

Foreword

The interferences between the space inhabited by Romanians and Northern Europe occurred relatively late and were comparatively rare. The oldest bonds between these spaces can be only traced back with difficulty due to the lack of written sources and the different interpretations given to some archaeological artefacts. Nor did the Viking age leave solid concrete proofs about the connections between the Romanian population and the Viking traders and warriors following the courses of water from present Russia on their road from the Varangians to the Greeks. It is however beyond any doubts that such contacts have actually occurred. During the late Middle Age and at the start of the Modern Age the area and possibilities of contacts have increased while also being better documented and more stable. A symbol of this change can be seen in the bonds between Sweden and Transylvania during the Thirty Years War or between the Romanians and the Northerners, and not just among the elites, during the Nordic War. King Carol XII of Sweden has commanded Romanian mercenaries into the battle, has established numerous contacts with Romanian voievodes such as Constantin Brancoveanu and Dimitrie Cantemir, has lived on and crossed Romanian territory. These contacts did not fail to attract the attention of the historians, one of the best contributions to this history being Veniamin Ciobanu's book *Les Pays Roumains au seuil du 18e siecle. Charles XII et des Roumains* (Bucarest: Ed. Stiintifica si Enciclopedica, 1984).

The contacts between the Romanian society and the North have been facilitated by the new cultural currents of Humanism, Renaissance and Reform and by their ideological, cultural, social and economic consequences. It cannot be argued that these early contacts have created a properly-constructed image of the North in the Romanian principalities. A change has taken place during the 19th century. On the one hand, among the Bessarabian Romanians and the eastern Baltic populations more opportunities for contacts were born once they were incorporated into the Russian Empire. On the other hand, the Romanians and the Northerners have started to construct their national identities and in the process felt the need to interact with other peoples and civilizations. The new means of transportation invented during the past 150 years have greatly facilitated these contacts. The birth of the capitalist society and the flow of capital added new ingredients to the opportunities of contacts. They were greatly advanced by the beginnings of the modern diplomacy with its instruments (legations, consulates, embassies).

Diplomacy represented an organized tool in pursuing a well-defined scope and, in this sense, it created favourably circumstances for the development of the Romanian-Nordic relations. Gradually, modern Romania established consulates and legations throughout the region, beginning with Sweden but not neglecting, for instance, Finland, by then a Grand Duchy under the Russian Empire. Finns and Balts, members of the Russian officer corps or simple soldiers, have had the possibility to gain a direct knowledge of the Romanian principalities during the Russo-Ottoman and

Russo-Romanian – Ottoman wars during the 19th century. This is the moment when the first Nordic clichés about the Romanians started to take shape. They have been masterly analyzed in Raoul Bossy's book (a former Romanian Minister in Helsinki) titled *Mărturii finlandeze despre România* and in a series of conferences delivered at the Romanian Academy. Lauri Lindgren from the University of Turku has achieved a number of important contributions to the study of these early contacts (in articles such as *Memorialiști finlandezi despre războiul din 1877-1878* or *Un corp de oaste românească în Finlanda*).

The development of the Romanian-Nordic and Romanian – Baltic relations since 1918 has led to the publication of a number of press articles, scientific articles, literary products and various other types of works, to the perception of the North by the way of direct contacts be they the result of diplomatic exchanges, literary visits, tourist's visits, business journeys.

This work, a result of the research grant entitled "A Romanian conception of Northern Europe (the 19th to 20th centuries)", financed by the Romanian National University Research Council, represents a "repertoire" indicating the references to the documentary sources and references about Northern Europe found in Romanian archives, libraries and the like and about Nordic sources and references about Romania found during the investigations in these countries. Its main purpose was to outline the main categories of archival sources and indicate their exact quotas in order to serve the community of fellow researchers, diplomats, businessmen and ordinary citizens who pose an interest in studying the Romanian – Nordic and Romanian – Baltic bonds.

In order to make the research more accessible references to the main published sources and references have been added. It must be emphasized that this is by no means comprehensive or entirely balanced. It reflects, in the first place, the stage of my research on these topics. For years, I have started my research with the Romanian – Baltic relations during the interwar period, then I continued with the Romanian – Finnish relations and eventually I have enlarged my research to encompass the Romanian – Nordic and Romanian – Baltic bonds during the 19th and 20th centuries. The order of preferences and research opportunities I had are well reflected in this work, i.e. in the ampler space dedicated to the Romanian – Finnish and Romanian – Baltic relations or in the still inadequate space dedicated to the references to the Romanian – Norwegian relations. Nevertheless, this is also a reflection of the scale of relations and it is no by chance that Romania and Norway are most distant one from another in geographical and perhaps cultural terms as well. On the hand, although my research was not focused on the Romanian – Danish encounters, the part dedicated to their sources and bibliography is quite adequate thanks to the results of a recent Ph.D. work defended by my close colleague and assistant Oana Lăculiceanu to which I wish to extend my gratitude

The archival sources are mentioned and easy access is provided to the readers, although this is also incomplete and reflect this author's researches. Some three quarters of the sources mentioned here have been researched by this author or are in his possession.

Although neither the sources nor the references are thus complete, I assume that they represent a meaningful progress in the dissemination of information about the Romanian sources about the North and the Nordic sources about Romania. The focus of this work is on references regarding the history of the relations between Romanians and Northerners, but in order to better reflect the merits of linguists and other scholars to the development of these relations, reference to their works is also made. The history of the Romanian – Swedish relations cannot be understood unless Alf Lombard's merits are not recognized or the history of the Romanian – Finnish relations without making reference to Lauri Lindgren, Barbu Brezianu or Marilena Aldea. In fact, no discrimination between sources is made insofar as they mark a stage in the development of the Romanian – Nordic and Romanian – Baltic relations.

Even the briefest reading of these sources show the marked development in recent years of the researches on the Romanian – Nordic and Romanian – Baltic bonds and intersections. The freedom and the travel and financing possibilities which resulted from the overthrow of the Communist regime in Romania and the EU integration is obviously playing in the advantage of the progress of these relations, which in effect improves our knowledge of the past. Thus, the researches of Veniamin Ciobanu in the field of Romanian – Swedish relations, Florin Anghel and Silviu Miloiu in the field of Romania's relations with the Baltic States, Bogdan Schipor in the field of parallels of Romania and the Baltic States' international positions in the European diplomacy, Oana Lăculeanu in the field of Romanian-Danish relations or Silviu Miloiu, Vesa Vares and Elena Dragomir in the field of Romanian-Finnish relations are a product of these new opportunities and openness. Important contributions were also brought forth by the development of the diplomatic and political atmosphere in the relations between Romania and the Nordic and Baltic States which are marked by the publication of volumes of documents about the Romanian-Norwegian, Romanian-Finnish or Romanian-Estonian relations.

The author of this work is fully aware that the merits of some contributors to the development of the Romanian – Nordic and Romanian – Baltic relations may have been downplayed or sometimes overlooked. I wish to assure them that this is not intentional and this will be corrected when this research will be continued with "repertoires" of the bonds and encounters between Romania and each of the Nordic and Baltic nations which will greatly enlarge the frame of reference and aim towards excellence. Practically, each of the chapters of this work will be understood as a link to a greater number of other sources relevant to our knowledge about the Romanian – Nordic contacts. A description of each archival volume of documents will be also added.

The work also includes about fifty pages of facsimiled copies after relevant documents and sources designed to mark some of the most relevant Romanian – Nordic and Romanian – Baltic encounters.

In the end, I wish to extent my gratitude to the Romanian National University Research Council for financing this research, to my editor Dan Mărgărit for his costly patience, to my colleagues from the fresh Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies, especially to Ambassador Vladimir Jarmolenko and Antero Inkari, to my close Finnish friends Marco Pribilla, Anssi Kullberg and Meri Herrala and

Romanian collaborators Elena Dragomir and Oana Lăculiceanu for their support and advices, and to my wife, Luminița. My gratitude to my professor, Kalervo Hovi. My thanks also go to my colleagues from the Valahia University of Târgoviște, its Faculty of Humanities and from „Grigore Gafencu” Research Center for the History of International Relations.

This work represents the first volume published under the aegis of *the Romanian Association for Baltic and Nordic Studies* (ARSBN), an association that also publishes *The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies* (*Revista Română de Studii Baltice si Nordice*).