Tenth International Conference on Nordic and Baltic Studies

Dissent versus Conformism in the Nordic, Baltic and Black Sea Areas

Tribute to Prof. Leonidas Donskis

June 6th-8th, 2019 | 10 am
Ovidius University of Constanța
Free admission

http://univ-ovidius.ro
https://balticnordic.hypotheses.org
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operating within the wider center-right – far-right axis. The Nordic experience (including Norway even though it is not a EU MS) provides an example of this spectrum in action. The three defining characteristics that set these parties apart from the more traditional far-right ones are: 1) the repudiation of hardcore extremism; 2) the search for political viability; and 3) the acquisition of mainstream recognition. The present article argues that as these parties compete for legitimacy, they are forced to alter their discriminatory rhetoric by switching tonal registers. One of the political strategies that enables them to put the outright “overt” in the “covert” is the recourse to dog whistle politics. Dog whistles are a form of racialized coded messaging that are designed to sound unassuming to the general electorate, but that intrinsically signal something more specific to a particular subgroup. While mainstream parties are also known to employ dog whistles (see the case of the Republican Party in the United States), radical right parties appeal to this rhetoric in order to sway to their side voters who might otherwise not resonate with them. How well can they overcome the stigma associated with their more extreme reflexes depends on a case by case basis. The present articles examines whether the four most prominent examples of Nordic radicalism (the Danish People’s Party, Finns Party, Sweden Democrats, and Norway’s Progress Party) have integrated dog whistles in their political messaging and tracks how these coded appeals change from one country to another. In order to assess where the openly racist rhetoric ends and the dog whistles begins (or vice-versa respectively), the articles analyzes a series of statements issued by the representatives of these parties prior, during, and in the aftermath of the 2015-2016 refugee crisis.

**SVIO-ESTONICA; MÄGISTE AND ARISTE: PARALLELS AND DIVERGENCES IN THE ESTONIAN ACADEMIC LIFE IN SOVIET-ESTONIA AND IN THE DIASPORA IN SWEDEN**

Researcher Dr. Sándor Földvári, Debrecen University & Hungarian Academy of Sciences

The journal “Svio-Estonica” was founded in Tartu, Estonia in 1934 and had been running until 1940 when it stopped with the beginning of war and the Soviet occupation. It was devoted to the study of Swedish-Estonian relations in the realm of history, minorities, language contacts and cultural influences. The keynote person was young scholar Julius Mägiste (1900-1978), who eventually moved to Sweden and organized the Estonian cultural and science life in Lund where he continued his research activity up to his passing away. Thus, since 1943 the journal ran until 1971 in Lund, and changed its profile slightly: the life and culture of Estonians in the emigration became a topic of the articles as well. The Swedish minority was deported from the Estonian islands to Sweden by the Soviet regime, thus the studies of historical and recent cultural contacts turned into studies of “sovietology”, too. All these statements are to be demonstrated by the statistics of content of the journal. The author came over all the issues and a brief content-analysis is to be given in the paper. However, this
paper is to be focused on the life stories of a Dissident living abroad and his match who had decided to remain at home: Paul Ariste. Indeed, while Mägiste immigrated to Sweden, another very talented linguist, Ariste stayed in Soviet-Estonia and later became the chair of the Department of Finno-Ugristics. He spoke more than forty languages, and made researches on language contacts and cultural ties. His solid book entitled “Keelekontaktid” (Language contacts, in Estonian) made a great impact for the linguistics at that time. What was Ariste able to achieve in his country, disconnected from contacts with foreign colleagues; and what could Mägiste do in Sweden, living in the free western world but separated from the homeland? The paper gives a comparison of these two outstandingly gifted Estonian scholars.

THE EUROPEAN WHO CAME BACK: KURDISH REFUGEES IN FINLAND

Researcher Adél Furu,
"Babes-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

This article examines the extent to which cultural continuity is manifesting among the Kurdish immigrants living in Finland and concentrates on those cultural practices and traditions of the Finnish society that seem difficult to be accepted by the Kurdish immigrants. The research questions addressed in this study are as follows: To what extent the new Kurdish refugees, as members of a non-Western culture, remain static and traditional? Do they resent the Nordic values or on the contrary, do they try to conform the Finnish values? I will examine whether, at least pertaining to some aspects of the Kurdish tradition, we can speak about the death of the tradition or it is premature to conclude it.

The present study wants to give an overview of the kind of Kurdish folk tradition that lives in Finland and of the nature of the Kurdish individuals’ relationship to their own cultural experience. We examine whether the members of the Kurdish community living in Finland have learned to act according to the standards of behaviour required by the Finnish society or the practices adopted by them differ from how the people of Finnish background conduct themselves. In many cases adult Kurdish individuals bring their own culture to Finland but it is often the culture of violence that goes with them to the new country.

Methodologically I rely on cultural, migration and social life studies in this article. In addition, I attend to identity and family studies.

THE MEMORY OF A FORGOTTEN EXILE: EUGEN LOZOVA N AND THE INTELLECTUAL DISSENT

Researcher Dr. Mircea-Cristian Ghenghea,
"Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iaşi

Thirty years after the dissolution of the totalitarian regime in Romania, due to various reasons, most of the names of those who were forced to leave the country and choose the exile
Aims of the Conference

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

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

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

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

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


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

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

The call of papers for this conference sought to encourage papers and debates on perspectives such as: dissidents and conformists during totalitarianisms and dictatorships; dissenting views in Nordic, Baltic and Black Sea region literatures; utopias and dystopias in Nordic, Baltic and Black Sea region literatures; _enemy at the gate:_ dissent and conformism during the two world wars; conforming to or resenting the Nordic values; rethinking conformism in the Nordic societies; 21st century dissenters in the Black Sea area; Europeanists and nationalists: a remodeling of dissent and conformism; ideologies without ideals: on moral blindness and apathy; education reforms in the Nordic, Baltic and Black Sea countries and cognitive autonomy and Nordic, Baltic and Nordic-Baltic cultural cooperation.

**Plenary session themes**

- Leonidas Donskis and his contribution to the advancement of dissent and conformism studies in East-Central Europe
- Dissent and conformism in a democracy

**Panel themes**

Panel 1: Dissent, identity and crisis
Panel 2: Intelligentsia and dissidence against totalitarianism
Panel 3: The Baltic nations between dissent and conformism
Panel 4: The theatre, the stage and the defying of conformism
Panel 5: Dissidence and dissidents during Late Totalitarian Communisms
Panel 6: Conformism, dissent and eschatology
Panel 7: Utopias, conformism and dissent in Scandinavian literature and society
Panel 8: Finnish language and culture in Europe: identity, consent and dissent
Panel 9: Distorted mirrors? The Black Sea Region as a space of discord and entanglement
Panel 10: Politics, representation and diplomacy

**Submission Guidelines**

All papers presented at the conference and eventually published in the Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies must be original and not simultaneously submitted to another journal or conference: full papers discussing dissent and conformism in their multifarious manifestations during the dictatorial and totalitarian political systems, wars, etc. or the way they reflected in literature, newspapers, education, etc.

Submission web page of Dissentism2019 is: https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=dissentism2019
Submission web page of the journal is: https://balticnordic.hypotheses.org/submission-guidelines

**Keynote addresses**

Prof. Dr. Vesa Vares, University of Turku
Lect. Dr. Andrius Švarplys, Kaunas College & "Vytautas Magnus” University of Kaunas
Prof. Dr. Silviu Miioiu, The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies & Valahia University of Târgoviște
Conference programme

Thursday, 6 June 2019

09.00-12.00: Registration of the participants;
Ovidius University of Constanta, Aleea Universitatii, no. 1, Campus, The Senate Hall

10.00-10.15: The opening of the Tenth Annual International Conference on Baltic and Nordic Studies in Romania
Ovidius University of Constanta, Aleea Universitatii, no. 1, Campus, The Senate Hall

Chair: Emanuel Plopeanu, The Dean of the Faculty of History and Political Sciences, Ovidius University of Constanta;

Speakers:
Prof. Dr. Sorin Rugină, Rector of Ovidius University of Constanța;
Lecturer Dr. Alexandru Bobe, Deputy Rector of Ovidius University of Constanța, Honorary Consul of Estonia in Constanța
Senior Researcher Dr. Bogdan-Alexandru Schipor, Vice-President of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies & „A.D. Xenopol” Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, Jassy

10.15-12.00: Plenary session I
Ovidius University of Constanta, Aleea Universitatii, no. 1, Campus, The Senate Hall

Chair: Lecturer Dr. Crina Leon, „A.I. Cuza” University of Jassy & Head of the Section for Nordic Studies of the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies

Plenary session theme: Leonidas Donskis and his contribution to the advancement of dissent and conformism studies in East-Central Europe

Mrs. Lina Kutkauskaitė-Žilaitė, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Lithuania, Bucharest,
How is Leonidas Donskis remembered in Lithuania?
Prof. Dr. Silviu Miloiu, Approaching conformism and dissent in Leonidas Donskis’ creation
Lect. Dr. Andrius Švarplys, Nationalism and liberalism in anti-Soviet dissident movement and now in contemporary Lithuania

12.00-12.15: Coffee Break
Ovidius University of Constanta, Aleea Universitatii, no. 1, Campus, building B, Amphitheatre A2.

12.15-18.15: Conference sessions

Panel 1
Dissent, identity and crisis
Room E 114, Campus, Building A

Chair: Andrius Švarplys

Klavš Zarins, A Crisis of Identity? The Problem of Baltic German Loyalty during the First World War
Aiga Berzina, Overcrowded prisons in The Republic of Latvia during War of Independence (1919-1921): who were the inmates?

Panel 2
Intelligentsia and dissidence against totalitarianism
Room E 206, Campus, Building A

Chair: Daniel Citirigă

Sándor Földvári, Svio-Estonica; Mägiste and Ariste: Parallels and Divergences in the Estonian Academic Life in Soviet-Estonia and in the Diaspora in Sweden
Sergiu Musteață, Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty and the Romanian Exile
## Participants

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kari Alenius</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kari.alenius@oulu.fi">kari.alenius@oulu.fi</a></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>University of Oulu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mioara Anton</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mioaraanton@yahoo.com">mioaraanton@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Nicolae Iorga&quot; Institute of History of the Romanian Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aiga Berzina</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aigaberzina91@gmail.com">aigaberzina91@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>University of Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Alexandru Bobe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alexandru.bobe@univ-ovidiu.ro">alexandru.bobe@univ-ovidiu.ro</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Ovidius&quot; University of Constanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Costel Coroban</td>
<td><a href="mailto:coroban_costel@yahoo.com">coroban_costel@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Ovidius&quot; University of Constanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gintaras Druckus</td>
<td><a href="mailto:g.druckus@archyvai.lt">g.druckus@archyvai.lt</a></td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Kaunas Regional State Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Gianina Drută</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gianinadruta@yahoo.com">gianinadruta@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>University of Oslo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Luiza-Maria Filimon</td>
<td><a href="mailto:luiza.filimon@gmail.com">luiza.filimon@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Independent Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sândor Földvári</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alexfoldvari@gmail.com">alexfoldvari@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Debrecen University &amp; Hungarian Academy of Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Adé l Furu</td>
<td><a href="mailto:furuadel@yahoo.com">furuadel@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Babes-Bolyai&quot; University, Cluj-Napoca</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mircea-Cristian Ghenghea</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mcghenghea2010@yahoo.com">mcghenghea2010@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Alexandru Ioan Cuza&quot; University of Iaşi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Alexandra Gruian</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alexandra.gruian@muzeulastra.com">alexandra.gruian@muzeulastra.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>ASTRA Museum, Sibiu; ARSBN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Adrian-Alexandru Herta</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adrian_hertza@yahoo.com">adrian_hertza@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Ovidius&quot; University of Constanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Yvette Jankó Szép</td>
<td><a href="mailto:furmanovic@hotmail.com">furmanovic@hotmail.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Babes-Bolyai&quot; University, Cluj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kristīne Jarinovska</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kristine.jarinovska@lu.lv">kristine.jarinovska@lu.lv</a></td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Public Memory Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Paweł Jaworski</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pawel.jaworski@uwr.edu.pl">pawel.jaworski@uwr.edu.pl</a></td>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>University of Wrocław</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Inga Kapeniece</td>
<td><a href="mailto:inga.kapeniece@inbox.lv">inga.kapeniece@inbox.lv</a></td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>University of Latvia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Krišs Kapenieks</td>
<td><a href="mailto:madaras@inbox.lv">madaras@inbox.lv</a></td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>Latvian War Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Anja Elisabeth Keränén</td>
<td><a href="mailto:keranenanjaelisabeth@gmail.com">keranenanjaelisabeth@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>University of Tampere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Andrey Korovin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:avkorovin@yahoo.com">avkorovin@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Institute of World Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lina Kutkauskaitė-Žilaitė</td>
<td><a href="mailto:amb.ro@urm.lt">amb.ro@urm.lt</a></td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>Embassy of Lithuania to Romania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Laurenţiu Adrian Lazăr</td>
<td><a href="mailto:laurentiu.a.lazar@barklav.ro">laurentiu.a.lazar@barklav.ro</a></td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>Honorary Consulate of Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Diana Lăţug</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dianalatug@gmail.com">dianalatug@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>&quot;Babes-Bolyai&quot; University, Cluj Napoca and The Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies</td>
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