

HIGH DIGNITY AND PROPERTY IN THE 16TH–17TH CENTURIES IN THE BANAT – “THE NOBLES GÂRLEȘTEANU OF RUDĂRIA’S WEALTH”

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The family of nobles Gârleșteanu of Rudăria and Caransebeș was one of the remarkable representatives of the Romanian elites in the mountainous Banat in the medieval and pre-modern era. With a history that documentary can be reconstitute for three centuries, from 1410 up to the end of the 17th century that family wrote the names of a series of the members down the panoply of dignitaries who were on the climb in the Banat of Severin, the Banat of Caransebeș and Lugoj after. In the course of time, I have investigated the beginnings of that family, its genealogic branches, and the family’s involvement in the county of Severin and town of Caransebeș administrative system that certainly provided them both the deserved prestige and a distinct welfare from the income they got from such dignities, to complete their familial wealth.¹ The present issue aims to add a supplement of one century to the history of their familial property, with a discussion on what we could name the case of the “Gârleștenis’ wealth”. It is difficult to reconstitute today from fragmentary documentary data that family’s total mobile and real goods. As referring to some moments of the family’ branches’ right of lands owning, the preserved court documents are more generous somehow with data concerning the domanial field. Nothing is

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¹ Ligia Boldea, *Nobilimea românească din Banat în secolele XIV-XVI (origine, statut, studiu genealogic)* (Reșița: Banatica, 2002); Ligia Boldea, “Tradiție și continuitate în lumea demnitarilor români ai banatului de Caransebeș și Lugoj – Gârleștenii de Rudăria,” *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie-Istorie XXII (2014): 275–291.

the same when speaking about their incomes or mobile goods, details which were practically not available for those documents. I have considered in spite of these objective impediments that a look on the development of the domanial aggregate from the second part of the 16th century up to the end of the next one would make the history of this family whole as far as possible now.

The Gârleştenis' land patrimony was documentary reconstituted for the 15th century and the first half of the next one on the basis of some preserved papers, ones of them as transumpt in much later documents belonging to the second half of the 16th century. The domanial aggregate of the family of Gârleşte of Rudăria, as I have been able to note, consisted both in a series of possessions that may be considered ancestors' properties on which the family's members had got reconfirmations or acts of new donations in the 15th century, and properties they were given by royal donations or they bought at the end of the 15th century and during the first half of the next one. The first of them were identified in the districts of Almăj and Mehadia², the new ones belonged to the district of Caransebeş³, and so we may note the tendency of the family to come closer to the central locality in the Banat of Severin where they took in fact their residence at.

The central point of the familial domain was certainly the estate of Gârleşte, documentary registered down in 1410. The settlement localized today in the south-eastern part of Caraş-Severin County, in Almăj Depression, along the river of Rudăria⁴, was registered in course of the time as Gârleşte and Rudăria, respectively. I suppose that during the 14th–15th centuries, either two close

² Neighboring districts, on the rivers of Nera and Cerna, located to southern and south-western of the Banat of Severin. There were the possessions of Gârleşte, Rudăria, *Rwstnik*, *Prilipeţ*, *Hernyak*, *Marsyna*, *Zelysthe*, in Almăj district, and *Mehadica*, *Chebnyak*, *Perho*, *Belethin*, *Moznyk* and *Wzredek* in Mehadia district, on which the family's members got paper of a new donation in the 15th century

³ Located in the Depression of Caransebeş-Mehadica, on the Timiş Valley, prolonged toward north-east on the Bistra Valley to Haţeg district, and toward the West Plain toward north [Dumitru Ţeicu, *Banatul montan în Evul mediu* (Timişoara: Banatica, 1998), 440–441]. *Rapolţ*, *Plessiva*, and *Vălişoara*, were attested as the Gârleştenis' possessions that Jacob of Gârleşte had been got in 1486 [Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, *Documente privind istoria românilor*, vol. II/2 (Bucureşti, 1891), 296]. The estates of *Kopach*, *Zlathna* and *Walissoara*, were added to after Jacob of Gârleşte had bought from the noble lady Ursula Horvath [Ligia Boldea, "Consideraţii asupra familiei unui viceban al Severinului: Mărganii," *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie-Istorie XV (2007): 169]. Less known is how the family got the right of owning at Găvoşdia and Bolvaşniţa especially, the last one generating also a new familial patronym.

⁴ The rivulet is an affluent of the Nera River, springing from the Mountains of Almăj, Svinicea Mare top; it passes these mountains of crystalline schist rocks, forming Rudăria Gorge, where the largest water mills complex in Europe is situated. Passing the depression the valley gets larger and the stream calmer, a fact that may explain, the village development to the range of the

settlements were located on the Rudăria river, merged during the 16th century, or the two toponyms for the village and the river there generated confusions regarding the level of the offices of authentication; on the one hand, my supposition rely on the new donation from 1484⁵ that Matthias Corvinus offered to Jacob of Gârliște, that referred to *Gerlysthe* and *Prodary* among the reconfirmed possessions and, on the other hand, on the paper emitted by John Sigismund Zápolya to state the course of the Gârleștenis' wealth, where *Gerlisthye alias Rwderia* was explicitly noted down in 1569.⁶ As for the economic power of the locality I may refer to the conscription of 1603 (I shall largely speak about in the next pages) that shows us one of the largest possessions at that time. It is possible that the family's prosperity had come both from the current farming at that time and other occupations corresponding to the geographic specific features of the area. Rudăria/ Rudărica⁷ as a toponym speaks about mining activities in the neighborhood; Francesco Grisellini comes to confirm this by underlining in his history the gold deposits exploiting along the rivers and rivulets in Almăj Depression, at Rudăria and Bănia.⁸ Ground sluicing and panning were in fact a well known practices along the rivers of Bistra and Timiș at that time, an occupation of the county nobles then; a royal paper emitted in May 1, 1512 asked the people in that field, in the counties of Hunedoara, Hațeg and Caransebeș to exchange gold only to the margrave's people.⁹ Hardly to think that the family who own the entire area should not have taken advantage of such opportunities even if I have not succeeded to identify documentary notes on. It is also possible that the water power of the Rudăria River constituted another source for the Gârleștenis as even today one of the most complex water milling system runs along the river – consisting in a series of the special horizontal wheeled mill (*moara cu ciutură*/ horizontal bucket mill) in Eftimie Murgu village (former Rudăria), the beginning of which is not quite defined for

center of a nobiliary domain. V. Sencu, I. Băcănaru, *Județul Caraș-Severin* (București, 1976), 66; Dumitru Țeicu, *Moara de apă din Banat* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2012), 10.

⁵ Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár, Diplomatikai levéltár, Arkanum Adatbázis Kft., 30223 (forwards DL).

⁶ Frigyes Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság és Szörény vármegye története*, vol. III (Budapest, 1878), 379.

⁷ From the Slavian “ruda” = ore and “reka” = river or “cavity to extract metals” up Vasile Ioniță, *Glosar toponimic Caraș-Severin* (Reșița, 1972), 34.

⁸ Țeicu, *Banatul montan*, 370. A report of Koczian, a counselor of the Court, in 1769, who went to Almăj to investigate the golden washers, noted that golden strata had been identified also in the streams that passes the villages of Rudăria, Bănia and Dalboșeț. Francesco Grisellini, *Încercare de istorie politică și naturală a Banatului Timișoarei*, Introduction, translation and notes by Costin Feneșan (Timișoara: Facla, 1984), 301.

⁹ Iosif Pataki, *Domeniul Hunedoara la începutul secolului al XVI-lea. Studii și documente* (București, 1973), 156, doc. 33.

the Banat yet.¹⁰ The preserved documentary data show us that the Gârleştenis had some mills in Caransebeş¹¹ (river of Sebeş) and at Prisaca¹² (river of Timiș). We might suppose than the family should have valorized such a potential on their own estate.

Since the middle of the 16th century the Gârleştenis' patrimony were repeatedly submitted to law in order to clarify the right of owning after the branch of male descendants of ban Jacob of Gârliște died; I believe, on the basis of the data I have got, that that branch owned the main part of the family's patrimony up to the middle of the 16th century (firstly, the ancestors' one and also what they bought in time). It is one of the most eloquent cases of families where the problems concerning lands owning and right of succession as well as the way the litigations were solved are clearest reflected by papers. There were three moments to be observed, all of them presented before the court of the princely Curia during the second half of the 16th century; it is a proof of how virulently that family had treated the landed property till the problems were irrevocably resolved.

The first litigation concerning Nicholas of Gârliște's inheritance was solved before magister Albertus Zalonkemeney in Cluj, the proto-notary of Transylvania; Nicholas died around 1535 without heirs. It seems that the strains between Eufrosina, his widow (re-married to Andrew Barchay by that time) and her sister Dorothea's children were so strong that only the central sedria could solved them, by the arbitration of 8 noble jurymen of Caransebeş. The paper emitted on the 22nd of November 1544¹³ notes down the agreement which gad come after lots of litigious, scrambles and altercations (*aliarum violentiarum, plurimis rixis et altercationibus tandem eadem partes.....et gwerris inter eos*) between the representatives of the two parties: Andrew Barchay, Nicholas Ombozi and George Bekews on the part of Eufrosina and her daughters, Sara and Ana; Ladislav Pribek, together with Ladislav Pobora, in the name of deceased Dorothea, Nicholas of Gârliște's sister. It is interesting to observe that it was the moment that regulated only the right of owning what Jacob and Nicholas of Gârliște had bought in the first part of the 16th century¹⁴, the ancestors' lands having been omitted even if we know that the two had had an important share on. So, those ones weren't referred to during the negotiations of 1544.

¹⁰ Țeicu, *Moara de apă*, 379.

¹¹ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság*, III, 160.

¹² Costin Feneșan, *Documente medievale bănățene (1440–1653)* (Timișoara: Facla, 1981), 107.

¹³ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság*, III, 234; Boldea, *Nobilimea*, 214–215.

¹⁴ It was about the estates *Zlathna*, *Kopach*, *Priscian*, Bolvașnița and *Plesywa*, district of Sebeș, Teregova, district of Mehadia, and other properties like the house, yard and garden in Caransebeș or mills on the rivers of Sebeș and Bolvașnița

A second decisive moment for the Gârleştenis' "wealth" consisted in a series of law suits that began in 1566 and ended on the 10th of December 1569 through the sentence delivered by John Sigismund in the princely court in Alba Julia.¹⁵ What was happened in fact? There were 20 years of a relative consensual life, but the family's successional problems came to a new point just at that time. Why then? A possible answer might be found up in Gabriel Gârleşteanu's death around that year; given his dignitaries and male successors, he became the central personage in the family. The suit law developed in two sections and put finally in act all the family's successors. It is interesting to note that the litigate was initiated by the representatives of the family's female branch, Jacob of Gârlişte's great-grandchildren from three of his children, Nicholas, Dorothea, and Catherine, placed in two clusters of interests. The ancestors' shares of lands were in that moment disputed, both the ones in Almăj district (Gârlişte *alias* Rudăria, and Prilipeţ) and those in the district of Mehadia (Mehadica, Cebniac, *Perho*, and Teregova); the estates bought by Jacob in 1503, in the district of Sebeş (Vălişoara, *Kopach* and *Zlathna*) were added too. The claimant asked in fact an equal partition of the right of owning on those estates. George and Peter, the two sons of Gabriel Gârleşteanu, involved in suit, in 1568, for the male branch of the family. The sentence delivered on the 10th of December 1569 definitely stipulated that the main part of the family's old patrimony would stay in the male branch's possession, represented by George and Peter Gârleşteanu, on condition that the two ones should give to the other descendants the daughters' proper quarter; there were excepted only Teregova shares exclusively inherited by George Ombozi as part of his mother Sara's personal legacy. That was the way the relations between the two branches of the family were set for the next generations.

The third important moment regarding the structure and unity of the Gârleştenis' "wealth" took part in 1588 and 1598, with the scission of interests of the main beneficiary of the inheritance, namely the family's male branch. Stephen Gârleşteanu asked the prince, on the 4th of February 1598¹⁶, to allow an "equal and proper division of all the lands, fields, water sides, plains, and hayfields, forests, groves, mounts and valleys" in the estates of Prilipeţ, Rudăria, *Schybnyak*, Pârvova, Cruşovăţ, and Mehadia, Teregova, *Plesyn*, and Valea Bolvaşniţei, county of Severin, between him and his cousins John and Nicholas Gârleşteanu, and after, a total separation of his shares from those ones of the rest of the family. Once admitted by the prince that partition generated the relatives' definitive separation as the prince requested the authorities in the county

¹⁵ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság*, III, 378–390.

¹⁶ Feneşan, *Documente*, 102.

to proceed to that partition irrespective of the opposition of John and Nicholas Gârleşteanu, or of any others.

The Gârleştenis' patrimony evolution during the first half of the 17th century

The status and role of that family within the social and political-administrative structures in the Banat of Caransebeş and Lugoj were founded on and generated in the same measure an economic prosperity that might be noted for those times and community. The census of gateways in the district of Caransebeş ordered by the Empire to Simon Lodi, the new ban, in 1603, presents a graphic image on the familial patrimony at the beginning of the 17th century. That paper preserved in a late copy was published *in extenso* by Adrian Magina in 2009.¹⁷ The document provides us with a series of important data on the proportion and especially on the fiscal power of the Gârleştenis' domains in whole. We have to note the researcher's cautions on that paper concerning that a series of known localities, certainly existing at that time were absent in the census. Adrian Magina considers that two are the explanations on the question: either the document is incompletely preserved up today, or the ones who made it didn't succeed to finalize it.¹⁸ For the family of Gârleşteanu, following the data I have on their lands evolution during the 15th–16th centuries, the decisions in the last of their patrimonial litigations in 1588–1598 especially, I do believe that the registration of their estates are complete in the largest measure. This is the premise I rely on in my analysis. We might note therefore that the Gârleştenis' properties, in 12 localities they were spread over, accumulated the most of the fiscal unities, namely 33 ½ ports (households) with a contribution of 33.50 forints from the total number of registered properties – 95 localities with 335 ports, corresponding to a fiscal obligation of 335 forints about (if we take into consideration that the fiscal value of a port revolved around 1 forint at that time). To all of them we might add the 6 ports the noble George Ombozi had at Teregova, as one of the last descendants of the female branch of the family, a great-grandson of ban Jacob of Gârlişte. The Gârleştenis contributed therefore with 12% around to the princely treasure and so the family occupied the first place among the noble contributors in the region, if we refer to the total value of fiscal obligations of the district of Caransebeş. Numerically, the Gârleştenis' lands are under those of some other noble families, as Fiat, Vaida or Bizere-Găman.

¹⁷ Adrian Magina, "Conscrierea porţilor districtului Caransebeş în anul 1603. Consideraţii pe marginea unui document," in I. A. Pop, S. Andea, eds., *Pe urmele trecutului. Profesorului Nicolae Edroiu la 70 de ani* (Cluj-Napoca: Centrul de Studii Transilvane, 2009), 283–295.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 284.

Whiles the last families' properties were mainly around Caransebeș, along the larger valleys of Timiș and Bistra, an area with a good economic potential, part of the Gârleștenis' ones were placed in Almăj depression and in the southern side extremity of the Timiș-Cerna passage, a more isolated area between mountainous frames. Yet, the demographic dynamics made that three of the greatest villages in Caransebeș district enter the family's patrimony; it is about Gârliște and Mehadica (with 10 ports any), and Teregova (with 11 ports), registered in 1603, so a superior economic efficiency comparatively to other villages with a smaller number of fiscal ports. It is also important to observe that the family owned in part those possessions, sharing them with other families; probably the Gârleștenis became related to those families in time, but they had the largest number of ports in any of those villages¹⁹, so they probably had got a certain pre-eminence within those domains.

Another item we have to observe in the document refers to different shares nominal belonging to. Only two are the localities where the family was registered for its wealth entity: Bolvașnița with 3 ports, as the family's exclusive property, respectively, Petnic, with $\frac{1}{4}$ of a port, together with the families of Fiat, Pribek, Bakocz, Zakan, and Lățug. It is interesting to note that only two of castellan Gabriel Gârleșteanu's direct descendants were nominally registered, George Gârleșteanu and his son, John Gârleșteanu, even if eight such descendants were alive at that time at list. As in the above mentioned study was already noted, George Gârleșteanu was, if we really credit the conscript, the wealthiest owner in the district at that time, with possessions in 9 localities and $28 \frac{1}{4}$ registered households. The villages of *Pleseo* (2 ports) and Prilipeț (6 ports) are referred as his personal properties, while for Mehadia (5 ports), Cebniac (4 ports), Gârliște (7 ports), and Crușovăț ($1 \frac{1}{4}$ port), Armeniș (1 port), Sadova (1 port), and Feneș (1 port), he was registered as a co-owner alive with other nobles belonging to different families. Gârliște, Prilipeț, Mehadica, Crușovăț, Cebniac, and *Pleseo* of his ancestors, and Armeniș, Sadova, and Feneș belonged to the family of Fiat's old possessions. He might be supposed to own those shares in the last villages for having been married to Catherine, one of the Fiats' heiresses.

His son John Gârleșteanu was registered with 2 ports in the village of Prisaca, together with Toma Nyakazo; I believe that that possession didn't belong to the family's common wealth; it was a personal purchase.

I believe finally that George Ombozi must be included into my analysis, the one who had 6 ports at Teregova (alive with members of the families Vaida and Banfi), one of the largest villages registered in 1603. I might not enclose but

¹⁹ They were registered with 7 ports at Gârliște (together with the families of Trawa, Zabo, and Nagi), 5 ports at Mehadica (together with the families of Rada, Borțun, Zabo and Frusa); George Ombozi had 6 ports (together with the members of the families Vaida and Banfi) at Teregova.

subjoin his presence to the Gârleştenis' domanial aggregate, as I have already noted, for that one was ban Jacob of Gârleşte's great grandson and his unique male descendant from the female succession²⁰; Teregova was at that time disputed within law suits and divisions between the family's different branches and entered finally the Ombozis' possession.

The conscript of households in 1603 makes me come with some reflections. Firstly, the role that George Gârleşteanu played within the familial patrimony, as long as the whole family was registered in two villages within which Bolvaşniţa seems to have had a special importance – some of the family's members took to add that toponym to the family's name²¹ (as it was in the 15th century in the case of "Gârleşte/ Rudăria", or, during the 16th –17th centuries, with the apposition "of Caransebeş"). Secondly we might ask whom of the family's members those villages belonged to? Hardly to set: for the first decade of the 17th century, we had possible names according to the Genealogy Annex I have published in 2014.²² But it is obvious that George Gârleşteanu incontestably owned the main part of the familial patrimony; I presume that he was of 60–70 years old at that time (and that one was the last moment he was recorded). Given the functions he had in the counties of Severin and Caransebeş during the 8th–9th decades of the 16th century, he was the main member of the family due to the authority and influence of his jobs and the corresponding revenue he had got so. He also

²⁰ Nicholas of Gârleşte, the alone one of the five sons of ban Jacob who had had heirs, was his grand-father; that one had two daughters only, Ana and Sara, an impediment in their genealogy and patrimonial continuity. The last one married to Nicholas Ombozi of Suatu (*Zowat, Zovath*), a noble whose family originated in the county of Cluj [see: Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a hunyadiak korában*, vol. V, CD; Coriolan Suci, *Dicţionar istoric al localităţilor din Transilvania*, vol. II (Bucureşti, 1968), 148; *Az Erdélyi Káptalan jegyzőkönyvei (1222–1599)*, Zs. Bogdándi, E. Gálfy, eds. (Kolozsvar: Az Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület Kiadása, 2006), 575], but that family had possessions in Hunedoara county, where the families of Nicholas Gârleşteanu of Arany and Măciçaş of Rapolt had possessions too; he would married to Sara, their female descendant. During the second half of the 16th century, Nicholas Ombozi and George, his son would dispute the right of owning both on some possessions in Severin county, with the Gârleştenis' descendants, and in Hunedoara county, with the family of Măciçaş of Rapolt's descendants.

²¹ In 1559 George and Peter, his brother were registered as Gârleşteni of Bolvaşniţa (Pesty, *A Szörényi bánóság*, 278). What is more important is that at the end of the 16th century the whole male branch of the family disputing the shares of their patrimony used the same patronym, beginning with George Gârleşteanu, George and Peter, his sons, and Nicholas, John and Stephen, his grand-sons (Feneşan, *Documente*, 102). Finally, for a late registering, another Nicholas Gârleşteanu added the same toponym to his surname while he was a refugee in the county of Hunedoara, in 1662. Costin Feneşan, "Caransebeş după Caransebeş – Note cu privire la destinul nobilimii şi oraşenimii din Banatul Caransebeşului şi Lugojului după anexarea de către Poartă (1658)," *Patrimonium Banaticum* III (2004): 92–93.

²² Boldea, "Tradiţie şi continuitate," 291.

had profitably married to one of the right heiresses of the Fiats, who had been admitted so by the princely authority; she owned shares in lots of the villages the family Fiat of Armeniş possessed.

The next times nothing spectacular happened in the Gârleştenis' wealth dynamics, the second half of the 16th century generally setting its proportions. Two aspects I have to refer to in my present analysis: other properties of the family in the context of litigates, borders delimiting or purchases before urban or county courts – to complete the image of that familial patrimony on the one hand, and in the other hand, women's owning right to, much better drawn in that case.

Other properties. Since the end of the 15th century, the most important immobile properties of the family were concentrated in Caransebeş undoubtedly; as a political-administrative center of Severin County, that town offered a proper environment to lots of the family's members rising local hierarchy and occupying ones of the most urban and county local dignities. We might suppose that each of the family's members had one or more properties in the town on the Sebeş River, part of them being aleatory recorded. So, in May 1601, the nobiliary yards and houses of John Gârleşteanu and his wife are registered²³ in the context of a prohibition that the family of George Găman set against Francisc Fodor's intention to get hold of a house he didn't have any right on; in January 12, 1604²⁴, Nicholas Gârleşteanu and Ana Peica, his wife, bought from Andrew Birta, for 50 forints, a vacant land located southward of Nicholas's house wall, to extend their dwelling probably. Before the local *sedria* of Caransebeş a transaction between *egregius nobilis* John Gârleşteanu and *providus* Nicholas Pancionovici was also set in April 10, 1582²⁵: Pancionovici sold for 18 forints a fallowed and clean hayfield on Srem Street, for a former duty he had no possibility to pay off. Other Gabriel Gârleşteanu's lands in Caransebeş countryside were registered in March 10, 1638²⁶ when they bordered a tilled land that two nobles in the county of Hunedoara had sold to Nicholas Măcicăşanu and his wife, for 40 forints.

When speaking about Cruşovăţ, the first record dated in 1588²⁷; as it is well known, the possession there had belonged to the family of Deş of Timişel in the

²³ Costin Feneşan, *Diplomatarivm Banaticvm*, vol. II (Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2017), 209–212.

²⁴ Feneşan, *Documente*, 129; Ionuţ Costea, *Solam virtutem et nomen bonum. Nobilitate, Etnie, Regionalism în Transilvania Princiară* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2005), 93.

²⁵ Feneşan, *Documente*, 64.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 168.

²⁷ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság*, vol. II (Budapest, 1878), 290. It is placed in the Depression of Domaşnea-Mehadia, at the Mehadica and Luncaviţa rivulets' confluence.

15th century²⁸, and in the first half of the next century, it was registered among the nobles Lazăr of Almăj's possessions²⁹, ones of the Gârleştenis' neighbors in the district of Mehadia. Even if we do not know how the possession entered the Gârleştenis' patrimony, what is sure is that that one was registered among George Gârleşteanu's possessions in the conscript of 1603.

Prisaca is another estate mentioned only in the beginning of the 17th century³⁰, with the families of Gârleşteanu and Nyakazo as co-owners. It was not a peaceful community if we remember the conflict between John Gârleşteanu, a vice-count of Severin at that time, and Stephen Nyakazo, in 1599.³¹ The water canal and sluice for both the Gârleştenis' mill and that downstream one of the Nyakazos began the apple of discord. A mutual agreement between John Gârleşteanu and Toma Nyakazo, Stephen's father, seems to have been set so that if the canal and sluice would have been destroyed by the Timiș River's whirling, the parts should have had a common purse. In the spring of 1599, that was the situation, and John Gârleşteanu repaired the installation on his own account waiting for Thomas's son, the heir of the mill after his father's death, to pay his part. As that one refused to comply with that clause, the litigate arrived before the county court, where a substitute vice-count named Nicholas Toth took the place of John Gârleşteanu (a vice-count at that moment, so to say, involved in a conflict of interest). For repeatedly refusing to give full swing to the co-owner's requests, Stephen Nyakazo was prohibited to rebuild his mill and use the installation. In 1604³², a new turn within the two families' relations: given his personal wants, Stephen Nyakazo hypothecated all his shares (house, lands, forests, hayfields, and the mill) in the favor of Ladislav Gârleşteanu and his wife, for 90 forints for 7 years. As all his lands were uninhabited the possibility that noble Gârleşteanu set there his own bounds in order to bring those lands into cultivation was stipulated. Later data show that the hypothecated effects remained in the buyer's property who would bequeath them in his daughters' favor.

A reminiscence of Gârleştenis' owning is to be found at Vălișoara, coming yet from the second half of the 15th century, through co-owning and becoming related later to the family of nobles Fiat of Armeniș. In 1627, more of the Gârleşteanu's family (Gabriel Gârleşteanu Sr., George Gârleşteanu, and Gabriel

²⁸ Boldea, *Nobilimea*, 197.

²⁹ Ligia Boldea, "Noi date asupra elitelor românești bănațene: familia Lazăr de Almăj (secolele XV-XVI)," *Banatica* 17 (2005): 319.

³⁰ Placed in the southern side of the Timiș Valley, near the Hills of Zăgujeni. Țeicu, *Banatul montan*, 363.

³¹ Feneșan, *Documente*, 107; Țeicu, *Moara de apă*, 378.

³² Frigyes Pesty, *Krassó vármegye története*, vol. IV (Budapest, 1883), 233–234.

Gârleşteanu Jr.'s wife) obstructed a new division of the estate, ordered by prince Gabriel Bethlen, for not complying with the old agreement.³³

Finally, we have other data on the Gârleştenis' domain in documents that mention their bonds with *sessiones* (plots of land) within different estates apparently out of the ancestors' patrimony. There are various cases, from testifying, to re-bordering or litigates concerning the right of owning. So, in 1624, Peter Marcu, a bond of Nicholas Gârleşteanu in the village of Jena (*Dsena*) was present as a witness at noble Francisc Groza's seizing of Sacu estate.³⁴ Another bond, Peter Gheorghe in Ohaba Mâtnic is also mentioned as a witness of Gabriel Gârleşteanu's wife, to traverse that the family of Csulai had had possessions at Obreja and Glimboca.³⁵ The *sessio* of John *Gerban* (Gârboni), a bond of John Gârleşteanu, was registered at *Felseomachkas*, caused by a correction of the borders of Caransebeş, ordered by prince Sigismund Báthory between September 11 and October 11, 1588³⁶, the moment of setting vicinities, with nobiliary possessions and bonds' *sessiones*, parceled out on localities. A more interesting but not a novel one is registered in a paper of 1618³⁷, with two plots in the village of Cernota, that Ladislav Gârleşteanu bought for 72 forints in 1608 from his aunt Elisabeth Gârleşteanu. To bring them into cultivation the nobleman populated them with bonds. But, to his surprise, his right of owning was contested in 1617 by noble Gabriel Mâtniceanu; that one took by force those lands for the reason that they had been once part of the Mâtnicenis's patrimony; even hypothecated long ago, his father would have bought them back and bequeathed them to him. The case would be brought before the princely court after the noblemen hadn't come to an understanding in the local courts, in front of which the parties came with their witnesses, but the paper ends there and we do not know the final sentence.

Women's right on land and real properties shows another interesting side in that family's development: I have had the opportunity to find a larger open-minded understanding in the case of the family's noblemen to let women get or inherit a series of familial lands, more visible than in the case of other noble families almost exclusively dominated by the male line inheriting (the Mâtnicenis, for instance). Analyzing the evolution of familial structures during the 16th–17th centuries I have rather clearly found the proportion between the male and the female, respectively, right of succession; two are the major aspects that induced configuration and re-configuration of way the patrimony passed from a

³³ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság*, II, 562.

³⁴ Pesty, *Krassó*, II/2 (Budapest, 1884), 302.

³⁵ Feneşan, *Diplomatarivm*, 451–459.

³⁶ *Erdélyi káptalan*, 218.

³⁷ Pesty, *Krassó*, IV, 270.

generation to another. The first and deepest change, as we have seen above, took place by the middle of the 16th century when the male line in the main family's branch (descendant of ban Jacob of Gârliște) who had owned the main part of the family's wealth, passed away in defiance of the fact that Jacob of Gârliște and Margaret, his wife, had seven children (5 boys and 2 girls). Temporary, the whole construction of the familial patrimony owning was broken up; only in the second half of that century it will be restored through the collateral branch of the family, descendant from castellan Gabriel Gârleșteanu.

The second aspect consisted in the matrimonial alliances within the families, a true matrimonial strategy in the course of time that made the Gârleștenis consolidate their wealth and local power. Obviously, the men in the family contracted mainly marriages to female members of some rich families of local dignitaries who were able to offer substantial dowry to their daughters. The Gârleștenis' female successors were also privileged to a certain extent of the heiress' right on familial shares, following their fathers' requests before the central power or clauses of will.

a. Documentary, the women in that family are visible only in the middle of the 16th century, once with Nicholas's death, the last son of Jacob of Gârliște; after his death, the two daughters Sara and Ana and the financial problems he had let would make difficulties in his successors' life. His female descendants – his widow, daughters, sisters, and grand-daughters, but also his grand-sons – had to confront before the princely court; the properties that Jacob and Nicholas of Gârliște had bought would be given their female successors, and the ancestors' properties mainly to the male branch of the family, descendants of Gabriel Gârleșteanu, except for the quarter the females had the right on, according to the sentences from 1544 and 1569 (as I have shown above).

In 1575, Elisabeth, Gabriel Gârleșteanu's daughter, assumed an interesting attitude by summoning his own brother in the county of Severin/ Caransebeș district court for her shares from the estates at Teregova, Bucosnița, Pleșiva, Mehadica, Pârvova, Cebniac (Mehadia district), and Gârliște and Prilipeț (Almăj district). It is an interesting summoning in my opinion just because the familial patrimony had been finally partitioned 5 years before, in 1569, and Elisabeth's brothers had become the main holders of the Gârleștenis' "wealth", on the one hand. On the other hand, at that moment she was Bona Vaida's wife, the noble vice-count/ castellan on foot and the man who had to lead the court in principle. It is possible that such a special social position of her husband (or his ambitions, maybe) made her take action against her brothers George and Peter Gârleșteanu, in order to get a more consistent share of the recently confirmed familial properties. It rests unclear whether she asked the daughters' right quarter (her brothers went slowly about it anyway) or tried to force

an equal sharing of the familial wealth, at one third/ any successor. The ulterior evolution of facts seems inclining towards the second variant. The reasons for such an opinion consist in: the first court the cause was presented before was the county court under John Tivadar's command as that one substituted her husband, Bona Vaida who was obviously involved in a conflict of interest. The sentence, also sanctioned after by ban Stephen Tompa, asked the two accused brothers to present the diplomas of privileges to prove their rights on the respective estates. The accused brothers applied to the superior court of prince Stephen Báthory; that one confirmed in fact the old princely sentence from 1569, that the female part had already got the proper rights. Elisabeth, the claimant there, certainly together with her husband or represented by that one, displeased with the sentence, tried in turn to go *in persona* before the prince within the Dieta of Mediaş that was to take place in January 1576. As prince Stephen Báthory abdicated during the dieta, the sentence would arrive to the parties only in 1578; it was the moment the new prince Christopher Báthory confirmed also the previous sentences and the cause was extinguished.³⁸ But the sense of that action rests to be investigated: did Elisabeth and Bona Vaida try to take advantage of his function in order to increase her share from the Gârleştenis' wealth even if they had no successors to leave them that legacy? In 1576 on the other hand, George Gârleşteanu, Elisabeth's brother and one of the litigants, succeeded to Bona Vaida in the function of a vice-count; the question in that case is to what extent did that fact alter the prince's sentence or it came only to equilibrate the sphere of influence within the family? As for me, I believe that that intra-familial conflict was generated by Elisabeth's unreasonable pretensions as long as she had always a good social and material situation for being a daughter of a castellan in Caransebeş, a sister and wife of Severin vice-counts after; such a situation became probably the support of her ambitions out of the legal rights of succession.

Fifteen years after, in 1591, Elisabeth's combative nature and wish to preserve her shares came again into light: together with her husband's relatives opposed to prescription of their possessions at Bozovici, Găvoşdia, *Dombrovics*, Teregova, and *Iabalsena* in charge of the princely fisc.³⁹ It was a situation generated by Bona Vaida's death, and it could dramatically modify the family's wealth. The princely fisc seems to have insisted on taking advantage from the fact that Elisabeth and her husband had no children, without taking into account the law that stipulated the inheritance right of ascendants (as the second successorial class) or of the collateral relatives up to the fourth degree. It is but true

³⁸ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánóság*, II, 75–76.

³⁹ *Erdélyi káptalan*, 305; Pesty, *A Szörényi bánóság*, II, 33.

that since the second part of the 16th century the central power manifested tendencies to profit about any uncertainty concerning the collateral relatives' right of succession or the co-owners' right of *protimisis* after a nobleman's death. Only by written proofs concerning their properties the different families could be excluded from the princely retract and their properties registering in the princely fiscal system.⁴⁰ As we have no final sentence in the case I have focused on, we cannot say how that conflict ended.

Barbara Gârleşteanu, Elisabeth's sister passed through a similar situation after her husband Francisc Ciorciuc's death as the couple had had no children. She decided around 1608 to bequeath her wealth (including the lands at Cernota) to her sister Elisabeth and her nephews, Stephen Gârleşteanu and Nicholas Gârleşteanu.⁴¹ The women's right to bequeath is ever stronger reflected in papers beginning with the second half of the 16th century and during the next one, both for the inherited and procured goods, a concluding proof of the role they played within the familial administrative system, far from being a marginal one.⁴²

From such a perspective what happened to Ladislav Gârleşteanu's daughters (Ana and Catherine) after his death before 1635, is also suggestive. Former vice-count of Severin and substituted ban of Caransebeş and Lugoj, one of the prominent family's members, Ladislav died without heirs, so his heritage was certainly brought forward for discussion. I might suppose that his shares from the familial patrimony were given to his collateral relatives; there is no data on their prescription on princely treasure. What is of interest is the story of the estate Prisaca that he and Magdalene Toth, his wife, bought in 1604. Having entered the princely fisc, it was redeemed for 200 imperial thalers by Francisc Josika in the name of his wife Ana Gârleşteanu, her minor sister Catherine, and other two women of the noble family of Peica of Caransebeş, as the princely sentence was noted down in a paper issued in June 1, 1635.⁴³ All the five beneficiaries were credited with the estate as a new donation with perpetual and irrevocable right on; it is a fact to confirm that the noble women had an easier

⁴⁰ Ligia Boldea, "Asupra unor controverse fiscale în Caransebeşul primei jumătăți a secolului al XVII-lea," *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie-Istorie XX (2012): 229–243.

⁴¹ Pesty, *Krassó*, IV, 270–273.

⁴² Georgeta Fodor, *Destine comune: viața femeilor între public și privat. Țara Românească, Moldova și Transilvania. Secolele XV-XVII* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2011), 146–153; Livia Magina, "Un destin feminin în Banatul sfârșitului de secol XVI: Barbara Moise," *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie-Istorie XIX (2011): 286; Ligia Boldea, "Examining the Status of the Noble Women in 16th–17th Century Banat," *Brukenthalia. Romanian Cultural History Review*, Supplement of *Brukenthalia. Acta Musei*, no. 3 (2013): 31–32.

⁴³ Pesty, *Krassó*, IV, 302.

access to the parents' legacy in the case of what those ones had bought, than to ancestors' goods which regularly remained to the male descendants.

b. Another level of discussion refers to the goods the Gârleştenis' wives came with and obviously increased their consorts' weal. On the basis of the documentary data I have had the opportunity to find that those wives belonged, almost without exception, to families of note in the Banat of Caransebeş and Lugoj – Fiat, Peica, Marga, Josika, Toth, and Lăţug – any of them with important local dignitaries. It is but certain that those women with their dowry and wedding gifts essentially contributed to the familial wealth. Unfortunately, the preserved papers up today do not contain any list of the goods which those women subjoined to the Gârleştenis. Only aleatory information have been preserved, referring to possessions in dispute on the basis of which we could make a relative reconstitution of the weal of the family they joined by marriage.

George Gârleşteanu's wife, Catherine Fiat's situation is a revealing one: she was a woman to prove in the course of time a distinct tenacity in protecting her inheriting rights. In December 10, 1578, she and Ana Bakoczy (John Simon's wife) were carrying on a lawsuit with their nephew Ludovic who had contested their owning right on a large number of villages and hamlets, part of the ancestors' patrimony of the family of Fiat of Armeniş.⁴⁴ The case took a complicated turn in August 1581⁴⁵ with Nicholas Florea involving in the suit by pretending shares of Fiat's wealth that belonged both to the two noble ladies and to Ludovic Fiat and his brothers. It is in fact a dispute that came after a long series of lawsuits within that family, between the female branch and the male one, respectively, beginning with 1530 around⁴⁶; even it seems a similar case with the Gârleştenis' one, the reality shows in fact a totally different situation, within which the inheritance right was equally admitted for both the sexes. How did such a sensible difference in the matter of succession within the two related families appear? One of the noblemen of the Fiats, Ladislav, had requested king Vladislav II, in the beginning of the 16th century, the right to bequeath his goods both to the male and female descendants, as he had a son (John) and three daughters. His son, John Fiat did the same think, asking king Louis II, in 1525⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Pesty, *A Szörényi bántóság*, III, 421–426. It was both about shares from the possessions of Buchin, Poiana, Poieniţa, Petroşniţa, Vălişoara, Golet, Cerneţ, Pădureţ, *Miraya*, Criva, Bolvaşniţa, Poreca de Sus and de Jos, Simonolţ, Armeniş, Feneş, Sadova, Slatina, and *Zarazpatak*, and the hamlets of *Chywro*, *Nagyapatak* and *Zekas*.

⁴⁵ *Erdélyi káptalan*, 118, no. 294, 296. Nicholas Florea wasn't in fact a member of the family of Fiat; one of his female ancestors, his grand-mother probably, had been married to Francisc Fiat in the first half of the 16th century, but they divorced and that lady was married to noble John Florea later.

⁴⁶ Boldea, *Nobilimea*, 238–242.

⁴⁷ Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, II/3 (Bucureşti, 1892), 508, no. 356. It was about the possessions of Buchin, Cerneţ, Golet, Bolvaşniţa and Petroşniţa.

the right of male succession on the ancestors' estates for his unique daughter: he obtained it for Catherine (wife of George Gârleşteanu some years later). John Fiat's early death without male successors made, like in the case of the Gârleştenis, the different branches of the family initiate a merciless dispute on the familial goods, the males being largely represented within one of them. But it is a case with royal papers of *praefectio* and so the female descendants' right of property was recognized in equal shares with the males' right. That was also Sigismund Bátyhory's final decision in 1578. The question is that the conscript of 1603 registered for Armeniş and Sadova (the Fiats' traditional properties) some members of the families of Florea, Bakocz and Gârleşteanu as co-owners.⁴⁸ So George Gârleşteanu's behavior is quite a paradox: as a representative of the male branch of his family and the main beneficiary of the legal partition of the familial fortune he backed his wife, a representative of the female branch of her own family, against the male representatives of the Fiats. The result was his registering in the conscript of 1603 with properties at Armeniş, Sadova, and Feneş.

Another interesting situation refers to 1597, the year Ana Peica, Nicholas Gârleşteanu's wife and other noble ladies (widows, wives and young daughters) in the families of Bucur, Căstruţ, and Peica asked the prince "the male right of inheritance" for 12 possessions in the former district of Izvoarele Caraşului.⁴⁹ Francisc Fiat opposed to them in his own name and in the name of his relatives from the Peicas and the Vaidas, for the male right. He was claiming surprisingly on the basis of his maternal not paternal ascendancy, as a son of Magdalene Peica and John Fiat. In consequence of that above his claims didn't totally correspond to the classic male succession. What we know is that during the first half of the 16th century the family of Bucuşniţa and that one of Peica⁵⁰ had co-owned those estates for a while and later the Peicas succeeded somehow to exclude the nobles of Bucuşniţa from those possessions. We might note that at the end of the century those estates were placed at the confluence between the Banat of Caransebeş and Lugoj and the former county of Caraş that had been occupied by the Ottomans from almost half a century; so, the nobiliary owing in that area was but relative and fluctuant between the two centers of political and administrative power. Unfortunately the paper from May 28, 1597 doesn't contain the princely sentence and we cannot find the winner in that dispute; the

⁴⁸ Magina, "Conscriptia portilor," 290.

⁴⁹ Feneşan, *Documente*, 98. It was about the possessions of Caraşova, Gârleşte, Ciudanoviţa, Jitin, Agadici, Maidan, Răchitova, Goruia, Greoni, *Petrowecz*, *Zpenczuracz* and *Gorwicza*, in *districtu de Crasso*.

⁵⁰ Pesty, *Krassó*, IV, 23.

case remain a singular one due to how the both parties claimed their right on the basis of their maternal ascendancy.

A series of properties of Barabara Raja and Sara Marga, another Nicholas Gârleşteanu's wives are registered in other papers. The first lady seems to have had *Czerna* estate that she willed to her husband. But prince Gabriel Bethlen donated the estate in 1619⁵¹ to John Kornis (*tricesimator* of Vărădia crossing) and his wife, probably on the basis of the princely retract on a free land. I couldn't say if Nicholas Gârleşteanu's opposition was a successful one and he had the documents to prove that his wife had willed the estate to him. For his second wife Sara Marga we might find in a document emitted in March 20, 1635⁵² that she (as a widow at that time) and Nicholas Gârleşteanu's sons owned half of Jena (*Dsena*) estate of 400 forints, by inheritance probably; the other half belonged to Sigismund Fiat of Caransebeş. The paper I have referred to is in fact the princely sentence sent to the local authorities to attest that the whole estate was donated to Sigismund Fiat for his loyal services and the 1,000 forints he had lent to the prince. Whether and how the family of Nicholas Gârleşteanu was redeemed doesn't clearly result from the document.

Magdalene Toth, Ladislav Gârleşteanu's wife seems to have had parts of the family of Măcicaş of Tincova's lands which had been mortgaged to Gaşpar and Michael Toth in 1572, by Peter and Michael Măcicăşanu. Nicholas, a descendant of the Măcicăşeni started an action to recuperate those possessions in 1642–1643⁵³, by paying 600 forints to the Toths, including Margaret, Ladislav Gârleşteanu's widow at that time.

Caransebeş court confirmed in 1651 that George Gârleşteanu's wife had donated a hayfield to Peter Ivul, at Racoviţa, for his services in some specific circumstances.⁵⁴

1658 was the moment that made the Gârleşteni leave the Banat for the neighbor county of Hunedoara where they seem to have had properties since the 16th century⁵⁵; their departure was similar to the other noble families in

⁵¹ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság*, II, 50.

⁵² Pesty, *Krassó*, IV, 299; Boldea, "Mărganii," 171.

⁵³ Pesty, *Krassó*, II/2, 246; Feneşan, *Documente*, 181. It was about the possessions of Tincova, Zăgujeni, Jupa, Măcicaşul de Jos and de Sus, Ruginos, Dumbrăviţa, Delar, Valea, Secaş and Grădişte.

⁵⁴ Pesty, *A Szörényi bánság*, II, 241.

⁵⁵ The first entry of the Gârleşteni in the district of Hunedoara took place in the beginning of the 16th century, by Nicholas of Gârlişte (ban Jacob's son) marriage with Eufrosina Tárnok, a daughter of ban Peter Tárnok of Măcicaş (originate in the district of Caransebeş). The couple, together with their sisters-in-law confronted yet in 1526 with the male successors of Peter Tárnok, for the estate of Rapolt (DL 36401). Nicholas of Gârlişte got in unknown circumstances the estate of *Arany/* Binţinţi, at the same time; a paper emitted by Alba-Iulia Chapter mentioned

the mountainous and piedmont area of the Banat. The couple of Nicholas Gârleşteanu and Varvara Lăţug set at Peştişu Mic, in 1662 tried so to put in order their goods and wealth. Varvara Lăţug's will wrote in September 6, 1662⁵⁶, in a house at Peştişu Mic, before the priest of Giosani and more refugee noblemen from the Banat (Jacob Fiat, Stephen Kun, John Deak, and Peter Makrai) let us understand that the noble lady experienced the illusion of a temporary trek and of return to Caransebeş. Varvara willed at the moment when "helpless she is standing in that foreign country", after "the pagan Turks sent us away from our town and from our wealth in Caransebeş"; she bequeathed a series of properties in Caransebeş, of 1,000 forints, to two of her daughters, Anuţa and Tinca, and to her Michael Giurma, her son-in-law, the elder daughter being disinherited. I sincerely doubt that such a will was put in use as it requested the new authority of the Ottomans' recognition. Ten days later, in September 16, 1662, Nicholas Gârleşteanu, her husband signed *manu propria* the paper through which his son-in-law Michael Giurma (Anuţa's husband) and John Deak, Giurma's brother equally shared the estates in Hunedoara County. That crossing of land interests at the boundary between the county of Hunedoara and the former Banat of Caransebeş and Lugoj made historian Costin Feneşan to raise the question of a possible Ottoman-Transylvanian condominium within the countryside of Caransebeş that had been occupied by the Sublime Port.⁵⁷

A late coming back of the nobles in the native land made them meet a total changed situation they hardly could have anticipated three decades before when leaving for Transylvania. The Gârleştenis, like others former refugees, had entertained hopes to recuperate their properties in all. What the Gârleştenis asserted is summarily offered by the conscript that Iakob Wenczel von Sternbach, the military commissar of the county of Severin ordered in the mid of August 1688, for houses and other real goods. Starting from the former owners or their successors' assertions the conscript was made by a commission, on the basis of the witnesses of 8 noblemen in Caransebeş, 6 jurymen in the new town council and of the suburb judge; 170 buildings, places for houses, and other immobile

him as Nicholas Gârleşteanu of *Arany* (*Erdélyi káptalan*, 68). New disputes between the heiresses of Peter Tárnok are recorded in 1535–1536 and the male descendants, and so we have also in this case: "practice concerning the female succession was so deeply rooted that the family's descendants claimed for their rights of succession related to estates in Hunedoara county, during the 16th–17th century, not to enter the fall in foreign hands". Adrian Magina, "Constituirea și evoluția domeniului familiei nobiliare Măciçaș de Rapolt (1478–1520)," *Banatica* 20/II (2010): 119.

⁵⁶ Feneşan, "Caransebeş după Caransebeş," 92–93. Villages of Ruienii and Zorlenţ in the former district of Caransebeş, and the mill in front of Caransebeş fortress' walls, and the garden in front of it were parts of the that legacy.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 94.

gods were registered then inside the fortification of Caransebeș.⁵⁸ Nicholas and John Gârleşteanu asserted Nicholas Bucur's house, George Gârleşteanu asserted Francisc Peica's house with related places near the mill; John Gârleşteanu together with Francisc Peica asserted Gregory Tivadar's house (but that one was bought by Samuel Keresztesi with the approval of general Veterani); a named Maria Gârleşteanu asserted George Gârleşteanu's house and the related places, and a mill; Nicholas Măcicaș' daughter asserted Gabriel Gârleşteanu's house. Members of other families asserted also the house of Stephen Gârleşteanu Sr. and Stephen Gârleşteanu Jr., probably transferred before 1658 by their owners.

A temporary coming back of the Ottomans in 1699 and, after, the total integration of the Banat in the Hapsburg Empire in 1718 put an end on the history of the noble class in their native land, the Banat. The Gârleştenis retired in the county of Hunedoara, on their properties; Peter Gârleşteanu of Gârliște (*Peter Gerlistei de Gerlest*) is referred to in a late paper from August 29, 1718⁵⁹, as a witness together with John Macskási of Tincova, at the last count of Severin, Peter Macskási of Tincova's wealth share between his son and his daughter. Both the witnesses signed *manu propria* that paper.

The present research aimed to add another century to the history of land patrimony belonging to one of the most representative noble Romanian family in the Banat during the Middle Age and the pre-modern era – the Gârleştenis of Rudăria, Bolvaşnița, and Caransebeș. I have mainly focused on the last changes within that family's domanial system in the 17th century, after the delimitations of succession during the previous century. I have taken the conscript of plots of land in 1603 as an eloquent one for accurately registering, I believe, the whole system of lands the family owned after two centuries of an ascending evolution within the political and administrative field of the county. The family's weal was equally completed through the new acquisitions some of the members of the family did during the first half of the 17th century, even if we might consider that they contributed more to their personal prosperity, not to that of the whole family. It is also interesting the role the women played within the land owning system of the family whether they were the family's descendants or joined the family due to matrimonial alliances, well planned probably. Even if they hadn't ever obtained the right of property through *praeffectio*, I have found that women hadn't been totally excluded from inheritance; in contrary, they might have and

⁵⁸ Costin Feneşan, "Caransebeşul la începutul celei de-a doua stăpâniri habsburgice (1688)," *Revista istorică* 1–2 (1996): 80–83.

⁵⁹ Pesty, *Krassó*, IV, 365.

decide on important shares of the family's land patrimony and add their own acquisition using their own incomes. So we have a well enough image of the domanial aggregate of the one of the best placed families in the medieval and pre-modern mountainous Banat, including all the questions of male and female right of succession, legacies or transactions the family's members operated, or of the inherent litigates before the courts of that time.

DREGĂTORIE ȘI PROPRIETATE ÎN BANATUL SECOLELOR XVI-XVII - "AVEREA NOBILILOR GÂRLEȘTEANU DE RUDĂRIA"

Rezumat

Printre familiile nobile românești bănățene ale epocii medievale și premoderne, Gârleștenii de Rudăria fac o figură aparte prin conectarea lor aproape permanentă la centrul de putere locală. Realitatea este lesne de constatat, căci în decurs de un secol și jumătate, de la finele veacului al XV-lea și până în 1658, nu mai puțin de 7 membri ai familiei au deținut unele din cele mai înalte demnități ale banatului de Severin, ulterior ale banatului de Caransebeș și Lugoj: cele de bani de Severin, apoi de vicecomiți/ castelani ai comitatului Severin și de prim-juzi (primari) ai Caransebeșului. Un model interesant de ascensiune și perpetuare a influenței politice care s-a bazat atât pe o serie de personalități remarcabile ale familiei, cât și pe o bunăstare materială rezultată din moștenirea patrimonială și din veniturile realizate în timp prin exercitarea funcțiilor deținute. Articolul de față continuă istoria familiei în epoca Principatului prin tratarea aspectelor legate de dreptul de succesiune masculin și feminin, de moștenirile testamentare, de tranzacțiile realizate de membrii ei sau de inerențele litigii ajunse în fața instanțelor vremii. Este o completare necesară a studiilor noastre anterioare legate de evoluția acestei familii atât de influente în spațiul Banatului medieval și premodern.