

Editorial Foreword

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On 28-29 May 2020 in full Coronavirus pandemic upsurge and lockdown conditions the Eleventh Conference on Baltic and Nordic Studies gathered on Zoom instead of The Palace of Culture and The Middle Age Citadel of Târgu Mureş as initially planned. The meeting was summoned in partnership with *Rethinking Europe* in order to reflect, from the perspective of the Baltic Sea Region, upon the Old Continent in the context of Brexit and the pandemic. Questions on the impact of the recent evolutions on Baltic and Scandinavian states have been raised, but the perspective was much wider looking on how the countries of this region responded to structural changes or alterations of the international environment over time.

The two plenary sessions on the *EU after Brexit: Perspectives on the Future of Europe* and *Constructions of Christian Identity and the Idea of the Holy Land in the Northern Periphery: The Sawley World Map in Twelfth-Century England* appropriately mirrored the sequential diversity of the conference. Panels have been devoted to *Encounters, fantasies and perceptions in shaping Europe, Rethinking Europe in Nordic and Baltic cultures, Rethinking the Baltic Sea Region in Europe during the interwar period, Rethinking Scandinavia and the Baltic Sea Region in Europe during the two world wars, Intercultural relations in the Nordic and Baltic countries, Reception of Nordic literature, New perspectives on Norwegian literature, Teaching and use of Nordic languages*. The main theories, concepts and ideas presented are resumed in the *Book of Abstracts* published before the conference, while the full papers are assembled in volume 12, issues 1 and 2 of our biannual peer review journal.

The Honorary Chair of the Conference, Her Excellency Dr. Violeta Motulaitė, Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania in Romania and Bulgaria, Honorary President of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies, has focused in her lecture, published in this issue, on the

Lithuanian perspective of the current European Brexit and Covid crisis, professing that:

“Lithuania is interested in a deeper cooperation in the common foreign and security policy (CFSP), especially in the crisis management, the prevention of hybrid threats and disinformation, the transatlantic partnership, the neighborhood policy development; the common market, especially in the services area; the protection of external borders, the strengthening and development of the Schengen area; the energy security; the transport policy; and eventually the health policy, having in mind lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.”

This issue publishes five research articles clustering political science analyses, cultural studies and historical research. Luiza Filimon deals with discriminatory discourses in the parlance of the Scandinavian radical right parties and concludes that the rhetoric utilized during the 2015 refugee crisis “falls into the coded register or at the very least purposefully attempts to veer away from the radical excesses which are marginalizing and self-exclusionary.” Ildikó Varga reconstructs the activity of the *La Fontaine Society* from the perspective of a convergence locus of Romanian, Hungarian and Finnish literature. Roxana Ema Dreve tackles Thorbjørn Egner’s book *People and Robbers of Cardamon Town* as a showcase of how children’s behaviour is influenced by adults’ expectations on Scandinavian rules of modesty. Costel Coroban recalls “the change in women’s mentality towards the concept of war and their own role in it according to autobiographical sources such as was journals, diaries, letters or autobiographical novels authored by women who were present at the front during the Great War.” In her article of debut Andreea Dahlquist approaches for the first time in historiography the Romanian-Swedish economic relations during the Second World War, successfully reflecting on the expectations and evolution of trade combined with politics and war. This issue ends with Crina Leon’s interview of Andreas Sønning, a Norwegian flute soloist, Associate Professor at the Norwegian Academy of Music and the owner and artistic director of Sønning Music Performance in Oslo, and a book review of Epp Annus’ “Soviet Postcolonial Studies: A View from the Western Borderlands”.