

## RESIDENCES OF GLOGOVENI BOYARS

CIOAREC Ileana

**Abstract.** *In this article I propose to present the homes of boyars Glogoveanu. The need for development of products produced on their land ownership and the approach of major exchange commercial centers produced in the early seventeenth century a change in the mentality of boyars. At the end of the seventeenth century, but especially in the century following several boyars buy houses and land in cities.*

*Among those families who bought homes in cities reflects the family Glogoveanu.*

**Keywords:** *Glogoveanu, boyars, Cerneți, Glogova, Craiova.*

Under the conditions of development and modernization of towns and society life inside them, a great number of boyars would leave villages where they had boyar courtyards and head for urban areas.

The necessity of capitalizing the products from their domains and the proximity of big centers of commercial convergence caused a change in boyar's mentality and activity starting with 17<sup>th</sup> century. Until this period the nobility was not connected to towns or townlets and towns. They had their courts on estates and did not have to use townlets unless they wanted to sell products and buy wares<sup>1</sup>. Starting with the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but especially in the next century, more and more people bought houses and estates in towns. This phenomenon entailed all big, noble families from Oltenia.

Craiova, the biggest urban center of Oltenia, known at international level, as far as Constantinople and Ragusa, became an irresistible attraction for great noble families during Austrian occupation (1718-1739). In this period the noble people integrated into Caesarian administration.

Another factor, which determined the noble people's shifting from village to town, was the political-administrative one. During the second half of 17<sup>th</sup> century an increase of political and administrative institutions was noticed. Thus, in that period apart from high officials, chosen from nobility, like the ban, deputies, numerous documents confirmed the existence of many servants (the so-called "red" in Gorj and Mehedinți, high boyars in Olt, village chiefs in Romanați, gendarmes in Vâlcea, district court judges in Dolj). During Brâncoveanu's reign, a unity of servants, a flag of soldiers was in Craiova<sup>2</sup>.

Under these circumstances, many noble people would build houses in Oltenian towns. Those towns performed functions of political-administrative central or marginal centers. Praiseworthy are cases of the Glogoveni (noble people who had came from Glogova, in the north of Mehedinți), the Coțofeni (Coțofeni din Față), the Argetoieni (from Argetoaia), the Filișani (from Filiși), the Poenari (Vâlcea, Gorj, Dolj counties), the Gănești (Prejoiu and Poenari, Vâlcea), the Zătreni (Zătreni, Vâlcea), the Pleșoieni (ex Romanați county, Dolj), the Oțetelișeni (from Oțeteliș, Vâlcea).

In 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, members of Glogoveanu family were appointed to various positions in county centers: Cerneți, Târgu Jiu, Râmnicu Vâlcea and Craiova. The settling of great noble families in the main urban centers led to the delimitation of some municipal areas, a fact confirmed by the making of some suburbs after them. In Craiova, for instance, their churches and houses can be seen in suburbs, such as Obedeianu (Constantin and Elena Church), Sf. Treime (Sacred Trinity Church), suburb of the fair (Sf. Ilie church)<sup>3</sup>. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after the center of Craiova had been moved twice, the district of the richest families laid between the Iancu Jianu, Comuna din Paris and Câmpia Islazului streets.

Their residences or ecclesiastical foundations identify the presence of Glogoveni boyars in various towns. From all the towns where these noble people have lived, it is only in Craiova and Glogova that there dwelling houses have been still preserved, whereas the one from Cerneți has disappeared.

The house in Glogova, in its present form, was built on the cellars of an old building. If we consider the technique of building we can determine two stages in the construction process.

The first step ascribed to the overseer Nicola Glogoveanu, attested by documents at the beginning of 17<sup>th</sup> century includes a basement at the level of the ground<sup>4</sup>.

The basement is a massive construction, with 1.40 – 1.45 m thick walls made of small (23/12/4cm) well-burnt bricks. In some places the lower part of the walls is made of large river stones. These river stones alternate with one up to three lines of bricks, horizontally arranged; inside the layers, a brick set vertically on border separates the stones.

The basement includes two arched rooms with cylindrical domes and voluminous arches. In the first room there is a single arch, and in the second there are six, which lean on walls and on two pilasters of square section. At the

<sup>1</sup> Valeria Costăchel, P.P. Panaitescu, A. Cazacu, *Viața feudală în Țara Românească și Moldova (secolele XIV - XVII)*, Bucharest, Scientific Publishing, 1975, p. 421.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolae Băbălău, Dinică Ciobotea, Ion Zarzără, *Din istoria instituțiilor administrative ale județului Dolj*, Craiova, Sitech Publishing House, 2004, pp. 37-39.

<sup>3</sup> Luchian Deaconu, *Memoria Craiovei*, Oltenia Museum, Craiova, 1981; see Craiova poster. 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, created by D. Bălașa, 1979.

<sup>4</sup> Radu Crețeanu, Sarmiza Crețeanu, *Culele din România*, Bucharest, Meridiane Publishing House, 1969, p. 16.

back of the last room there is a section, which does not have a vault, but a flat wooden ceiling. In this place there has been a trap, whose filled opening can be noticed at the extremity of the ceiling. This trap could be used only to get down to the basement, and not as a ladder for access to the house.

The entrance to the basement is not under the usual vault under the verandah, as in other Oltenian houses, but from the side facade, through a round door made by three thick pieces of oak and provided with ramparts for shooting and decorated with archvaul of apparent bricks. The arch of the door is made of apparent bricks arranged along, a bit buried in the wall, above which there is a line of bricks arranged across and plastered and higher there is a concentric motive made of teeth of apparent bricks<sup>5</sup>.

The author of the second stage is either Matei Glogoveanu, imperial consultant under the Austrian occupation, or his son Ioniță. It is this stage that the whole floor and two prominences belong to. The front prominence includes the entrance and the access staircase. At first the access staircase was on the outside, being placed in a solitary section of the southwest wall. The existence of this external staircase presented some disadvantages, as the house could be easily taken by storm in case of an attack. Matei Glogoveanu or his son Ioniță, the restorers of the house in 18<sup>th</sup> century replaced the old staircase with an inside one, under verandah.

The verandah is provided with wall parapet, small wooden columns, which sustain girders, made from the same material fashioned and decorated with notches<sup>6</sup> and multiple arches. The front side of veranda is higher, making a platform on which, according to Radu Crețeanu<sup>7</sup>, in the moment of calm and leisure they used to put carpets and pillows and when “the Turks boomed, the ones from upstairs could cooperate with the defenders in the basement, by shooting through the numerous ramparts of the parapet”.

From verandah one enters a spacious room, through a small door made from one piece of oak, of 10 cm thick, pierced by two ramparts which can be blocked from the inside with a beam placed crosswise. This room opens to five rooms: two on each side, and one at the end, the waiting room. The room for receiving guests, the first on the right is bigger than the others having the dimensions of 6/6m. The second room, on the same side, was divided in two small rooms. Between the two rooms, on the left side, one can pass under an arcade to a hall leading drives to the outhouse. This one was initially placed at 3 m distances from the house, the access being made through a wooden gallery. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century a new one was built attached to the house. From outhouse built in 17<sup>th</sup> century only the door made of massive oak is still there<sup>8</sup>.

The house underwent some changes at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century when the owner, of that time, Gheorghe Vernescu, widened the windows from the upstairs and replaced three pillars of the verandah<sup>9</sup>.

The house from Craiova built at the middle of 18<sup>th</sup> century by Popa Vasile occupied, according to the authors of *Istoria Craiovei*, the place of an old building raised during the reign of Moise Voda and Alexandru the II nd<sup>10</sup>. On 17<sup>th</sup> January 1720 Popa Vasile from Craiova sells for 47 thalers to senior Talabă and his wife Cristina “this house with courtyard and garden, with trees and basement, with stables, beds, tables and wooden benches”<sup>11</sup>. After her husband’s death, Cristina, wishing to go to Ardeal, sells on April 25<sup>th</sup> 1724, for 130 lei (the Romanian national currency), to Matei Glogoveanu “three houses and a store room, under the same roof, with basement and kitchen and the garden behind houses with orchard, with courtyard as long the stable enclosed, three wooden tables and four leather chairs”<sup>12</sup>.

This house burnt in 1801 but its walls were restored entirely<sup>13</sup>.

At the age of 12, Tudor Vladimirescu came into Ioniță Glogoveanu’s house from Craiova. Where together with the latter’s son Nicolae, was learned and studied Greek, becoming his man of trust<sup>14</sup>.

During the Russian-Turkish Wars between 1806-1812, Glogoveanu house was transformed into a hospital for Russian soldiers. The same destiny had this house also during the war between 1828-1829<sup>15</sup>.

The earthquake of 1838 also damaged the building. After this earthquake the house suffered some transformations and additions. On 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1867 Carol the 1<sup>st</sup> visited Craiova for the first time. After the end of the religious service at Madona Dudu church, he went to Glogoveanu’s house<sup>16</sup>. Carol also stayed in this house on further occasions of visits undertaken here in 1872, 1877, 1890 and 1904. Between him and the Glogoveanu family lasting friendship developed<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Radu Crețeanu, *Culele și casele întărite de pe Valea Motrului*, in “Monuments and Museums. Bulletin of scientifically committee of artistically and historical museums and monuments”, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 1958, pp. 103-104.

<sup>6</sup> Grigore Ionescu, *Istoria arhitecturii din România*, vol. II, *De la sfârșitul veacului al XVI-lea până la începutul celui de al cincilea deceniu al veacului al XX-lea*, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 1965, p. 334.

<sup>7</sup> Radu Crețeanu, *art. cit.*, in *loc. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>9</sup> Radu Crețeanu, Sarmiza Crețeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> *Istoria Craiovei*, Craiova, Scrisul Românesc Publishing House, 1977, p. 276.

<sup>11</sup> Maria Glogoveanu, *Cu privire la Casele Primăriei din Craiova*, in “Arhivele Olteniei”, year X, no. 54-55, 1931, p. 147.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 148.

<sup>13</sup> *Monumentele Craiovei*, Craiova, Helios Publishing House, 1998, pp. 43-44.

<sup>14</sup> Andrei Oțetea, *Tudor Vladimirescu și revoluția de la 1821*, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 1971, p. 48.

<sup>15</sup> G. Mil. Demetrescu, *Craiova în veacul trecut (Începutul secolului al XIX-lea)*, in “Arhivele Olteniei” year III, no.14, 1924, p. 324.

<sup>16</sup> SJAN Dolj, Prefectura Dolj, d. 127/1867, f. 34; Luchian C. Deaconu, *Craiova 1898-1916. Saltul la urbanismul modern. Nicolae P. Romanescu*, Craiova, Sitech Publishing House, 2001, p. 182; Nicolae Băbălău, Dinică Ciobotea, Ion Zarzără, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>17</sup> Olga General Gigurtu, *Amintiri și icoane din trecut*, Craiova, 1935, p. 198.

These things are mentioned in the autobiographical novels Olga General Gigurtu, Ana Leoveanu and Nicolae Porumb.

Olga General Gigurtu related that when the two members of Glogoveanu family died, Carol sent the family two telegrams in which he expressed the pain caused by their departure<sup>18</sup>. Here is the content of the telegrams sent by Carol to the mourning family:

"I found out with deep sadness the loss of your venerable husband, loved, and esteemed by all, and because I felt a deep affection. I fully share your painful feelings and I hope that God Almighty will comfort this cruel blow - Carol"<sup>19</sup>.

"Sincere condolences for the loss you experience through the passing away of your regretted beloved mother, who gave so many proofs of love and devotion to our family - Carol"<sup>20</sup>.

The presence of Tudor Vladimirescu and Carol in his house is proved by the small plate on the wall near the entrance to the present center of Law Court.

In 1908 Nicolae Romanescu raised the North wing of the building. Changes at this building will continue in the course of time.

The house remained in the property of Glogoveanu family till September 1913 when Nicolae Glogoveanu sold it for 177000 to City hall from Craiova. Besides the houses he also sold a part of furniture "except for six yellow chairs, four tables, a wardrobe with mirror, everything contained the basement and in the two sheds in the courtyard". The payment had to be done integrally at concluding the authentic contract. "Which contract will be executed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 1913, when I'll receive the integral price, and will be registered on my name, in the presence of judicial Council if this anymore"<sup>21</sup>.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the City hall of Craiova, initiated a series of work of joinery, tinsmithing, dying, installation of lightning conductors, and telephonic posts and then securing the water supply by placing a well former by situated at intersection of the Calea Târgului and Postelnicu Fir streets<sup>22</sup>.

As result of the devastating fire, which damaged the building in 1918, the city hall fixed it<sup>23</sup>. In that year a new part was added with two similar levels made from a turned corridor, with a secondary staircase and six rooms on the east side. In 1942 architect Ioan Atanasescu replaced the front baldachin, crumbled, with a masonry baldachin<sup>24</sup>.

A three century, old house, witness to the main events, which marked the history of Craiova, restored by Historical Monuments Commission, appears today as a massive building, with voluminous walls up to 1.20 m. It is made up of basement, ground floor and floor. The basement is made up of a rectangular room (13x8m) with semi-cylinder dome sustained on three brick arches. The ground floor has a big vestibule through which one may get into seven adjacent rooms. A mosaic interior staircase makes access to the floor. The floor has the same arrangement as the ground floor. The ceilings are from oak beams and plastered<sup>25</sup>.

Nowadays, County Tribunal Dolj here develops its activity.

Glogoveni people had houses also in Cerneți, but these aren't anymore. From a letter addressed to Nicolae Glogoveanu, by Tudor Vladimirescu, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 1815, we found out that the house had been burnt by adals who devastated Mehedinți and Gorj counties: "Thieves from Ada- Kalé destroyed our world and from me and you had taken all the provisions and everything they found; they punished people too. Cerneți was all burnt, only few noble houses remained, where they stay in, but when they will come out, the houses will still be burnt"<sup>26</sup>.

In this house stood, in 1838, and the French ambassador to Constantinople, Edouard Thouvenel, when it passes through the city Cerneți<sup>27</sup>.

The current village Prunișori was founded after 1865, following the allotment made by Alexandru Ioan Cuza. Before this year the village was not on today's hearth but in three groups of settlements. A group of settlements in the West Forest is Teiș, another group in the west of the village Prunișori and was called "IVANESTI" and the third group called Valley Gârniței. After 1865 the three groups was established residential village Prunișori composed of slums Ploștina in the west and Gârnița the east.

In this village was Glogoveni mansion, equipped with ground floor (of brick) and floor (wood). Downstairs is found five rooms not too big and a cellar. Upstairs were three larger rooms (11/5) and a smaller one. The manor

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 190-198.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 197.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 198.

<sup>21</sup> SJAN Dolj, Primăria Municipiului Craiova, Serviciul administrativ, d. 283/1913, f. 1-2.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, f. 13-15, 31-35.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, d.136/1918, f. 4-8, 14.

<sup>24</sup> *Monumentele Craiovei*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>26</sup> *Documente privind istoria României. Răscoala din 1821*, vol. I. *Documente interne*, Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 1959, p. 89; Mite Măneanu, *Cerneți – creșterea și descreșterea unui oraș*, in "Porțile de Fier", year VIII, no. 1 (14), 2004, p. 12.

<sup>27</sup> M. Edouard Thouvenel, *La Hongrie et la Valachie. Souvenirs de voyage et notices historiques. Ouvrage accompagné d'une carte détaillée du bassin du Danube*, Paris, 1840, p. 161; SJAN Dolj, Colecția Manuscrise, Fond Jean Porubsky, pachet VII, *Craiova de altădată*, f. 130; v. SJAN Mehedinți, Revizoratul Județului Mehedinți, dosar 665/1942, f. 22; Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria românilor prin călători*, ediția a II-a, vol. III, Bucharest, 1929, p. 189; *Călători străini despre Țările Române în secolul al XIX-lea*, Seria nouă, vol. III, (1831-1840), Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2006, p. 814.

remained the property Glogovenilor by 1912 when they sold it along with the estate of George and Hilarion Constantinescu. In 1921 they donated the school building which operated here until 1985. The mansion was demolished in October 1989<sup>28</sup>.

Glogoveni boyars had two houses (Nos 33 and 53) and the city of Râmnicu Vâlcea, Street Bravu. They have belonged to Captain Alexander Glogoveanu being built in the nineteenth century. They no longer exist today because they were demolished in December 1903 when the City Sanitation Commission decided to demolish all Râmnicu Vâlcea insanitary houses presenting a danger to people look ugly<sup>29</sup>.

Their presence in these administrative, political, and juridical centers is only a reflection of dimension of role-played by Glogoveanu family and some of its members.

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<sup>28</sup> Information provided by the village teacher Maria Egher, Prunișor.

<sup>29</sup> Titi Mihail Gherghina, *Imagini citadine din Râmnicul de altădată*, Râmnicu Vâlcea, Almarom Publishing House, 2007, p. 9.





Fig. 1. The house from Glogova.



Fig. 2. The house from Craiova.