that had taken place during the reign of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1859-1866):

“when we took the helm of governing in our hands and we stayed in power for three full months, we realised how much the treasury had been sacked. A lackey from Moldavia, waiter at several hotels, a certain Liebrecht (you’ve probably heard this name), became, in five years, unexpectedly, first telegraph inspector, afterwards, out of the blue, director of the post and telegraph [system] and, in the end, all the cabinet businesses of the ruler were passed to him. No one could obtain without him an auction or a place and, all of a sudden, Liebrecht became the owner of one of the richest houses in Bucharest, with furniture from Paris, with silks from Lyon, with bronzes from London and with four million piasters in cash... We arrested him and sued him.

Now we are also suing – because of him – Cuza’s ministers, Florescu and Kretzulescu...

The ways in which mores, both from the private sphere and those pertaining to the public arena, were affected by the Principalities’ tumultuous history was commented upon in a rather pertinent manner by Vasile Ivanovici Kelsiev. The Russian publicist observed that

“the centuries-old habit of being under foreign rule had as an effect the atrophy of patriotic sentiments in the masses here and made them very materialistic. Greeks, Bulgarians and Serbians do not manifest the same indifference towards their country’s fate. They had a single enemy – the Turks and their helpers – the Greeks. Turkey’s peoples know well who their enemy is, that is why each of them seeks to unite in a single country, each having a ruler, which they hang on to as a child to his mother and therefore they are strong. With the Romanians the situation is different. A small people, positioned by fate between powerful neighbours, they willy-nilly had to yield – now to one, then to another, so that they have become accustomed to the thought that their fate does not depend upon them. Here ruled the Turks, and the Polish, and we have also intervened with our protectorate, and Austria also entered with an army through here... Finally, they were placed under the protectorate of Europe’s great powers – meaning that they have become completely disorientated”.

Within this context, it is worth mentioning that, although the political situation was not as bad as Kelsiev depicted it, some less occidental practices (if we can label them as such) persisted until the end of the 19th century, when the Swede traveller “Topchi” was extremely intrigued and sooner critical with regard to the seriousness of disputes, because “in the domain of domestic politics, there is always in Romania a fierce fight between the

40 Bezviconi 1947, p. 410.
41 The Russian protectorate over the Romanian Principalities was inaugurated through the peace treaty of Küçük-Kaynarca (1774), which stipulated, amongst other things, that Russia had the right to intervene in favour of the Christians inhabiting within the borders of the Ottoman Empire, that it had the right to establish consulates in Turkey and that the Porte’s Russian subjects had the same privileges as those of other powers; Isar 2008, pp. 16-17.
42 Bezviconi 1947, p. 416. A summary of the Romanian Principalities’ international status starting with the 16th century and until the second half of the 19th century is provided by Maxim 2013, pp. 54-56.
government and the opposition, a fight that is perhaps more violent than anywhere else and which often leaves room to terrible scenes during elections”.  

Moreover, towards the end of the Phanariot regime, the Principalities still lacked a number of elements required in order to be considered occidental in terms of good governance. For example, Ignati Iakovenko was willing to include Wallachia amongst European states on condition that the natural resources were used in the state’s benefit, because in such a manner “the care of a well-intentioned government and a small amount of support granted from its part could bring the Principality of Wallachia amongst the greatest and most flourishing regions of Europe”.  

However, a decade later, Ivan Petrovici Liprandi considered that Moldavia and Wallachia were not ready to be European because

“in a well-organised state common good is placed above personal advantages, but this will not be the case of the Romanian Principalities, which have not yet matured and are not ready to receive an administration of a European type. With all its advantages, it would be more oppressive and unbearable, especially for the lower classes, than some of the boyars’ arbitrary actions”.  

Within this context, the Organic Regulation is not only “deficient in many respects, but it surpasses the country’s cultural level and nobody can understand the good that it brings”, the main reason for this situation being that “the future is not taken into consideration, only the present serves as a basis for everything and the past, with all the miseries suffered, is considered a time of welfare”. Moreover,

“where no [social] class is sufficiently mature to receive a European institution, no matter how favourable it would be[,] and where the power of a single person is still necessary for a long time to come for the preservation of general tranquillity[,] [...] on such a land it is difficult, and without exceptional efforts almost impossible, to implant such an institution and even harder for it to take roots”.  

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Concluding remarks

The Phanariot regime was perceived in an extremely negative manner by almost all foreign travellers and if we broadly define governance as “the establishment, application and implementation of rules” it becomes obvious that it is impossible to speak about good governance during the Phanariot period. Moreover, other fundamental traits of good governance were also absent, particularly as the rulers’ legitimacy was derived neither from democracy, nor from efficiency, but merely from the Sultan’s will (and from the amounts of money that filled his coffers), whilst several elements characterising weak or failed states were present, as, for example, the fact that the regime could not adequately provide political goods such as peace, security, law and order or certain social or economic goods such as development and prosperity.

This outstanding example of bad governance survived for more than a century not only because the Porte had a direct interest in the persistence of this state of affairs, but also because the Phanariots acted as an interest group, namely “a more or less organised association of individuals who have common interests and who attempt, through specific means, to influence the decisions of the authorities in the sense of attaining those interests”, the authorities being here represented by the Ottomans. Unfortunately for the

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47 Some Romanian historians were also critical with regard to the Phanariot rulers, but an evolution towards a more balanced view of this period is discernible, as Olaru 2013, pp. 160-161 notices when reviewing “the (mostly) Romanian literature on the Phanariots which sees the period of the ‘Greek’ rulers as – at best - a period of crisis marked by well-intended but ultimately failed reforms and at worst [as] the source of Romania’s belated and incomplete modernization. It is true that from the late 19th century the negative image of the Phanariot period underwent a sustained critique and the modernizing tendencies of the Phanariot rule was highlighted; but in the first case the deconstruction targeted the inconsistencies of the anti-Phanariot stereotypes while in the second the insights were never studied systematically. Such accounts usually looked at the administrative (under)achievements of the Phanariot state, namely to its impact upon the living conditions of the population. The almost general picture was that of a corrupt and abusive administration which plundered the subject population, debilitating its productive capacities. As I show in this paper, by shifting the perspective and looking at how the state regulated the agrarian relations, it is possible to observe crucial processes whereby the modern state, both as ‘state-system’ and as ‘state-idea’ comes into being”.

48 Kjær 2010, p. 10.
49 Kjær 2010, p. 12.
50 Kjær 2010, p. 145.
51 Radu 2013, p. 59.
Romanians, these selfish interests did not coincide with those of the community, which resulted in an excessively unstable political regime defined by a very ineffective manner of using the available resources, by utter, pervasive and inescapable corruption and by complete disregard towards the welfare of the society at large.

The causes of this wretched situation were clearly identified by the travellers: frequent wars unfolding on the Principalities’ territory and Ottoman suzerainty manifested in the form of Phanariot rulers. Habitually, Russian voyagers are the ones commenting upon the negative political realities encountered in the Principalities during the 18th-19th centuries, due to the international context. Namely, the almost incessant state of war with the Ottoman Empire brought them in large numbers in this area and motivated them to be attentive to the regime (if this was not an explicit work-related task). Moreover, their interests entailed careful consideration with regard to rulers and Ottoman suzerainty and, as Kiseleff clearly demonstrated, their sympathy towards the peasants, for example, was by no means altruistic. Besides all this and although the only assessment of the Phanariot regime that also emphasised its positive outcomes belonged to a Northerner, we should not minimise, disregard or consider that Russians’ accounts were false. On the contrary, their observations are usually correct and detailed, even if sometimes there is a clear tendency towards exaggeration.

Consequently, the image depicted mostly by Russian officers and diplomats differs from the notes provided by Nordic voyagers, who seem more objective and more keen on noticing the positive aspects of the political system from Moldavia and Wallachia between 1711/1716 and 1821. Overall, the general conclusion that results from all these reports is that the chance for good governance offered by the return to rulers appointed from amongst the local elite (1821-1829), as well as by the period when Pavel Dimitrievici Kiseleff acted as governor of the Principalities (1829-1834) was only partially capitalised upon, as the improvements enforced were not based on ethical and morally-sound bases, this being one of the explicative factors of the long-lasting adverse effects of the Phanariot regime on Romanian politics.
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NORWAY’ S POLITICAL / LINGUISTIC / LITERARY POLICIES IN THE 1830s

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Acknowledgements
This paper has been presented at the Seventh International Conference on Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania, Good governance in Romania and the Nordic and Baltic countries, hosted by the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies and Nicolae Iorga Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, București, 24-25 November, 2016.

Abstract:
Up until 1814 Norway was a province governed from Copenhagen. After its defeat in the Napoleonic wars, Denmark was forced to give Norway to Sweden. On the political side, the direct results of these events were the establishment of the Norwegian state and the writing of the constitution. On the cultural and literary side, the union with Sweden created the condition for inquiries about national identity. But if Norway had a political identity, the foundation of a cultural identity took more time, mostly because of the lack of a unique, national language. This article focuses on some linguistic and political policies from the 1830s and their influence on literature. Important themes such as oral/written language, the conflicts between Henrik Wergeland and Johan Sebastian Welhaven, national/cultural identity, tradition/innovation will be analyzed.

Rezumat:
Până în anii 1814, Norvegia a fost o provincie guvernată din Copenhaga. După înfrângerea din Războiile Napoleoniene, Danemarca a fost nevoită să cedeze Norvegia Suediei. Din punct de vedere politic, acest fapt a dus la înființarea statului norvegian și la redactarea și la semnarea constituției. Din punct de vedere cultural și literar, uniunea cu Suedia a creat condițiile optime pentru dezbaterea despre identitate națională. Dar dacă în acea vreme Norvegia avea o identitate politică, construirea unei identități culturale a luat mai mult timp, în mare parte din cauza lipsei unei limbi naționale unice. Acest articol prezintă, așadar, unele aspecte lingvistice și politice din anii 1830 și influența lor în literatură. Vor fi analizate cu precădere teme importante,
precum limbă vorbită/limbă scrisă, conflictul dintre Henrik Wergeland și Johan Sebastian Welhaven, identitate națională/culturală, tradiție/inovație.

Keywords: identity, union, nationalism, language, politics

Political nationalism

The Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) represented one of the most striking turning points in Scandinavia. Napoleon’s defeat in Russia and the Kiel treaty, from 14 January 1814, marked the beginning of another era in the history of Norway. In 1814, 400 years after Norway had been under Danish political and adiministrational control, Denmark had to surrender Norway to Sweden. But the Danish Crown Prince Christian Frederik repudiated the Treaty of Kiel and gathered an assembly in Eidsvoll in order to discuss the country’s political and cultural future. The 112 most influential men in Norway came to Eidsvoll under the coordination of Christian Magnus Falsen and adopted a liberal constitution, the most democratic of its time, signed on the 17th of May 1814. The main articles of the constitution focused on the separation of powers, people’s sovereignty and the respect of the human, individual rights, which are now integrated in the country’s politics and form the foundation of Norwegian democracy. This historical event played an essential role in Norway and led to the emergence of a patriotic feeling and a distinctive respect towards the past and the traditions it brought. Literary and history critics focused on the glorious moments of Norway’s history, such as the Viking Age and the Middle Ages, becoming the basis for what was to be regarded as Norwegian identity. In the book Experiences of War and Nationality in Denmark and Norway, 1807-1815, Rasmus Glenthøy and Morten Nordhagen Ottosen underline this idea by stating that: „Scandinavism is […] an important part of the legacy of the Scandinavia that was created in 1814”1.

Unfortunately, the independence did not last. That same year, Norway entered into a war with Sweden. King Christian Frederik had to renounce the throne in order for the country to maintain its constitution. Norway became again part of a union, this time having Karl XIV Johan (Jean-

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1 Rasmus Glenthøy and Morten Nordhagen Ottosen, Experiences of War and Nationality in Denmark and Norway, 1807-1815 (United States and United Kingdom: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014), 261.
Baptiste Bernadotte), one of Napoleon’s officers, as king. But the Norwegian constitution and the liberty it claimed became an ideal for the population, the majority of the books, articles, presentations or speeches being based on the presence of freedom seen as “national self-determination”.

**Cultural and linguistic nationalism**

The period between 1814-1830 could be regarded as a relatively peaceful period on the political side. Karl Johan’s relations to Norwegians were cordial and, as stated by several critics, “[...] no union monarch since has remained as popular in Norway”. During this period, many artists and writers created masterpieces, where the central point was represented by the fiords, the mountains, the people, Norse mythology and the historical events from 1349 to 1814.

Continuing to discuss the main political, cultural and linguistic reforms from years prior to this epoch, the general situation in the 1830s can be characterized by a national romantic debate between those who were in favour of Danish and those who supported the national movement. Moreover, Norway was a nation without a specific written language. In “Nationalism and Scandinavism in the development of the Nordic languages in the 19th century”, Odd Monsson underlines the fact that “[i]n Norway the written language was the main difficulty in the development of a national identity”. This contrast reflects the duality of the entire country whose elite was nevertheless influenced by Danish, while the rural population was mostly tied to folklore and oral traditions.

The two central figures of this linguistic turn from the 1830s were, the young poet, Henrik Wergeland, then 22 years old, who embraced the extravagance of the radical party and intended to enrich his poetry by using Norwegian dialect words, and Johan Sebastian Welhaven, who adopted the conservative aesthetics, supporting Danish influence in literature.

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Johan Sebastian Welhaven grew up in Bergen and was most surely influenced in his literary works by the beautiful nature of the western Norway. His poetry inclines to describe nature’s contrast and savage beauty, maintaining a nostalgic feeling towards Denmark and its literature. In *Norges Dæmring*, written in 1834, Welhaven criticizes his opponent, even if Wergeland’s literary production, particularly his poems, like *Till min gyllenlakk*, or his lyric dramas, like *Mennesket og Messias*, placed him among the most popular writers at that time. Despite his bitterness and his rough descriptions of the low estate of Norway’s development, Welhaven’s national romantic desire was to bring Norway on the same cultural line as the other European countries. Later, in 1867, in *Samlede Skrifter*, Welhaven writes about this conflict, underlying the fact that “an age of transition, a renaissance, is always an age also of clashes and invective”.

Henrik Wergeland was born in 1808, in Kristiansand, but grew up in Eidsvoll. This historical place, where Norway’s constitution was signed and adopted in 1814, must have left some marks on his own perspective on the Norwegian language. Wergeland’s propositions focused particularly on the gradual “norwegianisation” of Danish by the insertion of words from different dialects. When criticized by Welhaven, Henrik Wergeland received the support of his father, Nicolai, a pastor and a leading member of the Constitutional Assembly. Nicolai Wergeland criticized Norwegians’ attraction towards the past, namely towards Denmark, by inventing terms such as “Danomaniac” or “Danish-minded”, in order to conclude that “[t]he past […] was not only a mirror in which the nation could see itself”, but also “a battlefield and a weapon in Norway’s settling of scores with Denmark […]”.

Many scholars played an important role in the dynamics of this linguistic and cultural debate. Among them, Professor P.A. Munch distinguishes himself. Being one of the highest academic figures from his time, P.A. Munch certainly raised a lot of questions when he wrote, in 1832, the article entitled *Norsk Sprogereformation*, and strongly disagreed with Wergeland and the language reforms he proposed, claiming that a language is a homogeneous system that one cannot and should not fracture by introducing non-natural elements. Instead, Munch suggested either to keep

6 Rasmus Glenthøy and Morten Nordhagen Ottosen, *op. cit.*, 269.
Danish as written language or, if the idea was to create a Norwegian national language, the process should not begin with the mixing of Norwegian dialects and Danish, since Denmark had a political advantage due to its growing power in the north, but with using something he called as “pure dialect”.

As an answer to P.A. Munch’s article, Henrik Wergeland wrote an essay entitled *Om norsk sprogreformation*, in 1835, where he states that Munch’s method was too radical. If Norway was to have a national language, then the gradual renewing of Danish was the only way. He presented three arguments to support his theory, going from stylistics or patriotism to democracy. The main idea was that the people needed a language they could relate to and feel at ease with, a language that must be founded on the basis of Norwegian culture and specificity, a language which everyone used in everyday life. But, for the Danes and for the Norwegian elite, Danish was the written language, while the language spoken in Norway in the 1830’s was considered a dialect, the mark of an inferior social class, the peasants. This is the main reason why Denmark regarded this attempt to create a national language as an intention to undermine the Danish influence in Norway. However, the precaution must have had some fundament, since, according to Glenthøy and Ottosen, several grammar schools in Norway changed “the name of the subject they taught from Danish to Norwegian in the 1830s or 1840s”7.

**Conclusion**

In the years following 1814, Norway lacked its own administration, entrepreneurs and institutions, since, after a long negotiation process, lasting from August 1814 to August 1815, the country accepted the union with Sweden. But the economic and political problems experienced in this period were progressively left behind as the principles of the liberal and democratic constitution adopted in 1814 have been implemented.

That is why we believe that the resurgence of Norwegian literature in the 1830s was influenced by two important events. Apart the establishment of the Oslo University in 1811, the Eidsvoll constitution created the foundation for the development of a cultural and national identity. Henrik Wergeland and Johan Sebastian Welhaven were two

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7 *Ibidem, 274.*
important authors from this period. But the Norwegian folk tales gathered by Peter Absjørnsen and Jørgen Moe played an essential role, as well.

From a linguistic point of view, the vast majority of people spoke Norwegian dialect, while still writing in Danish. But things changed in January 1836, when the young Ivar Aasen wrote a contribution to the linguistic debate from the 1830s entitled *Om vort Skriftsprog*, and a few years later, a grammar and a dictionary of this new language (in 1848 and 1850). In his works, Aasen joins both Wergeland and Munch’s ideas and suggests that a national language is needed, but that this language cannot be created from just one particular dialect. A comparison between several dialects would be more appropriate. That is why the two different directions from the period 1830-1860 were the norwegianisation of Danish and the reconstruction of a New Norwegian written language. Started by Wergeland in the early 1830s, the idea of introducing words from Norwegian dialects into Danish (*riksmål*) was developed by Knud Knudsen, later named „the father of *bokmål*”, while the creation of a New Norwegian language, *landsmål*, (later called *ny norsk*) was adopted by Ivar Aasen. The debate followed now several points, such as etymology/phonology, tradition/innovation, etc. Ivar Aasen’s great contribution was that he discovered a common system one could use to unite the diverse dialects of Norway and create a bond between regions that were seen before as separated. However, *landsmål* had the great disadvantage of being an oral language, with no written literature, no tradition, which led to a more difficult implementation in schools and administration. While the Conservatives were in favour of Danish, the Liberals supported the new language and its principles, underlying the idea that even if Norway had a political identity, the foundation of a cultural and linguistic identity was a continuous process that started in 1814 and lasted for about one hundred years.
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HEDDA GABLER: BETWEEN TERRITORIES

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Acknowledgements
This paper has been presented at the Seventh International Conference on Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania, Good governance in Romania and the Nordic and Baltic countries, hosted by the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies and Nicolae Iorga Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, București, 24-25 November, 2016.

Abstract:
The aim of this paper is to provide a deleuzian analysis of Hedda Gabler, one of the most controversial feminine characters of Ibsen’s plays. Thus, using Gilles Deleuze’s concepts to interpret Hedda Gabler we can acquire a clearer perspective over the protagonist and her relationship to “territories” as sexuality, family or society, reconfiguring also the context in which she is living. The deleuzian lens enables us to offer a logical explanation of Hedda Gabler as a complex character, reconfiguring the context she belongs to and taking her out of the rigid imaginary of the paradox and of the absurd. Thus, Deleuze’s philosophy helps us understand better how Hedda Gabler determines in a certain way the ambiguity of the “territories” and how she influences/is influenced by it. Thus, this study represents a literary analytical exercise inspired by some of Deleuze’s concepts, more specifically deterritorialisation/territory, antigenealogy, rhizome, alliance and the plan of immanence, and is interested to see how they function in Henrik Ibsen’s play. Aspects as a character’s corporeality, the spatial structure and the irony contribute as well to a unified perspective regarding the different territorial forms analysed in the paper: sexuality, family, society, etc.

Rezumat:
Scopul acestei lucrări este de a realiza o analiză deleuziană a unuia dintre personajele feminine cele mai controversate din piesele de teatru ibseniene, și anume Hedda Gabler. Astfel, utilizând conceptele lui Gilles Deleuze pentru a o interpreta pe Hedda Gabler, poate fi conturată o perspectivă mai clară asupra protagonistei și asupra relației sale cu teritorii precum sexualitatea, familia sau societatea, reconfigurând, de asemenea, contextul în care trăiește. Lentila deleuziană ne permite să oferim o
explicație logică a personajului complex care este Hedda Gabler, reconstituind contextul căruia îi aparține și analizând-o în afara imaginului rigid al paradoxului și al absurdului. Astfel, filosofia lui Deleuze ajută la o mai bună înțelegere a felului în care Hedda Gabler determină, într-un anumit fel, ambiguitatea “teritoriilor” și (le) influențează/este influențată de acestea. Astfel, studiul de față reprezintă un exercițiul analitic literar inspirat de câteva dintre conceptele lui Deleuze, printre care deterriorializarea, anti-genealogia, rizomul, alianța și planul de imanență, după cum are în vedere modul în care acestea funcționează în piesa lui Ibsen. Aspecte precum corporalitatea personajului, structura spațială și ironia contribuie, de asemenea, la o perspectivă unitară asupra diferitelor forme teritoriale analizate în lucrare, precum sexualitatea, familia, societatea etc.

Keywords: Hedda Gabler, territories, deterriorialization, sexuality, family, society

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to provide an analysis of Hedda Gabler, one of the most controversial feminine characters of Ibsen’s plays. Thought to be a paradoxical and even absurd protagonist, Hedda Gabler has often been negatively reviewed over time, despised and too seldom understood and looked at as a valuable human being. It was her gestures, her lines and her acts that scandalised readers and spectators, though, ironically, what Hedda was literally most afraid of was the scandal. So, understanding Hedda Gabler is no easy task, since there is already a long tradition in ascribing the paradoxical and absurd things an independent and isolated value and not really questioning them. Thus, this study proposes a deleuzian analysis of Ibsen’s play, using concepts as deterriorialization/territory, antigenealogy, rhizome, alliance and the plan of immanence and questioning and attempting to understand the protagonist as a complex human being with a complex way of thinking and of acting, who cannot be separated from the context she is certainly connected to. We are not interested in ascribing Hedda Gabler a definitive and unique value, avoiding thus any labelling, since, as Gilles Deleuze says, the main characteristic of the human being is an “irréductible multiplicité”\(^1\). The main aspect that is obvious in Ibsen’s play is that Hedda Gabler is symbolically moving between several “territories”, like family, society or sexuality, constantly avoiding to be taken

prisoner to none of them. If she manages to free herself of these “territories”, how she does it, what is the meaning of her actions and, more specifically, what is the meaning of her suicide represent some of our most important concerns in this paper. Using Gilles Deleuze’s concepts to interpret Hedda Gabler we can acquire a clearer perspective over the protagonist and her relationship to the “territories” mentioned above, reconfiguring also the context in which she is living. The deleuzian lens enables us to offer a logical explanation of Hedda Gabler as a complex character, reconfiguring the context she belongs to and taking her out of the fixed, rigid imaginary of the paradox and of the absurd. Thus, Deleuze’s philosophy helps us better understand how Hedda Gabler determines in a certain way the ambiguity of the “territories” and how she influences/is influenced by it.

Despite the labels that critics have used over time and which Joan Templeton was right to approach in a critical manner in her overview, Hedda Gabler is more than an unreal, inhuman, phallic, unwomanly, born bad or neurotic woman. What the critics have transformed in a „determined effort to classify its protagonist [Hedda Gabler] as a defective form of Woman“ is rather the story of an individual whose main obsession is freedom. But, in Gilles Deleuze’s terms, what Ibsen’s play really questions is the individual’s deterritorialization as a way of evading ideology’s prison. Thus, it is precisely the sharp consciousness of being deliberately taken prisoner to the territories in which she is paradoxically searching liberation that marks the destiny of this character. But the paradox proposed by Hedda Gabler is not at all indecipherable or incomprehensible, but rather

2 „But if the language was too realistic, the protagonist was too unreal. Reviewers in Scandinavia, England and the United States accused Ibsen of willful obscurity on the grounds that a Hedda Gabler could not exist.” (Joan Templeton, Ibsen’s women, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p.204).
3 „For the literary critic of Oslo’s Morgenbladet, Hedda was a ‘monster created by the author in the form of a woman who has no counterpart in the real world’. “(Ibid., p.204)
4 „Psychiatrist Karl Stern is grateful to Ibsen for providing in Hedda a textbook case of the ‘phallic woman’ who refuses the normal female ‘desire to receive, to hold and to nourish’. “(Ibid., p. 208)
5 „The play’s early commentators generally depend for logic on begging the question; they refused Hedda the status of woman because they found her unwomanly.” (Ibid., p.205)
6 „Like Coleridge’s motiveless Iago, Hedda acts as she acts because she is as she is, a vicious, evil nature. Hedda, in other words, was born bad.” (Ibid.,p.206)
7 „Freudian interpreters have classified Hedda as a study in sexual neurosis.” (Ibid., p. 207) 
8 Joan Templeton, op.cit., p. 206.
9 „The word that appears most often in the early reviews of Hedda Gabler is ‘incomprehensible’. “ (Ibid., p. 204)
transforms the stage in a plane of immanence, characterised by two
tendencies, generally known as public and private, that no longer function
as opposed. The combination determined by the image of the territory and
the one of the plane of immanence creates very subtle lines of flight that
Hedda uses to draw her own freedom, playing thus on the stage both an
individual and a collective destiny. Thus, the protagonist’s physical and
mental dynamism creates a world where the vice is not the consequence of a
world tainted itself by this vice, but a resistance gesture concerning the
permanent (re-/de-)territorialization that Hedda understands exceptionally
well.

Originating in geography, the notion of territory is associated in
Deleuze’s philosophy with concepts like “plateau” and “map”, and its
specificity concerns the fact that it does not represent a perfectly closed
dimension, but one that contains the possibility to transgress the limits
through the deterritorialization movement. Thus, the closed territory
becomes the pretext of its opening: “A territory refers to a mobile and
shifting centre that is localisable as a specific point in space and time. It does
not privilege or maintain the nostalgic or xenophobic protection of any
particular homeland; instead, this centre (...) expresses an experiential
concept that has no fixed subject or object. (...) As an assemblage, a territory
manifests a series of constantly changing heterogeneous elements and
circumstances that come together for various reasons at particular times.
Although a territory establishes connections from the areas of
representation, subject, concept and being, it is distinct from a fixed image,
signification or subjectivity.”¹⁰ Moreover, the concept of territory is not part
of an antithetic relationship, but rather incorporates the antitheses in a
unique plane of immanence. This explains the fusion of the public and of the
private dimensions, the ambiguity of the sexuality which is both an intimate
and a social aspect, the behavioral paradoxes and the ambiguity of notions
as love, trust, belonging, care, anxiety, death, creativity, art etc. Thus, each
territory implicitly offers the liberation precisely through the norms defining
it, but it is the individual who chooses whether to enact such a possibility
through transgression. As a veritable “trickster”, Hedda acquires the
function of a lens/mirror which reveals the absurdity and the paradox of any
(apparently) stable world. She perceives and understands perfectly the

alienation, solitude and the boredom as an estrangement. However, freeing herself from boredom, alienation and solitude signifies more than playing the territorial game of power and dependence. One must not be surprised that the protagonist looks at the other characters both with contempt, irritation, indifference and cynicism, since they cannot understand either their own captivity or her ideals. It seems that all the characters are part of an “apparatus” and Hedda does not really want to belong to it:

(1) MISS TESMAN(...): God bless and keep you, Hedda Tesman. For Jørgen’s sake.
HEDDA (frees herself): Oh...! Leave me be!
(2) “TESMAN: Oh well... I just thought, now that you belong to the family, you...”
HEDDA: Hm...I’m not at all sure...”
(3) Oh, pray, leave me out of this.12
(4) “Our way? Leave me out of it”.13

Thus, irony, silence and death become deterritorialization options the protagonist wants to apply, since boredom becomes a perverse relish and since life’s meaning cannot really be found in the territorial assemblage. Moreover, Hedda’s irony and obsessive gaze demonstrate that she knows the subtleties of this mechanism and, as a voyeur, wants to see how the wheels of the “apparatus” are moving, being permanently aware of the fact that she is outside it.

2. Family and (anti)genealogy

The family is a crossing point where the public and the private domain meet each other, but it is also one of the most important territories that are visible in Hedda Gabler. Thus, from a deleuzian point of view, we witness the protagonist’s refusal regarding the genealogy and the hereditary hierarchies as a normative system. The famous scene in the beginning of the play whose protagonists are Hedda, Tesman and Aunt Jule is a full expression of how Hedda tries to undermine the family as a social territory that governs private relationships. Denying her suggested pregnancy,

12 Ibid., p. 192.
13 Ibid., p. 214.
refusing to participate in Tesman’s joy of receiving his slippers, the reserved attitude towards Berte, the maid, as well as towards the “everlasting” cohort of aunts who raised her husband, are all examples describing the statement above. Even the fact that the play begins with a discussion between Berte and Aunt Julle, and afterwards continues with a discussion between Aunt Julle and Jørgen, representing the Tesmans as a significant majority in the scene, describes family as a harassing institution to Hedda. “Because she’s ever so particular” and an eccentric appearance that used to ride a horse and wear a “black habit” and “a feather in her hat”, Hedda does not (seem to) fit in the intimate, passive, caring role of Jørgen Tesman’s housewife, as both Berte and Løvborg underline: “But I declare, I never once dreamed they’d make a match of it, her and Mr. Jørgen”; “Hedda Gabler (...)married to... Jørgen Tesman! (...) Hedda, how could you throw yourself away like that?” Moreover, Hedda has to cope with an aunt that has “always been both father and mother” to Tesman and a maid that “always looked after him, ever since he was a little boy”, making her feel misfit in a genealogical story she has no connection with. Thus, the “everlasting” mention of the familial roots – “sainted Joachim’s little boy” and the constantly praised childhood memories of Tesman delineate a closed network she cannot really belong to, because she has neither previous emotional attachment to it, nor wish to engage in such a context she finds rather pathetic, as the “slippers”-scene proves it:

“TESMAN: My old house shoes! My slippers, Hedda!
HEDDA: Ah yes. You mentioned them quite frequently on the trip, I remember.
TESMAN: Yes, I did miss them so. (He goes to her.) Here, just take a look at them, Hedda!
HEDDA [crossing the stove]: Thank you, they wouldn’t appeal to me.

14 Ibid., p. 168.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid., p. 169.
18 Ibid., p. 216.
19 Ibid., p. 171.
20 Ibid., p. 168.
21 Ibid., p. 171.
TESMAN [following her]: (...) Oh, you can’t imagine how many memories they have for me.
HEDDA [by the table]: But not for me, particularly.”

But Hedda is, as Deleuze would say, “fatiguée de l’arbre”,23 completely bored of a genealogy that rules over time and over the human being: it is already September, says Hedda while looking, ironically, “at the leaves of the trees”, “so yellow” and “so withered”24, experiencing the rhythm of the nature as a burden on her body, making the aunt’s blessing “for Jørgen’s sake”25 even more unbearable as it expresses at the same time a definitive belonging (in terms of nearly objectification) to the family hierarchy of the Tesmans. Hedda as human being has no more meaning than the old piano or the chest where Tesman kept his research documents during the honeymoon. Thus, drawing a line of flight as she tries to escape the classical familial duties, Hedda becomes rhizomatic, in her own room, accompanied by her piano, her pistols and the portrait of the General Gabler.

3. Maternal territoriality

Related to the familial horizon, maternity is a way of enacting its values and a way of expressing genealogy. Thus, by denying her own future maternal condition, Hedda Gabler practically denies the memory of her own body containing the embryo of a new familial, collective memory as part of the genealogical dimension: “I’m exactly the same as I was when I left.”26 Hedda’s pregnant body seems sentenced to an eternal glorification of the family as institution, so her refusal to accept her condition as a future mother is the refusal of an additional territory that drastically limits her ontological horizon. It is the pregnancy itself that creates a memory, because of the natural temporal continuity, illustrating how the public dimension gains the right to move freely within the private space:

“TESMAN [following her]: Yes, but have you noticed how well and bonny she looks? I declare she’s filled out beautifully on the trip.

22 Ibid., p. 177.
24 Henrik Ibsen, op.cit., p. 179.
25 Ibid., p. 178.
26 Ibid.
HEDDA [moves irritably]: Oh, do you have to...!
MISS TESMAN [has stopped and turned]: Filled out?
TESMAN: Yes, Aunt Julle, you don’t notice it so much when she’s wearing that dress...But I....well, I have occasion to...
HEDDA [at the verandah door, impatiently]: Oh, you don’t have occasion for anything!”

There is basically no boundary, so Aunt Julle’s threat to visit the new family daily – “Every single day I’ll come and visit you both” - delimitates even more clearly the territory of the social femininity, where the traditional image of maternity becomes a socially engaged one through the hereditary bonds. Moreover, Aunt Julle makes constant, implicit references to Hedda’s pregnancy, assuming maternity as an existential project, not as much for her nephew’s wife, but for herself: “I also do need to have someone to live for. Ah, well, God is good...and I fancy there’ll soon be a few things for an old aunt to do here in this house, too.” Pointing to the temporal proximity of the maternal condition, Aunt Julle, as well as Brack, seems to imprison Hedda in the motherhood’s territory even before she really becomes a mother. Her repetitive refusals are accompanied by a corporeal dynamism easily remarkable on stage and indicated in the stage directions, since Hedda constantly “moves irritably”, “impatiently”, “frees herself” or is “crossing to the stove”, while Tesman is constantly “following her”. Thus, she tries to avoid both her husband’s emotional harassment and the Aunt’s pathetic gestures, since she does not want to be caught in such a “history”, but rather interpolates and mocks it, revealing its flaws. Consequently, she tries to create or to permanently keep the distance from whatever could block herself in a definitive captivity, explaining her repugnance regarding maternity as what theoretically should be “stirring experience”. The body carries not only its own (hi)story, but the Other’s (hi)story as well, and maternity is the most explicit example of carrying further the genealogical roots. But for Hedda this would rather mean a corporeal betrayal of her own

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid., p. 249.
30 Ibid., p. 178.
31 Ibid., p. 177.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid., p. 208.
principles, an absurd irony of being “everlastingly” caught in a genealogical territory she has no “vocation” for:

“BRACK: No, well we won’t talk about that. But then when you’re faced with...what I may...perhaps a little pompously...refer to as sacred and...exacting responsibility ? [Smiles.] A new responsibility, my little lady.

HEDDA [angry]: Be quiet! You’ll never see anything of this sort!

BRACK [carefully]: We’ll talk about that in a year’s time...at the very latest.

HEDDA [shortly]: I’ve no aptitude for such thing, Mr. Brack. No responsibilities for me, thank you!

BRACK: Why shouldn’t you, like most other women, have a natural aptitude for a vocation that...?

HEDDA [at the glass door]: Oh, be quiet, I say!...”34

Yet another interesting reference regarding a potential human fulfilling through having children is made by Aunt Julle in a discussion with Tesman regarding the empty rooms in the house:

“MISS TESMAN [with a smile]: Ah, my dear Jørgen, you might find a use for them....when the time comes.

TESMAN: Why yes, Auntie Julle, you’re got something there! As I gradually add to my collection of books, then...Eh?

MISS TESMAN: Precisely, my dear boy. I was thinking about your books.”35

It is quite easy to perceive the irony here, since Miss Tesman is not at all alluding to the “books”, but what we understand from this dialogue is the importance of the maternal territory, not only in an abstract, symbolic way, but architectural as well. There is a physical territory designed for maternity, and the emptiness of it reveals both a positive and negative potentiality. What is even more striking is Tesman’s intention to fill those rooms with books, while not understanding that those should probably be children’s rooms, so the metaphor child-book/manuscript is not specific just when discussing the relationship Thea-Løvborg. While Thea’s only child is a book, alluding to Løvborg’s intellectual paternity, Hedda’s future child is a corporeal one, showing that Tesman’s paternity is only a physical one, pointing to the fact that he is incapable of creating something new in his field.

34 Ibid., p. 209.
Thus, maternity and paternity in *Hedda Gabler* are not blessed dimensions/territories meant to express the sainted role of the family, but they express rather a defective genealogy.

Thus, it is the “child” image of Løvborg’s manuscript which confirms the patriarchal dimension of the historical approach he is proposing. And, after all, the couple Thea-Tesman, represented in the end of the play as a ridiculous enacting of the relationship between a muse and a creator, evokes the same patriarchal image, where history’s reconstruction from Løvborg’s manuscript is nothing but an ironic illustration of genealogy. In the end, Tesman becomes the step-father of the manuscript, losing at the same time his quality as biological father through Hedda’s suicide, while Thea remains the blessing mother of a lost child she tries to revive. In this context, the protagonist remains both outside this strange genealogical “research” and inside a family she sees and understands as being part of a rigid and insensitive epoch. Hedda’s dialogue with Tesman in the end of the play reveals a protagonist who is both inside and outside her conjugal life as a married woman she does not seem to have ever belonged to, at the same time abandoned by her husband who decides to devote his life to the reconstruction of the manuscript together with another woman (Thea).

4. **Marriage and sexuality as territories. Adultery**

Moreover, love, marriage and sexuality can be seen as territories, since the protagonist builds her identity and her body in a clear contrast with the normative dimension of maternity, as a reaction to the sexual-patrimonial claims of belonging to the Tesman family: “you’ve won the wife of your heart”\(^{36}\). Thus, she refuses the identity she just seemed to accept willingly, even if the price of her caprice proved to be her own freedom. Thus, the body of this woman who refuses to accept her own pregnancy and the fact that her own sexuality is subordinated to her husband, or, moreover, refuses the implicit sexual proposals made by judge Brack – represents, from this point of view, a vulnerable territory that Hedda still tries to keep under control. Denying Tesman’s “occasion”\(^{37}\) of seeing her in intimate contexts her husband pretends to have, but denying others’ corporeal references or proposals as well, because there is no space for any “kind of

\(^{36}\) Ibid., p. 175.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., p. 178.
unfaithfulness”\textsuperscript{38}, Hedda tries to eliminate any possible dependence and vulnerability in relationship with others (other men, in this context). But, still, there is no free corporeality in (the protagonist) Hedda Gabler up to the moment when she decides upon her own life and, consequently, upon her body. Moreover, what the reader perceives as perversity and vice in Hedda is actually the fact that the protagonist ironically shows that she knows that the world she lives in is perverted and vicious, that she recognizes its subtle mechanisms and the ideology governing it, trying to (out)play it.

Thus, Hedda does not want a sexual affair, but she rather feels contempt and disgust regarding the corporeal subordination both in marriage and outside of it. Her main obsession is not with finding a man to entertain her physically, but with the world outside, with getting out of the closed territory she is supposed to live in because of the social norms. Thus, there is certainly a delimitation between the men’s and the women’s territory, underlined both when Hedda is talking to Løvborg and to judge Brack, describing the masculine public dimension, as hidden and even forbidden to their feminine counterparts, a “world that (...) she isn’t supposed to know anything about”\textsuperscript{39}. This explains Hedda’s desire to participate at conversations “on all manner of lively topics”\textsuperscript{40}, her “roundabout questions”\textsuperscript{41} to Løvborg, as well as her wish to “come along as an invisible onlooker”\textsuperscript{42}, “to hear a little of your liveliness…unexpurgated”\textsuperscript{43}, and all these attitudes express, after all, a terrible impulse of getting out of the social, emotional, gender territory she was ascribed to. What Hedda really understands is that she is \textit{outside} of a dimension/territory associated with the possibility of freedom to act – namely the manly public sphere, while being at the same time (imprisoned) \textit{inside} another territory whose boundaries are again closed and very difficult to surpass – namely the womanly private sphere. What Hedda actually tries is to find a breach for each of them, allowing her to move freely between those spheres, while not belonging completely to any of them. Hedda is not interested in a scandalous breaking up with the norms, but she is rather an observer, obsessed to see/gaze at while obsessed of not being seen/gazed at. And since her wish

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., p. 217.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., p. 219.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 204.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 218.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p. 226.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
is mostly connected with men as belonging to another horizon, the adulterous potentiality is naturally and wrongly involved from the men’s perspective. Both Løvborg and Brack understand Hedda’s “conversational” intent as a sexual dialogue as well. Thus, adultery as territory expressing sexual imprisonment is linked to dependence and power (as all others territories) and while Hedda understands clearly the two men’s suggestions, she is both ironic and distant when it comes to their potential enactment, clearly denying it.

5. Architectural/spatial territoriality

But the most important fact is that the notion of territory has, first of all, a concrete, physical meaning, since the house where Hedda and Tesman live, the widow’s Falk villa, functions as a strange and estranged territory at the same time. Moreover, the play has an important focus on the spatial horizon from the very beginning, since the action takes place in the same room during all the four acts. What is ever more striking is the long, detailed, accurate description in the beginning of the Act One, focused on the numerous doors and rooms, separated but also linked one to another, and on the windows and curtains that function as “doors” leading to/separating different spaces as well:

“A spacious, handsome, and tastefully appointed reception room, decorated in dark colours. In the back wall there is a wide doorway with the hangings pulled back. This opening leads to a smaller room in the same style as the reception room. In the wall to the opposite wall, to the left, is a glass door, also with the curtains drawn aside. Through the windows we see part of a covered verandah outside, and trees in autumn colours.”

Moreover, anytime Hedda is annoyed, irritated, angry or simply preoccupied by something, the stage directions indicate that she “moves across” this space impatiently, nearby the windows or the doors, as if she would really try to escape from a place that holds her prisoner, while being conscious of the impossibility of this fact. Here are some of the most obvious examples that describe Hedda’s spatial and corporeal dynamism on stage as expression of her need for freedom not only as a mental dimension, but as

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44 Ibid., p. 167.
an architectural one as well, since the environment of the house is both a sign of (physical/mental) confinement and openness:

(1) “HEDDA walks about the room, raises her arms and clenches her fists as though in a frenzy. Then she draws the curtains back from the verandah door, stands there and looks out.”

(2) “HEDDA [half under her breath, getting up]: Oh, these everlasting aunts!
   TESMAN: Eh?
   HEDDA [crossing to the glass door]: Nothing. (...)
HEDDA [nervously, walking across]: Oh, you know how it is... these things just suddenly come over me. And then I can’t resist them.”

(3) “HEDDA [rises impatiently] Yes, there we have it! It’s these paltry circumstances I’ve landed up in...! [She moves across.] That’s what makes life so pitiful! (...)

(4) “HEDDA [standing and looking out] Boring myself to death. So now you know. [Turns, looks towards the inner room, and laughs.] (...)

(5) “HEDDA [clenches her hands as though in desperation]: Oh, it’ll kill me... it’ll kill me, all this! (... All this...farce.”

(6) “HEDDA: In your power, all the same. Subject to your will and your demands. No longer free! [She gets up violently.] No! That’s a thought that I’ll never endure. Never.”

(7) “HEDDA goes into the inner room and pulls the curtains together behind her.”

(8) “HEDDA, dressed in black, is walking aimlessly about the darkened room. Then she goes into the inner room and is lost to view to the left of the doorway. A few chords from the piano are heard. Then she emerges again and goes back into the reception room.”

The doors, the windows (with their curtains included) can be both closed and opened, hence the ambiguity of this space, whose structure definitely points to the possibility of deterritorialization or at least suggests the potentiality of a play with the notion of territoriality as both a “closed” and

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46 Ibid., p. 206.
48 Ibid., p. 209.
49 Ibid., p. 251.
50 Ibid., p. 262.
51 Ibid., p. 263.
52 Ibid., p. 247.
“open” dimension. In this context, the fancy parties Hedda dreams of, where she imagined herself as a “hostess...presiding over a select group of friends”53, the “footman”54, the new piano and the “saddle-horse”55 meant to take her outside the house are desires/gestures supposed to create a line of flight for the subject who wants to escape the territory. Moreover, in the volume *Ibsen’s Houses*, Mark B. Sandberg points to Hedda’s impossibility to see the villa as more than „merely a home”56, since „she had hoped to maintain a house [føre hus]”, which is to say, to entertain at a certain level of social elegance.”57 For Hedda, the house is not supposed to be a mere domestic, feminine territory, in the way that Aunt Julle suggests that it could be – “this house of life”58, but clearly a social one, expressing the wish for and the exercise of her freedom: “The agreement was that we were to live a social life. Entertain.”59 The contradiction implied in this segregation between the house as a public space and as a private dimension is, however, also a sign of ambiguity, and another concrete example showing it is Aunt Julle and judge Brack’s reference to Hedda’s pregnancy. In fact, paraphrasing Sandberg, I would say that the Lady Falk’s villa is “merely a house”, since in Hedda there is no feeling of “home” in the sense of belonging there. Even the expression “Hedda’s house”60 is rather ironic, since the place has no special meaning for the protagonist, there can be no discussion about sentimental attachment or even social appraisal. What is even more ironic is the fact that everyone around her is talking about “her” house, while she does not even care about the place itself:

“BRACK: Yes...among other thing, because you’ve got just the home you wanted.

HEDDA [looks up at him and laughs]: Do you also believe that fairy story? (...)

HEDDA: Yes, well, then we came past this house one evening.(...) And then...to help him along a bit...I happened to say, just on the impulse,

53 Ibid., p. 197.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid.
57 Ibid., p. 110.
59 Ibid., p. 197.
60 Ibid., p. 247.
that I’d like to live here in the villa. (…) But in this ardour for Lady Falk’s villa, Jørgen Tesman and I met in mutual understanding, you see! It brought on engagement and marriage and honeymoon and the whole lot. (…)  

BRACK: (…) And perhaps you didn’t really care about the place at all?  

HEDDA: No, God knows I did not.”

From this perspective, the marriage between Hedda and Tesman is based on/appears as a territory-house which proves to be a sort of prison, representing the premise for the protagonist’s wish to create breaches of freedom in a space she perceives as estranged. As Sandberg underlines: „Seemingly married accidentally, she is also the accidental inhabitant of a house that everyone else thinks is her dream home. As the play opens, she literally has no history there –(…) it is easy to lose track of the fact that she has only slept there one night and will end up living in “Hedda’s house” for just a couple more, the most temporary of the house’s inhabitants, actually.” What is called „Hedda’s house” is, however, a very atypical territory, since „the whiff of domesticity that clings to this alien home is intolerable for Hedda.” This strange combination of „domesticity” and „alienation” provokes the protagonist’s deterritorialization, since Hedda cannot afford a fixed position within the territory, but experiences a continuous movement along a line of flight, from a room to another, from a curtain to another curtain, from a window to another window. Moreover, it is easy to notice that even her suicide does not take place in a central area of the house/stage, but in a secondary one, hidden and willingly closed (the curtains are drawn, so that we are not able to see Hedda in the end of the play), where she has symbolically gathered her own previous, alternative history/genealogy: the pistols, the piano and her father’s portrait. There is nothing in that little room that does not belong to Hedda: even her own death belongs to her, since it happens beautifully with a shot in the temple. Thus, Hedda’s death is just as ambiguous as death generally is, but mocking, besides, the other’s impossibility of seeing not necessarily beyond the boundaries of the world they live in, but not even within them.

61 Ibid., pp. 206-207.  
63 Ibid., p. 111.
6. Conclusion

Thus, what we actually witness through Hedda’s suicide is a territorial transgression where death is understood as deterritorialization. That is the reason why Tesman’s and Brack’s lines in the end will never function as a real understanding or explanation of the meaning of Hedda’s suicide: “TESMAN [yelling at BRACK]: (…) Shot herself in the temple! Think of that! BRACK (half prostrate in the armchair): But, good God Almighty…people don’t do such things!”

In fact, these lines describe the characters as associated with a clear territory they are not able to escape, defined even by their own lines, while their perspective over the protagonist’s gesture is influenced and determined by this territorial horizon they ontologically belong to. Thus, Hedda becomes for them nothing more than an object situated now completely outside, because „people don’t [usually] do such things”, like “shoot[ing] herself in the temple”, hence her decision is beyond explanation in a “territorial” meaning. This is the “power” she always refers to: there is no strength in choosing a territory, in choosing a normative power that will always rule over you, because the true essence of existence lies beyond the norms, in the individual’s own power to get out of the territories that attempt to imprison it. Thus the deterritorialization becomes, practically, a manner of winning one’s own freedom, expressed precisely in Hedda’s ideal of having “vine-leaves in (…) [the] hair” and portraying Hedda as a victim of the society as much as a victim of her own wish for freedom.

64 Henrik Ibsen, op.cit., p. 264.
65 Ibid., p. 227.
References:
SOCIAL SECURITY ASSURANCE FOR LITHUANIAN CITIZENS IN LATVIA IN 1919-1939

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Acknowledgements
The article was funded by the Research Council of Lithuania implementing Researcher teams’ project “The formation of modern social structure in Lithuania in 1918-1940” (No. MIP-069/2014).

Abstract:
After the First World War tens of thousands of Lithuanian citizens lived in Latvia. Men have died in the war, but in Latvia lived their wives, children, parents and grandparents. As well every year about ten thousand Lithuanian citizens went to look for job in Latvia (especially temporary). Lithuanian citizens that lived in Latvia and Lithuanian citizens that came in Latvia needed to ensure social protection. These citizens were faced with a variety of social problems that had to be solved: lack of food, disease, left homeless children and etc. In 1924 Lithuania and Latvia have signed the Convention on social assistance. On the basis of this agreement social support was provided for Lithuanians in Latvia. Meanwhile, the citizens of Latvia in Lithuania did not settled large social problems and this Convention had been rarely applied to them. The Lithuanian diplomatic mission and various public organizations took care to ensure social security in Latvia for Lithuanians. According archival documents Lithuania spent the largest sum of money on social protection for its citizens in Latvia of all the European countries.

Rezumat:
Over the centuries the nations of Lithuanians and Latvians have lived next to one another; they share the same linguistic roots and speak Baltic languages. However, they differ by their historical heritage and experience; that is why, one of the main features defining a nation – its religion – is also different (Latvians are Lutherans, while Lithuanians are Roman Catholics). In the 19th century Lithuanians and Latvians were part of the Russian Empire, but the area inhabited by Latvians witnessed rapid industrialization processes and the growing economic development, while Riga had become an important imperial city and port. Faster economic development and political circumstances in the region of Latvia forced Lithuanians to emigrate to this part of the empire in search of political stability and employment. The first wave of Lithuanian migration was determined by political changes and the uprisings in the period of 1831–1863, while the second migration wave took place at the end to the 19th century – the beginning of the 20th century due to the rapid industrial and economic development in Latvia. It is estimated that in 1914 around 95,000 Lithuanians could live in Latvia and as many as 35,156 in Riga. It was the time when Latvia had become a popular destination where prominent Lithuanian personalities received their education; Lithuanians used to establish schools and various organizations. The situation essentially changed after World War I when Lithuania and Latvia established themselves as free and independent republics in 1918. Lithuanians residing in Latvia retuned to their homeland on a mass scale; the majority of Lithuanian intellectuals who could already climb the career ladder in the independent country came back as well. Statistics show that in 1920 25,588 Lithuanians resided in Latvia (the number insignificantly
changed and 22,843 Lithuanians lived in Latvia in 1935), who made up the Lithuanian diaspora and who had to be taken care of by the Lithuanian government, if necessary. In the meantime, in 1923 Latvians accounted for 14,883, or 0.73%, of the Lithuanian population which totalled 2,021,792.

In historiography the main focus was on Lithuanian and Latvian political and diplomatic relations between the wars. It should be highlighted in this respect Zenonas Butkus and Ėriks Jēkabsons works. Latvian historian Ė. Jēkabsons has written a work on Latvian minority in Lithuania. Lithuanian historian Vilma Akmenytė Ruzgienė, in her dissertation, analyzed Latvians’ situation in Lithuania, and Latvia and Lithuania particular border issues Ė. Jēkabsons has also published a monograph on Lithuanian minority in Latvia. He focused on the Lithuanian minority political and cultural activities in the neighboring country. Lithuanian historian Dangiras Mačiulis analyzed in his article Lithuanian Diaspora in Latvia and its organizational and political ambition to take part in the Latvian parliamentary elections of 1928. He also analyzed the activity of Lithuanian community in Latvia, the influence of religion on Lithuanian community and the situation of Lithuanian schools in Latvia. Aldona Gaigalaitė wrote about the activity of Lithuanian organizations in Latvia. It should be noted that these historians did not investigate the Lithuanian

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1 Visuotinė lietuvių enciklopedija (Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 2007), t.XI, 594.
5 Ėriks Jēkabsons, Lietuvieši Latvijā (Rīga: Elpa, 2003
social status in Latvia, so this study is exclusively based on an analysis of Lithuanian archival sources, in particular on the analysis of the documents of Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Lithuanian Interior Ministry.

The article deals with the social assistance for Lithuanians in Latvia in 1919-1939. This assistance was to be granted by the Lithuanian authorities in cooperation with their Latvian counterparts. The aim of the article is to analyze the social assistance for Lithuanians in Latvian welfare environment, the necessity of social assistance, the targeted groups and the methods by which the aid was provided.

**Lithuanian community in Latvia**

During the first years after the World War I, the governments of Lithuania and Latvia had to take care of tens of thousands of refugees travelling from Russia across the territory of Latvia to Lithuania. They were in need of transportation services and food supplies; ailing citizens had to be taken care of and a wide variety of social problems had to be solved. In 1921–1922 Lithuania and Latvia signed as many as two treaties regarding the transportation of deportees across the territory of Latvia under which the Latvian Government agreed to transport Lithuanian refugees from Russia across the territory of Latvia and to provide food and other required assistance to them but the refugees could not be transferred to Latvia and settle there. At the same time, the Lithuanian Government had to ensure that the Lithuanians staying in Latvia (those who did not return to Lithuania) acquired Lithuanian citizenship. In 1919 the Lithuanian Representation in Latvia was instructed that in case that Lithuanians were identified who could not afford to pay for their passport, they had to be exempted from the payment of passport fee in part or in full.10

It should be noted that almost half of the total Lithuanians living in Latvia were citizens of Lithuania. According to the data of Lithuanian envoy Jonas Aukštuolis, there were approximately 15,000 Lithuanian citizens in

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10 Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (LMFA) report to Lithuanian representative in Riga 1919 December 2. (Lithuanian Central State Archives, LCVA) 383-7-35, 56
Social security assurance for Lithuanian citizens in Latvia in 1919-1939

Latvia in 1926.11 A similar number is given in Latvian historian E. Jākobsons’ researches.12 E. Jakobsons and Lithuanian historian D. Mačiulis note that in contrast to other national minorities, Lithuanians distinguished by the fact that a very low percentage of them possessed Latvian citizenship: only 35.4 per cent in 1920, 69.1 per cent in 1925, 51.8 per cent in 1930.13 About two hundred Lithuanians were Russian citizens, and only a few dozen were Belarus, Poland, Estonia and other countries’ citizens. Lithuanian authorities in particular had to take care of Lithuanian citizens. Lithuanian citizens in Latvia and Lithuania’s Latvian citizens' rights were guaranteed according the Convention on the rights of citizens, which was signed by Lithuania and Latvia on May 14th, 1921. Historian Vilma Akmenytė noted that although there were some misunderstandings in bilateral political, for Latvians and Lithuanians a special status of ethnic minority was granted, enjoy more than other minorities (such as Polish, German, etc.).14

The Lithuanian community stood out from among all the national minorities living in Latvia because they were most fluent in Latvian – in 1931 as many as 86 per cent of Lithuanians could communicate in Latvian, whereas, for instance, Latvian was spoken by 81.9 per cent of Germans or 19.5 per cent of Russians.15

Lithuanians usually resided in Latvian cities, in particular in Riga (7,748 in 1925; 6,817 in 1930), Liepāja (2,637 in 1925; 1,834 in 1930), Daugavpils (309 in 1925; 1,834 in 1930), Jelgava (635 in 1925), Mitava, Ventspils, Bauska, etc., whereas in the 1930s the number of Lithuanians residing in farms or homesteads was on the increase.

Not once had Lithuanian diplomats informed about the social composition of the Lithuanian colony, noting that the circle of Lithuanian intellectuals was rather scarce. Latvian historian E. Jākobsons mentions the social structure of Lithuanians living in Latvia in 1925: 45.3 per cent Lithuanian worked in agriculture, 17.9 per cent in industry, 8.1 per cent in trade, 6.0 per cent in the services sector, 1.8 percent in liberal professions

11 Lithuanian representative in Riga report to LMFA 1926 October 4 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 537; Lithuanian representative in Riga report to LMFA 1930 June 25 (LCVA) 383-7-1038, 7; Dangirias Mačiulis, Lietuvių diaspora 2007, 75.
12 Ėriks Jēkabsons, Lietuvieši 2003, 56,57.
14 Vilma Akmenytė 2008, 58.
15 Lithuanian representative in Latvia secret report to LMFA 1931 January (LCVA) 383-7-1038, 33.
(lawyers, artists, etc.), 14.8 per cent in other activities.\textsuperscript{16} In 1930 the Lithuanian colony in Riga mostly consisted of workers, coachmen and maidservants.\textsuperscript{17} In 1927 the consul in Liepāja informed that the colony was made of the poor and several intellectuals.\textsuperscript{18} By 1934 the majority of Lithuanian citizens residing in Latvia were poverty-stricken people and workers (city workers were especially lacking material supplies) who lived on their salaries exclusively, and once they lost their work they used to apply to consulates for support\textsuperscript{19}

**An agreement on social assistance between Lithuania and Latvia in 1924 and social support for Lithuanians in Latvia**

Lithuanians did not only live their usual life, were engaged in various labours, took care of education, founded societies but also continuously faced social problems which they had to solve. The large number of social issues troubled the governments of the two countries. In 1923 the Lithuanian legation in Latvia informed that there were numerous poverty-stricken people, citizens of Lithuania, in Latvia and Riga, who could be called ‘beggars’. A lot of Lithuanians working in Riga had perished in the war and their elderly widows, fathers, mothers and relatives lived in poverty.\textsuperscript{20} According to the data collected by Latvian authorities, there were many professional beggars in larger Latvian cities, such as Riga and Liepāja, who were begging on the streets or apartments and, therefore, made a burden on society. In Latvia, begging was paralleled to a criminal offence, and following the mutual treaties, Latvia did not only have a right to punish such persons but also to drive them out from the country. Therefore, in 1923 Latvia even sent a note to Lithuania.\textsuperscript{21}

Not all citizens of Lithuania could expect assistance from Lithuania in the event of disease or other case of emergency – the state of Lithuania could only pay for the treatment of those patients who were hospitalized with the permission of the Lithuanian representation and whose

\textsuperscript{16} Ėriks Jēkabsons, *Lietuvieši* 2003, 55,56.

\textsuperscript{17} Lithuanian representative in Latvia report to LMFA 1930 June 25 (LCVA) 383-7-1038, 8.

\textsuperscript{18} Lithuanian representative in Liepaja report to LMFA 1927 August 20 (LCVA) 383-7-706, 71.

\textsuperscript{19} Lithuanian consulate in Latvia report to Lithuania Interior Ministry 1934 April 14 (LCVA) 928-1-630, 39.

\textsuperscript{20} Lithuanian representative in Latvia report to LMFA 1923 October 23 (LCVA) 928-1-316, 21.

\textsuperscript{21} Latvia’s Note Verbale to Lithuania. 1923 (LCVA) 928-1-316, 23
underprivileged status was confirmed by the representation. In other cases – if Lithuanians could not afford to pay for their treatment, they had to be sent away from the country.\textsuperscript{22} Various societies were preoccupied with the provision of support to Lithuanians, which would also receive financial assistance from the Lithuanian government, e.g. in 1919 the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs paid the debt of the Lithuanian children’s shelter in Liepāja equal to 4,000 ostmarks.\textsuperscript{23}

The governments of Lithuania and Latvia resolved to establish a legal framework for the provision of social support for the citizens of the two countries. On 22 May 1924, an agreement on social assistance, made of 11 articles, was concluded between the two states. Both countries made a commitment to provide assistance to the citizens of the other country through their public and municipal authorities, whereas the expenses had to be covered by the citizen’s country of origin. The authorities had to notify the consulate of the assistance provided. Assistance could be offered in the following forms: a) subsistence in shelters and hospitals; b) burial of the deceased; in exceptional cases, assistance could be provided in the form of cash and food. Each country could request the repatriation of the person in need of support, in case the assistance was provided for a period longer than six months or the person was diagnosed with a chronic or incurable disease. The institutions had to be paid for the assistance provided through diplomatic representations. Bills between Lithuania and Latvia had to be paid up every six months but they could not be unpaid for a period longer than a year. Each of the parties could terminate the agreement after two years.\textsuperscript{24} The agreement took effect on 7 August 1924.

According to archival documents, during the first year the agreement was in force, until the summer of 1925, social assistance was provided to 23 people in Latvia: 4 were placed to shelters, 1 to a kindergarten, 1 was provided a child delivery service and the child was placed to a shelter, 1 received an allowance in bread, 2 were hospitalized, 1 received rye and fuel, 8 were put to an asylum, 1 was provided an allowance in cash, 3 were provided with assistance of treatment in a hospital, 1 was rendered

\textsuperscript{22} Department of Labour and Social Affairs of Lithuania note to Latvia Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1923 (LCVA) 928-1-316, 33
\textsuperscript{23} LMFA report to citizen Jazdauskis in Liepaja 1919 July 18 (LCVA) 383-7-35, 181.
\textsuperscript{24} Lietuvos sutartys su svetimomis valstybėmis 1919-1929, ed. P.Dailidė (Kaunas, 1930), t.1, 296-298.
assistance in the event of funeral.\textsuperscript{25} The number of people in need of social assistance gradually increased more than twice, and the surviving data entail that from 25 to 50 people used to take advantage of such assistance over a period of six months.\textsuperscript{26} In contrast to Lithuanians, the provisions of the agreement were applied rather rarely in respect of Latvians residing in Lithuania; up to 10 citizens of Latvia would use the assistance in Lithuania during six months. Thus, the agreement was far more relevant from the perspective of Lithuania.

Following the statistical information and the analysis of archival sources, the principal groups of Lithuanian citizens in Latvia in need of public social assistance can be singled out:

1. Elderly and disabled people. Elderly people without any family members but with serious health problems had to be taken care of. This group was comprised of the people who could no longer earn their living and take care of themselves and would often go begging.

2. Mental patients. The share of people having mental problems and not being able to take care of themselves was rather big among all socially-disadvantaged individuals.

3. Patients diagnosed with illnesses for certain causes.

4. Babies and children. Lithuanian public authorities and diplomatic representations had to take care of babies and children if they were foundlings, their mothers were dead, fell ill or got mentally ill and their close relatives could not take care of them. Quite often mothers themselves, made redundant and facing the shortage of money, would ask to take their children to a shelter or to cover kindergarten bills where children used to receive food and clothing. Mothers would often explain that with children in their care, they were not welcomed by any employer. Usually, single mothers who were not able to indicate the child’s father or the child’s father used to deny his paternity, run away, hide, etc. would seek a place for their children in a shelter.

\textsuperscript{25} List of socially assisted Lithuanian citizens in Latvia 1925 October 1 (LCVA) 928-1-401, 26-28.

\textsuperscript{26} At the second half of the year 1925 social support was granted to 31 persons, at the first half of the year 1926 to 25 persons, at the second half of the year 1926 to 39 persons, at the first half of the year 1927 to 53 persons, at the first half of the year 1935 to 50 persons. Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1935 September 14 (LCVA) 928-1-630, 43; List of Lithuanian citizens who are beneficiaries of social assistance (LCVA) 928-1-517, 63,69,71; Lithuanian Interior Ministry report to LMFA 1927 April 25 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 16.
On behalf of Lithuania, social assistance and the implementation of the agreement were the responsibility of the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior and the Department of Labour and Social Affairs subordinated to it, the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Lithuanian Legation in Latvia and Lithuania’s consulates in Riga, Liepāja and Daugavpils. Consulates were entrusted a very important role because they used to familiarise themselves with the problem, the people in need of assistance and their relatives and would offer possible solutions. Consular employees would act as intermediaries between the person in need of assistance (his/her relatives), Latvian social care institutions (homeless shelters, hospitals, children’s shelters) and Lithuanian public authorities. The surviving documents reveal that in 1933 and 1934 the largest yearly amounts were allocated to Lithuanian representations in Latvia for the support of Lithuanians: as much as 4,000 litas to the representation in Riga, 500 litas to the consulate in Daugavpils and 750 litas to the consulate in Liepāja. Considerable funds – 6,000 litas – were also allocated to the Lithuanian consulate in São Paulo, 4,000 litas to the consulate in Argentina but, for example, the Lithuanian representation in Berlin was assigned 2,000 litas, in Paris – 3,000 litas, in Moscow – 1,000 litas; the funds allocated to other consulates or representations for the support of Lithuanians equalled to around 500 litas. In 1933 the state of Lithuania assigned the total amount of 30,000 litas to diplomatic representations for the support of Lithuanian citizens abroad; in 1934 the sum amounted to 29,000 litas.27 By 1932 the credits for the support of Lithuanians provided to Lithuanian legations and consulates were given from the accounts of the Ministry of the Interior; starting from 1932 they were provided from the accounts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Before taking a decision whether to provide social assistance to Lithuanians in Latvia in a specific case, citizenship was first checked up – whether the person was really a citizen of Lithuania residing in Latvia. In the framework of this agreement, Lithuania could pay up treatment or shelter bills for those people who resided in Latvia on a permanent basis, were the citizens of Lithuania and were poverty-stricken, and their poverty was confirmed by responsible public authorities. It was inspected whether the applicant for assistance had close relatives, whether he or his relatives had

27 Lithuanian social security inspector information 1934 (LCVA) 928-1-595, 20; Lithuanian social security inspector information 1934 (LCVA) 928-1-579, 49
funds and real estate (e.g. land, buildings) and whether he could pay up social services. In case it was identified that close relatives could take care of their grandfather, child or ailing relative (including financially), public authorities refused to pay for the services provided. For example, Arturo Jozefi, a citizen of Latvia, who had previously resided in Panevėžys, applied to the President of Lithuania with a plea to support him but the Latvian Government disagreed to provide support to him because he had grown-up and employed children.28 Upon discussing the matter with Lithuanian public authorities, consulates used to decide on the assistance to be provided in a specific case – to pay an allowance, to place in Latvian care institutions or to send back to Lithuania (to relatives or specific institutions). Occasionally, consuls did not only have to take care of children but also to initiate the establishment of paternity in order to put parents under an obligation to pay for the maintenance of their child: “The Consulate is taking the necessary steps to make the aforementioned farmer maintain the baby but it is still not clear whether it is going to succeed”.29 There were also other cases when the agreement was applied; for example, in 1928 the Lithuanian Government agreed to pay for the treatment of 24 children from the Lithuanian schools in Riga in Latvian sanatoriums during the summer, though the number of children from poor families in need of medical aid was around 50. Lithuanian social care homes for children had no sanatoriums.30

In the frames of the agreement, social assistance was not provided for the following groups: a) people arriving for temporary employment in Latvia; b) in cases when people from Lithuania used to go for treatment in Latvia on purpose. In case people from Latvia went for treatment in Lithuania and wanted to go back to Latvia afterwards, the family had to prove that it would be capable to maintain the former patient; otherwise, visa was not issued.31 Latvian hospitals and other institutions were warned in advance not to admit the arriving Lithuanian citizens without payment.32

28 LMFA report to Lithuanian social security inspector 1931 January 12 (LCVA) 928-1-533a, 2.
29 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1932 October 19 (LCVA) 928-1-588, 106.
30 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1928 April 13 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 461-462.; Lithuanian envoy in Riga report to LMFA 1929 May 4 (LCVA) 928-1-875, 42.
31 Lithuanian Department of Social Affairs director’s report to LMFA 1923 January 16 (LCVA) 928-1-319, 84.
32 Lithuanian social security inspector report to LMFA 1927 January 21 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 2.
It should be noted that field workers arriving from Lithuania for temporary employment in Latvia were also posing considerable social problems, though they were not entitled to any benefits under the agreement on social assistance. Some 15,000 people from Lithuania used to arrive every year for work on Latvian fields. In 1936 men were paid 24 lats, women were paid 20 lats, i.e. less than Latvian workers. The working season used to last from April to November, i.e. they used to work eight months per year in total. Under employment contracts workers were committed not to change the farmer providing employment because if the worker decided to leave the farmer, he also had to depart from Latvia. In the opinion of the Lithuanian consulate, such a condition provided grounds for Latvians to exploit Lithuanians. Those arriving for work were often dissatisfied with working conditions or disagreements with employers; then they used to escape to cities on foot or by train, abandon their babies or children, fall ill, etc. Such workers were subject to the Law on Insurance of Villagers against Illnesses which took effect on 5 June 1928 in Latvia, and Lithuania did not have to pay up their treatment bills. Field workers had to cover up to a third of treatment expenses. However, starting from 29 April 1933 the law was amended; it did no longer apply to foreign citizens and all treatment expenses. If the worker was not able to pay himself, the expenses were included in the bill of the Lithuanian Government. In this way, from 1933 the number of people in need of support remarkably increased. Because of low salaries, the workers who fell ill could not afford to pay for their treatment.

In accordance with the bilateral agreement, the state of Lithuania used to pay for the placement of the elderly, the disabled and mental patients in shelters; babies and children in children’s shelters and kindergartens; patients in treatment establishments. In exceptional cases, the state of Lithuania would agree to provide a 20 or 30 litas monthly allowance to a person to avoid his placement in a shelter or the transfer to Lithuania.

33 Lithuanian social security inspector report to LMFA 1927 September 2 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 31
34 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to President of Latvian Chamber of Agriculture 1936 October 10 (LCVA) 383-7-630, 13
35 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1934 July 24 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 129
36 Lithuanian consulate report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1934 April 14 (LCVA) 928-1-630, 40.
37 Lithuanian Interior Ministry report to Lithuanian consulate in Riga 1930 December 6 (LCVA) 928-1-526, 4-5.
Children’s maintenance was paid by the state in case their placement in shelters or kindergartens was coordinated with Lithuanian consulates because there were cases when mothers would give away their children independently and bills for their maintenance were forwarded to Lithuania.  

The care of orphans was one of the most acute problems. There were Lithuanian shelters for children in Riga and Liepāja. The Riga City Board maintained one Lithuanian shelter for children from its own funds. The Lithuanian Consulate in Riga was worried that the number of Lithuanian children in the Lithuanian shelter was decreasing because Lithuanians were sometimes placed to Polish shelters or, more commonly, to Latvian “where children were embraced with the foreign spirit”. According to the data of the consulate from 1929, there were 17 children in the shelter, compared to up to 80 children 4-5 years ago, but some 50 Lithuanian children could reside in the shelters of Riga. The consulate worried about the plans of the Riga City Board to close the Lithuanian shelter: “Such a plan of the city board was posing a serious threat to Lithuanianhood”. The Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported the opinion of the consulate in Riga according to which the Lithuanian shelter had to be maintained by all means possible by admitting more children to it. The shelter of Lithuanian orphans in Liepāja functioned from 1914. During the war it was maintained by the Lithuanian colony and funds were raised from abroad; after the war was over, the shelter faced a difficult material situation. From 1924 it was supported by the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 3 years by the annual contributions of 6,000 litas. The Lithuanian colony could no longer maintain it; therefore, the state was continuously requested for support because its closure would have “a serious adverse effect on Lithuanianhood”. The shelter provided accommodation to 17 children, mostly Lithuanian orphans or children from poor families.

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38 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1930 September 5 (LCVA) 928-1-526, 24.; Lithuanian social security inspector report to Lithuanian consul in Riga 1930 September 25 (LCVA) 928-1-526, 23.
39 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1929 October 15 (LCVA) 383-7-881, 3.
40 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1929 October 15 (LCVA) 383-7-881, 3; LMFA report to Lithuanian consulate in Riga 1929 October 22 (LCVA) 383-7-881, 2.
41 Liepaja Lithuanian Society “Pašalpa” application to the Lithuanian minister of Internal Affairs in October 1929 (LCVA) 383-7-877, 8.
The Lithuanian government would agree to pay Latvian institutions for temporary care which could last up to six months under the agreement, whereas long-term care was already posing new problems. To solve the problems of the need of social assistance in Latvia, the state of Lithuania followed two major principles – financial capacities and national interest. The country’s financial capacities were first evaluated: the social services that were much more expensive in Latvia, compared to Lithuania, were the maintenance of elderly people in Latvian shelters and the treatment in Latvian hospitals.\(^{42}\) In the opinion of the Lithuanian Consulate in Riga dating to 1934, Lithuania paid the highest costs for the maintenance of children in shelters, whereas the fees for baby maintenance “were especially high”. Tidy sums had to be paid for the deportation of mental patients to Lithuania due to the costly Latvian escort (the transportation of one patient from Riga to Kalvarija cost around 130-150 lats).\(^{43}\) At the same time Lithuania sought that children would not lose their national identity. According to one of the reports, special attention had to be paid to Lithuanian babies placed in Latvian shelters: “They are nurtured in Latvian spirit; they forget their mother tongue altogether and, naturally, they turn into Latvians but at the cost of the Lithuanian treasury.\(^{44}\) The Lithuanian consul in Liepāja requested to return 9 children kept in children’s shelters to Lithuania: “there they would become patriots of Lithuania and learn some craft what they cannot attain here”.\(^{45}\)

The state of Lithuania could not always pay for accommodation in homeless shelters and children’s shelters, repeated treatment in hospitals or mental patients. In 1927 Lithuanian public authorities expressed their concern that the expenses for people in need of social assistance for more than six months accounted for the greater part of the bill for the services provided by Latvia to Lithuania.\(^{46}\) It was then resolved that, circumstances permitting, such children and individuals had to be moved to social care institutions and hospitals in Lithuania. Usually, consulates used to provide

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\(^{42}\) LMFA report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1929 December 30 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 378; Lithuanian social security inspector report to St. Vincent Paul Society Management Board 1935 October 16 (LCVA) 928-1-630, 29.

\(^{43}\) Lithuanian consulate in Latvia report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1934 April 14 (LCVA) 928-1-630, 39.

\(^{44}\) Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1927 April 24 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 44.

\(^{45}\) Lithuanian consulate in Liepāja report to LMFA 1928 October 18 (LCVA) 928-1-863, 1.

\(^{46}\) Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1927 March 25 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 64-65.
lists of people every year; the lists were made of people for whom vacancies in the shelters and hospitals in Lithuania were sought as well as children in need of a place in the children’s shelter. The deported Jews used to be admitted to the Jewish shelters established in Lithuania, while Lithuanians were provided residence in Lithuanian shelters. Each person was a matter of discussion with Lithuanian institutions. The surviving archival material entails that approximately 10 people used to be moved to Lithuanian institutions every year. It should be noted that Lithuanian social care institutions were continuously completely filled or even overfilled and would accept to admit Lithuanian citizens from Latvian institutions in exceptional cases only. In 1934 the Lithuanian consul in Riga regretted that the replies received from Lithuanian institutions were usually negative and he himself proposed to establish more sheltered housing in Lithuania as well as to expand the existing one; otherwise, social assistance costs would not reduce. It was also asked to move 3 adults and 15 children to Lithuania. However, only a part of people whose transfer was requested were moved to Lithuanian institutions; those remaining in Latvia were further maintained by Lithuania.

Lithuanian public authorities position on the implementation of the Treaty for social support

Lithuanian public authorities concluded that over nearly ten years, from 1925 to 1934, when the agreement was in effect, Lithuania had already paid 400,000 litas to Latvia, when the annual allocations from the Lithuanian budget accounted for 40,000 litas. Debts grew as well. In 1934–1935 measures were taken to move as many Lithuanians to Lithuania as possible, thus reducing the expenditure from the budget. Public authorities worried for the inconsistent application of the agreement – social assistance provided to Lithuanians in Latvia was far more extensive than that provided to Latvians in Lithuania. Lithuanian authorities continuously kept track of the information on the assistance provided to Latvians in Lithuania. It was noted in 1927 that there was no need to provide support to Latvian citizens in Lithuania, and in 1930 assistance was provided to one citizen of Latvia.

47 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1934 April 14 (LCVA) 928-1-630, 39-41.
48 The inspector of Department of Labour and Social Affairs of Lithuania report to Lithuania representative in Latvia 1934 March 24 (LCVA) 383-7-630, 66.
It was concluded at the beginning of 1935 that 4 citizens of Latvia resided in Lithuanian shelters on a permanent basis whose maintenance cost 1,600 litas per year, including isolated instances of treatment and payment of allowances, whereas in Latvia, social assistance was provided to 92 citizens of Lithuania during the first six months of 1934, and Lithuania was issued a bill of 28,000 litas for this period.\(^{50}\) In 1935, social assistance was provided to 9 citizens of Latvia under the agreement.\(^{51}\)

Despite such mutual inconsistencies, the Lithuanian-Latvian agreement on social assistance remained in effect throughout the inter-war period. After two years the agreement was in effect, in the spring of 1926, Lithuanian public authorities began seriously considering whether the agreement could be extended. Lithuanian public authorities were concerned about the fact that Lithuania had to pay Latvian institutions the average amount of 30,000 litas every year for the provision of social assistance, whereas there was no need to provide assistance to Latvian citizens; therefore, the agreement was clearly not in the interest of Lithuania.\(^{52}\) The Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Lithuanian diplomats in Latvia exchanged their opinions. The Ministry of the Interior followed the position that the agreement was not in the interest of Lithuania. According to the ministry, Lithuania had already paid 20,079 litas 72 ct to Latvian institutions for the provision of social assistance to the citizens of Lithuania in one year from the effective date of the agreement (from 6 August 1924 to 1 July 1925) and new considerable bills were expected. The ministry did not even suspect that if assistance was needed by such a high number of Lithuanians in Latvia, perhaps the assistance was also used by those “who did not really need it”. The Ministry of the Interior doubted the benefit of the agreement and proposed to terminate it because assistance could also be provided in the absence of agreements on social assistance, e.g. Lithuania also provided such assistance to foreign citizens even though it had not signed agreements on the provision of social assistance with their

\(^{49}\) Lithuanian Interior Ministry report to LMFA 1927 April 25 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 16.  
\(^{50}\) The inspector of Department of Labour and Social Affairs of Lithuania report to LMFA 1935 March 18 (LCVA) 383-7-630, 212  
\(^{51}\) LMFA report to Latvian representative in Kaunas 1935 September 29 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 62  
\(^{52}\) Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affaires report to Lithuanian Minister of Interior Affaire 1926 April 19 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 546; Lithuanian Minister of Interior Affaire report to Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affaires August of 1927 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 3.
countries of origin. On the other hand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs accepted the proposal to terminate the agreement with doubts and followed the opinion and “the termination of every agreement is detrimental to Lithuania, unless it is based on undoubtedly important motives”. Lithuanian representative in Latvia Jonas Aukštuolis asked not to terminate the agreement and not to leave the Lithuanian community “without any assistance”. He reminded once again that Lithuanian citizens residing in Latvia were very poor; most of them were factory workers and coachmen, whereas Latvian citizens in Lithuania engaged in farming were better-off.

On 24 September 1926 the Lithuanian Government resolved to terminate the agreement, and the envoy in Latvia was instructed to inform the Latvian government about it “without specifying the motives”. On 26 October 1926, Lithuanian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Latvia Jonas Aukštuolis presented a note indicating that from 1 November the agreement on social assistance should be considered terminated at the initiative of the Lithuanian Government. The agreement remained in effect until April 1927. Following the termination of the agreement at the initiative of Lithuania, Lithuanian diplomats faced certain problems because they did not know what measures should be taken to solve the problems of Lithuanian citizens in Latvia who lived in Latvian shelters and who received an allowance or assistance in the form of cash and food in Latvia. The Latvian Government wanted to know how to act after the agreement was no longer in effect because according to their data, at the beginning of 1927 social assistance was assured to the following people in Latvia: 7 children in children’s shelters, 5 children in kindergartens, 5 people in shelters for the helpless and 4 people in asylums. In the meantime, the Lithuanian consul in Riga feared that if the agreement was not extended, 50 patients with chronic diseases, including mental patients, syphilis patients and small

54 LMFA report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1926 August 17 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 536
55 Lithuanian envoy in Latvia J.Aukštuolis report to LMFA 1926 October 4 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 537
56 LMFA report to Lithuanian envoy in Latvia 1926 October 8 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 532
57 Lithuanian envoy note to Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs 1926 October 26 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 527.
58 LMFA report to Lithuanian Interior Ministry 1927 January 22 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 497.
59 Latvian envoy report to Lithuanian Prime Minister A.Voldemaras 1927 February 23 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 498-499.
babies, would have to be taken care of. Lithuania did not provide specific proposals. It was thought that if Latvia refused to provide social assistance to Lithuanian citizens in the absence of the agreement, “we are determined to transport our citizens living in Latvian shelters for children and the helpless as well as asylums to Lithuania”. The Latvian Legation in Kaunas was also informed about it by a note. In April the Latvian Legation in Kaunas re-addressed Lithuanian Prime Minister Augustinas Voldemaras asking how social issues would be solved; specific proposals were requested. Having considered all the circumstances and evaluated the situation of Lithuanians in Latvia, the Lithuanian Government promptly changed its mind and resolved not to terminate the agreement, and in the verbal note of 8 April it reported to the Latvian Legation that the Lithuanian Government took a decision to extend the agreement on social assistance “until the agreement is amended or replaced with another agreement”. In May the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted proposals on the amendment to the agreement, and the agreement remained in force until the very end of independence. In fact, the Ministry of the Interior followed its earlier position for the time being, believing that the agreement was not in the interest of Lithuania, and in August 1927 it again requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reconsider the termination of the agreement.

Conclusions

It should be noted that a numerous Lithuanian community that resided in Latvia after World War I continuously faced social problems. The community was mostly comprised of workers who lived on their salaries exclusively. They often had to apply for support from Lithuania in the event of illness, loss of employment or disability. Consulates maintained a direct relationship with Lithuanian citizens.

60 Lithuanian consul in Riga report to LMFA 1927 March 31 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 491.
61 Lithuanian social security inspector report to LMFA 1927 February 15 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 496
62 Latvian envoy report to Lithuanian Prime Minister A.Voldemaras 1927 April 6 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 494
63 Lithuanian Government Note to Latvian representative in Kaunas 1927 April 8 (LCVA) 383-7-680, 493
64 Lithuanian Minister of Interior Affaire report to Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affaires at August 1927 (LCVA) 928-1-517, 3
In order to solve social issues in the two countries, in 1924 Lithuania and Latvia concluded the agreement on social assistance whereby social assistance was provided to Lithuanian citizens in Latvia and Latvian citizens in Lithuania. Over twenty years the agreement was more important to Lithuania because Lithuanians were in need of assistance in Latvia much more often than Latvians in Lithuania. Latvian citizens were in need of support in isolated cases only (up to 10 per year), whereas in the case of Lithuanians, around 50 of them used to take advantage of social assistance over a period of six months. As a result of such inconsistency in the implementation of the agreement, in 1926 Lithuania was even willing to terminate the agreement. Lithuania had to pay rather tidy sums to Latvian social institutions.

Usually, social support was provided to elderly people, ailing people, mental patients, disabled people and children. In the framework of the agreement, Lithuania used to pay for the maintenance of these people in Latvian institutions for six months; afterwards, it used various means to move such people to Lithuania where their maintenance was much cheaper. However, Lithuanian care institutions used to admit Lithuanians from Latvia in exceptional cases only because they had no vacancies and that, in turn, increased maintenance costs in Latvia.
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JARDAR SEIM AND THE HISTORY OF A NORWEGIAN-ROMANIAN STORY

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Abstract
Jardar Seim is a historian and member of The Norwegian Historical Association, a specialist in Eastern European history which he taught at the University of Oslo between 1983 and 2002, and moreover a keen speaker of the Romanian language. He is the author of the works Øst-Europas historie/The History of Eastern Europe (Aschehoug, Oslo, 1994) and Øst-Europa etter murens fall/Eastern Europe after the Fall of the Wall (Aschehoug Forum, Oslo, 1999) and co-editor of the book Romanian-Norwegian Relations. Diplomatic Documents, 1905-1947 (Romanian Cultural Institute, Bucharest, 2007), one of the very few works dealing with the Norwegian-Romanian diplomatic relations. He was also a teacher of history, Norwegian and social studies at the High School in Ski, Norway, and responsible for the pupils’ exchange between the above-mentioned high school and Unirea High School (later Unirea National College) in Braşov, Romania, in the period 1993-2008.

Rezumat
How did you get to discover Romania, such a distant country from Norway?

It is not easy to figure out how a certain interest originated many years ago. But in this case I am fully aware of how a spark was aroused in me. Sometime in the 1960s I was passively listening to a music program on the radio. Suddenly the music started vibrating in a way I had never heard before. I was fascinated by the changes from a sore, melancholic tune to ardent, rapid movements. In other words, I had made my first acquaintance with Romania through its fabulous folk music. I even managed to order the LP that I had been listening to. I still have it. After that I set out to enlarge my former scarce knowledge about Romania by some reading, discovering for instance the surprising existence of a Romance language in the eastern part of Europe.
What memories do you still keep from your first visit to Romania, in 1965?

My first visit to Romania was in 1965-66 and lasted for nine months. After participating in summer courses for foreign students in Sinaia, I stayed for eight months in Bucharest studying at the University. That was owing to the first cultural agreement between Norway and Romania, which included scholarships for a student exchange. I was the first Norwegian student to make use of that. But the Romanian student who was supposed to arrive in Norway, never showed up. Responding to your question, I could pick out many memories from that year. Let me just mention two. Not everyone around me at home in Norway was convinced that it was wise of me to go to a communist country for such a long time. It turned out that I was the only Norwegian resident in Romania at that time, and there was no Norwegian embassy there, only in Belgrade. Before leaving Norway somebody warned me of the never-ending communist propaganda I would be exposed to all the time. I laughed at that. Of course I knew that I was to stay in a communist dictatorship with no freedom of the press, only one political party and a certain surveillance by the secret police. But I was confident that this was only part of the whole picture. I would also meet normal, ordinary people and get better knowledge of various aspects of the Romanian culture. With this conviction in mind I was nearly knocked out by one of my first experiences upon my arrival in Sinaia in July 1965. Suddenly I realized that there were loudspeakers on the main street spitting out political propaganda, even if I didn’t understand the words. A mood of distress overtook me. Were the warnings correct after all? Should I live in a political loudspeaker-hell for almost one year? Luckily, I should not. This arrangement was made on a special occasion, the 9th congress of the Romanian communist party when Nicolae Ceauşescu was officially elected general secretary. Another memory: The lecturing by the university professors in Bucharest would always be constrained within the party's political confines. Nevertheless, sometimes there might be a surprise. Not in a large auditorium, of course. One of the surprises that I experienced came in a small introductory language group for foreign students. At the
end of a session our teacher told some of us, I don’t think the whole group, about a Romanian writer who had been high up in the communist literary apparatus, before defecting to the West in 1960. All his works were removed from the libraries and bookshops. His name was Petru Dumitriu. His last book at that time was “Incognito”. It had appeared in French in Paris in 1962, and an English translation followed in 1964. I bought it immediately when I returned to Norway in 1966. It is a fascinating novel about the first years in Romania after the Second World War, falseness and deception being central themes. Unfortunately, I have forgotten the name of this daring professor who pointed to a forbidden writer.

What attracts you most to Romanian history?

There are many interesting periods in the Romanian history. Personally, I think that the interwar period is one of the most interesting. Sometimes I have heard Romanians, not historians, by the way, describing it in a rosy, almost panegyrical way. In the communist historiography it was mostly the other way around. What attracts me to the interwar history of Romania, however, is not that it has been contested, but that it was so varied, so rich in possibilities, crossing influences, power and powerlessness, and with contrasting views of how a society should be understood and developed. Firstly, Romania shared many of the common European preconditions for that period, like the aftermath of the First World War, the great economic depression and the new militant ideologies. Secondly, Romania had its own characteristics and conflict lines from before the war, continuously playing a role, like the problems of the peasantry, the different attitudes towards industrialization, or the priorities in the foreign policy. And thirdly, there were the actual political institutions, the social structures, the mentalities and not to forget, the people. Ordinary, anonymous people that sometimes behaved collectively also in a political setting, like the participants in the large demonstrations against the liberal government in 1928. Or individuals that more or less singly were in a position to change a direction or lay new premises for the future, like some politicians or king Carol II. In this interplay of external and internal, structural and personal factors in a specific time there are many fascinating details
that also invite explanations and drawing of larger lines, thus enriching the general understanding of Romanian history.

Could you identify some common features between the history of Romania and Norway?

I find it a bit artificial and too programmatic to look for common features between the history of Romania and Norway. But there are many fields where comparisons may be meaningful and open up for new understandings of both countries. One could, for instance, compare on a regional level different cooperative institutions in the countryside in the interwar period. Or one could compare how the two countries defined their positions in NATO and the Warsaw pact during the Cold War, both of them with some sort of deviation from the standard conduct of member states.

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson was not just a Nobel Prize laureate in literature, but he was also related to Transylvania. How important do you consider him both for the history of Transylvania and for Norwegian history?

Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson was very important for Norway, both as a prolific writer and as a political person, engaging himself in a great many subjects. Not as an ordinary politician, but rather as a prophetic and rumbling voice that made both friends and enemies around him. He also had a European reputation and used that in his commitment for suppressed peoples. He condemned Hungary’s policy of magyarization in Slovakia, and when he became aware of the parallel situation in Transylvania he expressed open sympathy for the Romanians there through a series of interviews in the Romanian-language paper “Tribuna” in Arad.

How do you manage to keep contact with the Romanian language and culture?

I try to keep in touch with Romanian culture in several ways. When visiting Romania I meet friends, but I also try to see places where I have never been before and where I know no-one. An
example: I had passed by Ploieşti many times on my way from Bucharest to Braşov, but never stopped there. Finally I decided to do that and found Ploieşti well worth a visit. Some reading of the town’s history beforehand added to the value of the visit. Last year I rented a car to visit Caracal and Alexandria as well as to look for some former manor houses in the countryside. Such trips broaden the view of what Romania is like. When visiting Romania I also buy far more books than I have got time to read. And of course, the Internet has made a tremendous difference when it comes to being in contact with the culture of a country that is geographically far away.

**Since you are a friend of Romania, could you please tell us more about the Norwegian community of Romania’s friends?**

In the first years of my acquaintance with Romania this question would have been easy to answer, the number of us being so small. Today the situation is much more complex. A great many Norwegians consider themselves friends of Romania, former students, people with professional contacts, tourists who have experienced that Romania is more than Dracula and “Ceauşescu’s palace”, and so on.

**How strong are the bilateral relations between Romania and Norway nowadays?**

I consider the relations to be strong, how strong it is impossible to measure. But the official relations are stable and closely knit. And then come the many human bonds. They may be invisible for others than those involved personally, but they are nevertheless sort of a foundation wall in the relations between the two countries, be it through Norwegians with an interest in Romania, or Romanians working in Norway or studying Norwegian at Romanian universities.

**In 2014 Romania and Norway celebrated 50 years since they decided to raise their diplomatic representations at the level of**
embassy. Could you please tell us some facts related to the history of the diplomatic relations between our countries?

The diplomatic relations between Romania and Norway are older than the establishment of embassies or legations. Before 1905, when Norway obtained its full independence by the dissolution of the union with Sweden, diplomatic matters were dealt with by the legations of Romania and Sweden/Norway in Berlin. After the dissolution the Romanian government proposed that the existing arrangements should be continued. The proposal was accepted by Norway, and one of the first matters dealt with was Norway’s proposal in 1907 for a commercial treaty. This was negotiated and signed in Berlin in 1910. The first permanent diplomatic representation was a Romanian legation in Kristiania (Oslo) in 1917. It was closed for financial, not political, reasons in 1922 and reopened in 1934. Norway established a permanent diplomatic representation in Bucharest in 1935. Later on there were shifting ways of maintaining the relations, for several years through side accreditations in neighboring countries, a token of relatively sparse and limited relations. In that perspective the diplomatic activities were mirroring the general levels of political, economic and cultural connections between the countries. But sometimes individual efforts by skilful diplomats could broaden and deepen the relations by establishing personal contacts and taking initiatives. I think that the Romanian minister in Oslo from 1934 to 1939, Dimitrie Juraşcu, was one such diplomat. He became a well known and respected representative of Romania in Norway. One of the visible results of his work was a large exhibition of Romanian folk art in Oslo in 1936 with several leading Norwegian cultural personalities in the patronage committee.

How has the image of Romania changed in Norway throughout the years?

For many years the image of Romania was marked by the communist dictatorship of Nicolae Ceauşescu and his stubborn resistance to reforms. After 1989 many Norwegians engaged in relief actions for orphans or deprived villages. When Romania became a member of the European Union, the free movement of people in the
European Economic Area resulted in making Romanian citizens visible in Norway in new ways, as beggars in the streets and thieves in the courts and criminal statistics. Ignorant and prejudicial Norwegians, and there are quite a few of them despite a general high educational level, tended to associate such impressions with the country of origin, having limited supplementary knowledge of Romania. But most people have realized that such impressions are not representative, and many have their own personal impressions from the many Romanians working in ordinary jobs in Norway. They are not so visible, they integrate into the society, but they are many more in numbers. I would add that a certain negative general image for many years developed independently of the marginal groups just mentioned. I think of the creeping doubt many got concerning the transition period after 1989, when Romania had experienced an all-times high level of sympathy in Norway at Ceauşescu’s fall. After 1989 we heard of the “mineriades” and that many former party cadres remained in power disguised as new struck democrats, of the sudden enrichment of some such people, and corruption on a large scale. Of course, the image one develops of another country is also a product of one’s own values, there is no neutral way of describing another society. Norway is a country with strong egalitarian values, even if such an expression should not be exaggerated as an absolute. But for many Norwegians the widening gap between rich and poor people in Romania and other former communist countries in the long run will be a more severe threat to the image of the Romanian society than the passing problems I just mentioned. Apart from more or less informed generalizations, I keep to my conviction from the 1960s: Nothing can compare with the image you get by meeting people and getting to know the culture of a country directly. I could never have become a friend of Romania in the stereotyped atmosphere of the Cold War years without such inputs.

[Interview with Jardar Seim, July 4, 2016]
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