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## FOREWORD

### MATERIAL CULTURE, MEDICAL CONSUMPTION AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE. AN INTRODUCTION\*

CONSTANȚA VINTILĂ-GHIȚULESCU\*\*

Luxury and consumption are multifaceted concepts which have been constantly re-evaluated over time. Today, thanks to new trends in historiography, these concepts have become important analytical tools in global history research. Luxury, novelties, consumption, merchants, elites, artisans, advertising, goods, networks, long distance global connections are some of the research topics proposed by recent studies in global history. Maxine Berg argues the term luxury gained positive connotations during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, being associated with the development of trade and of the economy in general.<sup>1</sup> However, it was only in the last two decades that consumption and luxury have inspired a whole range of research and researchers.<sup>2</sup> For instance, in her projects, Berg uses these concepts to analyse how the East India Company stimulated luxury consumption via trade exchanges among Great Britain, India and China. *Luxury and Pleasure* is the title of one of her books in which Berg highlights, from the very beginning, the convenient relationship between luxury and delight.<sup>3</sup> Starting with the 18<sup>th</sup> century, luxury and consumption define a new

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<sup>1</sup> Maxine Berg, Elizabeth Eger, *The Rise and Fall of Luxury Debates*, in *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century. Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods*, ed. by Maxine Berg et al., New York, 2003, pp. 7–11.

<sup>2</sup> I mention here only some of the research studies focusing on luxury and consumption. Other studies will be mentioned throughout this introduction. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai, Cambridge, 1986; *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. by John Brewer, Robert Porter, London, 1993; *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Victoria de Grazia, Ellen Furlough, Berkeley, 1996; *Consumers and Luxury: Consumer Culture in Europe, 1650–1850*, ed. by Maxine Berg, Hellen Clifford, Manchester, 1999; Haris Exertzoglou, *The Cultural Uses of Consumption: Negotiating Class, Gender, and Nation in the Ottoman Urban Centers during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, in “International Journal of Middle East Studies,” 35, 2003, pp. 77–101; Amanda Vickery, *His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Household Accounting in Eighteenth-Century England*, in “Past and Present,” Supplement 1, 2006, pp. 12–38.

<sup>3</sup> Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Oxford, 2007, p. 21.

community, the “new consumers,” interested in novelty and emulation. In another research project, Berg argues that: “Luxury is central to the global history of consumption.”<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, as Bart Lambert and Katherine Anne Wilson show, luxury seems to be an all-encompassing concept capable to “evolve over the time” in order to accommodate multiple connotations according to various research projects whose main points it needs to prove.<sup>5</sup> Researchers use the term today even though it was not mentioned as such in the archives of the past. In Transylvania, luxury appears for the first time in a sumptuary law from Cluj (1593) with reference to luxury displayed by the local community when choosing their clothes,<sup>6</sup> while in Walachia and Moldavia, the term is used much later towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in the context of drafting sumptuary legislation.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, even though the term was not in use at the time, researchers were indeed able to identify and operate with a number of other words describing wealth, extravagance and excess. Because it is a concept difficult to define, luxury should be analysed in the context of the time to which it belongs by relying on the consumer’s interpretation of certain objects as luxury artefacts according to their social, political or symbolic value.<sup>8</sup>

During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Maxine Berg argues, global and long-distance trade is transforming Europe by stimulating innovation in order to not only “imitate” but also improve imported luxury goods.<sup>9</sup> By imitation, Europeans create their own luxury products, much more attuned to local tastes, thus promoting new styles and fashion trends. However, if global trade contributes significantly to the development of industrial Europe,<sup>10</sup> South-Eastern Europe still imports goods from various regions of Europe, Russia or the Ottoman Empire, and only succeeds negligibly to develop (or imitate) its local production.<sup>11</sup> For instance, Marseille is connected to Crete and dependent on its olive oil to supply its soap manufacturers. As David Celetti shows, in turn, Crete prefers to ship its olive oil because trade is more profitable than investing into soap manufacturing. The Romanian Principalities follow the same pattern. Demand for luxury goods, for example, is on the rise. “Greek,” Armenian

<sup>4</sup> Eadem, *In Pursuit of Luxury: Global History and British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century*, in “Past and Present,” 182, 2004, p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> Bart Lambert, Katherine Anne Wilson, *Introduction*, in *Europe’s Rich Fabrics. The Consumption, Commercialisation and Production of Luxury Textiles in Italy, the Low Countries and Neighbouring Territories (Fourteenth–Sixteenth Centuries)*, ed. by Bart Lambert, Katherine Anne Wilson, Farnham, 2016, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Mária Pakucs: *Transylvanian Civic Sumptuary Laws in The Early Modern Period: Preliminary Observations*, in this special issue.

<sup>7</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Shawls and Sable Furs: How to Be a Boyar under the Phanariot Regime (1710–1821)*, in “European History Yearbook,” 20, 2019, pp. 137–158.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation*, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 4–5, 32.

<sup>9</sup> Maxine Berg, *In Pursuit of Luxury*, p. 86.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 86–87.

<sup>11</sup> For “disparities” between the West and the East, see Bogdan Murgescu, *România și Europa. Acumularea decalajelor economice (1500–2010)*, Iași, 2010.

and Jewish merchants dominate the marketplace and trade actively to meet the demand of the local growing population in a region that is increasingly stable.<sup>12</sup> However, growing demand did not lead to local production simply because dominant and omnipresent aggressive trade networks undermined the development of a local manufacturing sector.

Until recently, South-Eastern Europe has not been the focus of this type of research, with only a few studies dedicated to consumption and everyday life.<sup>13</sup> Regarding the Ottoman Empire, Suraya Faroqhi's research analyses the relationship between material culture and consumption.<sup>14</sup> But if the Ottoman Empire benefited from an important historiographical attention in the last decades, its former territories in South-Eastern Europe did not. Limited access to primary sources and the communist regimes' predilection for political history kept researchers away from the history of consumption. Moreover, it would have been quite an adventure for researchers to study consumption during a so-called 'egalitarian period.' Without a doubt, communist regimes viewed both consumption and luxury through a negative lens.<sup>15</sup> However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the history of everyday life, the history of fashion and social history became important research subjects. Compared to Western Europe, archives in this region include fewer collections, and surviving luxury goods are in limited numbers. Visitors to museums in Belgrade or Sofia, in Bucharest or Athens, in Istanbul or Ioannina can hardly find material sources older

<sup>12</sup> Mária Pakucs, 'This Is Their Profession.' *Greek Merchants in Transylvania and Their Networks at the End of the 17<sup>th</sup> century*, in "Cromohs," 21, 2017–2018, pp. 36–54; Michał Wasiucionek, *Greek as Ottoman? Language, Identity and Mediation of Ottoman Culture in the Early Modern Period*, in "Cromohs," 21, 2017–2018, pp. 70–89; Lidia Cotovanu, "Chasing Away the Greeks": *The Prince-State and the Undesired Foreigners (Wallachia and Moldavia between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, in *Across the Danube. Southeastern Europeans and Their Travelling Identities (17<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> C.)*, ed. by Olga Katsiardi-Hering, Maria A. Stassinopoulou, Leiden, 2017, pp. 215–253; Alexandr Osipian, *Trans-Cultural Trade in the Black Sea Region, 1250–1700: Integration of Armenian Trading Diaspora in Moldavian Principality*, in "New Europe College Black Sea Link Yearbook," 2012–2013, pp. 113–158; Gheorghe Lazăr, *Les marchands en Valachie, XVII<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Bucharest, 2007; Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Les Levantins. Cadres de vie et identités d'un groupe ethno-confessionnel de l'Empire Ottoman au "long" 19<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Istanbul, 2007.

<sup>13</sup> *Earthly Delights: Economies and Cultures of Food in Ottoman and Danubian Europe, c. 1500–1900*, ed. by Angela Jianu, Violeta Barbu, Leiden, 2018; Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Patimă și desfătare. Despre lucrurile mărunte ale vieții cotidiene în societatea românească: 1750–1860*, Bucharest, 2015; Ana-Maria Gruia, *The Gift of Vice. Pipes and the Habit of Smoking in Early Modern Transylvania*, Cluj, 2013; Nicoleta Roman, *Iordache Filipescu, the 'Last Great Boyar' of Wallachia and His Heritage: A World of Power, Influence and Goods*, in "Cromohs," 21, 2017–2018, pp. 106–122.

<sup>14</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi, *Moving Goods Around, and Ottomanists Too: Surveying Research on the Transfer of Material Goods in the Ottoman Empire*, in "Turcica," 32, 2000, pp. 435–466; Rossitsa Gradeva, *On "Frenk" Objects in Everyday Life in Ottoman Balkans: The Case of Sofia, Mid-17<sup>th</sup> – Mid-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, in *Europe's Economic Relations with the Islamic World 13<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, ed. by Simonetta Cavaciocchi, Firenze, 2007, pp. 769–799; *Living the Good Life. Consumption in the Qing and Ottoman Empires of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Elif Akçetin, Suraiya Faroqhi, Leiden, 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Material Culture of Global Connections: A Report on Current Research*, in "Turcica," 41, 2009, pp. 406–411.



than the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>16</sup> Written sources, a bit more numerous, are also lacking and detailed information about consumption becomes available only starting with the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Archaeological discoveries from various medieval cities and towns supplement the data we have about consumption.<sup>17</sup> Textiles, spices, food, books, drugs are all material sources defining both luxury and regular consumption based on their economic and social value. The quality and the social value attached to an object temporarily transform it into a luxury product. For instance, as Ovidiu Cristea shows in his study, velvet and silk offered by the Venetian diplomats acquire not only economic but also political significance when part of diplomatic protocol. Thus, Cristea analyses textiles from a symbolical point of view: as important social and political markers within a given context.<sup>18</sup> Not everybody could afford to buy or wear velvet, brocade or silk, therefore these luxury textiles should be looked for in the expense registers of diplomats and of the elites.<sup>19</sup>

Some goods, which today are considered commonplace, were too expensive at the time and consequently were not part of everyday consumption. David Celetti talks about anxieties provoked by olive oil or wine imports during periods of crisis when consuls and merchants corresponded assiduously in order to ameliorate the situation. At the same time, trade brings together people from different regions, of different faiths and linguistic abilities, who thus succeed in connecting different cultures all over the world. Merchants or diplomats, artisans or medical doctors did more than simply practice their professions and interacted with local populations on a daily basis. Taking Crete as an example, Celetti underlines the interaction between the French and the local community, preferably with Christians and, if need be, with Muslims or Jews. Similar findings are presented in other articles collected in this special issue: Mária Pakucs focuses on the well-known “Greek

<sup>16</sup> See <http://luxfass.nec.ro/memorabilia> for South-Eastern European visual sources assembled by the members of the LuxFass project during their various research stays.

<sup>17</sup> Daniela Marcu Istrati, Mihai Constantinescu, Andrei Soficaru, *The Medieval Cemetery from Sibiu (Hermannstadt). Huet Square. Archaeology, Anthropology, History*, Erlangen, 2015; Daniela Marcu Istrati, *Cahle din Transilvania și Banat de la începuturi până la 1700*, Bistrița-Năsăud, 2004; Verena Han, *Les courants des styles dans les métiers d'art des artisans chrétiens au XVI<sup>e</sup> et durant les premières décennies du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les régions centrales des Balkans*, in “Balcanica,” 1, 1970, pp. 239–275.

<sup>18</sup> Luca Molà, *Material Diplomacy Venetian Luxury Gifts for the Ottoman Empire in the Late Renaissance*, in *Global Gifts: The Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia*, ed. by Zoltán Biedermann, Giorgio Riello, Anne Gerritsen, Cambridge, 2017, pp. 56–87; Hedda Reindl-Kiel, *East is East and West is West, and Sometimes the Twain Did Meet: Diplomatic Gift Exchange in the Ottoman Empire*, in *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies*, vol. II, ed. by Rhoads Murphey, Keiko Kiyotaki, Colin Imber, London, New York, 2005, pp. 113–123.

<sup>19</sup> Hedda Reindl-Kiel, *The Empire of Fabrics: The Range of Fabrics in the Ottoman Gift Traffic (16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, in *Inventories of Textiles – Textiles in Inventories: Interdisciplinary Studies on Late Medieval and Early Modern Sources and Material Culture*, ed. by Barbara Karl, Thomas Ertl, Göttingen, 2017, pp. 143–164; Amanda Phillips, *The Historiography of Ottoman Velvets, 2011–1572: Scholars, Craftsmen, Consumers*, in “Journal of Art Historiography,” 6, 2012, pp. 1–26.

merchants” in Transylvania during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; Sorin Grigoruță analyses the presence of foreign medical doctors (Greeks, Germans, Dalmatians, French) and their interactions with and integration into the Moldovan society; Constantin Ardeleanu showcases the network of leech merchants, comprising French, Venetian, Jewish, Greek and Walachian merchants.

Dowry contracts, wealth inventories, wills, lists of expenses and price lists help us identify both luxury and domestic consumption.<sup>20</sup> Based on these sources, one can trace the shift in taste from the so-called “Oriental” products to the so-called “Occidental” ones. Even so, this type of inquiry may be misleading since at times many of the “Oriental” products brought to Bucharest or Iași via Constantinople or Brusa are imported from English, Venetian or French manufacturers. Moreover, some of the foreign observers, be they consuls or simple missionaries, point out the verbal ‘orientalising’ of some European products, transcribed in documents with corrupt versions of their original name.<sup>21</sup>

The consumer’s taste plays an important role both in the growth of local manufacturers and in the trade routes luxury goods travel from one place to another. In fact, the newspapers of the time record in detail the provenance of these goods, even though there is a consistent lag between Central and Western Europe and South-Eastern Europe. Here, where there is a viable press only starting with the 19<sup>th</sup> century, advertisements promote luxury and everyday consumption products shipped to Bucharest, Iași, Athens, Belgrade or even Istanbul from various corners of Europe.<sup>22</sup> This does not mean that South-Eastern European elites did not consume information at all. On the contrary, they would get journals and magazines detailing the latest fashion trends, interior decorations, gardening tips and even the building of new houses from Vienna, Paris, Leipzig or Stuttgart. Important urban centres, boasting wealthy elites, are therefore connected to fashion tastes via various fashion journals, magazines and even calendars. Some of the elites subscribe directly to these journals and magazines in order to receive them on a regular basis, others

<sup>20</sup> Benjamin Braude, *International Competition and Domestic Cloth in the Ottoman Empire: A Study in Undevelopment*, in “Review,” 3, 1979, pp. 437–454.

<sup>21</sup> Claude-Charles de Peyssonnel, *Traité sur le commerce de la Mer Noire*, Paris, 1787; Alexandre Maurice Blanc de Lanautte comte d’Hauterive, *Mémoire sur l’état ancien et actuel de la Moldavie* (1787). Bucharest, 1902; Ignatius Stefan Raicevich, *Observazioni storiche, naturali e politiche intorno la Valachia et la Moldavia*, Naples, 1788; Franz Joseph Sulzer, *Geschichte des transalpinischen Daciens, das ist der Walachey, Moldau und Bessarabiens. Im Zusammenhange mit der Geschichte des übrigen Daciens als ein Versuch einer allgemeinen dacischen Geschichte mit kritischer Freyheit entworfen*, Vienna, 1781; William Wilkinson, *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia: With Various Political Observations Relating to Them*, London, 1820; M. le Comte de Salaberry, *Essais sur la Valachie et la Moldavie, théâtre de l’insurrection dite Ypsilanti*, Paris, 1821.

<sup>22</sup> Anastasia Falierou, *European Fashion, Consumption Patterns, and Intercommunal Relations in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Ottoman Istanbul*, in *Women, Consumption, and the Circulation of Ideas in South-Eastern Europe, 17<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Century*, ed. by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Leiden, 2017, pp. 150–168; Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture. Literacy and the Development of National Identity*, London, 2006.

include them on their shopping lists, while still others get them via their friends. Among the magazines we find “Journal des Dames et des Modes,” “Costumes Parisiens” coming directly from Paris and “Lady’s Magazine” and “The Spectator” brought from London. Moreover, merchants help popularize a number of other magazines within the South-Eastern European area directly from Leipzig, a testament to the major role played by this city in the commercial network from the Balkans. Thus, diverse German journals helped fashion via text, recommendations, images and even textile samples the tastes of the elites reading: “Damen journal von Einer Damen-Gesellschaft,” “Journal für Fabrik, Manufaktur, Handlung, Kunst und Mode,” “Charis. Ein Magazin für das Neueste in Kunst, Geschmack und Mode, Lebensgenuß und Lebensglück,” “Zeitung für die Elegante Welt.”<sup>23</sup>

Consumption can also be studied by analysing sumptuary laws which single out through sanctioning – and therefore call by name – certain luxury products.<sup>24</sup> Sumptuary laws, which still need to be thoroughly researched by historians, regulate consumption of given items and reflect the ways in which political (and religious) authorities impose their control over the society at large. Mária Pakucs shows in great detail the evolution of sumptuary legislation in Transylvania, analysing not only clothing and other luxury products but also the organization and functioning of a community. Weddings, christenings, funerals and other festivities are strictly regulated in Sibiu, Cluj or Braşov, thus emphasising the role that regional vicinity played in exercising control and imposing order among city dwellers. Similar laws were missing from Walachia and Moldavia or were implemented much later, by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when they resembled more the sumptuary laws of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>25</sup>

In his study from this special issue, Michał Wasiucionek argues that Moldavia and Walachia start (in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) a process of “de-ottomanization” in order to

<sup>23</sup> I analysed the contents of these 18<sup>th</sup>-century fashion magazines during a research stay within the LuxFass project, between June and July 2018 at the Lipperheidesche Kostümbibliothek, Berlin.

<sup>24</sup> Claire Sponsler, *Narrating the Social Order: Medieval Clothing Laws*, in “Clio,” 21, 1992, 3, pp. 265–283; Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law*, New York, 1996; idem, *Governing Morals: A Social History of Moral Regulation*, Cambridge, 1999; Graeme Murdock, *Dressed to Repress?: Protestant Clergy Dress and the Regulation of Morality in Early Modern Europe*, in “Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture,” 2, 2000, pp. 179–199; Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Reconciling the Privilege of the Few with the Common Good: Sumptuary Laws in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, in “Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies,” 39, 2009, 3, pp. 597–617; Catherine Kovesi Killerby, *Sumptuary Law in Italy 1200–1500*, Oxford, 2002; *Dressing the Part: Textiles as Propaganda in the Middle Ages*, ed. by K. Dimitrova, M. Goehring, Turnhout, 2014; Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up. Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe*, Oxford, 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Donald Quataert, *Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720–1829*, in “International Journal of Middle East Studies,” 29, 1997, 3, pp. 403–425; Matthew Elliot, *Dress Codes in the Ottoman Empire: The Case of the Franks*, in *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity*, ed. by Suraiya Faroqhi, Christoph K. Neumann, Istanbul, 2004, pp. 103–123; Madeline Zilfi, *Whose Laws? Gendering the Ottoman Sumptuary Regime*, *ibidem*, pp. 125–141.

acquire the “European” legitimacy of a nation fighting for independence. Then, Wasiucioneck goes back in time to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries when the Ottoman architecture represented a model for the Walachian and Moldavian provinces. As Wasiucioneck points out, silk and stone intersect in the rendering of a pattern already widely spread throughout the Ottoman Empire. Floral decorations adorn the frontispieces of places of worship, but also some of the most important items of clothing, the kaftans. Used in political and diplomatic ceremonies, the kaftans are gifted by the sultan to princes in Walachia and Moldavia; in turn, princes give them to boyars once they are sworn in for office. Kaftans are also valued both at the Polish court and at the Russian tsar’s court.<sup>26</sup> Kaftans travel through a large space, contributing to the global connection of various cultures and their intermediaries.

In a study from 2000 analysing consumption in the Ottoman Empire, Donald Quataert shows that “the ownership of Western goods – whether guns or clocks or cloth – does not mean the westernization of their users.”<sup>27</sup> Similarly, in a more recent study, Amanda Phillips argues that the search for signs of “westernization” seems to be the “bogeyman” of the Ottoman Empire. Phillips analyses the baroque influences in art and architecture and concludes they do not necessarily represent a “Western” influence.<sup>28</sup> However, while the two authors research much earlier periods, Nicoleta Roman and Anastasia Falierou apply the term “westernization” to analyses of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the concept gains new meaning throughout South-Eastern Europe. The abundance of products imported from all over Europe contributes to a certain extent to changes taking place in this region, be they political or social. Using dowry contracts from Oltenia, an important Walachian province, with a special focus on the city of Craiova, Roman analyses the value of “Oriental” and “European” goods in shaping social status in an internal competition. Local boyars choose to invest in “foreign” goods both for their social status and in the absence of local products capable to satisfy taste and fashion. Dowry contracts offer the opportunity to assess the composition of trousseaus, including clothing, jewellery and items for domestic consumption (tableware, silverware, linen and bedding), but they do not provide many clues regarding the position of women vis-à-vis the market of these products, nor do they explain whether women (daughters and their mothers) were directly engaged in buying these products from the open market according to their own tastes. We do not have a clear answer to this question and future research is needed to establish the relationship between women and trade. Nonetheless, it is obvious that 19<sup>th</sup>-century women are important consumers of luxury products and that they are involved in domestic consumption. As Roman further shows, some of the items of domestic consumption are homemade with the help of Gipsy slaves.

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<sup>26</sup> Victoria Ivleva, *The Social Life of the Caftan in Eighteenth-Century Russia*, in “Clothing Cultures,” 3, 2016, pp. 171–189.

<sup>27</sup> *Consumption Studies and the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1922. An Introduction*, ed. by Donald Quataert, New York, 2000, p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> Amanda Phillips, *Everyday Luxuries. Art and Objects in Ottoman Constantinople, 1600–1800*, Dortmund, 2016, p. 35.

However, taste and fashion do influence local production to be in line with the new trends. If until the 1840s, Craiova elites would wear muslin, silk, velvet or satin, afterwards the market is dominated by cheap and easy to maintain cotton. Accessible to several social categories, cotton is now everywhere and loses its luxury status. Roman points out that pocket watches, still very expensive at the time so only a few could afford them, are among the luxury products which mark a social (and economic) position within the community. Umbrellas, represented until recently in various paintings as markers of modernity, are lost now in the multitude of indispensable objects of everyday life. In the end, the objects in dowry contracts shape up a feminine world and demarcate the sphere of womanhood, with women from the social elites (boyars, merchants, urban patricians) as primary consumers, preponderantly mentioned in sources. Anastasia Falierou's study is relevant in this matter. Analysing correspondence between Myrsinio Kourtzis and her mother (Efthimia Vasileiou) and her sisters (Harikleia and Penelope), Falierou emphasises these women's interest in luxury and fashionable products. From Istanbul, Myrsinio dispatches information about fashion and style, acting as a true agent, providing samples of trendy textiles and bargaining for hats, clothes or umbrellas for her mother and her sisters, who remained in Mytilene. Educated and well-informed, Myrsinio offers essential details about luxury consumption at the end of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Istanbul and, at the same time, sheds light on the tastes of the Greek bourgeoisie from Mytilene, whom she tries to model, with the help of her relatives, by providing information, goods, fashion tips and even value judgements.

The human body and its needs also encourage consumption. Up to a point, the medical market proves to be a luxury market only offering medical care and treatment to the members of a small elite.<sup>29</sup> Analysing 18<sup>th</sup>-century Moldova, Sorin Grigoruță shows very well that health (and implicitly its care) is costly. Only rulers and boyars could afford the services of the few doctors, many of them foreign. Moreover, this medical market is very diverse and we can only see the appearance of a well-established medical field late into the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>30</sup> Not only is the market still dominated by charlatans, midwives and itinerant healers,<sup>31</sup> but it also mainly relies on natural remedies and empirical practice. Constantin Ardeleanu demonstrates how a medical practice prevailing all over Europe – the use of leeches for medical purposes – leads to the development of an entire profitable economic network which satisfies the tastes of consumers anxious about their wellbeing. The leech trade, which reached its peak between the 1830s and 1850s, connects South-Eastern European provinces of the Ottoman Empire to France via a network of very active merchants. While it contributes to the creation

<sup>29</sup> Giulia Calvi, *Healing, Translating, Collecting. Doctor Michelangelo Tilli across the Ottoman Empire (1683–1685)*, in "Cromohs," 21, 2017–2018, pp. 55–69.

<sup>30</sup> Ionela Băluță, *La bourgeoisie respectable. Réflexion sur la construction d'une nouvelle identité féminine dans la seconde moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle roumain*, Bucharest, 2008; Georges Vigarello, *Histoire des pratiques de santé: le sain et le malsain depuis le Moyen Âge*, Paris, 1999.

<sup>31</sup> David Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism in Early Modern Italy*, Oxford, 2006.



of regulations controlling the use of leeches for medical practice, the marketing of this “valuable product” also gives ideas and people the opportunity to travel between the West and the South-East.

Everyday life changes significantly within the timeframe of this special issue, that is, roughly between the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In turn, consumption patterns also change how social categories, tastes, time periods and regimes are defined and redefined. In addition to local products, people from South-Eastern Europe consume a vast array of “foreign” products, which attain social significance depending on the timeframe, historical context and the social status of the consumer. Historical research, particularly economic and social history, will no doubt benefit from further research on consumption. As Suraiya Faruqi argues, consumption gains important social and cultural status, thus contributing to the better understanding of society.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Suraiya Faruqi, *Research on the History of Ottoman Consumption: A Preliminary Exploration of Sources and Models*, in *Consumption Studies and the Ottoman Empire*, ed. by Donald Quataert, p. 23.



## MATERIAL CULTURE AND CONSUMPTION IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

### DIPLOMACY AND GIFTS IN CONSTANTINOPLE: THE BOOK OF ACCOUNTS OF BAILO PIERO BRAGADIN (1524–1526)

OVIDIU CRISTEA\*

“Every gift is edged”  
Steven Erikson, *Memories of Ice*

Writing about Ottoman-Venetian relations means confronting an overwhelming bibliography written in different periods and dealing with various categories of sources. The challenge is not easy. For instance, the Venetian *relazioni* as one of the main sources for the reconstruction of Ottoman-Venetian political affairs were approached in different ways by scholars from Leopold von Ranke's era until the present day. Considered for a long time as the document *par excellence* for the history of diplomacy, the Venetian final reports were subsequently viewed as a distorted mirror which reflected in a very subjective way a different culture. However, in recent scholarship they were, once again, reconsidered. Many scholars argued that, despite their inherent subjectivity, the *relazioni* are still a very valuable category of sources which cover multiple and various aspects of the Ottoman Empire's history.<sup>1</sup>

This change of perspective in approaching the sources was doubled, in the last decades, by a radical transformation of the historiographical field. The traditional approach, focused on political and military history, was more and more challenged as historians began to understand the diplomatic activity as a complex tool mixing negotiation, information gathering, communication, representation and performance. The diplomatic encounters between representatives of the *Serenissima* and the Porte, respectively, make no exception.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leopold von Ranke, *The Turkish and Spanish Empires in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and Beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup>*, transl. by Walter K. Kelly, Philadelphia, 1845, pp. IX–X; Ugo Tucci, *Ranke and the Venetian Document Market*, in *Leopold von Ranke and the Shaping of the Historical Discipline*, ed. by J.M. Iggers, G.G. Powell, Syracuse, 1990, pp. 99–107; Gino Benzoni, *Ranke's Favorite Source: The Relazioni of the Venetian Ambassadors*, in *Leopold von Ranke and the Shaping of the Historical Discipline*, ed. by J.M. Iggers, G.G. Powell, pp. 11–27; Paolo Preto, *Venezia e i Turchi*, Rome, 2013, pp. 91–98; Eric Dursteler, *Describing or Distorting the Turk? The Relazioni of Venetian Ambassadors in Constantinople as Historical Source*, in “Acta Histriae,” 19, 2011, 1–2, pp. 231–248; Filippo de Vivo, *How to Read Venetian Relazioni*, in “Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et réforme,” 34, 2011, 1–2, pp. 25–59.

<sup>2</sup> See Eric Dursteler, *Describing or Distorting the Turk?*, pp. 231–248; Filippo de Vivo, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–60; both studies have an excellent historiographical overview. See also Ovidiu Cristea,

In contrast with the traditional historiography which understood diplomacy as a game of power between major political actors, recent studies emphasized the important role played by “minor” and “secondary” actors such as dragomans, spies, informants, servants in the diplomatic activity and in the configuration of the networks of influence.<sup>3</sup> Seen as a flexible web submitted to frequent and various changes, the diplomacy is analysed today from various perspectives, paying special interest to the ceremonial and gift-giving practices, languages, rhetorical strategies, gestures and emotions in a quest for a proper understanding of the process of negotiations in the past.

The following pages will focus on the gifts usually offered by the Christian ambassadors to the sultan and to the most important members of the *divan*, and more precisely on a Venetian case from the first decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The topic has been approached frequently by historians using the large amount of data included in the documents written by, for or around the Venetian bailo in Constantinople such as: letters, reports, and *relazioni*. My case study is based on a slightly different source, namely a register of accounts kept by the bailo Piero (Pietro) Bragadin during his mission in Constantinople (1524–1526).<sup>4</sup>

Before his appointment to the most prestigious diplomatic position of the Serene Republic, Piero Bragadin had a troubled political career. In 1498<sup>5</sup> and, again, in 1518<sup>6</sup> he was banished from the right to be elected in one of the public offices in the city due to a serious family debt and to his involvement in some shady matters. In the latter case he seemed to have counterfeited some documents to prove that he was appointed as *savio di Terra ferma*.<sup>7</sup> He was absolved each time and was able to resume his political career.<sup>8</sup>

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*Giocare con una palla di vetro: Venetian Perceptions on Ottoman Power (15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> c.)*, in *The Image of the Other: Memory and Representation of the Neighbourhood and the World*, Târgoviște, 2018, pp. 333–351. For a detailed analysis of the sources of the history of diplomacy see Isabella Lazzarini, *Communication and Conflict. Italian Diplomacy in the Early Renaissance, 1350–1520*, Oxford, 2015, pp. 49–66.

<sup>3</sup> E. Natalie Rothman, *Brokering Empire. Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul*, Ithaca, London, 2012; Noel Malcolm, *Agents of Empire. Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth Century Mediterranean World*, London, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> The document is preserved in Archivio di Stato, Venezia (hereafter: ASV), Secreta, Archivio Proprio Costantinopoli (hereafter: SAPC), Fascicolo spese, Piero Bragadin bailò, contabilità, 1524–1526; for general information concerning Bragadin’s election and mission see Maria Pia Pedani, *Elenco degli inviati diplomatici veneziani presso i sovrani ottomani*, Venice, 2000, pp. 22–23. In the following pages I used the Venetian form of the bailo’s first name.

<sup>5</sup> He was condemned for ten years together with his brothers Alvise and Hieronimo for *parole usade in caxa sua* against Nicolò Zorzi da San Moisè; see *I Diarii di Marino Sanuto*, vol. I, ed. by F. Stefani, Venice, 1879, col. 1015.

<sup>6</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXVI, Venice, 1889, cols. 316–317.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, col. 322. As a result, he was banished from the Major Council for the next year and his election from any office was forbidden for the next three years. He also paid a fine of 50 ducats.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. XXVIII, Venice, 1890, col. 19.

Pardoned in 1503 for his first condemnation, the following year he was elected captain of galleys of Barbary; true to his previous record, even in this position he provoked a ‘mess’ (*garbujo*).<sup>9</sup> Twelve years later, in September 1515, Piero was questioned by the *Quarantia criminal* about a sapphire pawned to the Jew Anselmo.<sup>10</sup>

Despite his tumultuous career, Piero Bragadin was rehabilitated and appointed as bailo in Constantinople on 11 October 1523<sup>11</sup> after his predecessor, Andrea Priuli, died on 18 July 1523 of the plague which broke out in the Ottoman capital. For various reasons, Bragadin delayed his departure for Istanbul until March 1524<sup>12</sup> and arrived at his destination on 25 April.<sup>13</sup> From the period of his mission only a small part of his reports survived, namely those written between 25 May and 6 December 1524, while others together with his final *relazione* read to the Venetian Senate on 6 June 1526, after his return in the lagoon, were lost and preserved only in an abridged form in Marino Sanudo the Younger’s *Diarii* (*Journals*). Thus, his book of accounts is a rare original document from the period of his activity in Constantinople; it is preserved today in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia, fund Archivio Proprio Costantinopoli, busta no. 1. The document is written on paper in the Venetian dialect by a contemporary hand and its significance lies with the detailed information concerning the ordinary and extraordinary expenses made in the Ottoman Empire for the honour of the Republic. The text raises a few methodological problems. There is little doubt concerning the accuracy of the data included as every expense had to be verified and approved from time to time by the Council of Twelve, the “governing body” of the Venetian merchants in Constantinople.<sup>14</sup> Occasionally, however, certain details are missing, and we can thus gain only an imperfect estimate of the total amount of money spent by the Republic’s representative. Furthermore, in many cases, we do not know the context of a specific expense; in other words we know who received a certain gift or amount of money but the reason is unclear.

Moreover, the line of separation between what we may consider today as a gift and what may be labelled as bribe is blurred. One may define as gift a reward

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. V, ed. by Federico Stefani, Venice, 1881, cols. 945, 1041.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. XXI, Venice, 1887, cols. 114–115; the case was reopened in 1519 due to new evidence. More exactly one of the testimonies proved to be false; *ibidem*, vol. XXVI, cols. 339–341.

<sup>11</sup> For his election *ibidem*, vol. XXXV, Venice, 1892, cols. 76–77.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, col. 202. In November 1523, the Venetian government sent a letter to the Venetian ambassador in Constantinople, Pietro Zen, instructing him to announce to the Porte the election of a new bailo. He was also instructed to explain that the new Venetian representative was forced to postpone his departure due to the winter season (*per la invernata non pol venir*).

<sup>13</sup> *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. 13 (*sub voce*); online version [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pietro-bragadin\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pietro-bragadin_(Dizionario-Biografico)) (consulted on 15.03.2019). Piero’s brothers were absolved in 1503; see *I Diarii*, vol. IV, ed. by Nicolò Barozzi, Venice, 1880, col. 732, while Piero later, in April of the same year (*ibidem*, vol. V, col. 20).

<sup>14</sup> I use the expression of Eric Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Baltimore, 2008, p. 41.



for a service already rendered and as bribe a stimulant for a forthcoming benevolence, but such a clear cut dichotomy has no correspondence in the day to day Venetian-Ottoman contacts in Constantinople. This is why in the following pages I used the term gift as a generic description of all sorts of “voluntary” donations and favours to various Ottoman officials.

The book of accounts starts with a brief notice stating that, on 28 May 1524, the Council of Twelve approved the expenses and the gifts offered by the bailo Bragadin during a special event, probably his solemn audience to the sultan. According to Sanudo, who quotes the bailo’s report of 20 May, Bragadin brought the presents and kissed the hand of the sultan on 25 April.<sup>15</sup> The note in the register of accounts states that the bailo submitted, as usual, the requested information to the members of the Council of Twelve “*Per non esser occorso far spese salvo le ordinarie per honor Il Excellentissimo Baylo messer Piero Bragadin ha convocato il Consiglio di XII per metter parte come e consueto e chiarir tute quelle particolarmente parte da esser poste a conto della Illustrissima Signoria nostra et parte a conto de Cotimo et per honor.*”<sup>16</sup>

It should be underlined that among the members of the Council – in fact in the first position – appears the illegitimate son of doge Andrea Gritti, *ser* Alvise Gritti, a very influential person in the entourage of the grand vizier Ibrahim pasha, but who, as a member of the Venetian community, was involved in various activities in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>17</sup> As the text indicates, the Council of Twelve considered the expenses of Bragadin to be justified and in accord with the interests of the Republic (*ben e necessariamente fatte*). This appreciation is followed by the names of the councillors who approved the total costs<sup>18</sup> and by a detailed list of the gifts presented to the sultan and most important dignitaries. All of them received textiles,<sup>19</sup> a type of present deemed highly valuable by the members of the Ottoman

<sup>15</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXVI, Venice, 1893, col. 412.

<sup>16</sup> ASV, SAPC, busta 1, fol. 1r. For honour as symbolic capital in the Ottoman Empire see Hedda Reindl-Kiel, *East is East and West is West, and Sometimes the Twain Did Meet. Diplomatic Gift Exchange in the Ottoman Empire*, in *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province and the West*, vol. II, ed. by Colin Imber, Keiko Kiyotaki, Rhoads Murphey, London, N. York, 2005, p. 114.

<sup>17</sup> The bibliography on Alvise Gritti is substantial but many works concern his role in the Hungarian-Ottoman relations. For the present topic see especially Aurel Decei, *Aloisio Gritti au service de Soliman le Magnifique d’après des documents turcs inédits (1533–1534)*, in “*Anatolia Moderna/Yeni Anadolu*,” III, 1992, pp. 1–103 (who deals with a following period); Elvin Otman, *The Role of Alvise Gritti within the Ottoman Politics in the Context of the “Hungarian Question” (1526–1534)*, M.A. thesis, Bilkent University Ankara, 2009, especially pp. 59–107; I was unable to consult the Ph.D. thesis of Suzan Ayşe Yalman, *The Life of Alvise Gritti (1480–1534) in the Ottoman Empire*, Harvard University, 1999.

<sup>18</sup> *Ser* Alvise Gritti; *Ser* Marco Loredan; *Ser* Francisco Morosini; *Ser* Lorenzo Belochio; *Ser* Piero Valaresso; *Ser* Gaspar Bassalu; *Ser* Zuan Mocenigo; *Ser* Piero Diedo; *Ser* Zuan Nani; *Ser* Hieronimo Valier; *Ser* Philippo de Baron; *Ser* Picardo di Medici.

<sup>19</sup> Hedda Reindl-Kiel, *East is East*, p. 118 used the term “textilomania”; see Luca Mola, *Venetian Luxury Gifts for the Ottoman Empire in the Late Renaissance*, in *Global Gifts: The Material*

elite. As expected, the sultan Suleyman the Magnificent received the most precious ones and the largest number, no less than six pieces. Among the gifted fabrics there were the following: a piece of crimson velvet lined with gold (*veludo cremesin alto basso doro*), a piece of crimson velvet (*veludo pian cremesin*), a piece of crimson silk satin (*raso cremesin*), a piece of damask *lionado* (colour of the lion), a piece of scarlet cloth (*scarlato de cento*) and a piece of purple cloth (*pavonazo de cento*). Three of the aforementioned gifts – the crimson silk satin, the scarlet cloth and the purple cloth along with a special type of velvet are to be found among the gifts offered to the grand vizier, *Frenk* Ibrahim pasha and to two other important members of the divan, Mustapha pasha and Ajas pasha. The main difference consists in the numbers: the grand vizier received two pieces of each item, while the other viziers only one. It seems that the velvets were of different colour. In Ibrahim pasha's case is mentioned *veludo Colorado veste due*, while Mustapha pasha and Ajas pasha received a *veludo lionado*, which means velvet in the colour of a lion.<sup>20</sup>

These differences suggest that the number and quality of gifts offered was strongly related to the Ottoman hierarchy. The sultan was the only one who received two special types of velvet and a total of six different categories of textiles. By contrast, each vizier received four and the only other dignitary who enjoyed a similar gift was *il magnifico capitano de Gallipoli*, but his inferior status in respect to the members of the divan is mirrored by a subtle change. The velvet offered to Ibrahim, Mustapha and Ajas pasha was replaced by a piece of damask *lionado*. The other seven dignitaries included in Bragadin's list received only one piece of textile: damask *lionado* for the most important ones (the *capugi basi* and the *cavus basi*), a simple scarlet cloth in the case of Caydar celebi, the first scribe of the Porte, as well as for the other subordinates of the viziers.

This well-defined hierarchy of gifts seems related to the Venetians' concern to pay the deserved respect to all Ottoman dignitaries. Any alteration of the well-established order could cause serious inconveniences. For instance, when in 1525 Piero Bragadin offered Mustafa pasha a lantern (*fano*) estimated at 1,000 ducats, the gesture strained (or, at least, this is what the bailo declared in one of his *dispacci*) the relations with the other viziers.<sup>21</sup> The information is mentioned by Sanudo, who, unfortunately, provides no other details. He simply comments that, in

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*Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia*, ed. by Zoltán Biedermann, Giorgio Riello, Anne Gerritsen, Cambridge, New York, 2018, pp. 56–87; for a more focused discussion on textiles as a gift see Hedda Reindl-Kiel, *The Empire of Fabrics: the Range of Fabrics in the Gift Traffic of the Ottomans*, in *Inventories of Textiles – Textiles in Inventories. Studies on Late Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture*, Göttingen, 2017, pp. 143–164.

<sup>20</sup> ASV, SAPC, fol. 1r. For comparison see the lists of gifts offered by another bailo in 1599: Luca Mola, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>21</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXIX, Venice, 1894, col. 429: “scrive che il fanò donato a Mustafa bassà ha zenerà odio con li altri bassa.” Evidently this is what Bragadin says about the matter. We have no other source to verify his statement. See also *ibidem*, vol. XL, Venice, 1894, col. 24.

the future, it would be better to offer such lavish donations in a more discrete manner. If Sanudo's conclusion is correct, one may assume that the extraordinary favour showed towards Mustapha was interpreted by the other members of the *divan* as a distortion of the "normal" hierarchy. It was an infringement on the etiquette and implicitly an indirect blow to the other viziers' honour.<sup>22</sup>

This list of ordinary presents offered during the solemn reception of the bailo was doubled by a shorter one which included extraordinary gifts. As the book of accounts mentioned, this appendix was to be kept secret (*da esser tenuti secreto come conforto lo ambassador, per bon rispetto*)<sup>23</sup> as it includes some members of the grand vizier's family (his parents and his son) and of his household (the *protoghero*, a sort of superintendent of Ibrahim pasha). Along with this list of ordinary and extraordinary gifts, expenses were occasioned by several other necessities. Piero Bragadin mentions 250 *akce* (*aspri*) paid in Cattaro for the repairs of the galley which transported him from Venice to Constantinople; this amount also covers the money paid to those who unloaded and then loaded again the cargo on the ship. There were also 300 *akce* for the sanjakbey of Montenegro, who invited Bragadin at dinner and who recommended the bailo to the grand vizier. Finally, the document included a payment of 200 *akce* for those who unloaded and carried the gifts in Constantinople.<sup>24</sup>

To these occasional expenses, Bragadin added 2.292 *akce*<sup>25</sup> spent on the occasion of the solemn audience with the sultan and during the meeting with the members of the *divan*. The highest amount of money was directed to the guards of the sultan (449 *akce*) and to the *cavus* (336 *akce*). It is worth noticing that, at some point, the document underlined that some small Ottoman officials were dissatisfied with the grant of 30 *akce* and that, consequently, the bailo was forced to double the sum. In the end other important amounts of money were spent for various subordinates of the Porte. For instance, Ibrahim pasha's *protoghero* and some *capizi basi* received 336 *akce* each. Other 386 *akce* were directed to the entourage of Mustapha pasha and a similar amount was paid to Ajas pasha's household. Even the household of the captain of Gallipoli received 193 *akce*. All these gifts were exceeded by far by a secret amount of no less than 5,600 *akce* allocated to *messer* Halibei (probably Ali bey), the main dragoman of the Porte. His special status in Venetian eyes is reflected by the gifts offered by the bailo on the occasion of the wedding of one of Halibei's nephews: a vest of crimson velvet, a vest of crimson silk satin, one of scarlet cloth and one of purple cloth plus a certain amount of money.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Hedda Reindl-Kiel, *East is East*, p. 114: "In the Ottoman Empire, however, gifts were, as I said, a part of the person's honour and hence an essential element of etiquette (...) In Ottoman eyes, Western Barbarians lacking the appropriate knowledge about suitable behaviour obviously had to be educated."

<sup>23</sup> ASV, SAPC, fol. 1v.

<sup>24</sup> For all the gifts offered on the occasion see Appendix I.

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

<sup>26</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXVII, Venice, 1893, col. 486: "Baylo li apresentatione una vesta di veludo cremexin, una di raxo cremesin, una di scarlato di cento, una di panno paonazo di cento et dette a

The book of accounts makes a clear difference between items presented as gifts and various amounts of cash offered on special occasions. It seems that the higher members of the Ottoman elite received precious cloths or other luxury objects while money was reserved to lesser officials. Also it is easy to notice the special importance given by the Venetian government to the grand vizier, Ibrahim pasha. His benevolence was considered of higher importance due to his status as a favourite of the sultan. Therefore, offering gifts not only to the grand vizier but also to his family and household was part of the Venetian strategy to gain Ibrahim's benevolence. Such a strategy was well planned by Bragadin and the Venetian government even before the departure of the new bailo towards the Ottoman capital. As Marino Sanudo pointed out in his *Diarii*, in February 1524, Bragadin received from his superiors the freedom to spend the necessary amount of money for the "common good" (*bene publico*). He was instructed to find "panni d'oro, di veludo alto basso, raso, scarlato etc. per mandarli a Embrain bassà, iusta la richiesta fatta, costerà circa ducati 2000."<sup>27</sup>

Once in Istanbul, Bragadin paid special attention to the grand vizier's wedding, carefully described in a letter of Piero Bragadin to his son. Despite the "private" character of the document, Bragadin's son was instructed to give a copy to Marino Sanudo to include it in his famous *Diarii*. Moreover, in the next days, the letter was read in the Venetian *Collegio* (the main executive body of the Republic) at the special request of the doge Andrea Gritti.<sup>28</sup>

According to Bragadin's detailed relation, the reception was more than a marriage ceremony. Instead a festival was organised on the Hippodrome, and its splendour astonished the Venetian representative. People from all walks of life participated, from the sultan himself to the poor and beggars.<sup>29</sup> There was food for everyone, games, challenges, horse races, fireworks *che durono lungamente con fuogi di varie sorte*, and the sultan remained until the morning to watch them. Among other things, Bragadin mentioned the marvellous tents installed on the Hippodrome: one of the sultan (*quello del Gran Signor*), one that was used by Uzun Hassan before the battle of Baskent (11 August 1473), one of Shah Ismail taken by sultan Selim I, and one of the Mamluk sultan, al-Ghuri (*sultan Elgaury*), captured by the same Selim I during his conquest of Egypt. The splendour of these

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quelli lo vene a invidar ducati ..... [omission in the text]." See also ASV, SAPC, fol. 3v: "li fo presentada una vesta de veludo cremesin, una de raso cremesin, una de scarlato de cento, una de paonazo de cento monta." The total amount (omitted by Sanudo) was 6,925 *akce*. For a comparison with the gifts offered by the bailo Giovanni Moro on occasion of a wedding of a grand vizier's daughter see Luca Mola, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

<sup>27</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXV, cols. 454–455.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. XXXVI, col. 505: "el il Doxe volse far lezer pieno Collegio la letterà di le feste fate a Constanlinopoli per le noze de Embrain bassa, che'l Baylo la mandò a suo fiol aziò me la desse, e data tolsi la copia e li aricordai la mostrasse al Serenissimo."

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, cols. 505–507.

pavilions was astounding, and Bragadin noted that their richness and the beauty were impossible to put into words: “*Quanto siano di ricchezza e di magnificentia et bellezza bisogneria cum el penello in longo tempo farlo, et si haveria fatica per la gran superbia et valuta è in quelli.*”<sup>30</sup> The wonderful presents received for the wedding are, in turn, dutifully mentioned by Bragadin although some of them, mounted on mules, were impossible to see. There were ten well-dressed (*ben vestidi*) slaves carrying golden vases in their hands, followed by ten janissaries carrying golden clothes, silks and exquisite furs. Behind them, there were 40 horses, 40 mules and 40 camels (*gambelli*) loaded with gifts.

Some entries in Bragadin’s register support the idea that Ibrahim pasha received special attention from the Venetians in the following period. On 10 September 1525, the Council of Twelve approved another list of gifts offered, this time, exclusively to the grand vizier.<sup>31</sup> Once again the document mentions clothes of various fabrics, whose combined value amounted to a total of 33,235 *akce*.<sup>32</sup> Bragadin justified this extraordinary expense by two reasons. One of them had to do with the victorious return of Ibrahim pasha from Syria and Egypt after eleven months and 7 days, while the other was related to the favour showed by the grand vizier towards the Venetian subjects on various occasions.<sup>33</sup> Ibrahim pasha was considered a key factor in Venetian strategy, as during his absence the incidents between the subjects of the two powers almost brought Venice and the Ottoman Empire on the verge of war.<sup>34</sup>

With one exception – Marc Antonio Pisani in place of Philipppo de Baron – the Council of Twelve was composed in September of the same members who had previously approved the money spent in May 1525. Once more, the Council concluded that the expenses were *ben et necessariamente fatte*. However, there were 7 votes for, 1 against and no less than 5 undecided – a result which could suggest that several members had doubts concerning Bragadin’s initiative or maybe

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, col. 505.

<sup>31</sup> ASV, SAPC, fols. 6v–7r: “Convocato per el Excellentissimo messer Piero Bragadin dignissimo Baylo Consiglio di XII nel qual fo messe la sopraditta spesa per apresenter al Magnifico Imbrhai bassa nel qual intervennero li infrascripti et fo messa la infrascripta parte. Ser Alvise Gritti, Ser Piero Valaresso, Ser Zuan Mocenigo, Ser Lorenzo Belocchio, Ser Marco Loredan, Ser Marc Antonio Pisani, Ser Zuan Nani, Ser Gaspar Basalu, Ser Francesco Morosini, Ser Piero Diedo, Ser Hieronimo Valier, Ser Picardo de Medici.”

<sup>32</sup> See Appendix II; for a comparison see *I Diarii*, vol. XL, col. 125, where Sanudo mentions that upon his return to Istanbul the grand vizier received presents estimated at 700 ducats, including a golden vest, others of crimson velvet, silk and purple clothes. At the rate 1:51 ducat/*akce* used by Bragadin in his book of accounts, the amount mentioned by Sanudo (700 ducats) is close to the real one (653.43).

<sup>33</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>34</sup> A similar conclusion in Eric Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople*, p. 128. The Venetians consider Ibrahim “as a key to their successful balancing act between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans in the 1520s and 1530s.”



considered the amount spent as excessive. Either way, we ignore whether the reasons were related to the total costs or to the prospective efficiency of such a lavish gift.

On this latter point it is worth mentioning that the intervention of Ibrahim pasha in some events that occurred before his departure for Egypt was decisive or at least was judged in these terms by Bragadin. In June 1524, several slaves escaped on a Venetian ship and the matter was solved only by Ibrahim pasha's intervention. The episode is mentioned in a *dispaccio* from 9 July, when the bailo underscored the role played by the grand vizier. Eventually, Ibrahim's diplomatic skill saved the members of the crew from a severe punishment<sup>35</sup> and averted reprisals for Venice.

In the same month another *dispaccio* (included in an abridged form in the *Diarii* of Marino Sanudo) mentioned several other incidents which tensed the relations between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. In this context, the departure of Ibrahim pasha for Egypt, scheduled for the beginning of autumn,<sup>36</sup> was deplored by the bailo, who considered the grand vizier a "great friend of our Republic" (*gran amico de la Signoria nostra*) and his absence harmful to Venetian interests. Bragadin took care to mark the event with a warm gesture of friendship. He expressed his feelings by "*le piu dolze et humane parole et abrazamenti et humane parole e tochar de man basandoli la spala et tocharsi testa con testa*" and by a gift consisting of "*cere, zuchari et confetti marzapani et biscotelli fatti con zucaro et aqua ruosa*." The bailo added that he intended to say more things but his heart was so afflicted by the grand vizier's departure that he was unable to add a single word.<sup>37</sup>

Such a setback for the Venetian network in Constantinople was compensated by the bailo's attempt to develop good relations with other two members of the divan: Ajas pasha and Mustapha pasha. The latter gained special importance after the vizier's appointment as governor of the Ottoman capital during the sultan's long stay in Adrianople.

Ajas pasha seems to have had a certain taste for cheese.<sup>38</sup> On various occasions he received a great piece of such product as a gift from the Venetian bailo. One can find some traces of such fondness in Marino Sanudo's *Diarii*. An

<sup>35</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXVI, col. 512.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. XXXVII, col. 27. According to a report from 19 October, the departure took place on 30 September (*ibidem*, col. 29). On 13 October, the sultan left in his turn the capital for Adrianople, taking Ajas pasha with him.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, cols. 271 and 275. "*li disse che'l geolgeva dir molte cose, ma che el suo cuor era tanto ingropato per la sua partita che'l non le poteva dir*." Bragadin's sentence provoked hilarity in the Council of *Pregadi*.

<sup>38</sup> Eric R. Dursteler, 'A Continual Tavern in My House.' *Food and Diplomacy in Early Modern Constantinople*, in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Joseph Connors*, ed. by Machtelt Israëls, Louis A. Waldman, Cambridge, 2013, p. 169 quotes a situation from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The sultans and other Ottoman dignitaries had a special fondness for Piacentine cheese.

entry from July 1524 mentions “a large piece of cheese” (*una peza grande di formazo*) offered by Bragadin after a fruitful dialogue with Ajas pasha.<sup>39</sup> This piece of information seems to be confirmed by the bailo’s book of accounts, which mentions a piece of cheese sent on June 1524 to Ajas pasha along with all sort of sweets.<sup>40</sup> The lack of concordance between this entry and Sanudo’s *Diarii* is easily explained by the time gap between the event and the moment when Bragadin wrote down his report. The cheese as a “diplomatic tool” (more correctly as a way to gain benevolence) was so important in Bragadin’s mind that he risked embarrassing himself in front of his superiors.

In December 1524, Sanudo qualifies the letters sent from Constantinople on 29 October as being ridiculous; in them Bragadin complained about the lack of response at his previous demands of cheese. The bailo was so keen to obtain the necessary amount of the product that his complaints against his own government provoked roars of laughter among the Venetian senators. The doge himself laughed so loudly “that he covered his eyes with his sleeve.”<sup>41</sup>

Nevertheless, the cheese seemed to be much praised by the Ottoman members of the *divan*, and the sultan himself had a soft spot for it. According to a letter of Bragadin from April 1525, resumed by Sanudo, the bailo asked Mustapha whether “the Sultan would enjoy a piece of sweet cheese as a gift.” The vizier answered affirmatively and added that the sultan would certainly appreciate the present more than anything else because “he enjoyed eating cheese very much.”<sup>42</sup> The pasha’s reply points to another issue. Apart from the intrinsic value of a present, what can be said about the relation between the donor, the choice of the gift and the receiver? In other words, did the donor pay attention to the beneficiary’s preferences? Or the choice of the item was more related to a certain trend, to a specific value associated by the Ottoman elite with a gift?<sup>43</sup>

The answers are far from straightforward. We know that in certain situations a vizier asked for a specific gift: Mustafa, for instance, demanded a lantern and a clock,<sup>44</sup> but we ignore how frequent such a situation was. Usually, the members of

<sup>39</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXVI, col. 485: “insieme [*i.e.* Bragadin and Ajas] contraseno gran amicitia, el zonlo il Baylo a caxa, li mandò a donar certo presente di una peza granda di formazo e altro che li fo molto aceto.”

<sup>40</sup> ASV, SAPC, fol. 2r: “a di 22 di stesso per uno presente fatto al M<agnifi>co Ajax bassa et mandatogelo al suo giardino, confetti, marzapani et una pezza de formazo granda et spese feceno li dui dragomani per portar el presente.”

<sup>41</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXVII, col. 283: “et il Serenissimo, di tanto rider li veniva, si messe la manega al viso.”

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. XXXVIII, Venice, 1893, col. 163: “Et rasonando li disse esso Baylo s’il Signor havia piacer che lui donase do peze di formazo dolce. Lui disse de si che li piaceva summamente piu che presente li potesse esser fatto, peroche li piaceva manzar formazo.” To please the sultan the bailo sent the “modest gift” (*piccolo presente*) to Adrianople as a “sign of reverence.”

<sup>43</sup> Hedda Reindl-Kiel, *East is East*, pp. 117–118.

<sup>44</sup> *I Diarii*, vol. XXXIX, col. 429.

the divan received precious textiles on solemn occasions and when the Venetian bailo was in desperate need of their support. Nevertheless, on usual occasions they could receive cheese, sweets or even wine, although such a product was theoretically forbidden for the Muslims. Thus, on 20 April 1525 Bragadin mentioned 1,875 *akce* spent for 3 barrels of wine offered between the beginning of his mission and the aforementioned day to the viziers, *chiaussi* and the dragoman of the Porte.<sup>45</sup> A similar expense is mentioned again on 7 September when the wine cost 2,500 *akce*.<sup>46</sup> It may be concluded that textiles, cheese, sweets, wine and money were the usual gifts during Piero Bragadin's mission in Constantinople.<sup>47</sup> Sometimes they were offered day by day, sometimes on different occasions such as official or private ceremonies.

The gifts were a mandatory ingredient for each diplomat in Constantinople in the quest for achieving his mission's goals. In the Venetian case, one may ask how the Republic's representatives managed to create their network of influence in Constantinople and how the gifts shaped on short and long term the relations between the bailo and the Ottoman officials.

On this point I consider that Piero Bragadin's book of accounts could rather mislead than offer valuable data. Each Venetian representative, or at least most of them, tried to impress their government and to show how effective their diplomatic activity was. I am not arguing that their reports are only rhetorical exercises or that the facts presented were intentionally distorted<sup>48</sup>; my argument is that sometimes we have only a vague idea on topics such as the relations between the bailo and the dragomans, the struggle for power among the Ottoman elite, the hidden meaning behind the dialogues between the political actors or the amplitude, costs and function of the Venetian networks in the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, if we consider the relations between the bailo and the Ottoman dignitaries, the *dispacci* draw somehow a static image based on the final result of a negotiation. Evidently, the diplomatic activity in Constantinople must be seen as a dynamic process which involved a permanent confrontation between different strategies. The Ottoman political aims, for instance, were not identical for each group struggling for the sultan's favour. A bailo had to confront a complex political reality and had to find a way between and among the Ottoman factions to achieve the Venetian aims.

In addition to these difficulties another one should be taken into consideration. If we focus exclusively on gifts, it is hard to evaluate what fraction of the total amount of the bailo's expenses they represented. This issue is complicated even

<sup>45</sup> ASV, SAPC, fol. 4v: "adj di stesso (*i.e.* 20 June 1525) per vin despensato a bassa, prothogeri, chiaussi et al Magnifico messer Halibei Dragoman et altri de conto che a menudo seria molte come metteno li altri bayli, botte tre dal principio fino a questo di ducati 12 ½ la bota monta ..... aspri 1875."

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, fol. 6r: "Et per vino dato a bassa, prothogeri, chiaussi et al Magnifico messer halibei et al Cadi grande et capizi de la porta et altri ..... aspri 2500."

<sup>47</sup> For a comparison see Eric R. Dursteler, '*A Continual Tavern in My House*,' p. 169.

<sup>48</sup> I already stressed my views in Ovidiu Cristea, *Giocare con una palla di vetro*, pp. 333–351.

more by the way each payment was registered in the book of accounts and, furthermore, by a detail already mentioned here. It is problematic to draw a clear cut separation between a gift and a bribe. Along with the items offered to Ottoman dignitaries, the scope of the bailo's actions included all sorts of deeds related to the diplomatic activity even though at a first glance they may seem mundane. Eric Dursteler, for instance, underscored the importance of banquets and conviviality in the diplomatic activity of the Venetian officials.<sup>49</sup> The feasts were an excellent opportunity to strengthen the prestige of a foreign sovereign by spending large amounts of money on tasty and exotic meals, to strengthen friendship ties or to make new friends among the upper and lesser Ottoman dignitaries and, last but not least, to gather intelligence *i.e.* the essential ingredient of the diplomatic game.<sup>50</sup> During a feast organized by Ajas pasha in 1536, the bailo Nicolò Giustinian was able to gather some clues on the vizier's attitude towards Venice and on an alleged Ottoman plan to invade Southern Italy.<sup>51</sup>

Piero Bragadin seems to have applied this "gastronomic strategy" generously, as his book of accounts lists the amounts of money spent for a lunch or a dinner in honour of different Ottoman dignitaries. On 27 August, for instance, the bailo paid 100 *akce* for *uno pasto* in honour of the dragoman Halibei and another Turk who was a former ambassador of the sultan in Venice.

Overall, such enterprises were a part of day to day diplomatic activity and they highlight the significance of "lesser" characters in the complicated game of power between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. Despite its inherent limitations, Piero Bragadin's register is a useful historical document, as beyond the accounts, it provides a balanced view on the expenses of diplomatic activity in extraordinary as well as in day to day circumstances.

<sup>49</sup> Eric R. Dursteler, 'A Continual Tavern in My House,' pp. 166–171.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 166. In the Romanian historiography, the importance of the banquets as a political weapon was underlined by Ștefan S. Gorovei, *Gesta Dei per Stephanum Voievodam*, in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Atlet al credinței creștine*, Putna, 2004, pp. 397–402; Ștefan S. Gorovei, Maria Magdalena Székely, *Princeps omni laude maior. O istorie a lui Ștefan cel Mare*, Sfânta Mănăstire Putna, 2005, pp. 340–343; Maria Magdalena Székely, *La célébration de la victoire en Moldavie à 1518*, in "Classica & Christiana," 10, 2015, pp. 329–352.

<sup>51</sup> ASV, Capi del Consiglio dei Dieci. Lettere di Ambasciatori-Constantinopoli, busta 1, doc. 128: "alli 12 che mi attrovai col S[ign]or Ayasbassa [*sic!*] al suo zardino, sicome per le publice li dinoto (...) uno mio servitor (*todesco che già fu servitor del secretario Rosso et poi del vedoa*) si attrovo a parlamento con uno delli schiavi del ditto Bassa *de natione alemana* et e di quelli che li porta li piatti del manzar et sic a servir fino chel Bassa manza, il qual gli disse come hanno havuto molto per male del [omission in the original] sia tagliati a pezzi quelli della fusta et li suggionse sapi che questo bassa e gran nimico della Signoria de Venetia et interloquendo ragionando che questo Signor turco ad ogni modo vuol passar in Puglia imaginandosi di prender tutta Italia, ha ditto de donarla al Re di Franza suo fratello (*ha ditto son certo che venetiani non ne vorano lassar passar et nuj anderemo a prender prima Venetia et poi si potra haver paura piu di tutto il mondo*)."  
The fragments are emphasised in the original manuscript. The document is analysed in Ovidiu Cristea, *Puterea cuvintelor. Știri și război în sec. XV–XVI*, Târgoviște, 2016, pp. 165–166.

## APPENDIX

## I

*Fascicolo spese, Piero Bragadin bailo, contabilità 1524–1526* (Archivio di Stato di Venezia, fund Archivio Proprio Costantinopoli, busta no. 1).<sup>52</sup>

Die 28 maij 1525, Per non esser occorso far spese salvo le ordinarie perho il Ex<cellentissi>mo Baylo messer Piero Bragadin ha convocato il Consiglio di XII per metter parte come e consueto et chiarir tute quelle particolarmente parte da esser poste a conto de la Ill<ustrissi>ma S<ignori>a nostra et parte a conto de Cotimo et per ho<nor>.

Landerà parte che li Infrascripti presenti ordinarij et extraordinarij et molte altre spese fatte per il bisogno publico et de la Nation siamo per questo Consiglio aprobate come ben e necessariamente fatte: nel qual Consiglio intervennero li Infrascripti

|                        |                     |                        |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Ser Alvisè Gritti      | Ser Piero Valaresso | Ser Zuan Nani          |
| Ser Marco Loredan      | Ser Gaspar Bassalu  | Ser Hieronimo Valier   |
| Ser Francisco Morosini | Ser Zuan Mocenigo   | Ser Philipppo de Baron |
| Ser Lorenzo Belochio   | Ser Piero Diedo     | Ser Picardo di Medici  |

De parte 13 [*sic!*], de non 0, non sinceri 0

Presenti portati da Venezia come qui sotto appar li quali sono sta apresentati

Al gran Signor

Veludo cremesin alto basso doro .....l. 14

Veludo pian cremesin.....l. 14

Raso cremesin .....l. 14

Damaschin lionado.....l. 14

Scarlato de cento .....l. 5

Pavonazo de cento.....l. 5

Al Magnifico Imbrhai bassa<sup>53</sup> et come begliarbei de la Grecia

Veludo colorado veste due.....l. 28

Raso cremesin .....l. 28

Scarlato de cento veste due .....l. 20

Pavonazo de cento veste due.....l. 20

Al Magnifico Mustafa bassa

Veludo lionado.....l. 14

Raso cremesin .....l. 14

Scarlato de cento .....l. 5

Pavonazo de cento vesta una.....l. 5

Al Magnifico Ajax bassa<sup>54</sup>

Veludo lionado.....l. 14

Raso cremesin .....l. 14

Scarlato de cento .....l. 5

Pavonazo de cento.....l. 5

<sup>52</sup> I have tried to preserve both the form of the manuscript and its original orthography.

<sup>53</sup> Ibrahim pasha.

<sup>54</sup> Ajas pasha.

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Al Magnifico Capitano de Galipoli   |           |
| Raso cremesin .....   | l. 14     |
| Damaschin lionato.....  | l. 14     |
| Scarlato de cento .....   | l. 5      |
| Pavonazo de cento.....  | l. 5      |
| Al Capizi bassi de la porta   |           |
| Damaschin lionado.....  | l. 14     |
| Al Chiaus bassi de la porta   |           |
| Damaschin lionado.....  | l. 14     |
| Al prothogero de li Capizi de la porta  |           |
| Scarlato de cento .....   | l. 5      |
| Alli quatro prothogeri de li bassa  |           |
| Scarlato de cento vesti quatro .....  | l. 24     |
| //fol. 1 verso  |           |
| Al prothogero del Capitano de Galipolj  |           |
| Pavonazo de 80, vesta una .....   | l. 5      |
| A Caydar celebi primo scrivane de la porta  |           |
| Pavonazo de 80, vesta una .....   | l. 5      |
| A Scander chiaus da la porta per expedir li presenti al commercio et per accompagnar alla porta   |           |
| Scarlato de 80.....   | l. 5      |
| fin qui li soprascripti presenti sono ordinarij   |           |
| Al padre del Magnifico Imbrhai bassa  |           |
| Veludo colorado.....  | l. 14     |
| Alla madre  |           |
| Veludo colorado.....  | l. 14     |
| Al fiol   |           |
| Raso cremesin .....   | l. 14     |
| Al prothogero   |           |
| Pavonazo de 80 .....  | l. 5      |
| Da esser tenuto secreti come conforto lo ambassador, per bon rispetto   |           |
| Per trazer li presenti de galia et le robe del Mag <sup>&lt;nifi&gt;</sup> co Imbrhai bassa quando quando <sup>55</sup> le galie dete Carena a catharo per discargar et Cargar per fitto de Cassa et farle Guardar..... | aspri 250 |
| Per uno presente fatto al vayvoda del sanzaco de Montenegro che mo porto presente per pasha alcuni capreti et stete a disnar et a Cena in Zuchari, confetti et Cere che cussi conforto el Rector.....                   | aspri 300 |
| Per uno schiavo tolto alli Dardaneli et presente fatto al castellan acio el facesse bona compagnia alla galia guora rimata l'j et accompagnatone fino a Galipoli.....   | aspri 230 |
| Contadi alli compagni de la galia et a bastasi per descargar le ditte robbe et a quelli de Commercio .....  | aspri 200 |
| Spese fatte per el bassar la mano al Sig <sup>&lt;n&gt;</sup> or et nella visitation de li Magnifici bassa et altri come particolarmente se dechiara  |           |
| Alli capizi de la guardia del Signor secondo usanza ducati otto veneziani val ...   | aspri 448 |
| Alli chiaussi ducati sei veneziani val .....  | aspri 336 |

<sup>55</sup> Word repeated in the manuscript.

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Alli Massalazi ducati tre doro et aspri 25 val .....   | aspri 193  |
| Alli Merteri .....   | aspri 30   |
| Alli Sacha .....   | aspri 20   |
| Alli Solachi .....   | aspri 30   |
| Alli sanciasi .....  | aspri 25   |
| Alli seirmen .....   | aspri 25   |
| Alli Tornazi .....   | aspri 25   |
| Al scrivani de li presenti .....   | aspri 40   |
| Alli Capizi di fora .....  | aspri 40   |
| Alli peini .....   | aspri 15   |
| Alli capi di sermen .....  | aspri 30   |
| Et per non se contentar de quelli sono giunti alti trenta .....  | aspri 30   |
| Alli sacrizi .....   | aspri 25   |
| .....  | aspri 2292 |
| //fol. 2 recto   |            |
| Per restro del altro lai .....   | aspri 2292 |
| Al protoghero del Mag<nifi>co Imbrhai bassa et come beglerbei de la Grecia ducati<br>6 venetiani val .....   | aspri 336  |
| Alli capizi bassi del ditto bassa et begliarbei [ <i>sic!</i> ] ducati sei de oro venetiani val ....   | aspri 336  |
| Alli capizi del ditto bassa et begliarbei .....  | aspri 100  |
| Alli soprascripti homini et macieri et altri de la corte del M<agnifi>co Mustaffa<br>bassa .....   | aspri 386  |
| Alli soprascripti homini de la corte del M<agnifi>co Ajax bassa .....  | aspri 386  |
| Alli soprascripti de la corte del Capit<an>o de Galipoli .....   | aspri 193  |
| Per barche in piu fiate per portar li presenti alla Porta et alli bassa et cortesie ....   | aspri 206  |
| Alli Trombetti di Imbrhai bassa .....  | aspri 100  |
| Alli Trombetti de li bassa .....   | aspri 100  |
| Al Trombeta del Capitano de Galipoli ducato uno doro val .....   | aspri 56   |
| Al gianizaro del subassi de Pera che me vene alla staffa per uno par de calce secondo<br>usanza .....  | aspri 54   |
| Al Magnifico messer Halibei dragoman per ordine del Excelentissimo Consiglio di X come<br>fece il mio p<rede>cessor da esser tenuto secreto, ducati cento doro venetiani val .....   | aspri 5600 |
| Per uno gianizaro che stete continuamente in galia per boni rispetti come fece il mio<br>predecessor .....   | aspri 300  |
| Per el spazo de ditta galia alla et altre cortesie si come fece il mio predecessor .....   | aspri 943  |
| Per far dui proclami, uno in Costantinopoli et laltro in Pera per far ritornar li homini<br>che erano fugiti per el garbuglio di schiavi, assicurati per el gran Sig<n>or et datoli la fede<br>ducato doi doro caraymiti val ..... | aspri 102  |

## II

(fols. 6 verso – 7 recto)

† 1525 adj 7 Settembre

Il Excellentissimo Baylo. Sono per el passato balotade in questo Consiglio tute le spese si ordinarie come extraordinarie che fino alhora erano occorso a far; et essendone da lhora in qua occorso far de le altre a commodo et beneficio de la nation nostra, per honor.

Landerà parte che tutte le spese fatte da di 15 april 1525 fin questo giorno siano per questo consiglio laudate et approbate come ben et debitamente fatte da esser poste parte a conto de la Illustrissima Signoria et parte a conto de cotimo.

De parte – XI

De non – 2

Non sinceri – 0

† 1525 adj X Settembre

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| per pichi 13 alto basso d'oro pavonazo a aspri 700 el picho ..... | aspri 9100 |
| per pichi 14 ½ alto basso cremesin a aspri 320 el picho .....     | aspri 4640 |
| per pichi 13 veludo cremesin a aspri 250 el picho .....           | aspri 3250 |
| per pichi 13 veludo verde a aspri 150 el picho .....              | aspri 1950 |
| per pichi 13 veludo alexandrin al ditto presio .....              | aspri 1950 |
| per pichi 13 veludo lionado al ditto presio .....                 | aspri 1950 |
| per pichi 13 raso cremesin a aspri 110 el picho .....             | aspri 1430 |
| per pichi 13 damaschin cremesin a aspri 115 el picho .....        | aspri 1495 |
| per pichi 13 damaschin rovan a aspri 75 el picho .....            | aspri 975  |
| per pichi 13 raso colorado a ditto presio .....                   | aspri 975  |
| per pichi 5 scarlato de cento a aspri 250 el picho .....          | aspri 1250 |
| per pichi 5 scarlato de cento a aspri 210 el picho .....          | aspri 1050 |
| per pichi 4 ½ scarlato de cento a ditto presio .....              | aspri 945  |
| per pichi 4 ½ scarlato de cento a ditto presio .....              | aspri 945  |
| per pichi 5 pavonazo de cento a aspri 140 el picho .....          | aspri 700  |
| per pichi 4 ½ pavonazo de cento a ditto presio .....              | aspri 630  |

† 1525 adj X Settembre

Convocato per el Excellentissimo messer Piero Bragadin dignissimo Baylo Consiglio di XII nel qual fo messe la sopraditta spesa per apresentar al Magnifico Imbrhai bassa nel qual intervennero li infrascripti et fo messa la infrascripta parte.

|                       |                         |                        |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Ser Alvise Gritti     | Ser Marco Loredan       | Ser Francesco Morosini |
| Ser Piero Valaresso   | Ser Marc Antonio Pisani | Ser Piero Diedo        |
| Ser Zuan Mocenigo     | Ser Zuan Nani           | Ser Hieronimo Valier   |
| Ser Lorenzo Belocchio | Ser Gaspar Basalu       | Ser Picardo de Medici. |

Il Excellentissimo Baylo. Essendo giontto il Magnifico Imbrhai bassa el qual e stato mesi XI et giorni 7 fuora in la Soria et in lo Egipto cum armata come la persona del Signor et havendo fatto tute quelle demonstration verso la nation nostra che a tuti sono note et e stato apresentato da quelli consuli honoratissimamente e conveniente cosa che essendo luj in gran gratia del Signor et etiam per esser stafatte a questi giorni molte querelle (?) alla porta si per la galia del Signor presa in Cipri da corsari et in Corphu et in altri diversi rechiami et ultimamente per le fuste abandonate da Bostan rais et condute per el Magnifico proveditor de larmata a Napoli et per honorarlo et per haver el favor suo da justo bassa per honor.

Landerà parte che le soprascripte robe presentate a lui et alla sua porta da esser poste a conto de la Illustrissima Signoria siano per questo Consiglio confirmate et aprobate come ben et necessariamente fatte.

De parte – 7

De non – 1

Non sinceri – 5



DIPLOMACY AND GIFTS IN CONSTANTINOPLE: THE BOOK OF  
ACCOUNTS OF BAILO PIERO BRAGADIN (1524–1526)

The study of the diplomatic relations between Venice and the Ottoman Empire was done by using a vast and multifarious category of sources: the reports of the Venetian ambassadors and baili at Constantinople and their final accounts, chronicles, letters etc. From this point of view, the use of a book of accounts seems, at first sight, not only unusual, but also quite odd. However, the book of accounts of bailo Piero Bragadin (1524–1526) may shed some light on the relations of the Venetian official with the Ottoman dignitaries from the perspective of the gifts he offered and their costs. The analysis of the document presents a rigorous hierarchy of gifts, mirroring the official Ottoman hierarchy. Aside from the official reception, gifts seem to have been an irreplaceable part in the daily relations between Venice's representative and the Ottoman dignitaries, and their adaptation to the tastes and practices of the later was a sure way to gain their support. In addition to the robes of velvet, silk and other precious fabrics, offered at various ceremonies, the most appreciated gifts in daily relations were sweets, cheese, wine and money (for the less important officials). Although the borderline between gift and bribe is thin in the light of the analyzed document, the data it provides allows a more precise understanding of the leverage used by Venetian diplomats to solve their litigations with the Porte.

**Keywords:** Venice; Ottoman Empire; diplomacy; Piero Bragadin; book of accounts



# SILKS AND STONES: FOUNTAINS, PAINTED KAFTANS, AND OTTOMANS IN EARLY MODERN MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA\*

MICHAŁ WASIUCIONEK\*\*

Buildings are arguably the last thing that comes to our mind when we talk about circulation of luxury goods and diffusion of consumption practices. Their sheer size and mass explain their tendency to remain in one place throughout their existence and bestow upon them an aura of immutability. This “spatial fix” of the built environment, both in terms of individual buildings and architectural landscapes, means that while they may change hand, they are unable to move across space. This immobility is by no means absolute, as shown by the well-known relocation of the Pergamon altar from western Anatolia to the Museum Island in Berlin, or shorter distances covered by dozens of churches in Bucharest, displaced from their original sites during the urban reconstruction of the 1980s. However, these instances do not change the fact that while both buildings and smaller luxury items constitute vehicles conveying their owners’ wealth and social status, they seemingly belong to two different realms, with little overlap between them.

However, as scholarship produced in recent decades has shown, approaching these two spheres of human activity as a dynamic and interactive whole can produce valuable insights into how architecture and luxury commodities construed and expressed social and political identity. As Alina Payne pointed out, buildings and whole sites could become portable and travel by proxy, in the form of drawings, descriptions, and fragments of buildings.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the architectural environment provides the spatial frame for the social and cultural life of humans and objects alike: the spatial distribution of luxury items within the household allows us to reconstruct the topography of conspicuous display and everyday

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<sup>1</sup> Alina Payne, *Introduction: The Republic of the Sea*, in *Dalmatia and the Mediterranean: Portable Archeology and the Poetics of Influence*, ed. by Alina Payne, Leiden, Boston, 2014, pp. 3–4.

strategies of self-representation.<sup>2</sup> The link between architectural topography and portable luxury objects resulted, at its most prominent, in the latter made with a single architectural setting in mind. A case in this regard is that of the silk *kiswa* coverings sent annually by the Ottoman sultans during the Ramadan to Mecca for Ka'ba sanctuary. Finally, as Ruth Barnes and Mary-Louise Totton have demonstrated for the medieval and early modern Indian Ocean, human mobility, luxury textiles, and architecture converged, contributing to the transfer of decorative motifs from fabrics to architectural decoration.<sup>3</sup>

This new focus on the interaction between portable objects, architecture, and human agency constitutes part of a broader change within the realms of art and architecture history. In the words of Nancy Stieber, the architecture historians' attention has increasingly focused "on the contingent, the temporary, and the dynamic, on processes rather than structures, on hybridity rather than consistency, on the quotidian as well as the extraordinary, on the periphery as well as the centre, on reception as well as production."<sup>4</sup> This preoccupation with the tangibility of objects, social practices, and cultural identities, opens new vistas, allows us to revisit the established narratives and provides us with a perspective beyond the entrenched master narratives of material culture as a succession of styles and categories.

The shift from essentialist towards a practice-oriented approach to architecture is of particular importance in the context of early modern Moldavia and Wallachia, and the Ottoman footprint on the material and cultural landscape of the principalities. The Ottoman-style material culture dominated the local patterns of consumption and aesthetic tastes well into the nineteenth century before being replaced by the shift towards Western European models, associated with a nascent national identity. However, for nation-oriented politicians and intellectuals, like Mihail Kogălniceanu and Alecu Russo, the Ottoman-style attire was a source of embarrassment that held the Romanian nation away from returning to its "natural" historical trajectory towards European modernity. Thus, both the sartorial revolution of the nineteenth century and the urban reconstruction along Western lines were meant to "de-Ottomanize" the landscape and replace "oriental" architectural vestiges with Paris-style houses and public edifices.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Gudrun Andersson, *A Mirror of Oneself: Possessions and the Manifestation of Status among a Local Swedish Elite, 1650–1770*, in "Cultural and Social History," 3, 2006, no. 1, pp. 21–44.

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Barnes, *The Painted Decoration: An Influence from Indian Textiles*, in *The 'Amiriya in Rada': The History and Restoration of a Sixteenth-Century Madrasa in the Yemen*, ed. by Selma al-Radi, Oxford, 1997, pp. 139–148; Mary-Louise Totton, *Cosmopolitan Tastes and Indigenous Designs – Virtual Cloth in Javanese Candi*, in *Textiles in Indian Ocean Societies*, ed. by Ruth Barnes, London, New York, 2004, pp. 105–125.

<sup>4</sup> Nancy Stieber, *Architecture between Disciplines*, in "Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians," 62, 2003, no. 2, p. 176.

<sup>5</sup> Emanuela Costantini, *Dismantling the Ottoman Heritage? – The Evolution of Bucharest in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, in *Ottoman Legacies in the Contemporary Mediterranean: The Balkans and the Middle East Compared*, ed. by Eyal Ginio, Karl Kaser, Jerusalem, 2013, pp. 231–254. For other instances of urban "de-Ottomanization" see Yorgos Koumaridis, *Urban Transformation and De-Ottomanization in Greece*, in "East Central Europe," 33, 2006, nos. 1–2, pp. 213–241.

The underlying assumption about the inherent incompatibility between Ottoman material culture and essentialized Romanian identity as one of European nation has permeated historical studies. However, there are significant nuances in its application between art history and architectural studies. Whereas the sartorial impact of the Ottoman center on the elite culture in the principalities is too salient to ignore (although it is often cast in a negative light), early modern Moldavian and Wallachian architectural heritage has been employed to argue that the Danubian principalities<sup>6</sup> had never been part of the Ottoman Empire. In an oft-cited fragment of Edgar Quinet's 1856 article, the French historian argued that the fact that there had been no mosques in either Moldavia or Wallachia constitutes a proof that the Ottoman conquest never took place.<sup>7</sup>

Despite being primarily adopted in the debate on the political and juridical status of the Danubian principalities vis-à-vis the Sublime Porte, the argument is deeply problematic. Firstly, it conflates two phenomena – Ottoman conquest and mosque construction – which, although interrelated, were nonetheless distinct from each other. In some instances, the erection of a congregational mosque (*cami*) could take place with a significant delay, or be abandoned altogether, due to considerations that had little to do with the conquest.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, it overemphasizes monumental architecture over residential architecture, which predominated numerically in the urban fabric, and constituted the primary frame in which social life unfolded.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Throughout the present study, I employ the term of “Danubian principalities” to describe the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. While this expression is admittedly anachronistic, as it was coined in the late eighteenth century, its usage is nonetheless justified by established practice and lack of better alternatives. Employing another term frequently used in modern Romanian – *țările române extracarpătice* (“Romanian lands beyond the Carpathians”) – is not only unwieldy, but also even more anachronistic, teleologically presenting Moldavia and Wallachia as preludes to the Romanian nation-state. Thus, while the notion of “Danubian principalities” is by no means an ideal solution, the choice to employ it seems the most convenient one.

<sup>7</sup> Edgar Quinet, *Les Roumains*, in “Revue des deux mondes,” 2, 1856, no. 2, pp. 26–27.

<sup>8</sup> A document from the *kadi* register of Tuzla, published by Nenad Dostović, illustrates the process of conversion of the local mosque (*mescid*) into a congregational mosque (*cami*) in the Bosnian locality of Miričina, which took place in 1644/1645. As he points out, the process of establishing a *cami* was by no means automatic. The Porte's main concern was if the number of Muslims in this Vlach village warranted the establishment of a congregational mosque, since a small number of faithful attending the mosque would diminish the sultan's prestige, see Nenad Dostović, *Dva dokumenta iz tuzlanskog sidžila iz 1054–55./1644–45. godine u Gazi Husrev-begovoj Biblioteci*, in “Anali Gazi Husrev-begovoj Biblioteke,” 41, 2012, pp. 61, 72. While more in-depth and comparative research is required to address this issue, the Ottoman authorities' preoccupation with the size of the local Islamic community would explain both why the establishment of mosques frequently coincided with conquest (the new places of worship being frequented by the local garrison, augmented by new converts), and why the relatively small number of Muslim permanent residents in the Danubian principalities did not lead to the establishment of *camis* in Bucharest and Iași.

<sup>9</sup> On the general tendency to overemphasize monumental over residential architecture in the Ottoman Empire, see Tülay Artan, *Questions of Ottoman Identity and Architectural History*, in *Rethinking Architectural Historiography*, ed. by Dana Arnold, Elvan Altan Ergut, Belgin Turan Özkaya, London, New York, 2006, p. 86.

Despite some differences in layout that have been noted by Romanian art historians, this variation falls within the parameters of the one that characterized the Ottoman lands.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, the descriptions and depictions of the urban landscape of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Moldavian and Wallachian built environment make clear their similarities to the Ottoman architectural idiom, further reinforced by the similarities in everyday practices and portable material culture. Although subsequent waves of modern urban reconstruction that targeted primarily secular edifices have obscured this aspect of Moldavian-Wallachian built environment, it is crucial to keep in mind when approaching the extant architectural monuments, predominantly religious in nature.

A final issue regarding Quinet's (and subsequent generations of historians') hypothesis is the approach to Orthodox monumental architecture in Moldavia and Wallachia as a sign of rejection of Ottoman culture and identity. As I have argued elsewhere, by founding new churches and monasteries, Moldavian and Wallachian elites indeed engaged in a defensive "confessionalization of space," imbuing the landscape of the principalities with Orthodox identity as a mechanism to retain the socio-political system which guaranteed their privileged status and control of political and economic resources.<sup>11</sup> However, the fact that the boyars made an effort to shore up the precarious position of the Danubian principalities within the broader imperial system and retain confessionally-marked land in the hands of the Orthodox elite did not necessarily mean that they rejected, or even pretended to reject, the Ottoman cultural idiom and identity. As all architectural monuments, Moldavian and Wallachian ecclesiastical edifices were able to convey a variety of meanings and constituted the primary *loci* of public self-fashioning of their endowers, whose strategies went well beyond the statements of their piety. In effect, and somewhat ironically, the same churches cited by historians as proof of the boyars' anti-Ottoman stance provide us with abundant evidence of an Ottoman-style material culture that Moldavian and Wallachian elites so eagerly embraced.

When we look at the extant votive paintings preserved in Moldavian and Wallachian churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we cannot help but be dazzled by the meticulous representations of the attire donned by the founders (*ctitors*). Given that few pieces of clothing from the period remain and even fewer can be attributed to a particular owner, these frescoes provide us with

<sup>10</sup> On the differences between Balkan and Moldavian-Wallachian house types, see Corina Nicolescu, *Case, conace și palate vechi românești*, Bucharest, 1979, pp. 26–27. On the Ottoman house type and its relatively brief popularity, see Maurice Cerasi, *The Formation of Ottoman House Types: A Comparative Study in Interaction with Neighboring Cultures*, in "Muqarnas," 15, 1998, pp. 116–156. On Bulgarian lands, see Georgi Kozhuharov, *Bulgarskata kushta prez pet stoletiya: kraya na XIV–XIX vek*, Sofia, 1967, pp. 33–34. Cristian Nicolae Apetrei, *Reședințele boierești din Țara Românească și Moldova în secolele XIV–XVI*, Brăila, 2009, for the earlier period.

<sup>11</sup> Michał Wasiucionek, *Danube-Hopping: Conversion, Jurisdiction and Spatiality between the Ottoman Empire and the Danubian Principalities in the Seventeenth Century*, in *Conversion and Islam in the Early Modern Mediterranean: The Lure of the Other*, ed. by Claire Norton, London, New York, 2017, p. 88.

the bulk of visual sources on the elites' sartorial preferences and material culture. However, this begs the question: why paint silks on stones in the first place? The question has been largely ignored by scholars addressing the material culture of the early modern Danubian principalities and treated as a non-issue. However, as I will argue, despite being seemingly trivial, the question may lead us to non-trivial conclusions. Rather than mere depictions of reality, the detailed representations of Ottoman kaftans force us to consider them as essential markers of identity and self-fashioning, deeply embedded not only in the local Moldavian-Wallachian context but also in the broader processes across the empire.

As I will argue, once we set these painted textiles against the broader background of architectural and social change in the Danubian principalities and the Ottoman Empire, we can observe the degree to which the Moldavian and Wallachian boyars adopted (and adapted) practices of architectural and artistic patronage radiating from the imperial center, and incorporated them into their practices and modes of self-representation. Although they did not erect mosques and remained attached to the Greek Orthodox faith, they did not shy away from their association with the Ottoman material culture and Ottoman identity itself. On the contrary, explicit references to the imperial origin of luxury objects, the inclusion of decorative motifs with explicit references to their Ottoman origins, and the dynamics of architectural patronage paralleling those of Istanbul – all this points to the boyars' eagerness to embrace imperial cultural idiom and adapt it to express their own identity and social status as a peripheral elite of the empire and participants in the Ottoman early modernity.<sup>12</sup>

To elucidate this phenomenon, the present study is divided into two main sections. In the first section, I address the issue of architectural models and practices of patronage in the Danubian principalities, setting them against a broader background of architectural dynamics in the Ottoman Empire. As I argue, once we discard the Orientalist notion of "post-classical" Ottoman architecture as stagnant, and focus our attention on dynamics rather than individual buildings, we notice surprising similarities in the practices of architectural patronage and stylistic choices, a trend that reached its peak in the 1760s within the sphere of secular architecture. Subsequently, I move towards the question of silks painted on the walls of Moldavian and Wallachian churches. As I argue, rather than being a transparent medium capturing realities of the time, the labor-intensive process of depicting elaborate and indelibly decorative motifs of the kaftans and their differentiation signifies their role in representing identities and reinforcing social hierarchies. This role of Ottoman kaftans painted on church walls was not only due to their sumptuousness, but rather their social life as "inalienable possessions" received from the sultan, thus introducing the association with the Ottoman center as a source of

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<sup>12</sup> On the topic of Ottoman early modernity, see Shirine Hamadeh, *Ottoman Expressions of Early Modernity and the "Inevitable" Question of Westernization*, in "Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians," 63, 2004, no. 1, pp. 32–51.

symbolic capital. I also focus on the painted decoration of the Stelea Monastery, examining the inclusion of Ottoman motifs as autonomous elements in the Wallachian decorative repertoire and the possible role of silk kaftans as potential proxies that allowed the pictorial décor to travel from Ottoman mosques to Moldavian-Wallachian churches.

#### FOUNDATIONS *ALLA TURCA*? FOUNTAINS, LEISURE, AND PRACTICES OF ARCHITECTURAL PATRONAGE

Two paradigms have plagued until recently the study of Ottoman architecture and built environment. The first was the model of the “Islamic city,” which proposed the existence of an atemporal and religious-specific system of arranging urban space and the patterns of social life within it. This purported blueprint included a division of the population into ethnically-organized *mahallas*, with a central spot in each occupied by a mosque and a bazaar grouping specialized artisans according to their trade, with narrow, winding streets flanked by inward-looking houses. Although developed on a limited set of North African *kasbahs*, the model of a uniform Islamic city has been widely accepted among scholars as a one-size-fits-all paradigm for all urban centers of the Islamic world. Only in the 1980s the new wave of revisionist scholarship challenged the established notion, pointing out that “the idea of the Islamic city was constructed by a series of Western authorities who drew upon a small and eccentric sample of pre-modern Arab cities on the eve of Westernization, but more than that, drew upon one another in an *isnad* [chain of transmission – M.W.] of authority.”<sup>13</sup> Rather than an undifferentiated and static site, the new scholarship reframed the urbanism of the Islamic world as a dynamic process, emphasizing how human interactions, economic currents, and cultural fashions continually redefined and reshaped such cities as Istanbul, Isfahan, or Mocha.<sup>14</sup>

In the Ottoman case, another historiographical challenge is the juxtaposition of the glorious “classical” period, with its peak during the reign of Süleyman (r. 1520–1566), juxtaposed to the purported period of stagnation and decline. Since the overwhelming “decline” paradigm has repeatedly been debunked by Ottomanists and is all but defunct among specialists, I will focus on the cultural and artistic dimension of the paradigm and its subsequent rejection. According to the “declinist” model, the political efflorescence of the Süleymanic age also signified the artistic and cultural peak of the Ottoman culture and arts. In the case of architecture, the pivotal character was Mimar Sinan (d. 1588), whose monumental and prolific oeuvre was a crowning achievement and at the same time a swansong of the Ottoman building tradition. However, as the imperial edifice began to crumble, so did its cultural and artistic achievements.

<sup>13</sup> Janet Abu-Lughod, *The Islamic City: Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance*, in “International Journal of Middle East Studies,” 19, 1987, no. 2, p. 155.

<sup>14</sup> Nancy Um, *The Merchant Houses of Mocha: Trade and Architecture in an Indian Ocean Port*, Seattle, 2009.



Revisionist scholarship on Ottoman cultural and architectural history agrees that the reign of Süleyman constituted a crucial watershed when the self-confidence of the Ottoman elite and the aspirations to universal monarchy led to the emergence of a relatively uniform imperial visual idiom in a variety of artistic media.<sup>15</sup> The formulation of a distinct style occurred in a competitive atmosphere, as it was meant to surpass both those of the Porte's imperial rivals (the Safavid Empire and the Habsburgs), as well as the achievements of the past.<sup>16</sup> However, where the scholarship departs from the trodden path is by emphasizing that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries did not spell decline or ossification, but rather a reformulation of Ottoman culture along different lines, driven primarily by internal dynamics rather than the impact of the West. At the center of this discussion is the concept of the "Tulip Age." First proposed by Ahmed Refik (Altınay) in the 1910s, the label meant to describe the period of 1718–1730 that the historian saw as the period of excessive consumption and profligacy, but also the first wave of Western impact on the Ottoman Empire and attempts at reform.<sup>17</sup> While accepted throughout the twentieth century, the concept of Tulip Age as the beginning of Westernization has come under fire from numerous quarters, with scholars questioning the role of European influences or even the distinctiveness of the period.<sup>18</sup> Instead, the stress is put on continuity and domestic factors in bringing about changes in cultural patterns and aesthetic preferences. Two "icons" of purported Europeanization – Saadabad Palace and Nuruosmaniye mosque in Istanbul – have been reclassified and reinterpreted as more indebted to local and Persian traditions rather than Western inspiration.<sup>19</sup> What we observe is the shift in social practices and identities, marked by what Shirine Hamadeh has called a *décloisonnement* of Ottoman culture, the emphasis on leisure, and a new phenomenon of "middle-class" architectural patronage, centered around fountains and public gardens.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, the

<sup>15</sup> Emine Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court*, Bloomington, 2013, pp. 11–15; Gülrü Necipoğlu, *From International Timurid to Ottoman: A Change of Taste in Sixteenth Century Ceramic Tiles*, in "Muqarnas," 7, 1990, pp. 136–170; Serpil Bağcı, *Presenting Vassal Kalender's Works: The Prefaces to Three Ottoman Albums*, in "Muqarnas," 30, 2013, pp. 255–313.

<sup>16</sup> Gülrü Necipoğlu, *Challenging the Past: Sinan and the Competitive Discourse of Early Modern Islamic Architecture*, in "Muqarnas," 10, 1993, pp. 169–180.

<sup>17</sup> For a fascinating account of the historiographical invention of the "Tulip Age," see Can Erımtan, *Ottomans Looking West? The Origins of the Tulip Age and Its Development in Modern Turkey*, London, New York, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Selim Karahasanoğlu, *A Tulip Age Legend: Consumer Behavior and Material Culture in the Ottoman Empire (1718–1730)*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Binghamton, 2009; Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*, Seattle, 2009, p. 138.

<sup>19</sup> Selva Suman, *Questioning an "Icon of Change": The Nuruosmaniye Complex and the Writing of Ottoman Architectural History (I)*, in "METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture," 28, 2011, 2, pp. 145–166; Can Erımtan, *The Perception of Saadabad: The 'Tulip Age' and Ottoman-Safavid Rivalry*, in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Dana Sajdi, London, New York, 2003, pp. 41–62.

<sup>20</sup> Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures*, p. 75.

focus of the Istanbulite elite's social life shifted from the walled city to *yalıs* (seafront residences) on the shores of the Bosphorus.<sup>21</sup>

Moldavian and Wallachian elites were by no means oblivious to these developments. Already in the 1690s, Dimitrie Cantemir inhabited a *yalı* in the district Ortaköy on the European shore of the strait and left a drawing of his waterfront residence (Figure 3). He was not the only member of the Moldavian-Wallachian elite to partake in the newly-fashionable *villegiatura*. In the eighteenth century, the *yalıs* belonging to the Orthodox elites of the capital concentrated in the districts of Kuruçeşme, Yeniköy, and İstinye, all three with a predominantly non-Muslim population. However, no district was confessionally uniform; although the authorities tried to enforce some level of distinction between houses belonging to Muslims and *zimmi*s, the high demand and rapid pace of turnover driven by commercial transactions and political confiscations blurred the boundaries, meaning that Muslims and non-Muslims alike operated within the same built environment of waterfront residences.<sup>22</sup> In comparison with the architectural tradition epitomized by the Topkapı Palace, the new batch of palaces upstream was considerably lighter and not as preoccupied with "line-of-sight accessibility" as more traditional residences.<sup>23</sup> The emphasis instead was put on leisure, as evident by the proliferation of dedicated rooms, such as *kahve odası* (for coffee drinking) or *bülbülhane* (room intended for listening to nightingales).<sup>24</sup>

Replicating the Istanbulite model in the urban spaces of Moldavian and Wallachian capitals ran into objective obstacles of the sites' topography. The banks of neither Dâmbovița nor Bahlui offered sensory pleasures on par with that of the Bosphorus. Iași and Bucharest's population growth led to the contamination of water with human and animal waste and frequent floods certainly did not add to their allure as sites of leisure for the elite.<sup>25</sup> However, the shortage of potable water in the Moldavian capital incentivized the rulers and local elites to engage in another form of architectural patronage: the construction of fountains.

Fountains came in all shapes and forms in the eighteenth-century Istanbul, and they came in scores. According to an estimate by Shirine Hamadeh, in the century following the 1703 return of the court to the city, the Ottoman capital was adorned with over 360 fountains, almost triple the number from the previous century.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Tülay Artan, *Architecture as the Theatre of Life: Profile of the Eighteenth Century Bosphorus*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989, pp. 29–72.

<sup>22</sup> Tülay Artan provides a somewhat amusing example of a conservative jurist from Eyüp, who, after having bought a *yalı* in Yeniköy from a Greek physician, was forced to come to terms with a pub and a *şırahane* adjacent to his new residence, see *ibidem*, pp. 152–153.

<sup>23</sup> Gülrü Necipoğlu, *Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Palaces*, in "Ars Orientalis," 23, 1993, pp. 303–342; Janet Abu-Lughod, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–169.

<sup>24</sup> Tülay Artan, *Architecture as the Theatre of Life*, p. 263.

<sup>25</sup> Bobi Apăvăloaei, *Alimentarea cu apă a orașului Iași în perioada domniilor fanariote*, in "Cercetări istorice," n.s., 30–31, 2011–2012, p. 95.

<sup>26</sup> Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures*, p. 76. Some scholars have attributed the proliferation of fountains to Westernization and the adoption of Baroque models, see Ali Uzay Peker, *Western Influences*

Starting from the 1720s, the Porte initiated a series of overhauls in the aqueduct network, repairing dilapidated sections and constructing new elements of water infrastructure. While part of this expansion can be attributed to demographic growth, the concern of supply seems not to have been a central impulse, nor did the initiative to build new fountains come from the authorities. Naturally, members of the dynasty, palace dignitaries, and state officials contributed to this frantic construction activity. However, the initiative belonged to a new category of middle-rank patrons, for whom the relative affordability of fountains provided an opportunity to engage in a public display and leave their mark on the urban fabric.<sup>27</sup>

Unlike Istanbul, Bucharest and Iași did not have a water supply system. In effect, potable water had to be brought in from Copou and Ciric, adding urgency to the establishment of an adequate system, but also providing an opportunity for the display of munificence and social status.<sup>28</sup> The first attempts to build an aqueduct seem to have occurred under Antonie Ruset, but it was only in the eighteenth century that a determined effort was made to provide reliable water supply. Starting from the reign of Grigore II Ghica, several voivodes engaged in the infrastructural expansion. The progress was undone on several occasions by natural disaster or political shifts, but by the second half of the century, a small, but functioning system of water supply was already in place. From its beginning, it has been a distinctly Ottoman-inspired enterprise, in step with the fountain boom occurring in the imperial capital. Istanbul provided know-how in two *suiulgis*, Dima and Constantin (who supervised the construction since the 1730s until the 1770s), and construction

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on the Ottoman Empire and Occidentalism in the Architecture of Istanbul, in "Eighteenth-Century Life," 26, 2002, no. 3, pp. 139–163. However, a growing body of literature has demonstrated major issues with this explanation and the concept of "Ottoman Baroque," pointing out instead to the internal dynamics of change within Ottoman aesthetics and visual culture.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 81; eadem, *Splash and Spectacle: The Obsession with Fountains in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul*, in "Muqarnas," 19, 2002, pp. 123–148. For the proliferation of fountains in Balkan provinces, see Maximilian Hartmuth, *Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Architecture and the Problem of Scope: A Critical View from the Balkan 'Periphery'*, in *Thirteenth International Congress of Turkish Art*, ed. by Géza Dávid, Ibolya Gerelyes, Budapest, 2009, pp. 300–301.

<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, the legal and symbolic nature of architectural patronage over fountains has been largely neglected in Romanian historiography, the only study addressing the topic being an article on well construction by Arcadie M. Bodale, who argues that well-digging was understood in a way similar to endowments of religious institutions (*ctitorie*), see Arcadie M. Bodale, *Fântânile și dreptul de patronat*, in "Anuarul Muzeului Etnografic al Moldovei," 16, 2016, pp. 92–94. However, while arguing for the origins of this model in pre-Christian beliefs, Orthodox tradition and drawing parallels with Western models, the author ignores the possibility of the influence of the Islamic institution of pious endowment (*vakıf*), despite the fact that numerous Orthodox institutions throughout the Ottoman space operated as *vakıfs*, see Sophia Laiou, *Diverging Realities of a Christian Vakıf, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Century*, in "Turkish Historical Review," 3, 2012, pp. 1–18; Eugenia Kermeli, *Ebu's Su'ud's Definition of Church Vakıfs: Theory and Practice in Ottoman Law*, in *Islamic Law: Theory and Practice*, ed. by Robert Gleave, Eugenia Kermeli, London, New York, 2001, pp. 141–156. This link is even more plausible given that at least one of the Wallachian voivodes of the eighteenth century – Nicolae Mavrogheni – established a *vakıf* to maintain three fountains he had constructed in his native village on Paros, see Sophia Laiou, *Between Pious Generosity and Faithful Service to the Ottoman State: The Vakıf of Nikolaos Mavrogenis, End of the Eighteenth Century*, in "Turkish Historical Review," 6, 2015, no. 2, pp. 151–174.

materials, with Ottoman authorities shipping in 1766 four hundred lead pipes necessary for repairs.<sup>29</sup> While most *çeşmes* constructed during this period have been destroyed in subsequent reconstruction, it is clear that their decorative form replicated the forms in vogue in the Ottoman capital (see Figures 6 and 7). Thus, in contrast to the established narrative, which ascribes urban development and the appearance of new public amenities to European influences, the construction of Iași's water supply system – arguably the most significant infrastructural enterprise in the city during this period – points to Moldavia's continued connection to the Ottoman patterns of architectural patronage and technological expertise.<sup>30</sup>

This Ottoman cultural model behind Moldavian fountains becomes even more salient in the case of the twin fountains flanking the gate of *Sfântul Spiridon* Monastery in Iași. The fountains were constructed in 1765 on the initiative of Grigore Ghica III and the quality of their execution prompted some scholars to theorize that they were manufactured in the ateliers of Istanbul and only subsequently brought to Iași.<sup>31</sup> Their stylistic features closely resemble those of the Golia *çeşme* built in the same period. Unlike the latter, however, they are accompanied by a total of four inscriptions in Romanian, Greek, and Ottoman Turkish (two), eulogizing the voivode and his achievement. The choice of the three languages unequivocally indicates three facets of the voivode's identity: as Moldavian ruler, well-educated member of the Greek cultural milieu, and a member of the Ottoman imperial elite. What is even more fascinating – and indicative – are the contents and style of the inscriptions. The Ottoman inscription is not, strictly speaking, a chronogram (*tarih-i menzume*); however, it employs a poetic repertoire of this genre, praising the ruler and the fountains, claiming that “those who are thirsty, are thankful for those fountains with two pipes, with the water running as if from two eyes of a lover, and they will remember that Grigore *Bey* filled Iași with joy bringing this water sweet as honey!” Nearly all those tropes can be easily found in the contemporary chronograms of Ottoman fountains, as the poetic genre enjoyed particular efflorescence during this period. The motif of the “thirsty public” (*li'l-atışın*) enjoying the sweet and fragrant waters of the fountains thanks to the contribution of the endower appears on virtually all eighteenth-century Istanbulite *çeşmes* and in *şehrengiz* poetry.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, a metaphor of a fountain as a lover (or vice versa) belongs to the established Ottoman repertoire.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Relațiile româno-orientale (1711–1821): documente turcești*, ed. by Valeriu Veliman, Bucharest, 1984, doc. 157; Bobi Apăvăloaei, *op. cit.*, pp. 98–99.

<sup>30</sup> The impact of the “fountain craze” in eighteenth-century Istanbul on the waterworks in the Moldavian capital is also discussed in Laurențiu Rădvan, Andrei Melinte, *Alimentarea cu apă în orașul Iași: influențe, rețea, tehnologie (secolul al XVII-lea – jumătatea secolului al XIX-lea)*, in “Historia Urbana,” 25, 2017, p. 22.

<sup>31</sup> Sorin Iftimi, *Turnul bisericii Sfântul Spiridon din Iași, un monument între două lumi*, in *Orașul din spațiul românesc între Orient și Occident. Tranziția de la medievalitate la modernitate*, ed. by Laurențiu Rădvan, Iași, 2007, p. 105.

<sup>32</sup> Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures*, p. 179.

<sup>33</sup> See, for instance Walter G. Andrews, Mehmet Kalpaklı, *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society*, Durham, London, 2005, p. 49.

However, the style of Ottoman *tevarih-i menzume* does not end with the Ottoman inscription, but rather spills into the Romanian one as well: “The Pool of Siloam, the pond of Solomon, / The streams of miracle-maker Spiridon / Are the source of health for the place of the sick, / Joy and life to all in Iași. / Third Grigore Alexandru Ghica giveth / So that the townfolk can multiply / Lo! You who are thirsty come and drink the water of life!”<sup>34</sup>

Apart from rhetoric employed, which again parallels those of Ottoman chronograms and emphasizes the munificence of the ruler, the author’s choice of Biblical figures and places is interesting. The reference to Saint Spiridon as the patron saint of the adjacent monastery is uncontroversial, but the Pool of Siloam and the figure of Solomon make it a somewhat ecumenical text, glossing over the religious differences between Islam and Christianity. The Pool of Siloam, cited in the Old Testament was venerated not only by the Jews but also by Muslims: in the thirteenth century, some medieval authors claimed that the spring was associated with the Zamzam spring in Mecca and described it as one of the springs of Paradise.<sup>35</sup> Even more saliently, in the Ottoman conquest, King Solomon was frequently mentioned, not only due to his role in Islamic tradition but also as an allusion to the “Second Solomon,” namely Sultan Süleyman.<sup>36</sup> Thus, it is quite likely that the presence of both in the *Sfântul Spiridon* inscription tapped both into the Orthodox and Islamic traditions.

The inclusion of chronogram-style laudatory inscriptions was by no means restricted to a single case. A chronogram-like inscription, written in *sulus* script, dated 1731 and currently housed at the Museum of History in Iași uses both Ottoman language and political repertoire to eulogize the fountain that had likely been placed either at Frumoasa Monastery or in the courtyard of the voivodal palace.<sup>37</sup> This sudden popularity and its striking similarity to the fountain and *tarih* craze of the imperial capital show that the adoption of architectural patronage patterns of the imperial center was an important tool for eighteenth-century self-fashioning of the Moldavian elite. This impact of Istanbulite visual idiom also explains more subtle adaptations of style, such as the incorporations of models radiating from Nuruosmaniye Mosque in the churches of *Sfinții Teodori* and *Sfântul Gheorghe* in the Moldavian capital.<sup>38</sup> As Maximilian Hartmuth rightly pointed out,

<sup>34</sup> “Fântâna lui Siloam, scăldătoare lui Solomon, / Pârăile făcătorului de minuni Spiridon / Izvorăsc sănătate într-a bolnavilor lăcaș / Desfătare, viață tuturor în Iaș. / A triilea Grigorie Alecsandru Ghica dăruiește / Și câtră toți de obște darul de înmulțește. / Însetaților, vedeți să dobândiți viața apelor!”

<sup>35</sup> Amikam Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimage*, Leiden, 1995, pp. 81, 171.

<sup>36</sup> On this topic, see particularly Gülrü Necipoğlu, *The Süleymaniye Complex in Istanbul: An Interpretation*, in “Muqarnas,” 3, 1985, pp. 92–117; Johan Mårtelius, *The Süleymaniye Complex as the Center of the World*, in “A|Z ITU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture,” 12, 2015, no. 2, pp. 49–57.

<sup>37</sup> S. Iftimi, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>38</sup> Lucia Ionescu, *Barocul târziu moldovenesc în arhitectura ieșeană*, in “Ioan Neculce: Buletinul Muzeului de Istorie a Moldovei,” n.s., 4–7, 1998–2001, p. 321; Gheorghe Balș, *Bisericile și mănăstirile moldovenesti din veacurile al XVII-lea și al XVIII-lea*, Bucharest, 1933, p. 450.

the imperial capital remained a point of reference for both the Ottoman and Moldavian-Wallachian architecture throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>39</sup>

These practices of architectural patronage coincided with similar currents in other spheres of intellectual activity in this period. In the field of historiography and literary production, we observe a trend towards identification with the Ottoman Empire as the elites' "identity space" superimposed over that of individual principalities. It is in the eighteenth century that we find in Romanian literature historical or para-historical works on the Ottoman Empire, such as those of Ianache Văcărescu, Popa Flor, or Dionisie Fotino.<sup>40</sup> This period also witnessed an outpour of Romanian-Turkish or Greek-Turkish dictionaries, phrasebooks and conversation manuals, suggesting a growing demand among the elite to master Ottoman Turkish.<sup>41</sup> These developments, just as those in the realm of architecture, suggest a strong affinity and self-identification with the Ottoman imperial edifice and culture. Thus, when Ianache Văcărescu described himself as a "Turk" during his diplomatic mission to Vienna in 1782, there is no reason to doubt that the label conveyed a facet of his political, though not confessional, identity.<sup>42</sup>

Two principal objections could be raised against this argument. The first one touches on the distinction between architectural style and influence. Does the adoption of aforementioned elements warrant the classification of eighteenth-century Moldavian-Wallachian architecture as Ottoman? The gist of the argument seems to be in the

<sup>39</sup> Maximilian Hartmuth, *Die Kunst des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts im unteren Donaauraum (Rumänien, Bulgarien, Ukraine) in Zusammenhang mit dem Phänomen Barock*, in *Barocke Kunst und Kultur im Donaauraum*, vol. 1, ed. by Karl Möseneder, Michael Thimann, Adolf Hofstetter, Petersberg, 2014, p. 183; idem, *Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Architecture*, pp. 295–308.

<sup>40</sup> Popa Flor, *Chipurile împăraților turcești împreună cu istoriile lor scrise pre scurt, în ce fel au urmat unul după altul de la cel dintâi până la acesta de acum la împărăție*, Biblioteca Academiei Române, Ms. Rom. 306, fols. 1–17; Ianache Văcărescu, *Istoria othomanească*, ed. by Gabriel Ștrempel, Bucharest, 2001; Victor Papacostea, *Viețile sultanilor: scriere inedită a lui Dionisie Fotino*, Bucharest, 1935. The list excludes the most important Romanian author of the period, Dimitrie Cantemir, whose career set him apart from other Moldavian and Wallachian authors of the period. Since he wrote *Historia incrementorum et decrementorum Aulæ Othomanicæ* in his Russian exile and with a Western academic audience in mind, these factors contributed to the final form of his work. On the emergence of Ottoman-Orthodox historiography, see Konrad Petrovsky, *Geschichte schreiben in osmanischen Südosteuropa: Eine Kulturgeschichte orthodoxer Historiographie des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden, 2014. The works by Popa Flor and Fotino, with the material structured as a series of physiognomical portraits of the Ottoman rulers, conforms to the popular formats of *silsilnames* and *kiyafetnames*, see E. Natalie Rothman, *Visualizing the Space of Encounter: Intimacy, Alterity and Trans-Imperial Perspective in an Ottoman-Venetian Miniature Album*, in "Osmanlı Araştırmaları," 40, 2012, p. 47; for Popa Flor and Fotino, see Călin Felezeu, *Între fanariotism și mișcarea de emancipare națională. Modelul cantemirian de abordare a imaginii Imperiului Otoman în cultura românească scrisă*, in "Tabor," 2, 2012, p. 56.

<sup>41</sup> Lia Brad Chisacof, *Turkish Known or Unknown during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century in the Romanian Principalities?*, in *Turkey and Romania: A History of Partnership and Collaboration in the Balkans*, ed. by Florentina Nițu et al., Istanbul, 2016, pp. 259–270.

<sup>42</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *A Wallachian Boyar at Emperor Joseph II's Court*, in "Journal of Early Modern History," special issue *Circulation of People, Objects and Ideas in Southeastern Europe and Eastern Mediterranean*, forthcoming.

eye of the beholder, but I would argue that the question of style is secondary to that of an idiom and the underlying processes. While the imperial tradition of monumental architecture, formulated by Sinan and developed in subsequent centuries, remained at the crux of the Ottoman visual repertoire, the latter proved extraordinarily capacious and flexible, allowing for considerable modifications across social hierarchies and geographical position, enabling patrons to calibrate them to different facets of their identities. The reconfiguration of power relations in the eighteenth century provided a significant impulse in this respect, as the newly ascendant “middle class” of the capital and provincial ‘*ayans* tried to find a visual expression of their new arrangement with the imperial center. This led either to a reiteration of local traditions with an Ottoman twist or to the emergence of sometimes quite surprising hybrids.<sup>43</sup> What mattered more than an individual aesthetic solution was the underlying orientation towards the Istanbul milieu and a dialectic formulation of an aesthetic idiom between the center and the periphery. Put against this background, the strategies pursued by Moldavian and Wallachian elites fall squarely within the continuum. The confessional difference between the imperial elite and the Danubian principalities meant that the distinction was effectively built in the relationship, but the reliance on Ottoman-style practices of architectural patronage and related poetic forms indicates a deliberate effort to bridge the gap and willingness to belong to the imagined community of the imperial ecumene.

The second caveat is chronological and ideological. The “black legend” of the Phanariot period established by the historians of the 1848 generation (*paşoptişti*), which saw the rulers of this period as foreigners and Ottoman lackeys with no connection to the local culture, continues to resurface in academic studies and public debates.<sup>44</sup> Within this interpretative key, the culture produced by Phanar circles was at odds with the pro-European aspirations of the local elite. Moreover, by assuming a rupture in the history of the Danubian principalities with the institution of the Phanariot regime in 1711–1716, the cultural and architectural trends of the eighteenth century need not apply for the earlier century. However, there is little evidence to suggest such rupture. This is well illustrated by the fact that scholars find it difficult to decide on the date when it supposedly began; apart from the traditional 1711–1716 mark, other scholars have proposed 1673, or even

<sup>43</sup> A fascinating example in this respect is the building activity of the Cihanoğlu ‘*ayan* family of the Aydın province in southwestern Anatolia, which fused Ottoman, Baroque, and Gothic elements in their edifices in a curious “family style”; see Ayda Arel, *Gothic Towers and Baroque Mihrabs: The Post-Classical Architecture of Aegean Anatolia in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, in “Muqarnas,” 10, 1993, pp. 212–218. This phenomenon occurred according to different schedules throughout the empire, varying between locations and social classes, see Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, “*In the Image of Rum*”: *Ottoman Architectural Patronage in Sixteenth-Century Aleppo and Damascus*, in “Muqarnas,” 3, 1985, pp. 70–96; Annie-Christine Daskalakis Matthews, *Mamluk Elements in the Damascene Decorative System of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, in “*Artibus Asiae*,” 66, 2006, no. 2, pp. 69–96.

<sup>44</sup> Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*, transl. by James Christian Brown, Budapest, 2003, p. 158.

1659, and a rather awkward label of “pre-Phanariot” has been applied to individuals living as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century.<sup>45</sup>

Although seen as an established period of Moldavian and Wallachian history, this apparent nebulosity of the Phanariot Age’s chronology points out to the fact that there is little to suggest a clear rupture with the patterns set in the seventeenth century. Indeed, we find several architectural monuments in the pre-1711 period that employ similar Ottoman models, such as the churches of Fundeni Doamnei, or Trei Ierarhi in Iași.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, as I have pointed out elsewhere, the adaptation of Ottoman cultural idioms dates back to the early seventeenth century, and their presence was by no means associated solely with the Greco-Levantine milieu.<sup>47</sup> Thus, what we observe is an evolutionary process that culminated in the mid-eighteenth century, rather than a rupture or an opposition between “local” architectural models embraced in the seventeenth century and the “orientalized” culture of the Phanariot period. Why, then, explicit references to the Ottoman idiom became so much more ubiquitous and salient only in the eighteenth century?

Scholars have generally explained the difference from the perspective of the *Zielkultur* (host culture), i.e., Moldavian and Wallachian boyars, deemed inherently opposed to the Ottoman state and ideology. However, I would argue that the developments of the *Ausgangskultur* (source culture) were at least equally important. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, a complex of social, political, and cultural changes produced a new Ottoman landscape that Baki Tezcan described as the “Second Ottoman Empire.”<sup>48</sup> This sea change empowered new groups and expanded the imperial political sphere. These newcomers to Ottoman politics, both among the urban “middle class” and the provincial ‘ayan, sought to define their new relationship with the imperial center and their newly-acquired Ottoman identity. In effect, the visual idiom of belonging to the empire changed to accommodate these new imperatives. In the field of written culture, new groups took up the pen to write local histories, and the “*tuğra*-mania” of Ahmed III’s reign put the imperial monogram at the center of imperial semiosphere.<sup>49</sup> In the sphere of architecture,

<sup>45</sup> Florin Constantiniu, *Din politica socială a unui prefanariot (Radu Mihnea)*, in *Stat, societate, națiune*, ed. by Nicolae Edroiu, A. Răduțiu, P. Teodor, Cluj, 1982, pp. 213–217; idem, *Când începe epoca fanariotă*, in “Studii și materiale de istorie medie,” 11, 1992, pp. 109–116; Eugen Stănescu, *Préphanariotes et Phanariotes dans la vision de la société roumaine des XVII<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles*, in *Actes du symposium gréco-roumain sur l’époque des Phanariotes*, Thessaloniki, 1974, pp. 347–358.

<sup>46</sup> Ana Dobjanschi, Victor Simion, *Arta în epoca lui Vasile Lupu*, Bucharest, 1979, pp. 24–25; C. Popa, D. Năstase, *Biserica Fundeni Doamnei*, Bucharest, 1969; Răzvan Theodorescu, *Vârstele artei vasilien și începutul modernității moldovenesti*, in “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie ‘A.D. Xenopol,’” 31, 1994, pp. 35–42.

<sup>47</sup> Michał Wasiucioneck, *Conceptualizing Moldavian Ottomanness: Elite Culture and Ottomanization of the Seventeenth-Century Moldavian Boyars*, in “Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Central and Eastern Europe,” 8, 2016, pp. 39–78.

<sup>48</sup> Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World*, Cambridge, New York, 2010.

<sup>49</sup> On the “*tuğra*-mania” of the early eighteenth century, see Philippe Bora Keskiner, *Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–1730) as a Calligrapher and Patron of Calligraphy*, unpublished PhD dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, 2012, p. 246.



these needs for a new mode of representation resulted in the hybrid reinterpretations in the provinces, and a boom of more affordable constructions, more suited to the means of the urban middling sort. Thus, the growing presence of the Ottoman idiom in the built environment of the Danubian principalities during the eighteenth-century was the result of the boyars' willingness to embrace it, but also the availability of patterns to do so within the imperial culture itself. In the absence of such readily accessible models, the association with the Ottoman material culture and identity had to rely on different means, and depicting silk kaftans served precisely such a purpose.

### SILKS AND STONES: PAINTING OTTOMAN TEXTILES

The apparent visual immediacy of Moldavian and Wallachian votive paintings at first glance poses no methodological problems. Even in the arguably more conservative depictions of saints and Biblical history, Orthodox painters of the early modern period did not shy away from portraying them in robes with distinctly Ottoman motifs.<sup>50</sup> To an even greater extent, the representation of the church's lay endowers and benefactors and their garments seem to conform fully to the realities of the period. As a result, the paintings are frequently treated in a way similar to photographs, with modern historians describing them as transparent media of conveying actual physical attributes and attire of the figures depicted. However, this is clearly not the case. No visual medium is transparent, and approaching it as such skims over a complex and laborious process of selection, arrangement, and execution of the painting, and the human agency behind it. This seemingly apparent contention sheds new light on the meticulous representation of silk kaftans donned by the founders, posing the question of why founders, *ispravniks*, and painters ascribed so much importance to the textiles.

In the premodern Danubian principalities and the world in general, where the sartorial distinction was meant to indicate social status and reinforce hierarchies, luxury textiles played a crucial role in social and political life. The clearest example of this function was the terminological conflation of appointment to office with the bestowal of a kaftan (*a căftăni*).<sup>51</sup> Although these garnered high monetary value, the status of kaftans as luxury items was primarily embedded in social relations surrounding the garment, particularly the practices of gift-giving and ceremonial bestowal, and its symbolic value intimately connected with the status of the person,

<sup>50</sup> Christos D. Merantzas, *Le tissu de soie comme représentation culturelle: le cas de la peinture monumentale post-byzantine dans la Grèce du nord-ouest*, in "Bulletin du Centre International d'Étude des Textiles Anciens," 83, 2006, pp. 17–21; idem, *Ottoman Textiles within an Ecclesiastical Context: Cultural Osmoses in Mainland Greece*, in *The Mercantile Effect: Art and Exchange in the Islamicate World*, ed. by Susan Babaie, Melanie Gibson, London, 2017, pp. 96–107; I would like to thank Nikolaos Vryzidis for bringing this fact to my attention and recommending me relevant bibliography.

<sup>51</sup> Interestingly, we find the same association between office and the garment across the Islamicate world, see L.A. Meyer, *Mamluk Costume: A Survey*, Geneva, 1952, pp. 60–62.

who presented the garment. As a result, the garment became a tool to express the cultural proxemics of power and define social and political hierarchies, inseparable from the bond between the giver and receiver of the gift. In effect, a higher symbolic premium was put on personal gift-items rather than “commercial ones.”<sup>52</sup>

In the Ottoman Empire and in the Danubian principalities, this role of kaftans was clearly discernible in the circulation of robes-of-honor (*hil’at*) bestowed by the sultan. In Ottoman miniature tradition, the acts of gift-giving played a prominent role and underlined the importance of the practice itself.<sup>53</sup> This empire-wide circuit of *hil’at* circulation included the elites of Moldavia and Wallachia. The latter embraced it eagerly, and *hil’ats* received directly from the Porte were highly-coveted items and sources of social and political distinction in the local context. This led to the boyars’ virtual “*hil’at*-mania,” put on display in the Wallachian chronicle by Radu Greceanu, who meticulously noted every instance of a kaftan received by Constantin Brâncoveanu.<sup>54</sup> However, the Porte-centered system of *hil’at* circulation encompassed only the top echelons of the principalities’ elites. The rest participated in a complementary local circuit, in which it the voivode distributed kaftans to the wider circle of boyars.<sup>55</sup> Since participation in these two circuits relied on the individual’s social and political status, the robes of honor provided a tool well-suited to operate as a marker of distinction within the boyar class, not only due to their quality but also (and more importantly) due to the circuit in which they were acquired.

However, trying to identify Ottoman robes of honor poses some difficulties. Unlike Mamluk *hil’ats*, the Ottoman kaftans lack an embroidered *tiraz* band that would allow us to identify the receiver and the context in which the garment was bestowed. This means that it is difficult to attribute individual artifacts to instances of gift-giving, and the lack of inscriptions facilitated the *hil’at*’s transformation into a commodity.<sup>56</sup> However, as Amanda Phillips has recently pointed out, one feature seems to set apart the kaftans bestowed by the sultan from other extant items,

<sup>52</sup> A particularly telling case in this respect is Thomas Roe’s embassy to the Mughal court, when Prince Khurram presented the English diplomat with a cloak he had himself worn, asking in exchange for a hat. However, Roe refused, informing the prince: “I would not offer that I had worn,” see Pramod K. Nayar, *Object Protocols: The “Materials” of Early English Encounters with India*, in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, ed. by Debra Johanyak, Walter S.H. Lim, New York, 2011, p. 196. See also idem, *Colonial Proxemics: The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India*, in “Studies in Travel Writing,” 6, 2002, pp. 29–53.

<sup>53</sup> Banu Mahir, *Türk Minyatürlerinde Hil’at Merasimleri*, in “Belleten,” 63, 1999, no. 238, pp. 745–754.

<sup>54</sup> Radu logofătul Greceanu, *Istoria domniei lui Constantin Basarab Brâncoveanu voievod (1688–1714)*, ed. by Aurora Ilieș, Bucharest, 1970, pp. 57, 58, 75, 90, 98, 101, for just a few examples.

<sup>55</sup> See for instance, *Literatura românească de ceremonial: Condica lui Gheorgachi (1762)*, ed. by Dan Simonescu, Bucharest, 1939, p. 280.

<sup>56</sup> Amanda Phillips, *An Ottoman Hil’at: Between Commodity and Charisma*, in *Frontiers of the Ottoman Imagination: Studies in Honour of Rhoads Murphey*, ed. by Marios Hadjianastasis, Leiden, Boston, 2015, pp. 118–123.

namely their ridiculously long sleeves.<sup>57</sup> From the point of view of their wearers, the length of the sleeves, which reached the ground, made them impractical, separate armholes being frequently used instead. Although the difficulties in attributing existing pieces to individual figures remain a problem, these long-sleeved kaftans feature prominently in miniatures in the context of court ceremonies, which makes this argument likely.<sup>58</sup>

We find numerous examples of such long-sleeve kaftans on Moldavian and Wallachian votive paintings in the seventeenth century. In Wallachia, this is the case of the decoration of the places of worship from Matei Basarab's period, such as Roata Cătunu, Dobreni, Arnota, or Săcuieni, and their presence becomes even more prominent during the reign of Constantin Brâncoveanu. The same proliferation can be seen in Moldavia. However, lower-ranking boyars, such as Datco *jupan* represented on the walls of Arnota, are depicted in short-sleeve kaftans, despite the fact that founders are represented with a long *kolluk*. Another distinguishing feature is the reproduction of decorative motifs on such garments. A particularly interesting case in this respect is the votive paintings in the *pronaos* of the Dormition Church of the Polovragi Monastery, which features the principal benefactors of the church: Petru Pârâianu, Danciu Pârâianu, Barbu Pârâianu, Matei Basarab, and Constantin Brâncoveanu (with his family).<sup>59</sup> While the garments of most founders are meticulously decorated with distinctly Ottoman motifs, the kaftan of Petru Pârâianu stands out for its lack of adornment. This contrast is most likely due to Petru's relatively low status within the Wallachian hierarchy, as he reached the rank of mere second *clucer*, in contrast to the others, who were either grand boyars or rulers of the principality. We can observe a similar association between rank, long sleeves, and Ottoman decoration in other churches of the seventeenth century, such as those of Arnota or Băjești. The close association between these three variables suggests not only that, in representing luxury fabrics, the painters and benefactors themselves sought to convey social status and political hierarchies, but also that they relied on explicitly Ottoman repertoire to do so. Thus, the aforementioned distinction between circuits of gift-giving and political status made its way into the votive paintings.

The prominence of Ottoman textiles on votive paintings also constituted a potential way of accommodating Ottoman motifs in the decorative repertoire. The church of Stelea Monastery in Târgoviște seems to provide an illustrative example. The monastery's renovation in the seventeenth century was in itself a political act. Following numerous attempts to establish his family's rule in both Danubian principalities, in 1644 Moldavian Voivode Vasile Lupu was forced to seek accommodation with his rival, Matei Basarab. As part of this reconciliation, each voivode

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 124–127.

<sup>58</sup> See for instance, *Seçaatname*, İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, MS T.6043, fol. 279a.

<sup>59</sup> On the frescoes of the Polovragi church, see *Repertoriul picturilor murale brâncovenești*, vol. I, ed. by Corina Popa, Ioana Iancovescu, Elisabeta Negrău, Vlad Bedors, Bucharest, 2009, pp. 229–256.

erected a church in the other's principality, with Vasile Lupu renovating the ruined Stelea Monastery that had been a burial place of his father.<sup>60</sup> It seems that the voivode spared no expense in what was a highly political act. According to Bulus b. Makariyos al-Halabi, known more widely as Paul of Aleppo, the „church is of great dimensions and high, with two lofty towers and many crosses, which cost – as we were told – 700 Venetian florins just for external decoration. The iconostasis is of great beauty and worked in Russian style, with three doors.”<sup>61</sup>

However, Vasile Lupu's foundation was heavily damaged in 1658, when the Ottoman and Tatar troops sent to expel the recalcitrant voivode Constantin Șerban entered Târgoviște, attacked and pillaged the monastery. The church was set on fire, destroying the iconostasis, as well as the paintings.<sup>62</sup> Under the new voivode, Mihnea III, the restoration began as indicated by the inscription on the Pantocrator icon commissioned by *Cupâr Fiera* to replace the one destroyed in the fire.<sup>63</sup> What is striking, though, is that the restored wall paintings did not follow a traditional repertoire of church decoration, replacing most of them with a repetitive pattern of knots and ogival fields filled with stylized floral motifs (Figure 4). The inspiration for this departure from the established idiom clearly came from the decorative style employed in Ottoman mosques, both in Istanbul and in provincial centers across Rumelia, for instance Sofia (see Figure 5).

Admittedly, the knot motif has been present in both Islamic and Byzantine art since the early medieval period, and the interference between the two traditions certainly has to be taken into consideration.<sup>64</sup> However, they are prominently absent from Moldavian and Wallachian wall paintings until the seventeenth century, and both their arrangement and the color palette of blue, red and white follows closely that of Ottoman foundations, suggesting a growing receptivity to the imperial visual idiom. Partly, this can be attributed to the influx of painters from the Ottoman territories, which increasingly influenced the artistic repertoire during the seventeenth century.<sup>65</sup> At the same time, such motifs were not altogether absent from the

<sup>60</sup> Nicolae Stoicescu, *Matei Basarab*, Bucharest, 1988, pp. 174–175. For the art historical analysis of the Stelea monastery, see Cr. Moiescu, Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Biserica Stelea*, Bucharest, 1968.

<sup>61</sup> Paul din Alep, *Jurnal de călătorie în Moldova și Țara Românească*, ed. by Ioana Fedorov, Brăila, 2014, pp. 242–243.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 404; Gh. I. Cantacuzino, *Vechea biserică Stelea din Târgoviște*, in “Revista monumentelor istorice,” 1, 1974, no. 1, p. 39.

<sup>63</sup> Al. Efremov, *Icoane de la mijlocul secolului al XVII-lea din biserica Stelea-Târgoviște*, in “Buletinul monumentelor istorice,” 42, 1973, no. 1, p. 54.

<sup>64</sup> Fay Arrieh Fick, *Possible Sources for Some Motifs of Decoration on Islamic Ceramics*, in “Muqarnas,” 10, 1993, pp. 233–234.

<sup>65</sup> The stylistic evolution of the Wallachian paintings in the mid-seventeenth century has been generally attributed to local artistic tradition, see Cornelia Pillat, *Pictura murală în epoca lui Matei Basarab*, Bucharest, 1980, p. 10. However, as Elisabeta Negrău has pointed out, many of the painters identified as Wallachians actually originated from Ottoman Rumelia; Elisabeta Negrău, *Doi pictorii greci necunoscuți și rolul lor în pictura epocii lui Matei Basarab*, paper presented at the session *Date*

Moldavian-Wallachian milieu, where they featured not as an autonomous decorative pattern, but rather as a feature of Ottoman *hil'ats* appearing on votive paintings. Thus, it seems quite possible that the Ottoman kaftans, already circulating in the principalities and prized as status symbols, acted as a proxy that allowed for the further adoption of the imperial visual idiom and its popularity in the built environment (Figures 1 and 2).

The impact of Ottoman architectural aesthetics on the Danubian principalities in the course of the seventeenth century is a well-established fact, although usually masked by the vague term of “oriental” models employed by scholars. This is exemplified by the apparent predilection of Vasile Lupu to employ imperial-style motifs in the buildings erected during his reign. This did not go unnoticed by his contemporaries: a Franciscan monk, Marco Bandini, described the Moldavian court of the 1640s as fashioned after the models of Topkapı Palace, and Miron Costin noted that Vasile Lupu decorated his palace with Kütahya and Iznik tiles.<sup>66</sup> That the aesthetic idiom was legible for the Ottoman audience can be seen in the favorable description provided by Evliya Çelebi, who visited Iași during the reign of Lupu’s son, Ștefăniță (r. 1659–1661). The voivode’s crown architectural achievement, Trei Ierarhi Church in Iași, provides ample evidence in this respect. As Răzvan Theodorescu pointed out, the construction of the church corresponded to the period of Lupu’s closest cooperation with the Ottoman establishment and its architecture meant to convey the message of the founder’s cultural affinity to the imperial center.<sup>67</sup> In turn, while another voivode crucial for the current form of the Stelea Church, Mihnea III, was a famous, if unsuccessful rebel against the Porte, he had at the same time an intimate familiarity with Ottoman aesthetics due to being a member of a grandee household led by Ken’an Pasha and his wife, Atike Sultan.

However, as I would argue, the link between architectural styles, conspicuous display and identity went beyond a simple political expedient, but rather showed a growing attachment of the boyar elite to the Ottoman polity and its cultural ways. While in the seventeenth century, this took the form of depicting textiles and *hil'ats* on the walls of Moldavian and Wallachian churches, the *décloisonnement* of imperial culture in the following century provided the boyars and voivodes alike with a greater repertoire of tools to express and negotiate their role within the cultural ecumene of the empire. In a sense, the silks represented on votive paintings and fountains built in Moldavian and Wallachian cities are part of the same story, that of Moldavian-Wallachian elites of the early modern period increasingly seeing the Ottoman Empire as, at least partly, their own.

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*noi în cercetarea artei medievale și premoderne din România*, on 2 November 2017, at the “G. Oprescu” Institute of the History of Art, Bucharest.

<sup>66</sup> Evliya Çelebi, *Günümüz Türkçesiyle Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., vol. 5/2, ed. by Seyit A. Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı, Istanbul, 2007, p. 474.

<sup>67</sup> R. Theodorescu, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

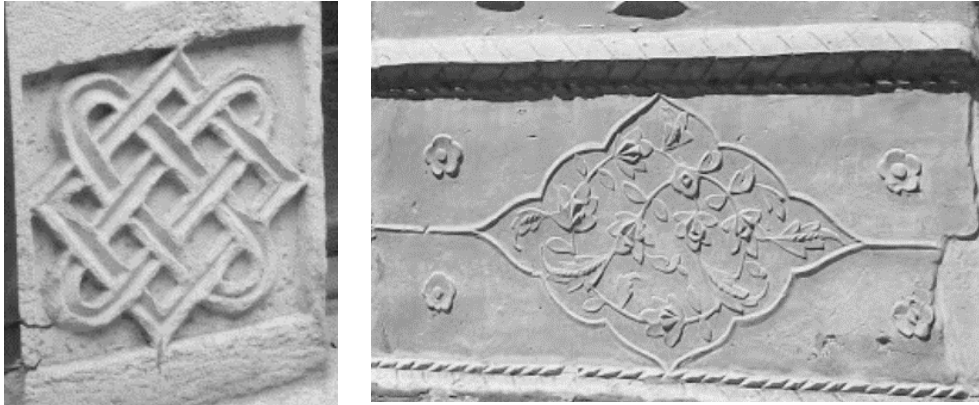
## SILKS AND STONES: FOUNTAINS, PAINTED KAFTANS, AND OTTOMANS IN EARLY MODERN MOLDAVIA AND WALLACHIA

### *Abstract*

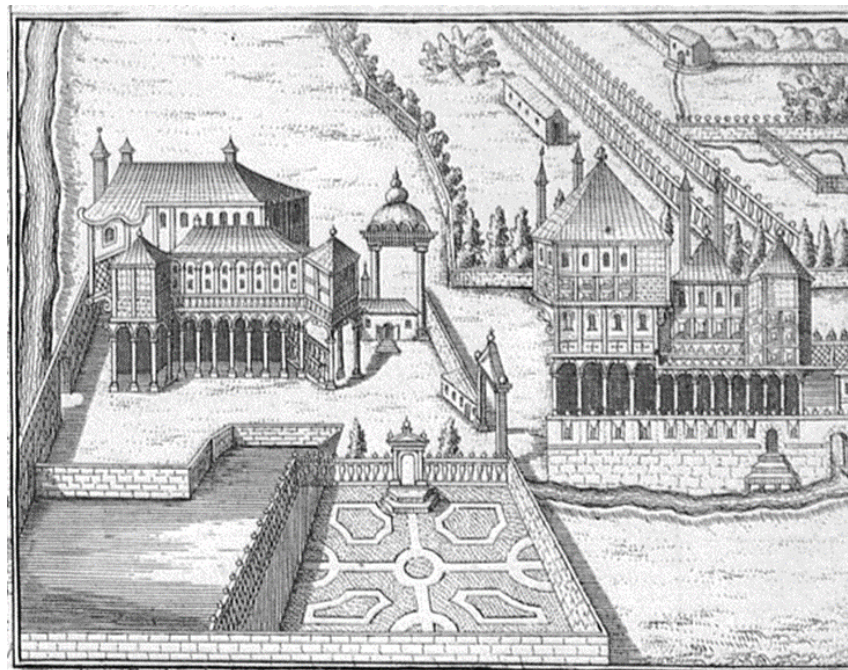
Throughout the early modern period, the Ottoman material culture and aesthetics exerted considerable influence on the tastes of Moldavian and Wallachian elites. However, while this cultural footprint has been recognized with regard to moveable luxury goods, such as garments and household objects, the architectural influence has been regarded differently within historiography. Particularly, the absence of mosques and other Islamic places of worship in the Danubian principalities has been brought up in scholarship as an argument for their position outside of the Ottoman space. In turn, the incorporation of Ottoman architectural elements was usually considered as a purely stylistic choice devoid of deeper meaning. The scope of this study is to rethink the relationship between Ottoman models and their incorporation into the built environment of the Danubian principalities throughout the early modern period. Focusing on the patterns of architectural patronage and incorporation of Ottoman stylistic elements, the paper argues that patrons in Moldavia and Wallachia not only emulated many of the trends from Istanbul but also consciously incorporated them to emphasize their ties to the imperial culture and society. By means of constructing fountains, depicting kaftans bestowed upon them by sultans and adapting a decorative program radiating from the imperial centre, rulers and boyars showcased not only their wealth but also their ties to the Ottoman political edifice and elite culture of the empire.

**Keywords:** material culture; architecture; identity; Ottoman Empire; Moldavia; Wallachia

## APPENDIX



**Figures 1–2.** The knot motif, Doamnei Church, Bucharest (left); Ottoman-style ogival motifs, Fundenii Doamnei Church, Bucharest.



**Figure 3.** Dimitrie Cantemir's drawing of his palace in Ortaköy, 1714–1716 (source: Dimitrie Cantemir, *History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire*, transl. by N. Tindal, London, 1734). The palace was demolished in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, to make way for the palace of Grand Vizier Nevşehirli Damad Ibrahim Pasha, finished in 1725. The drawing presents a relatively light structure, although representing a transitional period, with the main buildings separated from the waterfront by a garden and a masonry wall.





**Figures 4–5.** The painted wall decoration of Stelea Monastery, Târgoviște (left), and the dome of Banya Bashi Mosque, Sofia (right). The pattern of interchanging knots and ogival fields employed at Stelea is clearly inspired by the motifs employed in 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman mosques (photos by the author).



**Figure 6.** The fountain at Emirgan, Istanbul (1779).



**Figure 7.** The fountain at Golia Monastery, Iași, built by Grigore Alexandru Ghica (1766). While not a free-standing meydan fountain, Golia's çeşme shows clear similarities in terms of decoration to that founded by Sultan Abdülhamid I.



# TRANSYLVANIAN CIVIC SUMPTUARY LAWS IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS\*

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS\*\*

## INTRODUCTION

A 1709 ordinance (*Policey-ordnung*) of the town fathers of Braşov (Kronstadt, Brassó) in Transylvania posited that a great number of laws was not beneficial to a polity, “whereas it would be desirable that one could stand always by the good old customs.”<sup>1</sup> In this particular piece of legislation, urban authorities aimed to regulate the sequence of events (time of day, number of participants) and the number of guests at weddings. The unusual rhetoric bemoaning the need for issuing laws repeatedly, exceptional as far as I can fathom from other Transylvanian regulations, captures one of the most salient features of sumptuary laws: they were passed frequently and generated in contemporaries and modern historians alike uncertainty over their relevance and efficiency.<sup>2</sup> Naturally, these preambles are formulaic and reliant on stock phrases,<sup>3</sup> but they should not be dismissed without consideration as they offer useful hints for addressing the political and social context of a law. While I am planning a larger study on Transylvanian sumptuary laws in the early modern period, in this article I shall adopt a more narrow focus on seventeenth and eighteenth century sumptuary laws from Transylvanian Saxon towns, with an emphasis on the rhetoric of these juridical texts.

In the first part of the article I offer a general introduction into the history and typology of sumptuary laws in Transylvania between the sixteenth and the eighteenth

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I for the archival and bibliographical references of all Transylvanian sumptuary laws.

<sup>2</sup> Sumptuary laws could also contradict one another, as stated by Gertraud Hampl-Kallbrunner, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Kleiderordnungen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Österreichs*, Vienna, 1962: “Wenn man die Kleider- und Schmuckverordnungen aus der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts vergleicht, so findet man darinnen viele Wiederholungen und auch Widersprüche.”

<sup>3</sup> Hilary Doda, ‘*Saide Monstrous Hose*’: *Compliance, Transgression and English Sumptuary Law to 1533*, in “Textile History,” 45, 2014, no. 2, p. 177.

centuries, followed by a discussion of the main themes of luxury, excess, and social order. Ultimately, my conclusion is reliant on Alan Hunt's approach to sumptuary laws "in terms of 'project' and 'governance'."<sup>4</sup> I strongly agree with Maria G. Muzzarelli's view that the political nature of the sumptuary laws can yield a better understanding of their purpose and functions in early modern societies.<sup>5</sup> In my opinion, clothing and banqueting regulations reveal the ideology of power of the issuing authorities, their aspirations as governing bodies, and their understanding of political action.

Sumptuary laws have a long and rich scholarship that highlights the multifaceted approaches to analysing them, from a political, social, economic, or cultural perspective. Therefore, can there still be a purpose in approaching sumptuary laws? Is there room for innovative reflection on this topic? The recent work of Astrid Pajur on sumptuary laws from early modern Estonia with a fresh look at the topic,<sup>6</sup> and the fact that Transylvanian clothing laws were hardly analysed by historians, endorse a positive answer to these questions.

Sumptuary legislation has been edited constantly since the late nineteenth century and has not lost its appeal for scholars, as shown by the very recent publication of the medieval sumptuary laws of the Emilia-Romagna and Umbria regions and the digital edition of the 1574 edict of Elizabeth I of England.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the ubiquity of sumptuary legislation,<sup>8</sup> as well as its characteristic of being seemingly repetitive and unchanged over longer periods, dissuaded historians from considering it a substantial historical source. In my view, especially for polities where sumptuary legislation was a late development, such as Transylvania, clothing regulations have to be appraised and understood in relation to the entire legal and political context in which they appeared and were issued. Thus, sumptuary laws are good

<sup>4</sup> Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions. A History of Sumptuary Law*, London, 1996, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Reconciling the Privilege of the Few with the Common Good: Sumptuary Laws in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, in "Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies," 39, 2009, no. 3, p. 599.

<sup>6</sup> Astrid Pajur, *The Fabric of a Corporate Society: Sumptuary Laws, Social Order and Propriety in Early Modern Tallinn*, in *A Taste for Luxury in Early Modern Europe. Display, Acquisition and Boundaries*, ed. by Johanna Ilmakunnas, Jon Stobart, London, 2017, pp. 21–38. See also the recent contributions on Spanish clothing regulations in the early modern period: Ruth de la Puerta, *Sumptuary Legislation and Restrictions on Luxury in Dress*, in *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, vol. I, ed. by José Luis Colomer, Amalia Descalzo, Madrid, 2014, pp. 209–232; Gabriel Guarino, *Spanish Fashions and Sumptuary Legislation in Habsburg Italy*, in *Spanish Fashion*, vol. I, pp. 233–250; Saúl Martínez Bermejo, *Beyond Luxury: Sumptuary Legislation in 17<sup>th</sup> Century Castille*, in *Making, Using and Resisting the Law in European History*, ed. by G. Lottes, E. Medijainen, J. Viðar Sigurðson, Pisa, 2008, pp. 93–108.

<sup>7</sup> *La legislazione suntuaria, secoli XIII–XVI. Emilia-Romagna*, ed. by Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, Rome, 2002; *La legislazione suntuaria, secoli XIII–XVI. Umbria*, ed. by M. Grazia Nico Ottaviani, Rome, 2005; <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/proclamation-against-excess-of-apparel-by-queen-elizabeth-i>, accessed on 4 April 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Neithard Bulst, *Kleidung als sozialer Konfliktstoff: Probleme kleidergesetzlicher Normierung im sozialen Gefüge*, in "Saeculum," 44, 1993, p. 32, where he stated that "Kleidergesetze gehören zu den verbreitetsten Gesetztexten in Europa."

indicators of the official stance of local and central authorities on policy and administration, of the projections of social order and of social control. In German speaking territories, clothing regulations were a significant part of the *Policeywissenschaft*, of the early modern political theory of order established through specific norms.<sup>9</sup> Beginning with the eighteenth century, clothing and sumptuary laws as *Policeyordnungen* were issued under this heading in Habsburg Transylvania as well (see Fig. 1).

### PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

It is well known that sumptuary laws comprised a diverse legislation curbing excessive spending for various occasions of everyday life that lent themselves to the display of wealth and status (weddings, funerals), and yet there is definitely more interest in the rules imposed on fashion and clothes. The work of Alan Hunt, which is a solid analysis of the progress of sumptuary laws throughout history, takes a similar stance.<sup>10</sup> More recently, Giorgio Riello and Beverly Lemire interpreted sumptuary laws exclusively as impositions on fashion and consumption of textiles.<sup>11</sup> While it is true that from the sixteenth century onward, in Western Europe sumptuary legislation focused more on dress and outward appearance, regulation on weddings and funerals continued to be issued in Eastern Central Europe into the early nineteenth century. In Transylvania, the last clothing regulation in Sibiu was issued in 1806.<sup>12</sup>

The study of Transylvanian sumptuary laws dates back to the nineteenth century, but it had stopped short of growing into an explored avenue of research. Oskar Meltzl's doctoral thesis from 1870 was the first survey of Transylvanian sumptuary laws, more precisely on the wedding and clothing laws of the Saxon towns, and its merit lies in the extensive publication of sumptuary laws.<sup>13</sup> Recent scholarly interest in sumptuary laws in Transylvania is scarce, and the first contributions in the field are those of Horst Klusch, who was an ethnographer and analysed sumptuary laws as sources for establishing the traditions of the Transylvanian Saxons' folk costumes.<sup>14</sup> Éva Deák, an ethnographer herself, has dealt with women and luxury in her continuing research interest in early modern Transylvanian fashion and court society.<sup>15</sup> Gyöngy Kiss Kovács has written a short study on clothing laws

<sup>9</sup> Anne-Kathrin Reich, *Kleidung als Spiegelbild sozialer Differenzierung. Städtische Kleiderordnungen vom 14. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der Altstadt Hannover*, Hannover, 2005, pp. 68–69.

<sup>10</sup> A. Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. XIV.

<sup>11</sup> Beverly Lemire, Giorgio Riello, *East and West: Textiles and Fashion in Early Modern Europe*, in "Journal of Social History," 41, 2008, no. 4, p. 890.

<sup>12</sup> Emil Sigerus, *Chronik der Stadt Hermannstadt*, Sibiu, 1930, p. 36; Julia Lehner, *Die Mode im alten Nürnberg*, Nuremberg, 1984, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Oskar Meltzl, *Über Luxus und Luxusgesetze. Dissertation zur Erlangung des juridischen Doktorgrades*, Sibiu, 1870, pp. 23–29.

<sup>14</sup> Horst Klusch, *Siebenbürgisch-sächsische Trachtenlandschaften*, Sibiu, 2002, pp. 22–34.

<sup>15</sup> Éva Deák, *Viseletszabályok, társadalmi rend és a nemek szerepe a koraiújkor Erdélyben és Magyarországon. Nők a koraiújkor Magyarországi viseletszabályozásaiban*, in "Palimpszeszt," 21, 2003, online at [http://magyar-irodalom.elte.hu/palimpszeszt/21\\_szam/12.html](http://magyar-irodalom.elte.hu/palimpszeszt/21_szam/12.html), accessed on 29 August 2017.

in the town of Cluj.<sup>16</sup> Mária Lupescu-Makó from the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj is currently working on material culture and fashion in the late Middle Ages and early modern period, using last wills and testaments as her primary sources.<sup>17</sup> She also coordinated the M.A. thesis of Szidonia Brad on seventeenth century Transylvanian dress.<sup>18</sup> The excellent study of Robert Born on early modern costume books discusses Transylvanian sumptuary laws and their attempt at social control.<sup>19</sup> It is clear, however, that Transylvanian sumptuary laws have not attracted the attention they deserve from historians, and that they have been viewed strictly from the perspective of dress and social hierarchy. I argue that they represent more than an attempt at curbing luxury or consumption: this specific legislation has strong political and economic implications as well.<sup>20</sup>

### SOURCES

A small number of sumptuary laws of Transylvanian Saxon towns are published, some are known from secondary literature, but most of them are still in the archives. I have listed the Transylvanian sumptuary laws and their bibliographical or archival references in Appendix I.

The first known Transylvanian sumptuary laws date from the sixteenth century. Nearly all such laws and regulations were issued by the local governments of towns, mostly Saxon urban centres, making sumptuary legislation an “urban phenomenon,” similarly to Italy.<sup>21</sup>

A salient trait of Transylvanian sumptuary laws is their belatedness in comparison to Western Europe, which translates into an overall lag compared to the European trend. This observation is valid for all territories formally part of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom. Katalin Szende has discussed the absence of sumptuary

<sup>16</sup> Gyöngy Kovács Kiss, *Adatok a viselet szabályozásáról a XVI.–XVII. századi Kolozsváron*, in *Kolozsvár 1000. éve*, ed. by Tibor Kálmán Dáné et al., Cluj, 2001, pp. 60–62.

<sup>17</sup> Mária Lupescu Makó, *(Nu) haina îl face pe om. Îmbrăcămintea și purtătorul ei în Transilvania (secolele XVI–XVII)*, in *Avere, prestigiu și cultură materială în surse patrimoniale. Inventare de averi din secolele XVI–XIX*, ed. by Dan Dumitru Iacob, Iași, 2015, pp. 35–69.

<sup>18</sup> Szidonia Brad, *Erdélyi ruházat: 1600–1660*, M.A. thesis, Cluj, Babeş-Bolyai University, 2014, [https://www.academia.edu/8211221/Ruh%C3%A1zat\\_1600-1660](https://www.academia.edu/8211221/Ruh%C3%A1zat_1600-1660), accessed on 29 August 2017.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Born, *Mapping Transylvania as a Multiethnic and Multiconfessional Region in Costume Books (17<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, in *From Traditional Attire to Modern Dress. Modes of Identification, Modes of Recognition in the Balkans (XVI<sup>th</sup>–XX<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, ed. by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2011, pp. 52–82. Historical costume books from early modern Transylvania are well described in Cornel Irimie, Julius Bielz, *Unbekannte Quellen zur Geschichte der siebenbürgischen Volkstracht des 17.–19. Jahrhunderts*, in “Forschungen zur Volks- und Landeskunde,” 1, 1959, pp. 173–196.

<sup>20</sup> Franco Franceschi, *La normativa suntuaria nella storia economica*, in *Disciplinare il lusso. La legislazione suntuaria in Italia e Europa tra medioevo ed età moderna*, ed. by Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, Antonella Campanini, Rome, 2003, pp. 163–178, arguing for a better correlation between sumptuary legislation and economic processes in history.

<sup>21</sup> Catherine Kovesi-Killerby, *Sumptuary Law in Italy, 1200–1500*, Oxford, 2002, p. 30.

legislation in medieval Hungarian towns and the two centuries delay compared to Western Europe in this respect. Following the ideas put forward by András Kubinyi, she argued that local councils in medieval Hungarian towns did not see the need for sumptuary legislation as long as excess in clothing did not lead to social conflict, and luxury did not disturb the harmony between the individual and society.<sup>22</sup> This explanation alone probably is not sufficient to argue for the lack of sumptuary laws in the region but it established the reliable premise that this type of legislation is strongly related to the needs of the political authorities and their ideas of governance.<sup>23</sup>

Transylvania is not unique in this respect: in smaller towns from the German territories sumptuary laws issued by the local councils appeared after 1560, similarly to Sibiu, and continued to be issued well into the eighteenth century, while the last sumptuary law in Nuremberg dates from 1693.<sup>24</sup> The Netherlands, however, did not issue nor need sumptuary legislation<sup>25</sup>; Alan Hunt, referencing Simon Schama, mentions two such laws that were ‘substantial’ and date from the seventeenth century.<sup>26</sup>

Whereas in the sixteenth century, during the transition to modernity, in Western Europe the interest for regulating wedding banquets and funeral attendance diminished and the focus of the legislation shifted towards dress and class identity,<sup>27</sup> the Transylvanian ruling elites were less concerned with the control of outward appearances and fashion at first. The sixteenth century sumptuary laws of the Saxon towns in Transylvania regulated wedding receptions, baptisms and funerals. They reflect the concern for proper conduct, for good morals and lack of excess of the political elites, a strive for order and discipline.<sup>28</sup> The sumptuary legislation of Transylvanian towns became more targeted and specific at the end of the seventeenth century, when the clothing laws were separated from wedding or funeral laws; the switch to German as official language better enabled this distinction. More precisely, *Kleiderordnungen* became autonomous laws, albeit occasionally issued together with the other types of sumptuary laws (wedding regulations – *Hochzeitslimitationen*, funeral regulations – *Leichenordnungen*).

<sup>22</sup> Katalin Szende, *A luxusfogalma és a luxusigények kielégítése a középkorban*, in *Luxusiparok. Válogatás a IX. Kézművesipartörténeti Szimpózium (Veszprém, 1996. szeptember 27–28) előadásaiból*, ed. by Sándor Horváth, János Szulovszky, Budapest, Veszprém, 1997, pp. 17 and 23.

<sup>23</sup> This lag is evident in other aspects of literacy in the urban settings of medieval Hungary: Katalin Szende, *A magyar város írásbeliség kezdetei*, in *Arcana tabularii. Tanulmányok Solymosi László tiszteletére*, ed. by Attila Bárány, Gábor Dreska, Kornél Szovák, Budapest, Debrecen, 2014, pp. 436–438.

<sup>24</sup> J. Lehner, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution. Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to Present*, Cambridge, 2008, p. 46, note 16.

<sup>26</sup> Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age*, New York, 1987, p. 182 and p. 634, note 113; Alan Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>27</sup> *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires, and Delectable Goods*, ed. by Maxine Berg, Elizabeth Eger, Basingstoke, 2003, p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> M. Pakucs-Willcocks, *Gute Ordnung und Disciplin: Patterns of Social Discipline in Sibiu (Hermannstadt) in the Sixteenth Century*, in “NEC Yearbook,” 2003–2004, pp. 173–206.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, Transylvania was in turn an autonomous principality tributary to the Ottoman Empire (1541–1699), and then a province of the Habsburg monarchy under the name of Great Transylvania, administered by a centrally appointed governor.<sup>29</sup> Thus, at the turn of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, a dramatic shift in the statehood of Transylvania took place, with a direct effect on the sumptuary laws issued here, as I mentioned earlier.

The Diet of Transylvania passed clothing laws very rarely; the few ones that we know of were directed at particular social groups. Displaying the true national identities was at the heart of the only sumptuary law issued by the Diet of Transylvania in 1650: “All Jews and all Greeks should wear cloaks according to their sort, and if anyone of them should wear a Hungarian military cape, he will be fined 200 florins.”<sup>30</sup>

Greeks and Jews in Transylvania of that time were mostly merchants, coming from the Ottoman Empire, with very strict limitations to their trade; disguising their true ethnicity might have offered them more opportunities and leverage for doing business. On the same occasion, the Diet also passed a clothing regulation for peasants and servants, forbidding them to wear “cloth coats and trousers, boots, expensive hats, and linen shirts.”<sup>31</sup>

After 1711, when the Habsburg rule was fully established, the government of Transylvania issued territorial sumptuary laws for the province, on the model of the central *Policeyordnungen*.<sup>32</sup> Such was the ordinance from 1743, “aimed at curbing excessive luxury,” copied into the town protocols of Cluj.<sup>33</sup> I shall not discuss them into more detail, as my analysis will focus on the sumptuary regulations issued locally by Transylvanian urban governments.

Transylvanian Saxon towns were small polities, based on simple political and juridical structures that remained unchanged since the Middle Ages. Their population was also small compared to other urban centres in other parts of the Habsburg empire.<sup>34</sup> The great census of 1784 offers reliable figures for the urban population

<sup>29</sup> See *History of Transylvania*, vol. II, ed. by László Makkai, Zoltán Szász, Budapest, 1988, <http://mek.oszk.hu/03400/03407/html/164.html>, accessed on 6 June 2017.

<sup>30</sup> *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, ed. by Sándor Szilágyi, vol. XI, Budapest, 1886, p. 78: “mind sidó mind görög tartson neme szerint való köntöst; ha ki pedig magyar katona köntöst viselne, légyen kétszáz forint büntetésnek.”

<sup>31</sup> Zsolt Trócsányi, *Törvényalkotás az Erdélyi Fejedelemségben*, Budapest, 2005, p. 56; *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, ed. by Sándor Szilágyi, vol. XI, Budapest, 1886, p. 72: “parasztember és béres szolga pedig hogy posztóruhát, nadrágot, csizmát, dupla és forintos süveget, gyolcs inget viselni ne merészeljenek, országúl interdicáltuk.” For the specific clothes for peasants in Eastern Europe see Irena Turnau, *European Occupational Dress*, transl. by Izabela Szymańska, Warsaw, 1994, pp. 45–46.

<sup>32</sup> G. Hampl-Kallbrunner, *op. cit.*, pp. 44–56.

<sup>33</sup> Gy. Kovács Kiss, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>34</sup> Transylvanian towns remained ‘small’ in the eighteenth century: Gábor Sonkoly, *Erdély városai a XVIII–XIX. században*, Budapest, 2001, p. 159.

of Transylvania: Braşov had ca. 17,700 inhabitants, Sibiu had around 14,000 (from 5,500 at the beginning of the sixteenth century), and Bistriţa – 4,600.<sup>35</sup>

Sibiu, as the capital of all the Saxons in Transylvania, had a more elaborate government, with a mayor (*Bürgermeister*), a royal judge, a county judge, a town administrator, and a 12-member town council. Other towns were run by a judge, an administrator and the council. Neighbourhoods as organised social structures comprising the heads of households in a street or square were also in charge with keeping order and informing the town councils of the goings-on.<sup>36</sup> For instance, in 1697, the city fathers of Sibiu instructed the heads of neighbourhoods to watch out for prostitutes, who were “not allowed to cover their heads with veils or white headscarves” but had to wear red cloth, to be “distinguished from the honourable lady’s wear.”<sup>37</sup>

Sumptuary laws were communicated to the populace via various channels.<sup>38</sup> The Braşov 1652 wedding regulation had to be read to everyone from the pulpit; it is true that this one is the most “religious” sumptuary law, with strong Christian overtones.<sup>39</sup> The Saxon towns were close-knit communities with effective formal and informal social control, where transgressions were probably preempted rather than punished. Heads of neighbourhoods and guild masters were also instrumental in the communication of the sumptuary laws among the citizens. As the Mediaş clothing law of 1752 put it, “ignorance is not a defence, and no one shall excuse themselves with it” (*niemand mit der Unwissenheit entschuldige*).<sup>40</sup>

#### EXCESS, PASSION, AND RUIN: THE IDEA OF LUXURY IN TRANSYLVANIAN SUMPTUARY LAWS<sup>41</sup>

The first sumptuary laws of the Transylvanian towns have a limited range of concerns, a fact reflected by their either very concise or inexistent preambles. The sumptuary laws of Bistriţa from the 1530s aimed to uproot the foolishness and excess of all kinds of festivities: “To avoid the wild frenzy (*ille furor corybanticus*) of the three-day weddings that have been the custom until now, one day of celebration should suffice.”<sup>42</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Az első magyarországi népszámlálás (1784–1787)*, ed. by Dezső Dányi, Zoltán Dávid, Budapest, 1960, p. 368.

<sup>36</sup> Sibiu statute of 1589: *Corpus statutorum Hungariae jurium municipalium*, vol. I, ed. by Sándor Kolozsvári, Kelemen Óvári, Budapest, 1881, p. 555.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 578: “von dato bisz ins künfftige alle, die alsz Huren ertapt und angegeben werden, zum Unterscheid der ehrlichen Weiber-Tracht, den Kopf mitt keinem Schliger, noch weissen hautptuch bedecken, sondern rothe Tücher tragen.”

<sup>38</sup> Publication and publicity of sumptuary laws is addressed especially by German historians: e.g. A.-K. Reich, *op. cit.*, pp. 90–93.

<sup>39</sup> Archives of the Black Church in Braşov, Trausch Collection, IV F1 T9–101, p. 93.

<sup>40</sup> Sibiu National Archives, Brukenthal Collection, Q1–4, no. 123.

<sup>41</sup> Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury*, Cambridge, 1994 as a diachronic reflection on the definitions of luxury served as a reliable starting point.

<sup>42</sup> O. Meltzl, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

The following extant sumptuary legislation, from Sibiu, is similarly unembellished with its motivation. Simply named “statutes,” i.e. decisions of the town council, the sumptuary laws of 1565 prescribed the number of guests at feasts of the neighbourhoods and meals offered by newly accepted guild masters. “Because there has been great excess and filth in the city during banquets and feasts (*grösser uberflus und unrath*) [...] the honourable and wise council has decided the following points [...]”<sup>43</sup>

Regulation concerning dress and fashion in particular was first issued by Lutheran authorities for their clergy in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Clothing regulations were created by the Lutheran Church of the Transylvanian Saxons for their priests. As early as 1574, the *Articuli de pastorum vita et moribus* stipulated in article VII: “The clothes of the priests should be decent and following our rules. They should shun luxury (*luxus*) in their clothes, which is desired from their wives as well, not to expose themselves to ridicule and shame because of such frippery. The habit of priests should not be dyed red. [...] Priests should not wear any rings on their fingers [...] Their wagons should not be covered with red cloth out of vanity; black should be used instead as a sign of humility.”<sup>44</sup>

The synods of the Lutheran Church in Transylvania continued to issue similar regulations in the course of the following century.<sup>45</sup> Preaching was a powerful tool for social control: Damasus Dürr, the priest of the village of Apold in the 1570s, spoke against luxury in clothes, expressed in velvet and sable hats: “one cannot tell people from one another because of the luxurious clothes (*prechtiger kleydung*), whether a man is an artisan or a merchant, whether a lady is a councillor’s wife or a shoemaker’s.”<sup>46</sup>

The word “luxury” was first used in an urban setting in the sumptuary law of Cluj of 1593: “Seeing here in this town the luxury (*luxus*) in the clothes of men, but foremost of women and girls, the town fathers have judged that many people do not keep themselves according to their standing and worth (*rendihez és ertekekhez alkalmatlannak lenny*) [...] therefore they decided to reign this in. Anyone, or his

<sup>43</sup> zu urkunt in das stadtbuch lassen einschreiben. *Die älteste Protokolle des Hermannstädter Rates und der sächsischen Nationsuniversität (1522–1565)*, ed. by M. Pakucs-Willcocks, Sibiu, Bonn, 2016, p. 259.

<sup>44</sup> *Urkundenbuch der Evangelischen Landeskirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen*, vol. 2, *Die Synodalverhandlungen der evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Siebenbürgen im Reformationsjahrhundert*, ed. by G.D. Teutsch, Hermannstadt, 1883, pp. 193–194; *Die evangelische Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts. Vierundzwanzigster Band. Das Fürstentum Siebenbürgen. Das Rechtgebiet und die Kirche der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, ed. by Martin Armgart, Tübingen, 2012, p. 383: “Vestitus sacerdotum sit decens et ordini nostri conveniens. Absit luxus in vestitu, quod etiam de uxoribus ministrorum illorum dici volumus, ne se hac levitate indecenti arroganter scandalo et ludibrio exponant. Pepla non sint croco tinta (...) Ministri quoque a gestandis annullis in digitis omnino abstineant (...) Currus quoque tectos non ad superbiam exornatos panno rubeo circumvehant. Nigro colore potius utantur humilitatis signo.”

<sup>45</sup> Graeme Murdock, *Dressed to Repress? Protestant Clerical Dress and the Regulation of Morality in Early Modern Europe*, in “Fashion Theory,” 4, 2000, no. 2, pp. 179–200.

<sup>46</sup> Damasus Dür, *Predigten*, 1939, apud Ulrich Andreas Wien, *Raumzüge reformatorischer Predigt am Beispiel des Kleinpolder Pfarrers Damasus Dürr*, in *Siebenbürgen – Pionierregion der Religionsfreiheit. Luther, Honterus und die Wirkungen der Reformation*, Sibiu, 2017, p. 76.



wife or child, seen wearing expensive clothes not matching his poverty [...] should be made to pay twice the tax he owes.”<sup>47</sup>

Luxury as *Pracht* was associated with clothes, as in the 1693 Braşov *Polizeiordnung* (*Luxus oder Kleiderpracht*); any other excessive display of wealth through conspicuous consumption was labelled as “folly” (*Thorheit*) and “pride” (*Stolz*). The city fathers also relied on the citizens’ good judgment to amend their ways, but had also instructed the hatmaker women to make the headgear of young girls following the allowed width and with the appropriate fabric. “None of them [young girls and maidens] should order a wider headgear or from a different fabric than it is allowed, namely the maidens of the first class above damask, those from the middle class above taffeta, and those from the third class above *bogasias* [cotton twill].”

The preambles of sumptuary laws grew more elaborate over time, dwelling more insistently on the ideas of luxury, excessive display and ruin, best captured by the clothing law of Mediaş of 1767. The introductory paragraph of this regulation showcases the entire range of concerns and concepts of morality, piety, misrepresentation of self, neglect of family duties, recklessness, wickedness, and contempt of one’s social and financial standing (based on the property tax). “We have to acknowledge with great displeasure and anxiety to what extent the arrogance and luxury in clothes, excess at weddings and other gathering, have become predominant in our town, and there is no end to these rampant vices that are in contempt of God and disregard the modesty and frugality of a true burgher. Thus people give a false appearance to others, displaying clothes bought with borrowed money [...], bringing misfortune upon their poor wife and children. They burry themselves in debt and are unable to pay their imperial-royal tax. In the end, there is no difference between the distinguished and the needy, the poor and the wealthy citizens. Therefore, prompted by the duties of our office, we are compelled to put an end to this evil, with the aim of upkeep of the tax based estates and of restoring the necessary order and frugality.”

This clothing regulation is in fact the only one from the series of Transylvanian sumptuary laws that stresses the relation between spending and livelihood, using it as a criterion for establishing the classes: to class III belonged “all good burghers who feed themselves with their own means and own their house,” whereas class II included the journeymen, apprentices and “burghers who feed themselves with borrowed money.”

Jan de Vries has put forward the dichotomy between “old” and “new” luxury that opposed the excessive display of wealth to more refined markers of status; it was a societal shift during the seventeenth century that came with the accessibility of foreign goods, prompting the wealthier classes to find new ways to distinguish themselves with different patterns of consumption.<sup>48</sup> The language of the Transylvanian

<sup>47</sup> Gy. Kovács Kiss, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–61 (Hungarian original).

<sup>48</sup> J. de Vries, *op. cit.*, p. 58; *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by M. Berg, E. Eger, p. 9.

sumptuary laws remained tributary to the discourse of excess and ruin throughout the eighteenth century.

## GENDER AND CLASS

These are the two poles that urban authorities of the eighteenth century used in order to structure the interdictions and limitations on clothes, on food and on the number of guests at social events. The bulk of the corpus of Transylvanian sumptuary laws was issued in the eighteenth century, under the influence of the Habsburg administration and legislation. All towns of the Transylvanian Saxons were provided with at least one clothing regulation in this period. The clothing laws differ from town to town in their concerns and approach, but they were all created around the idea of class and appropriate dress.

The first Austrian Patent which had created five classes or status groups, as Ulinka Rublack called them, of citizens dates from 1542,<sup>49</sup> while in Nuremberg four classes were organised for regulation purposes in 1583, but this type of legislation caught on in the following century, especially in smaller towns in the Holy Empire.<sup>50</sup>

The Transylvanian Saxon local authorities projected their own ideas of an organised society. A first mention of classes appears in the Braşov sumptuary law of 1693, referring to three classes created by the clothing regulation of 1679, which I could not find to date. Later sumptuary laws, prescribing the forbidden or the allowed fabrics and materials for their clothes and accessories established five to nine classes of burghers as follows:

- Sibiu (1752) – 9 classes;
- Sighişoara (1755) – 5 classes (with several subdivisions), and the Wallachians as a separate category;
- Mediaş (1767) – 5 classes, numbered from the lower ranks upwards;
- Bistriţa (1780) – 5 classes.

From the preamble of the Mediaş sumptuary law (1767) we learn that the classes were established relatively to the tax paid by each inhabitant of the town. Councils of smaller places, such as Orăştie (1723), did not resort to classes and imposed the clothing law only according to gender. Notably, only one class of people had no restrictions for their costume or accessories: the highest officials of Sibiu, who were also the political leaders and head judges of all Saxons in Transylvania and thus enjoyed a privileged status. The 1752 *Kleiderordnung* of Sibiu relied on the common sense and better judgement (*Prudence und Überlegung*) of these two

<sup>49</sup> Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up. Culture Identity in Renaissance Europe*, Oxford, 2010, p. 267; Josef Kallbrunner, *Tracht und Sitte im merkantilistischen Polizeistaat*, in "Wiener Zeitschrift für Volkskunde," XLIII, 1938, pp. 1–17.

<sup>50</sup> J. Lehner, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–19: the first divisions into classes in sumptuary laws in smaller German towns date from the seventeenth century.

high officials. The unstated idea was that they were to serve as models to their entire community. The clothing regulation of Sighișoara shows a similar stance towards the highest officials. On account of their public office, it was conceded that they had to distinguish themselves from the others in their clothes as well but without showing anything luxurious or obnoxious (*nichts üppiges oder ärgerliches*), while dressing according to their status (*wie es ihrem stande gemäsz komt*).<sup>51</sup>

The sumptuary law of Mediaș (1767) includes a wedding regulation as well, with differentiated provisions for each of the five classes regarding the food they were allowed to serve (what meats and how many dishes), the number of dancing couples and the permitted number of guests. For instance, the lowest class were prescribed only three “customary” meals: the usual roast, sweet bread and pie, and some fruit. The fifth class, which was the highest, were allowed an eight-course meal including the roast, but without the “expensive cakes with almonds, sugar etc. etc. any other similar sweets and confectionery.”

None of the sumptuary laws resort to the rhetoric of unruly women who devote themselves to lavish displays of colour or pricey fabrics, but they do expose the consequences of a reckless behaviour of men who drive their family to ruin (Mediaș 1767). Heads of households, men alone were held responsible and accountable for the welfare of their family; with their behaviour they set the example and model to follow. The gendered approach of the Saxon sumptuary laws is a straightforward division of provisions into male and female subjects. Sons and daughters were included in the class of the parent of corresponding gender.

Foreign novelties and adopting new fashions are not a shared concern of all the laws examined here. In 1650, the political and ecclesiastical authorities issued a sumptuary law in Mediaș, forbidding red and yellow boots for going to church and the new foreign long hair.<sup>52</sup> The 1755 sumptuary law of Sighișoara ordered that new fashions generally were to be averted, while the expression “made to the latest fashion” (*nach der neuen mode gemacht*) is mentioned only once in the Bistrița sumptuary law (1780) for the fourth class. Generally, interdictions were imposed on garish new colours in fabrics and ribbons.

The clothing law of 1696 of Sibiu opened a new rhetoric of merit and respect, of social status and right pairing of materials and colours: the cloth of Sibiu could not be matched with a sable hat, yellow tall boots, thin headscarf, thin batiste apron, expensive lace and red shoes etc. Patricians whose forefathers had served the city were allowed sable hats and four horses for their carriages, English cloth and blue silk. Commoners had to be content with sable tails for their hat brims, local cloth and linen, without expensive jewellery. This particular law also prescribed what women should wear indoors: the wives of prominent citizens could wear dyed serge (*perpet*) aprons in their home around the cooking stove, but commoners’ wives

<sup>51</sup> *Corpus statutorum*, vol. I, p. 626.

<sup>52</sup> O. Meltzl, *op. cit.*, p. 25 states that the long hair mentioned in this sumptuary law refers to wigs, that had just come into fashion; I am not fully convinced that this is the case.

only plain linen aprons.<sup>53</sup> In this *Kleiderordnung*, certain topics of Austrian *Policeyordnungen* can be recognised such as: the idea of merit and that of serving the public good.

Several markers for status and social identity occur in all Transylvanian clothing laws.<sup>54</sup> Luxury tended to be associated with the expensive and rare, but in my opinion the layering in classes of allowed or forbidden clothes in the Transylvanian *Kleiderordnungen* created several degrees of luxury, with varied levels of approved spending and display.

For the upper classes full sable hats, wide sable brims and trims, velvet and heavy silk fabrics, and lace were the items most commonly forbidden. Fox fur was allowed, but the better parts of the fur were not for the lower classes, who could only wear fox tail and claws as collars for their coats. Foreign cloth was for the affluent, local Transylvanian cloth and linen for the working classes, who were also allowed *bogasias* and other cheap cotton textiles. Girdles were made of silk with various fastenings and tassels; silk, gold and silver thread were permitted for the higher echelons of the urban communities. The ribbons and bands that Saxon women wore attached to their headgear had to be modest, not garish or too wide. High-heeled shoes and tall boots had just come into fashion and only the higher classes were allowed to have them.

#### SOCIAL CONTROL, NATION BUILDING AND *GUTE POLICEY*

In Sibiu, the capital city of the Transylvanian Saxons, the first sumptuary laws issued locally were a wedding regulation (1547) and a town statute on banquets and on setting the pay for day-labourers and domestics (1565). These most probably emulate the regulations issued for the Austrian lands during the same period.<sup>55</sup> The early sumptuary laws were called simply “statutes,” similarly to other pieces of legislation (decrees) passed by town authorities. Even the sumptuary law of 1652 from Braşov was still named “articles,” but the one from 1693 was already issued as a *Polizeyordnung* – an ordinance for policing good behaviour. Seen as a measure to curb excess, this was a programmatic document of the town authorities to set an example and veer the community away from luxury. This particular sumptuary law came four years after a great fire destroyed most of the city, and the restoration of proper Christian morals and modesty were immediate remedies to appease God. The town authorities, the *Obrigkeit*, “fatherly” admonish citizens to take the law in earnest and that “everyone remain within their bounds” (*daß ein jeder in seinen Schranken verbleibe*). In 1754, the city fathers of Braşov argued for the “beneficial

<sup>53</sup> A. N., *Zur Volkskunde. Aus den Protokollen des Hermannstädter Kapitels*, in “Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für siebenbürgische Landeskunde,” 31, 1908, nos. 3–5, p. 73.

<sup>54</sup> For the role of clothing as marker of social statute see Martin Dingess, *Von der “Lesbarkeit der Welt” zum universalisierten Wandel durch individuelle Strategien. Die soziale Funktion der Kleidung in der höfischen Gesellschaft*, in “Saeculum,” 44, 1993, no. 1, p. 91.

<sup>55</sup> *Quellenkunde der Habsburger Monarchie*, ed. by Josef Pauser, Vienna, 2004, p. 223.

and salubrious regulations” entailed by the police ordinances of the town. Further, this ordinance was issued in anticipation of the annual fair: the regulation warned the “beloved citizenry” to avoid buying any merchandise that would serve luxury and opulence. Among these unwanted products, officials listed fabrics with velvet, gold or silver, fox fur, and generally any goods produced abroad.

Overall, the eighteenth century Transylvanian clothing laws aim mostly at establishing and maintaining a social and political order based on the professional and social status of each inhabitant of the town. While they addressed the universal issue of luxury as irrational spending, some sumptuary laws responded to actual situations and were informed by recent events. The fact that they reacted to certain perceived urgencies shows that they were a strong instrument in exercising power and governing. Moreover, the variations in their style and elegance of writing reveal the strife for originality, as town notaries showed off their rhetorical skills in composing the texts of the laws.<sup>56</sup>

I have mentioned that the eighteenth century sumptuary laws issued in Transylvanian Saxon towns were inspired by the *Policeyordnungen* of the Austrian Empire, however they were not simple imitations of these. Examining the clothing laws of Sibiu from the seventeenth century and those of the eighteenth century, the shift in the concept of the regulations is evident: the vague social distinction of the first clothing law of Sibiu from 1696 was replaced by the fine layering of the town burghers into nine classes. Thus, the local lawmakers adapted the templates to their needs and visions. The townsfolk of Mediaș and Bistrița were both separated into five classes, but the councillors of Mediaș decided to count the classes from bottom up, therefore soldiers, gate keepers, bakers and journeymen were included in the first class. In Sighișoara there were practically eight classes, since the second and third of the five Latin ‘classes’ contained several sub-classes, numbered in German! Furthermore, the first class of the *tertia classis* were allowed the same clothes and accessories as the third class of the *secunda classis* – the distinction between them was merely clerical and hierarchical.

Arranging and defining the classes for the purposes of the clothing laws was done by combining the social status (patricians, noblemen), the professional status (notary, physician, learned people, artisans, servants) and the political status (members of the small council, members of the greater council) of the citizens. Each sumptuary law grouped citizens according to different criteria, just as the professional and social categories varied from town to town. The stance of the regulations shifted from listing the forbidden fabrics, materials or accessories to naming the allowed ones. In the Sibiu clothing law of 1755, the four upper classes were provided with the inventory of the items that they were not permitted to

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<sup>56</sup> It is known that town notaries were instrumental in devising the official discourse of power in town chancelleries. For Transylvania see Ágnes Flóra, *Laborem circumspecti domini notarii. Town Notaries in Early Modern Transylvania*, in *Writing and the Administration of Medieval Towns. Medieval Urban Literacy*, ed. by Marco Mostert, Anna Adamska, vol. I. Turnhout, 2014, pp. 313–335.

display, while the lowest five classes received detailed lists of full clothing (from head to toe) that they could wear. The most populous social groups (artisans, servants, maids, day-labourers, etc.) were excluded from using foreign fabrics and were encouraged to resort to local cloth and linen for their garments. This was a very clear mercantilist measure applied in small, making sure that local textile industries were not in want of customers.<sup>57</sup>

The issue of donated, inherited or hand-me-down clothes is not addressed in any of the clothing regulations examined, whereas second-hand clothes were a significant part of personal wardrobes.<sup>58</sup> The *Kleiderordnung* of Orăștie (1723) urged townsfolk to remove from their homes the forbidden items once the law was issued: *soll ein jeder der was dergleichen in seinem Hause hat, von dem Tag der Publicirung dieselben [Kleiderordnung] abschaffen*.

The clothing regulations relaxed the rules for feast days and for certain festivities; Neithard Bulst stated that such occasions served as a release for the citizens,<sup>59</sup> a safety valve for averting conflict and discontent. Compliance was probably attained not without transgressions, but neither of these aspects is of primary interest here. In fact, we have hardly any information to date on how sumptuary laws were received and observed. One exceptional instance, noted by Silvia Popa, is found in the diary of Thomas Tartler, parish priest in Brașov, who mentioned in his diary the reaction of the city folk to the sumptuary laws.<sup>60</sup> He wrote that: “On 2 March [1732] a new clothing law was read out, but the only outcome was that no one followed it.”<sup>61</sup>

The eighteenth century Transylvanian clothing laws helped shape the national identity of the Transylvanian Saxons through costume. Officially created and sanctioned national costumes are not a local innovation: King Gustav III of Sweden established in 1778 the “national Swedish dress,”<sup>62</sup> but it was aimed at the courtiers and had mercantilist undertones, with the purpose of encouraging the local cloth production.<sup>63</sup> The Bistrița and Orăștie *Kleiderordnungen* mention German and Hungarian costume separately from the Saxon costume. Under German clothes one meant the Austrian court fashion that had gained rapid ground in Transylvania after

<sup>57</sup> C. Berry, *op. cit.*, p. 79 on economic reasons for clothing laws in medieval England. Also Hermann Freudenberger, *Fashion, Sumptuary Laws, and Business*, in “Business History Review,” 37, 1963, pp. 46–48.

<sup>58</sup> The practice of bequeathing clothes is well-documented by early modern Transylvanian testaments and executors’ account books.

<sup>59</sup> N. Bulst, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>60</sup> Silvia Popa, *Vestimentația brașovenilor vechi și noi. Despre modul de reprezentare a senatorilor brașoveni în secolul al XVIII-lea prin prisma vestimentației*, in *Portretele patriciatului săsesc din Brașov. Un capitol de artă transilvană – Bildnisse sächsischer Patriziat aus Kronstadt. Ein Kapitel siebenbürgischer Kunst*, Brașov, 2013, p. 46.

<sup>61</sup> *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Brassó*, Brașov, 1918, p. 132: “Den 2. März wurde die neue Kleider-Ordnung verlesen, allein der Ausgang hats gewiesen, dass sich Niemand daran gekehret.”

<sup>62</sup> Johanna Ilmakunnas, Jon Stobart, *Display, Acquisition and Boundaries of Luxury and Taste*, in *A Taste for Luxury*, ed. by Johanna Ilmakunnas, Jon Stobart, p. 10.

<sup>63</sup> H. Freudenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

1700 and was adopted by wealthy patricians.<sup>64</sup> The colonisation of German-speaking protestants from the Hereditary Lands of the Habsburg Monarchy in the eighteenth century, the *Landler*, who could have introduced new styles of clothing, did not leave traces in the sumptuary laws of the Transylvanian Saxons.<sup>65</sup>

### PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Transylvanian sumptuary laws of the early modern period held the same concerns and representations for social order and propriety as their European counterparts. In this paper I discussed the changes to sumptuary legislation issued in the Saxon towns of Transylvania from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. I have treated this legislation as a group, although variation existed and regulations from different towns did not copy one another. My main argument and conclusion is that sumptuary legislation, in its delayed form compared to the Western European trend, was an expression of good governance, of the relationship between town councils and their subjects, of the concern and care that authorities showed for the citizens.

The eighteenth century sumptuary legislation concerning clothing adapted Austrian patents and *Policeyordnungen* more closely, by dividing the town inhabitants into classes and prescribing the allowed and forbidden fabrics and accessories suitable for each class. Luxury in clothing (*Pracht*) was not a central concern of the Transylvanian legislation, which emphasised more the imperative for reigning in excessive spending and the necessity for individuals to dress according to their standing. As Neithard Bulst suggested, town councils as legitimate authorities relied on the acceptance of their representations and norms among their governed subjects, acceptance of the assigned place in the community.<sup>66</sup> My main aim was to examine the projections of an orderly society through the control of clothing and through social restraint, the norms meant to shape the visible and recognisable society, with hardly any personal choice in self-fashioning and self-presentation.<sup>67</sup> I have deliberately not addressed the question of acceptance and enforcement. At this stage of my research, my concern was more for what the sumptuary laws stood for, their projections of concern for the common good, their aspirations for order and peace.

Further analysis should examine more closely the dynamic between territorial sumptuary legislation and urban clothing laws, in a manner similar to Ulinka Rublack's approach to this question.<sup>68</sup> Civic legislation from other towns in early modern

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<sup>64</sup> S. Popa, *op. cit.*, p. 49–51.

<sup>65</sup> Irmgard Sedler, *Die Landler in Siebenbürgen. Gruppenidentität im Spiegel der Kleidung von der Mitte des 18. bis zum Endes des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Marburg, 2004, pp. 62–63, where the author points out that the *Landler* generally did not leave a lasting impression on the written testimonies of their contemporaries in Transylvania and, more specifically, Sibiu.

<sup>66</sup> N. Bulst, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>67</sup> Giulia Calvi, *Le leggi suntuarie e la storia sociale*, in *Disciplinare il lusso. La legislazione suntuaria in Italia e in Europa*, ed. by Maria Giuseppina Muzzareli, Antonella Campanini, p. 216.

<sup>68</sup> U. Rublack, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

Transylvania should be uncovered in the archives, or perhaps attempts at legislating consumption included in more general pieces of legislation in polities with less complex systems of governance and administration. This, in turn, could probably answer the crucial question of why sumptuary legislation appeared and thrived exclusively in the Saxon towns of Transylvania.

## APPENDIX I

### Sumptuary Laws of Transylvanian Saxon Towns Examined in the Present Study

| Town                 | Year | Archival/Bibliographical reference   |
|----------------------|------|--|
| Bistrița (Bistritz)  | 1532 | Oskar Meltzl, <i>Über Luxus und Luxusgesetze. Dissertation zur Erlangung des juridischen Doktorgrades</i> , Sibiu, 1870, pp. 23–29.  |
|                      | 1533 | <i>Ibidem</i> .  |
|                      | 1637 | Otto Dahinten, <i>Geschichte der Stadt Bistritz in Siebenbürgen</i> , Cologne, 1988, p. 456.   |
|                      | 1640 | <i>Ibidem</i> .  |
|                      | 1714 | <i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 457–460.   |
|                      | 1726 | <i>Ibidem</i> , p. 462.  |
|                      | 1780 | <i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 460–461. Library of the Romanian Academy, Documente istorice, MDCCXXXVII*.   |
| Brașov (Kronstadt)   | 1652 | Archives of the Black Church in Brașov, Joseph Trausch manuscripts collection, IV F1 T9–101, pp. 93–96.  |
|                      | 1677 | <i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 97–103.  |
|                      | 1693 | <i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 105–112.   |
|                      | 1697 | <i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 113–115.   |
|                      | 1709 | <i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 121–125.   |
|                      | 1732 | <i>Ibidem</i> , pp. 131–141.   |
|                      | 1736 | National Archives of Brașov, Actele magistratului, I 84, no. 548.  |
| Mediaș (Mediasch)    | 1754 | Archives of the Black Church in Brașov, Joseph Trausch manuscripts collection, IV F1 T9–101, pp. 145–146.  |
|                      | 1767 | O. Meltzl, <i>op. cit.</i> , pp. 24–25, note 3.  |
| Orăștie (Broos)      | 1767 | National Archives of Sibiu (NAS), Brukenthal Collection, Q1–4, no. 123.  |
|                      | 1723 | <i>Corpus statutorum Hungariae jurium municipalium</i> , vol. I, ed. by Sándor Kolozsvári, Kelemen Óvári, Budapest, 1881, pp. 611–613.   |
| Sibiu (Hermannstadt) | 1547 | Lost, summary in <i>Hermannstadt und Siebenbürgen. Die Protokolle des Hermannstädter Rates und der Sächsischen Nationsuniversität, 1391–1705</i> , ed. by Käthe Hientz, Bernhard Heigl, Thomas Sindilariu, Sibiu, 2007, p. 87. |
|                      | 1565 | Latest edition: <i>zu urkundt in das stadbuch lassen einschreiben. Die älteste Protokolle von Hermannstadt und der Sächsischen Nationsuniversität (1522–1565)</i> , ed. by Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, Sibiu, 2016, pp. 259–260.   |

\* Thanks are due to dr. Elena Bedreag of the “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History, who found this document in the Library of the Romanian Academy and generously passed on the reference.



|                         |      |  |
|-------------------------|------|--|
|                         | 1574 | Lost, summary in <i>Hermannstadt und Siebenbürgen</i> , p. 87.   |
|                         | 1650 | O. Meltzl, <i>op. cit.</i> , p. 25.  |
|                         | 1685 | NAS, Medieval Documents, U VI 1555 (wedding regulation).   |
|                         | 1689 | A.N., <i>Kleiderordnung</i> , in "Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde," 31, 1908, nos. 5–6, pp. 73–75.                                    |
|                         | 1696 | NAS, Medieval Documents, U VI 1977 (wedding and funeral regulation).   |
|                         | 1700 | G.J. Haner, <i>Hochzeitgesetze für Hermannstadt aus dem J. 1700</i> , in "Transsilvania. Beiblatt zum Siebenbürger Bote," 7, 24 December 1846, no. 102, pp. 465–467. |
|                         | 1752 | <i>Corpus statutorum</i> , vol. I, pp. 616–626.  |
|                         | 1760 | Fr. Schuler von Libloy, <i>Materialen zur Siebenbürgische Rechtsgeschichte</i> , Sibiu, 1862, pp. 149–158.   |
| Sighișoara (Schässburg) | 1755 | <i>Corpus statutorum</i> , vol. I, pp. 626–629.  |

## APPENDIX II

## Division in Classes of the Town Inhabitants and Regulation of Clothing in the Sumptuary Law of Bistrița, 1780\*\*

| I <sup>st</sup> Class   |   |
|---|---|
| Town judge, judges, town council, notary, public office holders, nobility                         | Forbidden:<br>M: furs and coats made of velvet, of gold or silver fabric, or sable<br>F: Any fabric or velvet with gold or silver stitching, sable or other fur lining below the breast, silk petticoats with gallons or lace   |
| II <sup>nd</sup> Class  |   |
| Vice-notary, speaker, clerks, archivist, town doctor, four senior members of the centumvirate     | Forbidden: (and everything on the previous class)<br>M: lynx, sable or any expensive fur lining, damask, silk lining, gold and silver pieces on waistcoats and sable trim on the skincoats<br>F: Gold and silver caps, lace (point d'Espagne) on the waistcoats, silk petticoats, sable trim on coats except for collars  |
| III <sup>rd</sup> Class   |   |
| Members of the centumvirate, merchants, pharmacist, surgeons, town organist, clock maker, painter | Forbidden:<br>M: lynx, sable and fox as trim, gold and silver braids or laces on the girdle, any gold or silver lace, waistcoats of heavy silk fabric, hats with sable brims<br>F: all gold and silver or napkins from Milan, muslin or taffeta sleeves and aprons, gold and silver lace and collars, winter hide coats with fox brims, silk summer hats, <i>carton</i> , sable trims on caftans, hats or other items of clothing, gold and silver braids, lace on Hungarian braids, silk stockings, German shoes with Saxon costume and silk (shoes) with German costume |

\*\* I followed the order of classes and genders in the original law.

M = articles referring to male clothing; F = articles concerning female clothing.

| IV <sup>th</sup> Class                                   |  |
|--|--|
| Burghers not members of the centumvirate, apprentices    | <p>Forbidden:</p> <p>M: all fine broad hats, made of French cloth, winter hats with silk or velvet brims, all silk trimmings, all fur brim except for fox back and lamb skin, all fine English, French, Dutch cloth for cloaks, waistcoats, trousers or on other items, gold and silver laces, canes, all kinds of headdress with the German, Saxon or Hungarian costume, all silk, high-heeled shoes, no boots with the Saxon costume</p> <p>F: silk gowns, petticoats of <i>carton</i>, batiste aprons and shirts, silk collars, velvet winter hats, waistcoats made of silk with stitching, except for taffeta and <i>creditor</i> shoes (high heeled boots are allowed), <i>portfir</i> braids, <i>portfir</i> in Hungarian and German braids, lynx, marten or silken <i>Stutze</i>, made after the latest fashion</p> |
| V <sup>th</sup> Class                                    |  |
| Burghers who work as journeymen with other guild masters | <p>Forbidden:</p> <p>M: all foreign cloth, all sorts of trim except for lamb skin, silk laces, silk or velvet girdles, marten winter hats</p> <p>F: white bonnets, all silk napkins, fine aprons, <i>carton</i>, black gowns of any fabric, silk waistcoat, all trims (except for fox back and dewlap, lamb skin), all <i>portfir</i> braids, all silk fabric except for taffeta in the German and Hungarian braids, all sorts of high heeled shoes or boots.</p>  |

## TRANSYLVANIAN CIVIC SUMPTUARY LAWS IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD: PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

### Abstract

This article examines the Transylvanian sumptuary laws of the early modern period, in a first analysis with a historical emphasis on this particular legislation. Sumptuary legislation appeared in the sixteenth century in the urban centres of the Transylvanian Saxons. Beginning with the eighteenth century, the Habsburg administration issued territorial clothing laws for the entire province, while urban councils of the Saxon towns also continued issuing their own sumptuary legislation, which were inspired by the *Policeyordnungen* of the Austrian Empire, without being simple imitations of these. As a preliminary study, I highlighted the main concerns of sumptuary laws, their emphasis on social order and restraint, on the division of urban communities into professional and social groups, and on the notion of luxury.

**Keywords:** sumptuary laws; Saxons; Transylvanian towns; luxury; social order; governance



Figure 1. Sumptuary Law from Mediasch, 1767 (source: Sibiu National Archives, Brukenthal Collection, Q1–4, no. 123).



## FRENCH RESIDENTS IN OTTOMAN CRETE: TRADE, DIPLOMACY AND DAILY LIFE IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY\*

DAVID CELETTI\*\*

The paper tackles the diverse, and sometimes contradictory, facets of French presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. It takes eighteenth-century Ottoman Candia – nowadays Iraklion / Heraklion – as a case study. This choice has been driven by the opportunity of analyzing – on a small scale – different aspects of living and trading in a “secondary” Levantine *échelle* during the eighteenth century. It also provides an opportunity to unveil interactions, contacts and transfers between the different communities living on the island. The “low status” of Crete within the overall French trade network notwithstanding, the *échelle* produced six sizeable files (AN, AE, B I 341–347) preserved at the Archives Nationales de France and devoted entirely to the lives of French residents in Crete.

The paper’s main thesis is that Western presence in the Levant went well beyond merely commercial activities to encompass – even in secondary trade centers like Crete – broader personal interactions at all social levels. Trade was inextricably linked with diplomatic activity and the daily life of the merchants took them well beyond commercial affairs, into the realm of everyday encounters, engaging them in personal, and sometimes even intimate, relationships. Long-term residence, in some instances spanning throughout the whole life, fuelled tendencies towards assimilation that formed the basis of the emerging “Levantine” society. This aspects engaged European residents and local Christians, mostly Greeks and Armenians. More sporadically, however, it concerned also Jews and Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David Celetti, *French Residents and Ottoman Women in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Levant: Personal Relations, Social Control, and Cultural Interchange*, in *Women, Consumption and Circulation of Ideas in South-Eastern Europe: XVII–XIX Centuries*, ed. by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Leiden, Boston, 2017, pp. 47–64; Ștefan Knost, *Les Francs à Alep, Syrie, leur statut juridique et leur interaction avec les institutions locales (XVII<sup>e</sup>–XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, in *Gens de passage en Méditerranée de l’Antiquité à l’époque moderne. Procédures de contrôle et d’identification*, ed. by Claudia Moatti, Wolfgang Kaiser, Paris, 2007, pp. 205–218; Ian Coller, *Cosmopolitanism and Extraterritoriality: Regulating Europeans in Eighteenth Century Turkey*, in *Europa und die Türkei im 18. Jahrhundert / Europe and Turkey in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, ed. by Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp, Göttingen, 2011, pp. 205–218.

The paper is divided into three parts. The first one focuses on Cretan economy and emphasizes the importance of the island's commerce with France. The following section deals with diplomatic actions and practices, stressing the role of consuls in facilitating trade and in helping their fellow countrymen in their everyday life in the *échelle*. The final part highlights certain aspects of the French residents' daily life, examining the existence, and the extent of, social contacts among communities otherwise divided by national, religious, and cultural fault lines.

### A MINOR ÉCHELLE

From the perspective of French commerce, Crete constituted a minor *échelle* within a vast network of French merchant settlements in the Levant. Its trade relied almost entirely on the exports of low-value raw material – as wax or olive oil used in the booming Marseilles' soap manufactures – and the import of a vast, but modest in terms of volume, array of French products.<sup>2</sup> This picture was only partially mitigated by the role played by the island in French cabotage trade<sup>3</sup> – the so-called *caravane(s)*.<sup>4</sup>

The marginal role of the Cretan trade was a consequence of the island's overall poor economic condition that limited both the supply and demand. Its potentially rich agriculture<sup>5</sup> tilted heavily towards specific products<sup>6</sup> – as wine, wheat and olive –, unevenly distributed on a vast, partially uncultivated territory, largely cut off from the coasts by poor land connections.<sup>7</sup> This state of affairs in itself resulted from Crete's long-term adaptation to its changing position within Levantine trade. During the first centuries of Venetian rule, the island had been a major wheat producer. From the sixteenth century onwards, it developed olive plantations and vineyards, and became an important exporter of Malvasia (or Malmsey) wine.<sup>8</sup> Wine and olives

<sup>2</sup> Archives Nationales de France (hereafter: AN), AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 February 1716.

<sup>3</sup> Maria Fusaro, *After Braudel: A Reassessment of Mediterranean History between the Northern Invasion and the Caravane Maritime*, in *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean. Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, ed. by Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood, Mohamed-Salah Omri, London, New York, 2010, pp. 1–23; Daniel Panzac, *La caravane maritime. Marins européens et marchands ottomans en Méditerranée 1680–1830*, Paris, 2004, p. 230; Gilbert Buti, *Un aspect original de l'armement provençal au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle: la caravane maritime*, in "Bulletin de la Société des amis du vieux Toulon et de sa région," 114, 1992, pp. 65–86.

<sup>4</sup> Louis Bergasse, *Histoire du commerce de Marseille*, vol. IV, 1599–1660, Paris, 1954, pp. 91–100.

<sup>5</sup> "L'île, dont le climat est fort beau, est très abondante de toute sorte de comestibles. Cette année particulièrement la récolte des grains a été fort belle et celle de l'huile et du vin donnent de grands espoirs" (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 June 1723).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, *M. Delane au Conseil de la marine*, 15 February 1716.

<sup>7</sup> This aspect was often related to poor demographic conditions, according to consul Baume's 1723 report. "Pour nous transporter à cet endroit, nous avons marché une journée et deux nuits, traversé plusieurs montagnes sur toute l'étendue de l'île, et de vastes vallées les unes très bien cultivées, les autres en friche faute de peuple pour les travailler" (*ibidem*, *M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 June 1723).

<sup>8</sup> The wine was first produced in the Greek village of Monemvasia, occupied in 1248 by the Venetians. Having tasted the local wine, the Venetians began to produce it in their possessions on

rapidly acquired commercial importance, the former taking advantage over the latter in regard to market demand and harvests' yields.<sup>9</sup> This trend came to a partial halt in the first half of the seventeenth century, when political instability and fears of war led the Venetians to pressure peasants to increase their wheat output, considered a strategic crop in case of the outbreak of hostilities and disruption of commercial ties with the Ottoman lands.<sup>10</sup> This approach led to an increase in the production of cereals in the last period of Venetian dominion, and, conversely, a stagnation in that of olives and wine. The Ottoman conquest once again reversed the situation, as olives quickly became the island's most important produce.<sup>11</sup>

The eighteenth-century expansion of olive groves on the island reflected the options of domestic producers, as landowners sought to diversify land use. At the same time, it reflected the island's increasing integration into European, and particularly French, trading networks. Crete lured merchants by the prospects of acquiring cheap olive oil, perfectly matching the demands of Marseilles' booming soap industry.<sup>12</sup> "Depuis que la mortalité des oliviers de Provence [a réduit notre production] le commerce [des huiles d'olives] s'y est rendu très considérable et je compte que on porte de France depuis six à sept ans plus de quatre millions de piastres sévillanes ou de sequins Vénitiens qu'on a été prendre en Italie chemin faisant."<sup>13</sup>

Some data will help identify the problem and its magnitude. Between 1700 and 1721, the French exported an average of 92,000 *mistat* of olive oil from Crete, double the amount of wine exports. Four years later, in 1725, they sent to Marseille 200,000 *mistat* of the commodity. From the beginning of 1717, twenty to forty ships regularly loaded olive oil shipments. Between 1720 and 1741, French imports of this product increased by 50 per cent. This trend reached such a scale that, already by the early eighteenth century, Ottoman authorities stepped in to limit the exports

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Crete, where it became one of the most widely exported, high-quality Levantine wines (Michela Dal Borgo, *Malvasia. The Story of a Levantine Wine in Venice*, in "Ligabue," 59, 2011, pp. 110–128; *Atti del Convegno "Venezia e le Malvasie del Mediterraneo"*, Venezia, 28 maggio 2015, Venice, 2015, pp. 12–16).

<sup>9</sup> Wines, in particular, were sent to Venice, to be then re-exported almost in all European countries, up to the British Islands, Germany, Poland, and Russia. But wines followed even other, less obvious, ways, as, for example, that to Chios and to the Flanders; to the Turkish areas through the emirates of Monteshe and Aydin, to Rhodes or to Northern Africa (David Jacoby, *Creta e Venezia nel contesto economico del Mediterraneo orientale sino alla metà del Quattrocento*, in *Venezia e Creta. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi Iraklion-Chanià 30 settembre – 5 ottobre 1997*, ed. by Gherardo Ortalli, Venice, 1998, pp. 73–106; Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade. Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Monteshe and Aydin (1300–1415)*, Venice, 1983, pp. 3–20).

<sup>10</sup> Allaire Brumfield, *Agriculture and Rural Settlement in Ottoman Crete, 1669–1898: A Modern Site Survey*, in *A Historical Archeology of the Ottoman Empire: Breaking New Ground*, ed. by Uzi Baram, Lynda Carroll, New York, 2000, pp. 37–78.

<sup>11</sup> M. Abrate, *Creta colonia veneziana nei secoli XIII–XV*, in "Economia e Storia," 3, 1956, pp. 251–277; Gherardo Ortalli, *Venezia e Creta. Fortune e contraccolpi di una conquista*, in *Venezia e Creta*, ed. by Gherardo Ortalli, pp. 9–32.

<sup>12</sup> Jean Vidalenc, *La vie économique des départements méditerranéens pendant l'Empire*, in "Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine," 1–3, 1954, pp. 165–198.

<sup>13</sup> AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 February 1716.

as they feared shortages for domestic consumption. This concern was further exacerbated by the fact that the local soap industry began to develop on the island, with manufactures being established in Chania and Candia. In 1723, six soap factories were active on the island; by mid-century, their number increased to twelve, then to fifteen in 1783, and to eighteen in 1787. Their demand took up to fifty per cent of the olive crop in a good year, and almost all in case of bad harvests, not counting the demand of Istanbul and of other provinces. It is therefore not surprising that the authorities in Istanbul sought to limit exports. Sometimes this led to official bans, as it happened, for example, in 1716 and, again, in 1776.<sup>14</sup>

The actual effectiveness of these measures remains, however, an open question. Such attempts had to face the pressures of local producers and merchants, already tightly linked to the international market. They also sparked protests from the French traders' side, participating almost exclusively in olive oil business and able to fall back on a particularly active and influential diplomatic network. As consul Delane clearly stated, any interruption in the export of Cretan olive oil would have almost certainly put an end to French presence in the *échelle*, as merchants would not be able to find an alternative export commodity.<sup>15</sup> Black market and official corruption provided another check on governmental efforts. All those reasons limited the effectiveness of export bans, and pushed the Ottoman leaders towards adopting more realistic, free-trade solutions, accompanied by moderate taxation.

“L’huile était ici une marchandise de contrebande [au temps de l’interdiction du commerce, mais] on en chargeait presque autant [que l’on fait aujourd’hui dans un cadre de libre échange] au moyen des présents que l’on faisait aux puissants du pays. La Porte ayant reconnu l’utilité qu’elle pouvait retirer en laissant ce négoce libre et l’impossibilité qu’il y avait d’empêcher les cours, et pressée par ailleurs par les instances des gens du pays a accordé la libre sortie de cette marchandise au moyen d’une imposition qu’elle fit en 1725 d’un droit qui s’appelle « beddat » et qui a été pendant quatre années consécutives de deux paras l’ocque.”<sup>16</sup>

On the other hand, such trends mirrored the island’s deepening dependence on international markets, which brought both opportunities, but also dangers associated with their volatile demand, as shown, for example, by the sudden decline of sales following the 1720 Marseilles’ plague.<sup>17</sup>

Oil exports greatly contributed to French trade deficit. Even counting in the wares brought by *caravanes*, the balance was structurally negative, and had to be

<sup>14</sup> Molly Greene, *A Shared World. Christians and Muslims in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Princeton, 2000, pp. 134–139.

<sup>15</sup> “Il faudra que la plus part de nos négociants fassent retraite si la permission de sortir les huiles ne nous est pas confirmée n’y ayant dans tout ce Royaume que très peu de soie, cives et laines qui n’occupent pas un seul petit marchand” (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 February 1716).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, *M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le commerce du Levant*, 8 March 1725.

<sup>17</sup> “On assure que les levées d’huiles ne seront pas si fortes cette année à cause que la grande quantité que on [avait] transporté à Marseille n’a pu être consommée pendant la contagion et il faudra donc du temps pour leur débouchement” (*ibidem*, *M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 June 1723).



covered with bullion and coins, usually piasters, sequins, or vouchers signed in others trade centers (Table 1). Piasters were a coinage of Spanish origin, widely diffused in the Levant, and the most – if not exclusively – widely accepted in Northern Africa,<sup>18</sup> whereas sequins were a gold Venetian coin weighing 3.5 grams of .986 gold introduced in 1284, and rapidly ascended to the second most popular currency in the Levant.<sup>19</sup> Vouchers were common promises of payments, subscribed by merchants operating in *échelles* with trade surpluses.<sup>20</sup> Along with coins and financial assets, French traders brought to Crete a wide range of products.

Up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, Venetian luxury textiles, including brocades, gold-thread textiles, satins, watered silks, velvets, and silk velvets held an important share on the Cretan market. Subsequently, Dutch and English fabrics were marketed on the island, primarily by Armenian merchants from Smyrna. By the 1720s, *draps du Languedoc* of the *londrines secondes* type had by far overtaken any other type of cloth among Cretan imports.<sup>21</sup> However, the Venetians managed to retain competitive advantage in regard to silks, as they were apparently cheaper than the French ones.<sup>22</sup>

French merchants also sold paper, glass and iron, traditionally re-exported to Crete from Venice, fish and caviar from Istanbul, and coffee. The imports of the latter originated since the sixteenth century from Yemen and reached the Eastern Mediterranean by way of Cairo; however, during the eighteenth century, this route was gradually substituted by Central American imports, which came to take the central place in trade.<sup>23</sup> These major items were complemented by secondary products, such as dyestuffs and especially Caribbean coffee, which occupied an increasingly relevant place (Table 2).

If France was without doubt Crete's main commercial partner, the island was also well integrated in other Mediterranean trading networks, with ports of Egypt, as well as Istanbul and Smyrna, accounting for a sizeable share of its traffic.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, due to its geographical location at the crossroads of the South-Eastern

<sup>18</sup> Ferréol Rebuffat, *Les piastres de la Compagnie Royale d'Afrique*, in "Cahiers de la Méditerranée," hors série, 1, 1976, pp. 21–34.

<sup>19</sup> "Je compte que on a porté de France depuis, de six à sept ans, plus de quatre millions de livres en piastres ou en sequins Vénitiens qu'on a été prendre en Italie" (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 February 1716).

<sup>20</sup> Charles Carrière, *Réflexions sur le problème des monnaies et des métaux précieux en Méditerranée Orientale au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in "Cahiers de la Méditerranée," 1, 1976, pp. 1–20; idem, *Réflexions sur les crises commerciales au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in "Cahiers de la Méditerranée," 2, 1977, pp. 5–15.

<sup>21</sup> AN, AE, B I 341, *M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le commerce du Levant*, 8 March 1725. See also Edhem Eldem, *French Trade in Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*, Leiden, Boston, 1999, pp. 37–39.

<sup>22</sup> "Il vient, outres les balles de draps de France, des soies de Venise, de Florence et de Messine, à cause du fait qu'elles sont moins chères que celles de France" (AN, AE, B I 341, *M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le commerce du Levant*, 8 March 1725).

<sup>23</sup> M. Greene, *op. cit.*, pp. 127–128.

<sup>24</sup> AN, AE, B I 344, *Rapport sur l'économie crétoise*, 11 January 1779.

Mediterranean, the island was an almost unavoidable stopover for *caravanes* sailing between Northern Africa and the Levant to Greece and Europe. This, in turn, encouraged flourishing transit trade. On their journey north, captains sold in Crete goods brought from Barbary Coast and the Levant and bought olive oil and wheat. On their journey back, they exchanged the products of French manufactures, such as Languedoc, Yorkshire, Venetian or Leyden cloths, for oil. The island's ports became hubs where virtually all items of maritime trade in the Eastern Mediterranean could be found and traded, from cinders to goat's hairs, from gall nuts to cotton and wool, from spices to coffee, sugar, and colonials.<sup>25</sup> Along with merchandise, French ships also benefited from the existing demand for passenger transport as they could offer relatively comfortable and safe travel conditions.<sup>26</sup> "La plus part des bateaux caravaneurs viennent des ports du Grands Seigneur chargés de riz, café, lin, toilerie, poissons, sels, cuirs, planches, tabac à fumer pour compte des marchands Turcs, Arabes, Juifs, Grecs, Arméniens, lesquels pour la plupart les chargent en sortie de vins, huiles, raisins secs, fromage, miles, olives, bois à brûler, savon et autres denrées du Royaume pour le transport à Constantinople, Smyrne, Chio, Salonique, Alexandrie, Tunis et autres ports. Sans compter la quantité de puissants et autres passagers qui vont et viennent de cette île à la terre ferme et aux îles de l'Archipel [sur nos bateaux]."<sup>27</sup>

The Ottomans' growing demand for French sea shipping also increased the French community's political clout on the island. The growing number of ships sailing under the French flag meant that captains and sailors added further numbers to merchants, priests and artisans traditionally residing on the island.

From the point of view of the *Nation Française*, and particularly for the consular service, the *caravanes* constituted an essential element in the system of Cretan trade. Custom duties paid to the local diplomatic mission by French captains stopping in Crete constituted one of the most important sources of revenue, second only to money received from the Chamber of Commerce of Marseilles (Table 1).<sup>28</sup>

#### DIPLOMACY, CONSULS, AND PASHAS

In Crete, even more than in other *échelles*, diplomacy emerged as an essential tool in securing French economic success. Olive oil, the core of the island's trade

<sup>25</sup> Michel Morineau, *Naissance d'une domination. Marchands européens. Marchands et marchés du Levant aux XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles*, in "Cahiers de la Méditerranée," hors série, 1, 1976, pp. 145–184.

<sup>26</sup> Daniel Penzac, *Les échanges maritimes dans l'Empire ottoman au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in "Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée," 39, 1985, p. 177–188.

<sup>27</sup> AN, AE, B I 341, *Liste des bâtiments caravaneurs qui ont abordé au port de Candie depuis le premier juillet 1720 jusqu'au premier août 1724*.

<sup>28</sup> Duties consisted in the "*droit d'avarie*" and the "*droit de consulat*," that were paid as a percentage of the value of the items loaded or unloaded in the *échelles* (Joseph Nicolas Guyot, *Répertoire universel et raisonné de jurisprudence civile, criminelle, canonique et bénéficiale*, Paris, 1777, vol. 4, p. 581).

with France, was, in fact, a commodity particularly vulnerable to export embargos coming from both central and local governments.<sup>29</sup> This, in turn, exposed French merchants to all sorts of *avanies*, as the island's pashas skillfully exploited their authority to extort gifts and money. In this context, establishing friendly personal relations with local authorities was of utmost importance for the individual consuls' task of protecting commerce and, at the same time, constituted an important step in the diplomats' careers. For this reason, Consul de Cresmery, in his first letter to the *Conseil de la Marine*, stressed the lavishness of the reception he was granted upon his arrival in Crete by the local pasha. The diplomat presented the festivities that took place on 15 November 1717 as a proof of good relationships he was able to establish with the local government: "Je suis enfin à La Canée depuis le quinze du mois dernier [...]. L'entrée que l'on m'a faite à mon arrivée a été l'une des plus magnifiques que l'on ait encore vue dans ce pays en pareille occasion. Toute la Nation vint me recevoir à la Soude où je mis pied à terre et je trouvai [...] le premier écuyer du Pacha avec quatre beaux chevaux dont il y en avait deux très richement harnachés, l'un était destiné à me porter et l'autre au cas où je voulusse changer pendant la route. Les deux autres étaient pour les deux drogmans de cette échelle."<sup>30</sup>

In fact, the consuls tried hard to establish friendly contacts with the pashas. The most common way was to provide them with particularly valuable gifts.<sup>31</sup> Sometimes, more subtle means were resorted to, such as using the tensions between the Ottomans and the Venetians to secure their favorable attitude towards French tradesmen. Such was the case described by the consul in Candia in 1716, at the time of the Ottoman-Venetian war of 1714–1718, as he stated that "La crainte que nous donnions du secours aux Vénitiens et Maltais les obligera de nous ménager [...] ainsi nous pourrions demander bien de choses à la Porte que on ne osera pas nous refuser."<sup>32</sup>

The attempts to gain the pasha's favors, in this case his permission to export olive oil without major restrictions, were not always as successful as expected. In June 1716, for example, Delane asked the ambassador in Constantinople to intervene with the grand vizier to obtain either the liberty of trade in Cretan oil, or, at the very least, an authorization to export what had been bought prior to the ban, as the local pasha had allowed to bring to France only a part of the purchased goods, corresponding to 2,000 quintals.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> The Venetians, for instance, considered French diplomatic and consular services one of the main factors behind the remarkable French commercial success (Archivio di Stato di Venezia, *Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia*, b. 556, fols. 89–90, 20 October 1760). Karen Barkey, *The Ottoman Empire (1299–1923): The Bureaucratization of Patrimonial Authority*, in *Empires and Bureaucracy in World History. From Late Antiquity to the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Peter Crooks, Timothy H. Parsons, Cambridge, 2016, pp. 102–126.

<sup>30</sup> AN, AD, B I 341, *Lettre de M. de Cresmery au Conseil de la Marine*, 12 December 1717.

<sup>31</sup> Idem, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 February 1716.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, *Lettre de M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 15 February 1716.

<sup>33</sup> "[Le Pacha], après bien de sollicitation, a accordé [l'exportation] de 2 000 quintaux de huile, encore est-il accompagné par un commissaire rigide dépêché de près pour que on ne en charge pas une plus grosse quantité" (*ibidem*, *Lettre de M. Delane au Conseil de la Marine*, 13 June 1716).

Turning to ambassadors for help was an annoyance and a clear sign of the limits of the consuls' ability to deal effectively with the local powers. Precisely for this reason Nicolas Morel de Cresmery stressed his very good connection with the pasha, established through their frequent encounters and open discussions. In a letter to the *Conseil de la Marine*, he juxtaposed his friendship with the Ottoman official to numerous misunderstandings and tensions that characterized the tenure of his predecessor at the post and drew an explicit connection between his achievements and the steady flow of oil trade that benefited Marseilles since he had been appointed consul in Chania.<sup>34</sup>

Stressing good relations with the Ottoman *élite* did not imply any appreciation for the local official. On the contrary, the provincial authorities were frequently depicted as tyrannical, corrupt and inefficient: "Les puissants qui commandent cette île sont des gens ignorants, féroces, [ce sont des] tyrans, comme Ibrahim Pacha, lequel exerce notre patience et la pousse même à bout depuis deux ans et demi qu'il est en Candie, car [...] il prétend des contributions infondées des Français et de leurs bâtiments [...]."<sup>35</sup>

Apart from undue taxes, sudden levies, and other vexations, French diplomats depicted the local governors as negligent in managing even the most vital trade facilities, such as roads and ports. Such laxness was explained by the "oriental character," careless and lenient, as well as by widespread corruption, and a deeply rooted antipathy towards Westerners. "Si le chef du Gouvernement qui réside à Candie était moins opposé et antipathique à tout ce qui s'appelle Franc, il voudrait bien faire travailler à nettoyer le port [de Candie] dans lequel nos moindre bâtiments ne peuvent entrer sans risque de se perdre, surtout en hiver lors-ce-que ils entrent avec un vent fort. Je ne peux manquer de souligner la nécessité indispensable qu'il y a de creuser ce port [...]. Il est certain que tous les Turcs et autres connaissent cette vérité, mais elle ne saurait en gagner les puissants qui gouvernent à employer à cette sorte de travaux et autres de réparation de la place les vingt milles piastres annuelles que le Grand Vizir y destine, lesquelles ils mettent dans leur bourse impunément. Personne n'ose parler, le dire ni agir contre elles sous risque de être envoyé à leur examen et à leur rigoureuse justice, ainsi qu'il arrive souvent."<sup>36</sup> Once again offering money to the Ottomans was perceived by the French diplomats as the only way to break the deadlock.<sup>37</sup>

However difficult the relations with the island's officials might have been, French diplomats were interested that their *échelle* was run smoothly by high-ranking

<sup>34</sup> "Je prendrai la liberté de l'informer aujourd'hui que la récolte des huiles a été très abondante cette année, ce qui attire journellement une quantité considérable de bâtiments de Marseille. Le Pacha, avec lequel je vis parfaitement, j'ai de nombreuses rencontres et je tiens un dialogue fort ouvert et franc, en accorde la sortie toutes les fois que je lui en fais demander la permission" (*ibidem*, *Lettre de M. de Cresmery au Conseil de la Marine*, 26 December 1717).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, *Lettre de M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 7 December 1723.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, *Lettre de M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 23 June 1722.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, *Lettre de M. Baume au Conseil de la Marine*, 7 December 1723.

individuals with clear authority. In such cases, in fact, they could better solve eventual conflicts including those with the local merchants and population. This aspect emerges quite clearly from the protest filed against French residents of Chania, accused of monopolizing the trade of imported goods, squeezing out Turkish merchants. Reporting on the events, consul Le Maire stressed that the local authorities, represented only by a *vizir à deux queues*, was too weak to respond adequately and put an end to the tumults. Thus, he asked therefore the ambassador in Constantinople to intercede and have the Porte appoint a *vizir à trois queues*, who would garner more respect among the local populace. The Ottoman ruling class was therefore at once a hindering presence, in so far that they levied *avaries*, disrupted trade to receive gifts and money, or delayed needed infrastructural intervention; on the other hand, they represented an unavoidable partner for managing sometimes violent reactions of the local population. This, in turn, might suggest all the complexity of the emerging dominant position of French tradesmen even in local markets.<sup>38</sup> “La population de cette ville a entrepris pendant le courant mois en trois différentes occasions [des actes contre] la Nation. La Nation ayant été menacée par une sédition populaire comme elle verra par les pièces ci incluses je dois représenter à Son Excellence que le Pacha qui commende en cette ville n’étant que un vizir à deux queues n’a aucun pouvoir ni autorité et que nous devons attendre qu’un faible et médiocre appuy ce qui m’a contraint de recevoir l’Aga des janissaires pour lui demander sa protection contre les insultes dont nous étions menacées. [...] La Nation se trouve plus nombreuse qu’elle ne l’était autrefois et il y aborde des [grandes] quantités de nos bâtiments chargés de denrées et autres marchandises dont plusieurs séditeux et mutins voudraient avoir l’achat et la vente au préjudice des français à qui elles sont adressées ou à qui elles appartiennent, ce qui les a porté à demander qu’aucun de nos négociants ne puissent vendre en détail des marchandises qui viennent ici.”<sup>39</sup>

The consuls expressed their admiration for Turkish pomp, as in de Cresmery’s account, the necessity of building friendly relationships, as shown by Baume, and contempt for an apparently unresponsive, deeply corrupt society stressed by Le Maire. They also felt an attraction for Crete, mainly directed, however, towards its ancient Greek past. The same consul Baume, in fact, related with touching remarks the long trip he had undertaken to reach the village of Gortyna, and the visit to local ancient ruins. He saw in them the remnants of the labyrinth, itself part of a marvelous city, perfectly matching and reflecting his vision of the glorious past of Minoan Crete.<sup>40</sup>

Along with diplomacy, the consuls organized and controlled the French residents’ daily lives. This task went well beyond economic matters, encompassing social and

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, *Lettre de M. Le Maire au Marquis de Bonnal*, 25 November 1722.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>40</sup> Luigi Bossi, *Quadro geografico-fisico storico-politico di tutti i paesi e popoli del mondo con carte geografiche e tavole in rame*, vol. XV, Milano, 1829, pp. 142–143; Federico Halbherr, Domenico Comparetti, *Relazione sui nuovi scavi eseguiti a Gortyna presso il Letheo*, Florence, 1887.

political arrangements as well. On the one hand, they aimed to cement unity among merchants, and, on the other, to present the French Nation as a small-scale replica of an idealized vision of France.<sup>41</sup> According to their plans, the Turks were to witness an edifying image of the country as a well-ordered, dignified, and successful monarchy. Enhanced respect would not only encourage trade, but also ease the tensions between the Frenchmen and local population, as well as the local authorities. It would have helped, in other words, to avoid such troubles as those stirring Chania in 1722, as well as the widespread negative actions of ill-disposed pashas.

### FRENCH RESIDENTS IN OTTOMAN CRETE

A document of 1712 provides us with a relatively comprehensive picture of the French Nation in early-eighteenth-century Crete, giving us information on such aspects as residence, regular or irregular sojourns on the island, function within the community, duration of stay in Crete and, in general, family status in the Levant (Table 3).

By this time, the *Nation Française* had evolved into a small community of around fifty-two residents, encompassing merchants, surgeons, artisans, people without clear profession, and a few women. Most of them (forty-seven out of fifty-two) resided in Chania. This strong concentration broadly reflected the economic and social structure of Ottoman Crete. Starting from the sixteenth century, the hinterland of Chania developed as a region of intensive olive cultivation. This trend increased even further under Ottoman rule, when olive oil became the main export commodity, with the city as its chief trading center. Moreover, Chania, which, unlike other towns, was not cut off by steep mountain ranges, provided relatively easy access to the south. Gentle slopes linked the city to the rich plain of Messara, with its extensive olive-tree cultivation. Thus, it provided clear commercial advantages, proven by the fact that it was in that city that the French established their consulate.

Only five Frenchmen resided in Rethymno. The town's favorable geographical position and rich agricultural hinterland notwithstanding, the town played no economic role to speak of. This was largely because of its extremely poor port facilities, which hindered trade, since merchants active in the region had to ship their wares to the port of Souda in the vicinity of Chania, in order to load them on seafaring ships.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, no French resident was registered in Chania. This might seem surprising given the town's role as the administrative capital of the island, as well as its political and religious centre. The presence of provincial authorities attracted, apart from bureaucrats and soldiers, numerous merchants, including Greek Orthodox, Jews

<sup>41</sup> Ian Coller, *East of Enlightenment. Regulating Cosmopolitanism between Istanbul and Paris in the Eighteenth Century*, in "Journal of World History," 21, 2010, 3, pp. 447–470.

<sup>42</sup> "A Rettimo [Rethymno] nos négociants font acheter des parties considérables [d'huiles] qu'ils font transporter par les bateaux du pays au port de La Soude, où nos bâtiments vont les charger, ne pouvant aborder surtout en hiver à Rettimo, dont le port est entièrement comblé" (AN, AE, B I 341, *Commerce du Levant. Relation de M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine*, 8 March 1725).

and Muslims.<sup>43</sup> The absence of French traders possibly stemmed from its political and military character, but also illustrated a tendency, quite strong among foreigners, to concentrate in the same town to establish a compact and cohesive community.

Obviously, most French residents in Crete were merchants by trade. However, they by no means represented the community's full social and professional spectrum. In fact, in Chania, sixteen residents were listed as merchants and six as *commis*, clerks working for affluent traders. If we add up both categories, it becomes clear that less than a half of all residents (47 per cent, to be precise) were actually active in commercial activities. The rest comprised clergymen, the consul's secretary, four *dragomans* (two "ordinary," coming respectively from Smyrna and Constantinople, and two locals of Jewish origin holding a *berat*), a surgeon, a baker, an innkeeper, and as much as nine coopers (three listed as masters, two as apprentices, and four as simple workers). Three residents, Jean Baptiste Careffe, Louis Allinary, and Michel Babu, are listed without indicating their profession. The first one is described as living *sans certificate* – without documents formally allowing him to reside in Crete – with his brother Pierre, a merchant and legal resident in the *échelle*. Louis Allinary, born in Marseilles, arrived in Crete with consul de Cresmery, and subsequently accompanied him in Sidon and Cairo before returning to Crete. Finally, Michel Babu, holder of a certificate of residence, was a former cook of consul de Cresmery. After the latter's departure in 1722, he worked for a time as innkeeper, and settled permanently on the island.

The much smaller number of residents in Rethymno included three merchants, Honoré Lyon, born in La Ciotat, without certificate; Jean François Toulon from Fréjus and Ambroise Carfeuil from Marseilles; a surgeon, Jean Baptiste Fabre, without certificate, and Jean Homas from Aix en Provence, baker and innkeeper without certificate.

Among residents we also find three women, all without certificate of residence. Marguerite Couture, born in Marseille, was the wife of Pierre Rainaud, who had started out as a merchant before becoming a ship captain; Benotte Faxe, also from Marseilles, lived on the island as mother-in-law of merchant Joseph Brondé; Marguerite Brouchière, in turn, was servant in the family of merchant François Bouquier.

The French Nation in Crete consisted essentially of medium-term residents, 43% of whom lived on the island for less than five years by the time of the survey; 21% had spent between six and eight years in Crete, while a mere 18% – over nine years (Graph 1). Such a timeframe was consistent with the directives of the Chamber of Trade of Marseille and the French central authorities, which limited the period of residence in the Levant as a means to keep control of traders abroad.<sup>44</sup> There were, however, exceptions. Jean Chiousse, merchant from Marseilles, had been living in Crete for fifteen years; he arrived there in 1710 from Constantinople,

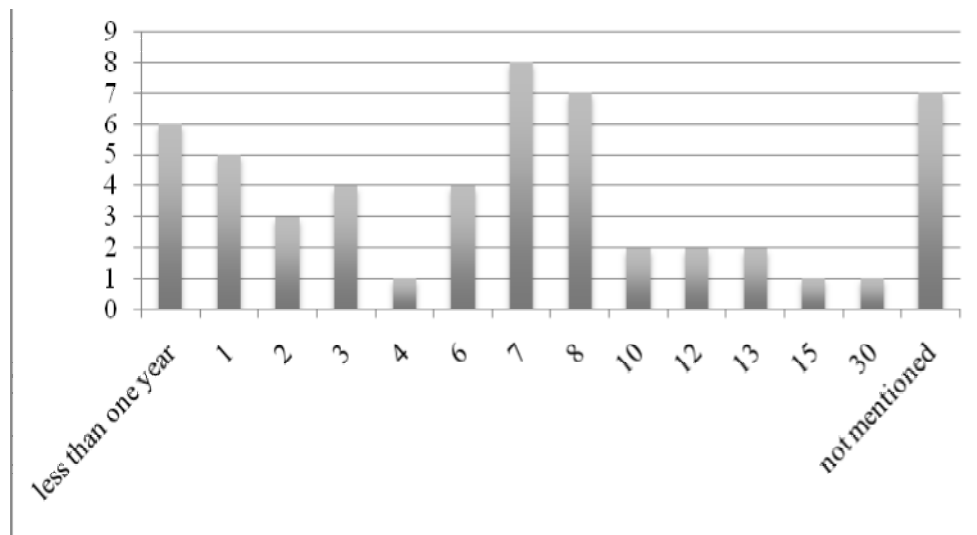
<sup>43</sup> M. Greene, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>44</sup> Even if the legal limitation to ten years of residence was actually set by law only in 1731, the Chamber of Trade tended however to keep the Frenchmen's sojourn abroad to short periods coherent with the needs of average trade practices (D. Celetti, *op. cit.*, pp. 47–64).

where he had been a clerk to merchant Ramuzat. Chiousse also set up his own business in the Ottoman capital and subsequently moved to Acre. Another interesting case is that of the master cooper Antoine Floquin, who, by the age of eighty, had spend thirty years in Chania. Moreover, many traders resided in other *échelles* before coming to Crete. Joseph Brondé, for example, had worked in Smyrna and Salonica. Jean François Delialbiey had lived thirteen years in Acre, helping his father run the business. Antoine Besson, merchant from Marseilles, had lived six years in Constantinople and Smyrna; Julien Ambroise had been in Athens and Corone.

**Graph 1**

French Merchants' Period of Residence in Crete in the Survey of 1725



Source: AN, AE, B I 341, *État de tous les Français qui résident présentement à la Canée et Retimno*, 8 March 1725.

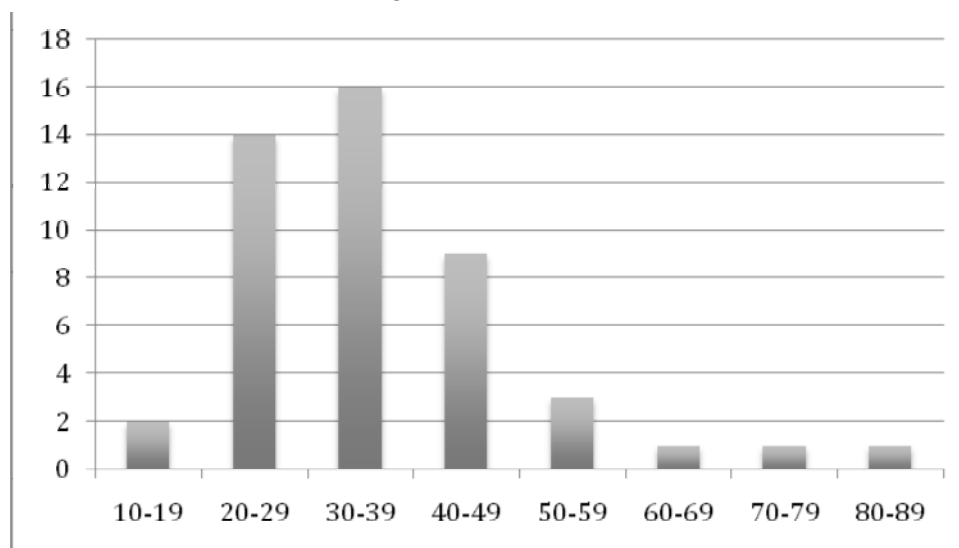
Surprisingly enough, the consuls were well aware that a significant part of French residents (42 per cent) lived in the *échelle* illegally, that is without a proper certificate, whereas *only* 52 per cent held documents allowing them to reside and trade there. A tiny group of six per cent secured a certificate, but only following their arrival in Crete, proving that they had come illegally to the island. This picture contrasts with the strict rules that French authorities tried to impose on residents in the Levant, which required both a passport and formal permission to sail to the *échelles*. This casts doubt on the effectiveness of control the consuls were expected to exercise and their ability to put the rules into practice. As we examine our sources more closely, we see a more complex picture that, to an extent, qualifies this conclusion. Four cases of illegal residence concerned women, who, theoretically, could reside in the Levant only as merchants' wives. Fourteen illegal



residents were artisans, servants or surgeons, while one was a person without any stated profession. Thus, only three merchants resided in the *échelle* without a passport. The French administrative machine in Crete, therefore, appears to have been able to keep an eye on the traders themselves, but not so much on the “marginal” members of the French Nation, artisans and women. It is also interesting to note that, even upon having discovered undocumented residents, the consuls took no immediate action, which stands in stark contrast with the formal demands of the ambassadors, who insisted on strict application of the rules.<sup>45</sup>

As is usual for a population composed predominantly of merchants, and for early modern demographic and social models, most residents were aged between 20 and 49 years, younger and older representing marginal exceptions (Graph 2). Two young men were nineteen, but only one, Antoine Béaumont from Cassis in Southern France, was a merchant and had been evidently sent to the Levant to learn the trade, whereas Antoine Daillot, born in the *Archipel*, was a cutter.

**Graph 2**  
Age of the Residents

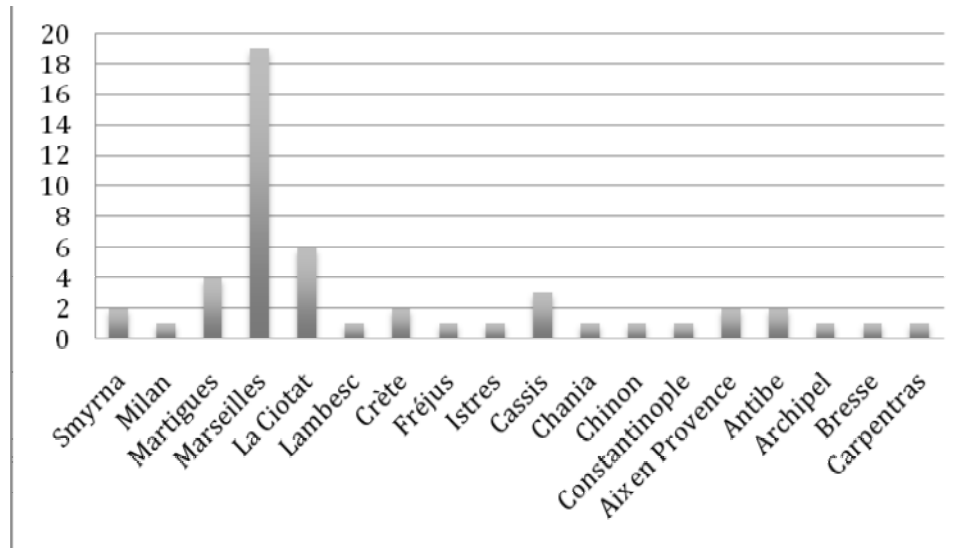


Source: AN, AE, B I 341, *État de tous les Français qui résident présentement à la Canée et Retimno*, 8 March 1725.

Elderly residents were also an exception. One merchant, Antoine Besson from Marseilles, was 53 years old, and another, Honoré Lyon from La Ciotat, was at the age of 70, but resided in Rethymno without permission. The other cases concern a woman, a surgeon and a baker (Graph 2).

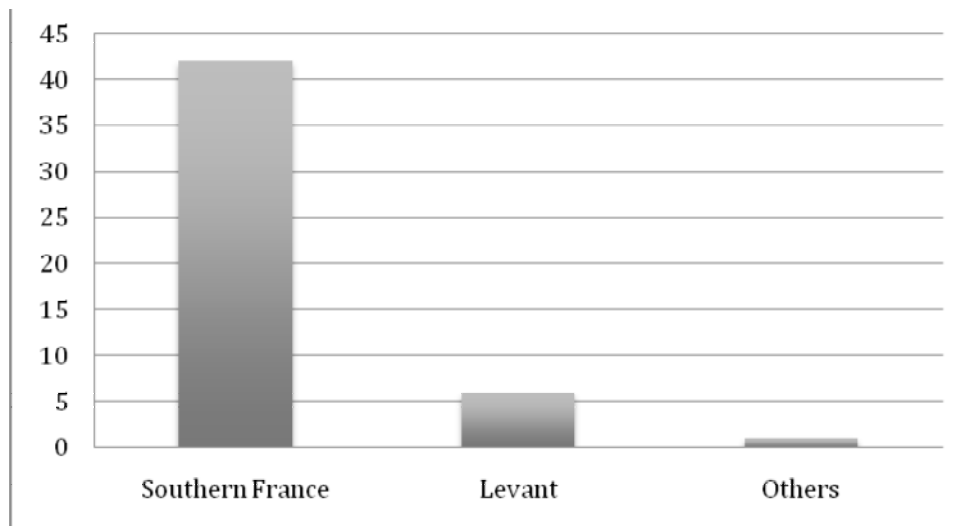
<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 47–64.

**Graph 3**  
City of Origin of French Residents in Chania and Rethymno



Source: AN, AE, B I 341, *État de tous les Français qui résident présentement à la Canée et Retimno*, 8 March 1725.

**Graph 4**  
Region of Origin of French Residents in Chania and Rethymno



Source: AN, AE, B I 341, *État de tous les Français qui résident présentement à la Canée et Retimno*, 8 March 1725.

Most residents were born in Marseilles, or, more generally, in Southern France. A remarkable number of seven people – four *dragomans*, a merchant and two coopers – were actually from the Levant (Graphs 3 and 4).

Finally, the list provides us with a range of personal information. We know that the first *dragoman* was partly paid by the consulate and partly from a tariff imposed on each French ship dropping anchor in Chania, whereas the second one was entirely on the payroll of the French Nation (Table 1). This divergence with regard to the sources of revenue might reflect the interpreters' different positions in terms of their importance and responsibilities, given that the ship tariff could yield higher return than salaries did.

The oldest merchant of the French Nation, Honoré Lyon from La Ciotat, who resided in Rethymno without authorization, served for many years as vice-consul under de Cresmery and Le Maire, levying consular tariffs on ships anchoring in that port, after having "navigated most of his life and commanded numerous ships." Trading, shipping and vice-consular functions emerge here as interconnected professions or, at least, as options available in different periods of one's career and life.

Surgeon Jean Baptiste Fabre was the son of a Frenchman and a Greek woman, which shows that long-term residents were keen to form personal and intimate bonds with the local population; in fact, inter-communal marriages were quite common in this period. All the other residents, with the exception of the first *dragoman*, Jacques Gerbaud, the innkeeper, and Bathélemy Floquin, a cutter born on the island, were, on the contrary, married to French women, who had joined their husbands in the *échelles* with their children.

## CONCLUSIONS

Crete, which has generally been considered a "secondary *échelle*," due to its marginal position in the French trade system in the Levant and the humble status of its main export – olive oil –, emerges as a relevant trade center. First of all, the island's olive oil acquired in the early eighteenth century a vital importance, as it fed Marseilles' booming soap manufacture and offered the perfect substitute for falling domestic production. Olive oil trade expanded and exports to Marseilles reached such a level that they molded commercial relationship between France and Crete, leaving their mark on the transformations of the island's economy. The low level of the Cretan demand did not allow French merchants to balance exports and imports, and deficits became a structural feature of this sector of Levantine trade. Piasters and Venetian sequins flowed into the island, and bills were issued in other *échelles* that had French export surpluses. Cabotage, the so-called *caravanes*, played a role in mitigating otherwise ever-growing deficit, mirroring at the same time the vitality, and complexity, of French economic presence in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The island hosted a small French community. Consular activity was, however, intense and showed all the aspects of the French diplomatic strategies in the Levant. It also shed light into the multifaceted relations that linked consuls, merchants, and

local powers into a single complex net. Without diplomatic support, olive oil trade was in constant danger of interruptions and merchants were exposed to the whims of the pashas. The consuls' ability to build good relations and effective networks with the local leading classes was a prerequisite of stable and profitable trade. This was achieved by merging different and somewhat contrasting strategies, as gift-giving, threats, developing friendly relations, which, in any case, never blurred an overall negative image of the Ottoman officials as corrupt, lax, and inefficient.

Though small, the French community in Crete presents a complete picture of the questions, problems, and contradictions touching foreigners' presence in the early modern Levant. Closed in itself by rigid rules, controlled by the attentive eye of the consul, they should have offered the image of unity, order, and discipline. Concentrated in work and business, French merchants were supposed to avoid any personal contact with local residents, the official *dragomans* serving as language and cultural intermediaries. Reality offered a much more complex, and varied picture, where mixed marriages, long-term and irregular residence were so diffused to enclose almost half of the French people living in Crete. This, in turn, suggests that immaterial circulations were as relevant as the material ones.

**Table 1**

Outcome and Income of the Consulate in Chania in the First Quarter of 1723

| Date    | Outcome   | Piastres | Income   | Piastres |
|---------|---|----------|--|----------|
| Janvier | 1<br>Pour solde du dernier quartier de l'année passée suivant le compte rendu donné par le Sr François Portal   | 747.14   | Du Capitaine Saper pour le droit d'avarie sur sa tartane chargé d'huile pour France                      | 30       |
|         | 16<br>Payé au capitaine Laugier pour la nourriture de 10 matelots disgraciés pendant trois jours les ayant amené de Château Rouge en cette ville d'après le mandat n. 1   | 560      | Du capitaine François Pauquet pour le droit de demie avarie sur sa tartane partie vide                   | 15       |
|         | 16<br>Payements divers aux capitaines pour 28 coups de perrier <sup>46</sup> et 2 coups de canon que on tira de l'ordre de Monsieur le consul pour la confirmation du Pacha de cette ville d'après le mandat n. 2 | 3        | Du capitaine Georges Moulet pour le droit de demi avarie sur sa tartane partie vide                      | 15       |
|         | 16<br>Payé au sieur Fonton second Drogman pour le louage de 5 montures pour le service de la Nation suivant le mandat de M. le consul n. 3  | 1.1      | Du capitaine Laugier pour l'avarie sur sa pinque arrivée chargée de bled à la Soude et destinée à Retimo | 35       |

<sup>46</sup> Little bronze gun firing one pound balls (Moritz Meyer, *Manuel historique de la technologie des armes à feu*, Paris, 1837, vol. II, p. 75).

|         |    |   |      |  |      |
|---------|----|---|------|--|------|
|         | 31 | Pour perte faite sur 107 sequins ayant été obligé de les recevoir de Ismail Cheleby   | 1.14 | Du capitaine Jean Roux pour le droit d'avarie de sa barque nolisé en caravane                | 35   |
|         | 31 | Payé au chapelain Père Montans pour les cierges donnés la fête de la purification suivant les usages sur le mandat n. 4   | 15.3 | Du capitaine Bruny pour le droit d'avarie de sa pinque chargé d'huile pour la France         | 35   |
|         | 31 | Valeur d'une lettre de change que les députés de Constantinople nous ont tiré provenant de la répartition que son Excellence a faite sur chaque échelle celle-ci ayant été fixée à 300 piastres suivant l'ordonnance de Monsieur l'Ambassadeur et les lettres des S. Députés. | 300  | Du capitaine Pierre Fabre pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane nolisée en caravane           | 30   |
| Février | 9  | Pour une lettre envoyée au Pacha de Rettimo au sujet d'un miroir présenté au Janissaire Aga sur le mandat 5   | 16   | Du capitaine Couture pour le droit de demie avarie de sa barque partie pour Candie           | 17.2 |
|         | 15 | Pour les deux pics de draps d'Angleterre présentés au Pacha en cadeau suivant le mandat de M. le consul 6   | 9    | Du capitaine Ricord pour le droit d'avarie de sa pinque chargé d'huile pour la France        | 35   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine d'Estienne pour le droit de avarie de sa pinque chargée d'huile pour la France  | 20   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Mousiston pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane partie vide                      | 15   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Tourrand pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane                                   | 18   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Louis Icard pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque chargé d'huiles pour la France | 35   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Pauquet pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane                                    | 15   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Guizard pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane chargée d'huiles pour la France    | 30   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Lampré pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque réglée à pro rata de son nolis      | 19   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Reybard pour le droit de demie avarie de son bateau parti vide                  | 20   |
|         | sd |   |      | Du capitaine Robin pour la demi avarie de son bateau à la Soude                              | 20   |

|      |    |  |     |  |      |
|------|----|--|-----|--|------|
|      | sd |  |     | Du capitaine Jullier pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane chargé d'huile pour la France                                    | 25   |
|      | sd |  |     | Du capitaine Reynaud pour le droit d'avarie de sa barque partie vide   | 17   |
|      | sd |  |     | Du capitaine Eymin pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque de relâche à la Soude  | 17   |
|      | sd |  |     | Reçu du capitaine Manuel pour le droit d'avarie de son pinque parti vide   | 17   |
|      | sd |  |     | Du capitaine Georges Moules pour le droit d'avarie de sa tartane nolisée en caravane                                       | 30   |
|      | sd |  |     | Du capitaine Barthélémy pour le reste de l'avarie de sa barque chargée d'huile   | 26   |
| Mars |    | Payé au S. Fonton second drogman pour diverses montures d'après mandat 7   | 2   | Du capitaine Bertrand pour le droit d'avarie de son vaisseau à pro rata des marchandises qu'il a chargées dans cette ville | 25   |
|      |    | Pour diverses effets eu de la Reine d'Hongrie, entre autres prunes et confitures par la suite données aux puissants du pays suivant le mandat numéro huit    | 140 | Du capitaine Jacques Beaumont pour le droit d'avarie de son vaisseau   | 22.2 |
|      |    | Payé au S. Fonton pour ce premier quartier pour ses appointements suivant le mandat 10 relatif au louage de sa maison  | 56  | Du capitaine Jean Rous pour le droit d'avarie de sa barque   | 35   |
|      |    | Compté à Aly Pacha Janissaire de la nation pour le premier quartier de ses appointements sur le mandat 11  | 15  | Du capitaine Jean Langles pour le reste du droit d'avarie de son vaisseau l'Irondelle                                      | 34   |
|      |    | Pour trois boustes [enveloppes] d'étoffe de soie pour y mettre les lettres que le Pacha a écrit à Constantinople   | 1.1 | Du capitaine Ronne pour le droit de demi avarie de son vaisseau à la Soude   | 22.2 |
|      |    | Pour change de ce premier quartier sur les piastres 747.12 que la Nation devait pour son dernier quartier de l'année passée à raison de 1 pour cent l'année. | 28  |  |      |
|      |    | Pour change de trois mois sur les piastres 560 que j'ai passées au crédit du consulat ainsi que je l'ai expliqué ci-dessus à raison de 1 pour cent l'année   | 21  |  |      |

|                 |  |  |             |  |                |
|-----------------|--|--|-------------|--|----------------|
|                 |  | Pour mes attributions de ce premier quartier | 8           |  |                |
|                 |  |  |             | <b>Au total</b>  | <b>752</b>     |
| <b>Au total</b> |  |  | <b>1859</b> | <b>Piastres dont la Nation reste débitrice pour dans ce premier quartier</b> | <b>1107.39</b> |

Source: AN, AE, B I 341, 8 April 1723, *Compte rendu par le sieur Honoré Germain de la Nation de cette ville de La Canée des sommes que il a exigées et payées pour le consulat pendant le premier quartier 1723.*

**Table 2**  
French Trade in Crete (1720–1725)

| Imports from Marseilles |                    |  |       |          | Exports to Marseilles |                     |                       |        |          |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--|-------|----------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|
| French products         |                    |  |       |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Prove-nance             | Quantity           | Merchan-dize   | Value | Unit     | Prove-nance           | Quantity            | Mer-<br>chan-<br>dize | Value  | Unit     |
| Marseille               | 12 balles et demie | Londrines<br>Secondes  | 15300 | Piastres | La Canée              | 537298<br>mistaches | huile                 | 130433 | Piastres |
| Marseille               | 1 ballot           | serges<br>impériales   | 175   | Piastres | La Canée              | 6279<br>oques       | cire                  | 5808   | Piastres |
| Marseille               | 2 caisses          | bonnet   | 320   | Piastres | La Canée              | 345 oques           | soie                  | 1897   | Piastres |
| Marseille               | 1 balle            | peigne   | 480   | Piastres |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Marseille               | 1 balle            | ciseaux  | 50    | Piastres |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Marseille               | 2 caisses          | indigo   | 700   | Piastres |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| French re-exports       |                    |  |       |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
|                         |                    | piastres<br>Sévillanes,<br>sequins<br>zinzertis,<br>pistolles<br>d’Espagne |       |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Marseille               |                    |  | 34378 | Piastres |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Alexandrie              |                    | Sequins  | 55880 | Piastres |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Livourne                |                    | piastres<br>sévillanes   | 50400 |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Constan-<br>tinople     |                    | sequins<br>Vénitiens   | 50000 |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Smirne                  |                    | sequins<br>Vénitiens   | 80000 |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Malte                   |                    | sequins<br>Vénitiens   | 5277  |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |
| Marseille               |                    | lettres de<br>change<br>sur  | 54377 |          |                       |                     |                       |        |          |

|           |            |                              |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------|------------|------------------------------|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|           |            | Constantinople               |       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marseille |            | lettres de change sur Smyrne | 37690 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marseille |            | lettres de change sur Alep   | 4000  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marseille | 4 balles   | Poivre                       | 500   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marseille | une churle | Cannelle                     | 200   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marseille | 2 barils   | Girofle                      | 300   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Marseille | 2 barils   | Muscade                      | 300   |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Source: AN, AE, B I 341, *Lettre de M. de Monthenault au Conseil de la Marine sur le commerce du Levant*, 8 March 1725.

**Table 3**

A – French Residents in Chania (1725)

| Name                              | Age | Function  | Certificate / Appointment                                 | Arrival Date  | Spouse                                  | Others  |
|-----------------------------------|-----|---|---|---------------|---|---|
| Révèrend Charles d'Henvin         |     | Supérieur de la mission des Capucins de cette ville et Chapelain, curé de la Nation française |   | 1712          |   |   |
| Frère Felix de l'État de Milan    |     | Religieux   |   |               |   |   |
| Joseph Ennemard d'Aix en Provence | 36  | Chancelier par brevet du 13 mai et 1 <sup>er</sup> août 1720                                  |   | 1713          |   |   |
| Jean Antoine Suzibée de Smirne    | 31  | Premier Drogman   | Lettre de Monseigneur le Marquis de Bonnal 1 octobre 1716 | 12 avril 1717 | Marinette Pocary de la Sude depuis 1721 | 130 piastres de appointement payées par le Consulat et 3 piastres d'ancrage pour chaque bâtiment qui mouille en ce port |



|   |    |                                 |  |                           |  |   |
|---|----|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|---|
| Charles Fonton de Constantinople                              | 22 | Second Drogman de cette échelle | Patente de Monsieur le Marquis de Bonnal 8 juillet 1722                            | 1722                      |  | 200 piastres d'appointement qui lui sont payées par la Nation avec la nourriture et le logement n'étant pas marié |
| Moyse et Raphael Bonfils, frères juifs                        |    | Drogman à <i>barats</i>         | Patente de M. le Marquis de Bonnal du 25 octobre 1719                              |                           |  |   |
| Honoré Colom Chaux de Marseille                               | 36 |                                 | Sans certificat. M. de Cresmery dont il était domestique l'a établi dans l'échelle |                           | Marié à Magdalaine Merille fille du feu François de Fallon, sans enfants   |   |
| Joseph Brondé de Marseille                                    | 36 | Marchand actuellement député    | Certificat du 11 avril 1715 pour résider en cette échelle                          | 31 mars 1721              | Marié depuis deux ans à la Demoiselle Anne Fase de Marseille, sans enfants   | Il a résidé en qualité de marchand à Smirne et Salonique  |
| Maximin Brondé frère jumeau et associé de Joseph de Marseille | 36 | Marchand                        | Certificat du 16 juin 1717   | 1 <sup>er</sup> aout 1717 | Marié à la Demoiselle Jeanne Rozé Vachier de Marseille venue en cette ville avec son fils Jean Jacques le 4 novembre 1721 munie de un certificat du 25 septembre 1721 ayant encore un autre enfant âgé de 8 mois |   |
| François Portal de Martigues                                  | 33 | Marchand                        | Certificat du 8 juillet 1717   | 17 aout 1717              |  |   |
| Pierre Careffe de Marseille                                   | 42 | Marchand                        | Certificat du 21 octobre 1717  | 18 février 1718           |  | Il a résidé dans l'échelle en 1709 et 1710  |
| François Bouquier de Martigues                                | 35 | Marchand                        | Certificat du 22 juin 1719   | septembre 1719            | Marié à la Demoiselle Catherine di Broglia de la ville d'Aix munie de un certificat du 14  |   |

|  |    |          |                                      |  |  |  |
|--|----|----------|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
|  |    |          |                                      |  | novembre 1721<br>résident dans cette<br>échelle depuis le<br>13 février 1722<br>sans enfants |  |
| Balthazar<br>Rostan<br>D'Antibe                    | 32 | Marchand | Certificat du<br>12 avril 1717       | septembre<br>1717  |  |  |
| Jean<br>Rostan<br>frère du S.<br>Balthazar         | 37 | Marchand | Certificat 14<br>juillet 1724        | octobre<br>1724  |  |  |
| Gaspar<br>Masson                                   | 45 | Marchand | Certificat du<br>10 novembre<br>1719 | juillet<br>1722  |  |  |
| Benoit<br>Arnaud de<br>La Ciotat                   | 40 | Marchand | Certificat 29<br>janvier 1711        | mars 1711<br>– mai<br>1718 à La<br>Canée<br>puis à<br>Candie<br>jusqu'en<br>1719, puis<br>en France<br>et revenu<br>le 6<br>février<br>1722                        |  |  |
| Noel<br>Justinien<br>Remuzat<br>de<br>Marseille    | 27 | Marchand | Certificat du<br>17 juillet<br>1717  | mai 1717,<br>avec des<br>intervalles<br>pour des<br>voyages<br>en France<br>à<br>Marseille,<br>auparavant<br>résident à<br>Constanti-<br>nople<br>environ<br>7 ans |  |  |
| Joseph<br>Hiacinte<br>Remuzat,<br>frère de<br>Noel | 26 | Marchand | Certificat du<br>26 juillet<br>1724  |  |  | Il doit passer à<br>Seyde  |
| Jena<br>Chiousse<br>de<br>Marseille                | 42 | Marchand | Certificat 14<br>février 1710        | mai 1710   |  | Avant 1710<br>résident à<br>Constantinople 11<br>ans en qualité de |

|                               |    |                      |  |                 |  |   |
|-------------------------------|----|----------------------|--|-----------------|--|---|
|                               |    |                      |  |                 |  | commis du S. Remuzat puis de marchand associé avec le S. Lamer et ensuite deux ans à Acre en la meme qualité de marchand  |
| Jean François Delialbiey      | 40 | Marchand             | Certificat du 11 février 1700 pour se rendre à l'échelle de Acre         |                 |  | Le certificat fut délivré pour aller à l'échelle de Acre où le feu père se trouvait. Il passa ensuite à Rome où il resta 3 ans marchand. Il revint à Acre prendre la place de son père il y demeura 13 ans après quoi il passe à l'échelle où il se trouve depuis 13 mois |
| Antoine Besson de Marseille   | 53 | Marchand             | Certificat du 6 novembre 1710 pour résider à l'échelle de Constantinople |                 |  | Il est resté six ans à Constantinople puis à Smire jusque au mois du aout dernier quand il est passé en cette échelle   |
| François Utre                 | 22 | Marchand             | Certificat du 4 novembre 1723  | 30 octobre 1723 |  |   |
| Pierre Guerin de Smirne       | 22 | Marchand             |  |                 |  | Fils de Antoine Guerin, marchand résident à Smirne, il réside dans cette échelle depuis environ trois ans n'ayant aucun certificat à la Chambre de Commerce   |
| Ambroise Jullien de Marseille | 39 | Commis du S. Careffé | Certificat du 17 juin 1713   |                 | Catherine Rose Goujon de Marseille, marié depuis le mois de Juillet 1722 | Avant 1713 il est à Athène en qualité de marchand et ensuite il a fait fonction de vice consul à Corron pendant deux ans  |

|                                 |    |                               |   |                       |   |  |
|---------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|--|
| François Marin de La Ciotat     | 29 | Commis du S. Guerin           | Certificat du 11 février                                      | Depuis environs 3 ans |   |  |
| Jean Abeile de Martigues        | 23 | Commis du S. Bouquier         | Certificat du 23 février 1722                                 | 30 mars 1722          |   |  |
| Antoine Beaumont de Cassis      | 19 | Commis du S. Brondé           | Certificat du 24 aout 1724                                    | 21 juillet dernier    |   | Il a résidé dans cette échelle encore deux ans auparavant  |
| François Vian de La Ciotat      | 26 | Commis du S. Balthazar Rostan | Sans aucun certificat de la Chambre                           | Depuis deux ans       |   |  |
| François Chiousse de Marseille  | 29 | Commis                        | Certificat du 9 aout 1719 pour aller résider à Constantinople |                       |   | Frère de Jean Chiousse il est venu dans cette échelle le mois de juillet dernier pour être commis du frère               |
| Jean Baptiste Careffe           | 37 |                               | Il réside sans aucun certificat de la Chambre                 | mai 1718              |   | Frère de Pierre, il réside avec son frère  |
| Louis Allinary de Marseille     | 66 |                               | Certificat du 18 novembre 1717                                | 1717                  |   | Il est arrivé en 1717, il est allé ensuite à Seyde et au Caire avec M. de Cresmery, il est revenu au mois d'aout dernier |
| Marguerite Couture de Marseille | 41 |                               |   |                       | Epouse de Pierre Rainaud qui résida à Candie en qualité de marchand muni du certificat du 21 mai 1711 et commandant à présent un bâtiment | Elle est venu s'établir depuis quatre mois dans cette ville sans aucun certificat  |
| Benotte Faxte de Marseille      | 60 |                               | Sans certificat   | 14 octobre 1718       |   | Elle vit auprès de la famille Brondé, sa fille étant la femme du S. Joseph Brondé  |
| Marguerite Brouchière           | 30 |                               | Sans certificat   | mai 1725              |   | Servante du S. Bouquier  |
| Pierre Daumier de La Ciotat     | 50 | Chirurgien de la Nation       | Sans certificat   |                       | Anne Arnaud de La Ciotat, son épouse depuis le  |  |

|  |    |                                    |                               |                  |   |   |
|--|----|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|---|
|  |    |                                    |                               |                  | 30 novembre 1710, qui réside à l'échelle, avec leur trois garçons                                   |   |
| Joseph Vert de Lambex  | 50 | Boulangier de la Nation            | Sans certificat               | 30 novembre 1718 | Marié à Demoiselle Floquin, un garçon   | Auparavant y est resté 24 ans en tant que boulanger   |
| Jacques Gerbaud de Carpentras                                | 39 | Aubergiste de la Nation, boulanger | Sans certificat               | Depuis 4 mois    | Marié depuis environs deux ans avec la nommée Ranoussa, grecque de Rettimo n'ayant pas d'enfants    | Auparavant il a résidé à Rettino dix ans  |
| Michel Babu de Chinon en Touraine                            | 36 |                                    | Certificat du 28 mai 1720     | 1718             |   | Il est venu avec M. de Cresmery dont il était cuisinier il a ensuite tenu l'auberge de la nation qu'il a quitté depuis 4 mois. Il a un garçon avec lui de environ 6 ans |
| Louis et Joseph Boyer frères de Marseille                    |    | Maitres tonneliers                 | Sans certificat               | Depuis 10 ans    |   |   |
| Antoine Floquin de Bresse                                    | 80 | Maitre tonnelier                   | Certificat du 9 novembre 1706 | Depuis 30 ans    |   |   |
| Charles Fauron de La Ciotat                                  | 40 | Maitre tonnelier                   | Certificat 11 mars 1717       | 8 mai 1717       |   | Un garçon de quatre ans, son père et un de ses frères se trouvent avec lui sans certificat  |
| Joseph Fauchier  | 25 | Garçon tonnelier du S. Fauron      | Sans certificat               | Depuis 7 ans     |   |   |
| Barthélemy Floquin natif de cette ville, fils du S. Antoine  | 23 | Tonnelier                          | Sans certificat               |                  | Marié depuis un an et demi avec Catherine Exlauch, grecque de la Soude ayant un enfant de neuf mois |   |
| Antoine Daillot de l'archipel, fils du feu Antoine de Cassis | 19 | Tonnelier                          | Sans certificat               | Depuis 5 ans     |   | Associé avec le S. Barthélémy Floquin   |

|                             |    |                  |                               |                 |  |  |
|-----------------------------|----|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| François Jaume de Martigues | 28 | Tonnelier        | Certificat du 28 juin dernier |                 |  |  |
| Gaspard Colla d'Istres      | 23 | Garçon tonnelier | Sans certificat               | Depuis 7 ans    |  |  |
| Jean Durand de Marseille    | 33 | Tonnelier        | Sans certificat               | Depuis six mois |  | Il a résidé auparavant à Candie onze ans |

## B – French Residents in Rethymno (1725)

| Name   | Age | Function | Certificate / Appointment     | Arrival Date           | Spouse   | Others  |
|--|-----|----------|-------------------------------|------------------------|--|---|
| Honoré Lyon de La Ciotat                     | 70  | Marchand | Sans certificat de la Chambre | 1712                   |  | Fait la première fonction de vice consul résident depuis plusieurs années à Rettimo. M. Delaunay, de Cresmery et Lemaire l'ont établi successivement vice Consul et l'ont chargé du soin d'exiger les droits de l'échelle sur les batiments français qui chargent pour la marchandise ou pour la caravane. Il est considéré sur le pays. Il a navigué la plus grande partie de sa vie ayant commandé plusieurs batiments. |
| Jean François Toulon de la diocèse du Fréjus | 45  | Marchand | Certificat du 7 mai 1722      | Mois d'octobre dernier | Rosolée Faure de La Ciotat munie de un certificat du mois de mars 1723 |   |
| Ambroise Carfeuil de Marseille               | 34  |          | Certificat de l'année 1717    | Depuis deux mois       | Marié depuis 8 ou 10 mois avec Thérèse Faxé de Marseille soeur de      | Avant de résider à Rettimo il a résidé pendant huit ans à Candie avec son   |

|   |    |                          |                 |  |  |   |
|---|----|--------------------------|-----------------|--|--|---|
|   |    |                          |                 |  | la femme du S. Joseph Brondé. M. Lemaire mon prédécesseur la fit embarquer pour la France lors de son départ pour Seide, d'ordre de M. le comte de Maurepas à la réquisition des M. de la Chambre de Commerce sur ce que elle était venue en ce pays sans leurs aveu, avec une permission de M. Le Bailly due Langeron et la mère, qui était grièvement malade est restée à La Canee | père que y était boulanger et qui y est mort.                       |
| Jean Baptiste Fabre de Crète                      | 42 | Chirurgien               | Sans certificat |  | Marié avec une grecque   | Fils du nommé Antoine Fabre aussi chirurgien et d'une femme du pays |
| Jean Homas, d'un village proche d'Aix en Provence | 22 | Boulangier et aubergiste | Sans certificat |  |  |   |

Source: AN, AE, B I 341, *État de tous les Français qui résident présentement à la Canée et Retimno*, 8 March 1725.

## APPENDIX

### 1. Consuls in Chania

The consular post was created in 1676 and remained in function until 1791. In 1764 it was transformed into a vice-consulate, absorbing the vice-consulate of Candia, which was re-established in 1772. The consul was supported by a vice-consul and a clerk from 1776.

Léon Delane (appointed in 1708)  
 Nicolas Morel de Cresmery (appointed in 1717)  
 Benoit Le Maire (appointed in 1722)  
 Jean Jacques de Monthenault (appointed in 1724)  
 Joseph Martin (appointed in 1730)  
 Léon Delane (appointed in 1732)  
 Nicolas Dez (appointed in 1735)  
 Pierre-Étienne Robeau de Valnay (appointed in 1737)  
 Gaspard David Magy (appointed in 1746)  
 Claude Charles de Peyssonnel (appointed in 1757)  
 Joseph Amoureux (appointed in 1765)  
 Pierre-Jean Reybaud (*deputé de la Nation* 1772)  
 Théodore Cavelier (appointed in 1773)  
 François-Alexandre d'André (appointed in 1775)  
 Jean Baptiste Michel Guyot de Kersey (appointed in 1779)  
 Joseph-Claude de Pellegrin (appointed in 1781)  
 Natal-Henri Mure d'Azir (appointed in 1787)

## 2. Vice-consuls of Candia (Heraklion)

Jean Baptiste Dubois (1711–1716)  
 Antoine-Gabriel Durant (appointed in 1718)  
 Jean Baptiste Baume (appointed in 1720)  
 Antoine Maltor (appointed in 1735)  
 Henri de Costa (appointed in 1740)  
 Gaspard-David Magy (appointed in 1741)  
 Jean-Louis de Clairambault (appointed in 1746)  
 Jean-François du Teil (appointed in 1750)  
 Melchior de Vaugrigneuse (appointed in 1767)  
 Charles-Hyppolyte de Laidet (appointed in 1779)

From 1787 there is a vacancy until 1790, when Dutrouy is appointed, but does not reach his post.

## 3. Vice-consuls of Rettimo (Rethymno)

The vice-consulate of Rettimo was created at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and suppressed in 1734. It was managed by merchants who had no diplomatic license (*brevet diplomatique*). These were:

Honoré Lyon (1725–1728)  
 Gaspard Masson (1726–1728)  
 Roch Bellon (1728–1734)



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FRENCH RESIDENTS IN OTTOMAN CRETE: TRADE, DIPLOMACY AND  
DAILY LIFE IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

*Abstract*

Crete has been widely considered as a secondary trade centre by the French primary sources themselves. A deeper analysis of the files preserved at the Archives Nationales de France specifically concerned with the island's trade and diplomatic relations with France reveals, however, quite another picture. The increasing olive oil exports to Marseille – an essential raw material for the booming southern France soap industry –, the strategic position of its harbors both for military and commercial endeavors, as well as the vibrant diplomatic activity of the consuls based in Crete, made the island one of the most relevant pivots of 18<sup>th</sup>-century French presence in the South-Eastern Mediterranean. These aspects not only shed new light on the French-Cretan economic relations, but also allow us to uncover the tight interconnections between trade and diplomacy, the complex daily life of French residents united under the *Nation Française*, as well as the multifaceted relations among ethnic and religious communities living on the island.

**Keywords:** Mediterranean economic history; Mediterranean trade; French history; Ottoman history; diplomatic history; cultural history



## DOWRY CONTRACTS, WOMEN'S OBJECTS AND THE CIRCULATION OF GOODS IN MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY ROMANIAN FAMILIES. THE CASE OF OLTENIA\*

NICOLETA ROMAN\*\*

In a social and ethnic conglomerate such as the Ottoman Empire, the Romanian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia represent a somewhat distinctive case. They were autonomous territories (like the North African provinces of Tunis and Egypt), which kept their Orthodox faith, their laws of Byzantine inspiration and their customs, while still contributing through taxes and goods to the Empire's wellbeing. Their commercial ties were for a long period reduced to the Porte and the neighbouring powers Russia, Austria and Poland. It was a periphery that embraced the European economy when the Ottomans were trying to recover from military conflicts and riots. The suzerain power itself chose decentralisation as a form of government that was more appropriate to its pluralist society<sup>1</sup> and from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it also permitted economical privileges for some of the European powers such as France and Austria.<sup>2</sup> The region acquired an openness toward the West after the Napoleonic wars and the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) when co-operation started between the European powers on various fronts including social matters (American colonies, slavery, corsairs, Danube navigation,

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<sup>1</sup> Suraiya N. Faroqi, *Introduction*, in *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. III, *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839*, ed. by Suraiya Faroqi, Cambridge, 2006, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> On the capitulations' regime see Viorel Panaite, *Război, pace și comerț în Islam: țările române în dreptul otoman al popoarelor*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Iași, 2013; idem, *Wallachia and Moldavia from the Ottoman Juridical and Political Viewpoint, 1774–1829*, in *Ottoman Rule and the Balkans, 1750–1860: Conflict, Transformation, Adaptation*, ed. by Antonis Anastasopoulos, Elias Kolovos, Rethymno, 2007, pp. 21–44; Andrei Oțetea, *Pătrunderea comerțului român în circuitul internațional (în perioada de trecere de la feudalism la capitalism)*, Bucharest, 1977, pp. 32–35 for the Austrian privileges in the Romanian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia in the eighteenth century. From the Austrian side, this is considered as an expansion which can also be connected to the occupation of the territory for shorter periods.

national movements, etc.).<sup>3</sup> The port of Odessa became free for all commercial ships in 1817 (*porto-franco regime*)<sup>4</sup> and provided Western goods to the Russian Empire's cities and even beyond its borders. And even though some years had passed since that moment, the Romanian writer Costache Negruzzi (1808–1868) mentions the impact this event had on the market and society of the Bessarabian city of Chişinău. For him it was still a pleasant and curious image to see the ladies all dressed up in “breezy and beautiful clothes, and the English and French fabrics rustling contemptuously when they pass by.”<sup>5</sup> The experience in the Romanian lands was similar some years later when through the Treaty of Adrianople (1829) the Danube ports gained the same status.<sup>6</sup> Travellers also wrote about the enthusiasm over imports of Western goods in the Romanian capitals (Bucharest and Iaşi), though in provincial cities things emerged more slowly and there was a gradual diffusion and cultural transition.<sup>7</sup> This is the prosperity that the women of the Romanian elite allowed to be glimpsed on the streets of the city, a public image that they constructed taking into account the latest fashions but also their social status, rank and financial resources. Dowry chests brought to light inherited garments, “worn out” and adapted for a different use, together with the newest materials. However these goods were not the only things that women received, for

<sup>3</sup> M. Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and Its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon*, London, 2013; Brian E. Vick, *The Congress of Vienna. Power and Politics after Napoleon*, Cambridge, 2014, pp. 193–194; Beatrice de Graaf, Ido de Haan, Brian Vick, *Securing Europe after Napoleon. 1815 and the New European Security Culture*, Cambridge (forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup> Anna Makolkin, *A History of Odessa, the Last Italian Black Sea Colony*, Lewiston, New York, 2004, especially chapter five; Evrydiki Sifneos, *Imperial Odessa: People, Spaces, Identities*, Leiden, 2017, pp. 25–26.

<sup>5</sup> Costache Negruzzi, *Opere*, vol. I, *Păcatele tinereţilor*, ed. by Liviu Leonte, Bucharest, 1974, p. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Constantin Buşe, *Comerţul exterior prin Galaţi sub regimul de port franc (1837–1883)*, Bucharest, 1976; Paul Cernovodeanu, Irina Gavrilă, *Comerţul britanic prin Galaţi şi Brăila între 1837–1852*, Bucharest, 1978 and the works of Emil Octavian Mocanu, especially *Portul Brăila de la regimul de porto franco la Primul Război Mondial*, Brăila, 2013; *On the Western Black Sea Coast and the Danube. Economic and Social Development in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Constantin Ardeleanu, Andreas Lyberatos, Corfu, 2016 and the results of the Black Sea Research Project <https://blacksea.gr/en>.

<sup>7</sup> Alexandru Alexianu, *Mode şi veşminte din trecut: cinci secole de istorie costumară românească*, vol. 2, Bucharest, 1987, pp. 302–304; Adrian-Silvan Ionescu, *Modă şi societate urbană în România epocii urbane*, Bucharest, 2006; idem, *Changement des modes aux pays roumains: fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> – début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles*, in “Revue roumaine d’histoire,” XLV, 2006, nos. 1–4, pp. 99–139; Angela Jianu, *Women, Fashion and Europeanisation in the Romanian Principalities*, in *Women in the Ottoman Balkans*, ed. by Amila Buturović, Irvin C. Schick, London, 2007, pp. 201–230; Angela Jianu, *Between East and West – Elite Fashions and Political Change in the Romanian Principalities, 1774–1850*, in *Berg Encyclopaedia of World Dress and Fashion*, ed. by Djurdja Bartlett, Pamela Smith, vol. 9, 2010, pp. 503–504; Constanţa Vintilă-Ghiţulescu, *From Işlic to Top Hat: Fashion and Luxury at the Gates of Orient*, Valladolid, 2011; eadem, *Constructing a New Identity: Romanian Aristocrats between Oriental Heritage and Western Prestige (1780–1866)*, in *From Traditional Attire to Modern Dress: Modes of Identification, Modes of Recognition in the Balkans (XVI<sup>th</sup>–XX<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, ed. by Constanţa Vintilă-Ghiţulescu, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2011, pp. 104–128.

the dowry “is drawn into socially oriented behaviours that result in a mobility,”<sup>8</sup> a mobility that attracts a “continual restructuring of the social field, catalyses political energies, breaks and modifies traditional solidarities.”<sup>9</sup> Thus the dowry becomes one of the factors that contribute to the creation of matrimonial alliances, to the growth of the family patrimony and to the construction of economic appearances. The ladies who strolled on the boulevards of Romanian towns in clothes of the newest and most expensive materials were the beneficiaries of such dowry contracts and of such a transforming process.

### SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The dowry is closely linked to the status of women, and to their inheritance and property rights. It is rare to find a comparative overview of the European juridical models. Anglophone and Italian cases have often been taken as representative of the north and the south of the continent respectively, and it is only recently that a closer analysis has been undertaken within these spaces and across the continent as a whole, local juridical practices have been examined<sup>10</sup> and research has been carried out that enables comparison with other spaces (Russian and Greek, for example).<sup>11</sup> This work has brought to light a greater degree of variety and adaptability, even within the already established models. In England, the principle of *coverture* led to a merging of the properties of the two spouses into a single patrimony and a limiting of the wife's possibilities of action, even if there were ways of negotiating with the rigidity of the law.<sup>12</sup> However the Anglophone space was not unitary in this respect, with Scottish law insisting more on the partnership of spouses and making a clear distinction between movable goods, held in common but under the wife's control, and immovable goods, which, though belonging to her, were administered by her husband.<sup>13</sup> In imperial Russia, married women kept control of the properties

<sup>8</sup> Violeta Barbu, *Ordo amoris. O istorie a instituției căsătoriei în Țara Românească a secolului al XVII-lea*, Bucharest, 2011, p. 206.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>10</sup> See the contributions in *The Transmission of Well-Being. Gendered Marriage Strategies and Inheritance Systems in Europe (17<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, ed. by Margarida Durães, Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, Bern, 2009; Anna Bellavitis, Beatrice Zucca Micheletto, *Introduction*, in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being in Europe from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century. North Versus South?*, ed. by Anna Bellavitis, Beatrice Zucca Micheletto, Abingdon, 2018, pp. 1–27.

<sup>11</sup> Michelle LaMarche Marrese, *A Woman's Kingdom. Noblewomen and the Control of Property in Russia, 1700–1861*, Ithaca, London, 2002; Evdoxios Doxiadis, *The Shackles of Modernity: Women, Property, and the Transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Greek State (1750–1850)*, Cambridge, London, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> For the difference between norm and practice see especially Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England*, London, 1993; *Married Women and the Law: Coverture in England and the Common Law World*, ed. by Tim Stretton, Krista Kesselring, Montreal, 2013.

<sup>13</sup> Deborah Simonton, *Community of Goods, Coverture and Capability in Britain. Scotland versus England*, in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being*, ed. by Anna Bellavitis, Beatrice Zucca Micheletto, pp. 36–37.

that they brought into the family, and in 1763 they were legally permitted to sell them without their husbands' agreement and to engage in transactions. However, this was a reform supported by the elite and for the elite,<sup>14</sup> and the situation of ordinary women was quite different, their goods being held in common.<sup>15</sup> Generally speaking, in Europe the dowry became a channel for the continuing enrichment of the family patrimony. In Italy it remained inalienable and in the absence of children it would return to its family of origin.<sup>16</sup> Here too, however, there were differences between the north and the south of the country, to which were added the struggle to maintain a balance between the power of the state and that of the Church.<sup>17</sup> The law of dowry thus brings into discussion the relation of the woman to her blood family, to her husband and his family, and to inheritance practices.<sup>18</sup> The power of usufruct, enjoyed by the husband in the management of the dowry until it passed to the next generation, was a temporary one. In fact, this power was granted by and through the wife,<sup>19</sup> the legislation being aimed at the economic strengthening of the family. In other spaces, such as the Pyrenees, it was not gender or the fact that it was the man who carried on the family name that counted, but the principle of primogeniture.<sup>20</sup> The importance of land and immovable properties, especially in agricultural societies, led to a channelling of the inheritance of these properties towards one of the children, thus avoiding a repeated division of the land, which would undermine the economic power of the family.

The civil code issued under Napoleon Bonaparte (1804) was introduced in France as a reaction to the legislative liberties granted following the Revolution of 1789 (for example rights for unmarried mothers and illegitimate children, equal inheritance rights for sons and daughters, and the forbidding of the disinheritance of children by their father), which, according to recent research, had destabilised family economy and harmony.<sup>21</sup> The legislators sought to re-establish and reinforce a state of order, and while unmarried women had full rights, wives were in a position of legal dependence on their husbands. The spread and the influence of the

<sup>14</sup> Michelle LaMarche Marrese, *A Woman's Kingdom*, pp. 2, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Deborah Simonton, *Women in European Culture and Society. Gender, Skill and Identity from 1700*, Abingdon, 2011, pp. 162–163.

<sup>16</sup> Ida Fazio, *Percorsi coniugali nell'Italia moderna*, in *Storia del matrimonio*, ed. by Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, Michela De Giorgio, Bari, 1996, p. 165.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 193–194.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 166–170.

<sup>19</sup> Renata Ago, *Oltre la dote: i beni femminili*, in *Il lavoro delle donne*, ed. by Angela Groppi, Bari, 1996, pp. 167–170.

<sup>20</sup> Marie-Pierre Arrizabalaga, *Gender and Well-Being in the Pyrenean Stem Family System*, in *Gender and Well-Being in Europe. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. by Bernard Harris, Lina Galvez, Helena Machado, Fordham, 2009, pp. 89–90.

<sup>21</sup> Suzanne Dosen, *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France*, Berkeley, 2004; Marion Röwekamp, *Married Women's Property Rights in the Nineteenth Century in France and Spain. A North-South Case Study*, in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being*, ed. by Anna Bellavitis, Beatrice Zucca Micheletto, pp. 79–80.

French code is beyond doubt, but this did not mean that it was immediately adopted without adaptation to or to the detriment of local specificity. In the Pyrenees, a compromise was reached that took account of the old regime of primogeniture,<sup>22</sup> while in Spain the code was adopted late and in a distorted manner, and in Greece the use of customary law was preferred until a civil code could be drawn up that combined Byzantine tradition and local specificity with the new modifications at the European level.<sup>23</sup> Conditions in Greece were favourable to the endowing of women and even their inclusion in inheritance, and in the Aegean islands the principle of primogeniture applied.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, in Bulgaria it was rare for women to receive land as part of their dowry and even more rare for them to receive inheritance; in the western part of the country, in the absence of sons the preferred option was the cession of the goods to the community.<sup>25</sup> From Western Europe to the Balkans, we find a plurality of systems of inheritance and of their relations to the dowry and to women.<sup>26</sup> Even if women were in a subordinate position to men, what emerges is the importance of class, order of birth and economic situation as factors in the administration and interpretation of the law. Moreover, the custom of the land or local specificity sometimes took precedence in dealing with family problems.<sup>27</sup> It was the family as an economic and patrimonial unit that legislation and the community protected and favoured, not the individual.<sup>28</sup>

An analysis of the situation in Romania seems both necessary and useful, even if somewhat similar studies for the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century have been carried out.<sup>29</sup> The present study analyses dowry contracts in Wallachia,

<sup>22</sup> Marie-Pierre Arrizabalaga, *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> Evdoxios Doxiadis, *From Legal Diversity to Centralization. Marriage and Wealth in Nineteenth-Century Greece*, in *Gender, Law and Economic Well-Being*, ed. by Anna Bellavitis, Beatrice Zucca Micheletto, p. 97.

<sup>24</sup> Paul H. Stahl, *Household, Village and Village Confederation in Southeastern Europe. East European Monographs*, Boulder, 1986, pp. 153–159.

<sup>25</sup> Maria N. Todorova, *Balkan Family Structure and the European Pattern. Demographic Developments in Ottoman Bulgaria*, Budapest, New York, 2006.

<sup>26</sup> Nicole Arnaud-Duc, *Les contradictions du droit*, in *Histoire des femmes en Occident*, vol. IV, *Le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. by Geneviève Fraisse, Michelle Perrot, Paris, 2002, pp. 132–133; Heide Wunder, Grethe Jacobsen, *Introduction*, in *East Meets West: A Gendered View of Legal Tradition*, ed. by Grethe Jacobsen, Heide Wunder, Kiel, 2015.

<sup>27</sup> Deborah Simonton, *Women in European Culture*, p. 163.

<sup>28</sup> Margarida Durães, Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, Llorenç Ferrer Alòs, Jan Kok, *Introduction. Historicizing Well-Being from a Gender Perspective*, in *The Transmission of Well-Being*, ed. by Margarida Durães, Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux, pp. 41–42.

<sup>29</sup> Chronologically: Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Zestrea între normă și practică. Țara Românească în secolul al XVII-lea*, in “Studii și materiale de istorie medie,” vol. XVIII, 2000 and XIX, 2001 (continued in *În șalvari și cu ișlic*); Violeta Barbu, *De la comunitatea patrimonială la comunitatea de destin: zestrea în Țara Românească în secolul al XVII-lea*, in *De la comunitate la societate. Studii de istoria familiei în Țara Românească*, ed. by Violeta Barbu, Florina Constantin, Constanța Ghițulescu, Andreea Iancu, Gheorghe Lazăr, Bucharest, 2007 (continued in *Ordo amoris*); Angela Jianu, *Women, Dowries, and Patrimonial Law in Old-Regime Romania (c. 1750–1830)*, in “Journal of Family History,” 34, 2009, no. 2, pp. 189–205.

taking as a case study the city of Craiova and the Oltenia region situated in the south-western part of today's Romania. My main source is a trove of seven registers found at the tribunal in Craiova containing 250 such documents.<sup>30</sup> Dowry contracts were not new and during the eighteenth century they had been registered in the ledgers of the metropolitan church,<sup>31</sup> which oversaw a range of family matters at the time. In less than a century, political events brought about significant changes. The intermittent wars with the Russian and Austrian empires, the war of independence started by the Greeks and economic problems prompted the Porte to agree to some concessions in order to keep its power in the Balkans. The Treaty of Adrianople (1829) settled this, and Wallachia, which had supported the Greeks in 1821, now entered a Russian protectorate, under which its princes would be chosen from among the Romanian boyars and not the Phanariots of Constantinople as before. This was the beginning of Balkan nationalism and, at the same time, of the secularisation and institutional reformation of a space seeking to recover from the backwardness for which it was so blamed in the West. The Russian protectorate brought the first Romanian constitution, the Organic Regulation (1831), together with new institutions and a gradual secularisation. The old rules were reinterpreted and adapted to the new legislation meant first to assess the population and then to create an administrative infrastructure and a personnel network especially in the cities and towns. A special section of the law even stipulated the obligation of municipal courts to register dowry contracts,<sup>32</sup> specifying movable and immovable assets, their price, and the agreement between the parties.<sup>33</sup> Thus, the state created its own legal system and the dowry contract endorsed by the court became a binding document which could be used to settle inheritance disputes.

Old habits, however, were difficult to change and people needed time to become accustomed to registering their official documents not in front of a priest but in a court of law. Thus, starting with the 1840s, it was customary to bring in dowry contracts for marriages concluded many years earlier. For example, Costița, "a poor orphan girl," registered her dowry contract on 19 May 1850 with the mention that: "because she had her own dowry when she married in 1827 she now wanted to register the said dowry, given to her husband without any contract, with this dowry contract including only movable assets and hard cash, totalling six hundred and forty two *lei*, ten *parale*."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> There are two more dowry contracts which are unfortunately not completely readable. Further dowry contracts for this time period will be added to the corpus as they are found and transcribed.

<sup>31</sup> See Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu's qualitative analysis of dowry contracts in *În șalvari și cu ișlic. Biserică, sexualitate, căsătorie și divorț în Țara Românească a secolului al XVIII-lea*, Bucharest, 2004, where she mainly uses registers found in the manuscript section of the Romanian Academy Library.

<sup>32</sup> *Regulamentele organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei*, vol. I, ed. by Paul Negulescu, George Alexianu, Bucharest, 1944, p. 122, art. 332.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 123, art. 335.

<sup>34</sup> Arhivele Naționale. Direcția Județeană Dolj (hereafter: DJAN Dolj), Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 7/1844, numbered, document no. 8.



However, we need a retrospective look to understand both how the dowry and inheritance system functioned and how the succession of goods within the family worked in the Romanian space. Part of Ottoman Wallachia and briefly under Austrian rule, Oltenia is a suitable microcosm to capture the reaction of the low-ranking boyars and of the wealthy bourgeois to these political changes. The focus on this area is not arbitrary: not only had it been under dispute for a long time, but it had also been at the crossroads of information and high culture exchange between the two empires. Starting with a quantitative analysis, I will highlight and interpret how norms are reflected in dowry contracts and the frequency and importance of certain goods. The statistical analysis will be complemented with information about the history of local families to better understand the subject and provide working patterns for a more thorough future investigation.<sup>35</sup>

## I. THE ROMANIAN DOWRY SYSTEM

### I.1. THE DOWRY (SYSTEM) IN WALLACHIA, THE DOWRY (SYSTEM) IN OLTENIA

Recent Romanian historiography has dealt with the legal nature of the dowry system, its structure and its role in building a family heritage, but my interest is directed towards an economic perspective with an emphasis on properties and objects. However, a definition of the dowry system in the Romanian space and its contextualisation are necessary to understand the framework of this discussion. From the outset, it has to be said that the term includes both the endowment and the trousseau given to the woman on her wedding day, both of which are recorded in the contract.<sup>36</sup> *Îndreptarea Legii* [The Legal Guidebook] (1652), Romanian legislation of Byzantine inspiration, allows the woman to obtain through dowry both real estate (immovable property: land, houses, shops, vineyards, orchards) and movable property (goods: jewellery, clothes, tableware, furniture, etc.), all priced. The wife remains the owner of the property while the husband is its usufructuary administrator, who must, if necessary, allow the sale, exchange or transfer of property should the wife request it. In case of divorce, the husband must return any property received or pay for it; however, he can recover his investment if he has incurred any expenses repairing, maintaining or improving the property acquired through the dowry contract.<sup>37</sup> Although the woman was the beneficiary of all these actions, the dowry contract was, by law, a predominantly male legal process. The father or his substitute<sup>38</sup> was

<sup>35</sup> An inquiry using the same framework and type of sources is currently undertaken for another Romanian county.

<sup>36</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *În șalvari și cu ișlic*, pp. 135–170. The discussion continues in *Mariage et parenté à travers les actes dotaux roumains (1700–1865)*, în “Annales de démographie historique,” 2011, no. 1, pp. 141–160; Violeta Barbu, *De la comunitatea patrimonială*, pp. 73–78.

<sup>37</sup> *Îndreptarea Legii* (1652), Bucharest, 1962, gl. 265, p. 266.

<sup>38</sup> When the father passes away, he is replaced by uncles, brothers or his widow. For orphan brides, there was the Charity Box, introduced by the state, and very poor servants worked for their dowry or were helped by boyars. Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *În șalvari și cu ișlic*, pp. 161–170.

the endower, a priest was until the nineteenth century the executor of the act, and it was the son-in-law who confirmed receipt of the dowry in front of male witnesses.

While necessary at that time in order to validate the contract, the presence of witnesses gradually became optional during the nineteenth century and after the adoption of the Civil Code (1865), witnesses were replaced by the public notary, who was better equipped to handle “the transfer of authority from the family circle (family, relatives, friends, neighbours) to a public institution.”<sup>39</sup> The corpus I use for my investigation shows the same trend: the dowry records registered at the Civil Court in Craiova between 1837 and 1849 show the co-existence of both witnesses and judicial approval, while the dowry contracts registered between 1855 and 1859 show as sufficient the “acknowledgment” of the institution at the end. In addition, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Metropolitan Antim Ivireanul (1640–1716) introduced a form showing how to draft the dowry contract, categorising the goods and streamlining the information in order to take into account the economic possibilities of each class.<sup>40</sup> Later, however, due to secularisation, this fell into disuse and dowry lists only mentioned the value of the property, starting with the most valuable items. Even so, my quantitative corpus reveals nuances which are worth mentioning. In general, the value of estates, houses, shops and other properties was not registered because their prices varied according to the political and economic context of the time. Where there are exceptions, they both reinforce the rule and emphasise the practice: even though the endowers knew the value of the property, they did not write it down for the future benefit of the one who received it.

It was also the endowers who determined the value of the given property, and if the daughter or son-in-law sold the property during their lifetime at a higher price than originally set, then the surplus returned to them. This is what Hristache Zamfir stipulated when he gave his daughter Elena in 1848 the houses in the St. Arhangel quarter of Craiova, together with the garden and their annexes: “[A]ll goods have been priced among us, six hundred Austrian *galbeni împărătești* [imperial gold coins], but for the [illegible word] of the parts will be sold at public auction and I will retain the surplus, but if the total sum is short, I will repay the rest.”<sup>41</sup>

It may be observed that in the majority of cases the signing of a dowry contract was on a different date from that of the transfer of the property. This allowed for more bargaining regarding the value of goods. The dowry protected women and continuously affected the lives of those involved in the transfer of property. The process was also closely linked to the succession system, which,

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The prince, the trustee (*epitropul*) and even the priest could act as the father's replacement. Violeta Barbu, *De la comunitatea patrimonială*, pp. 73–78.

<sup>39</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *În șalvari și cu ișlic*, p. 139; eadem, *Mariage et parenté*, p. 143.

<sup>40</sup> Antim Ivireanul, *Opere*, ed. by Gabriel Ștrempel, Bucharest, 1972, pp. 393–394. Sections on the form include: clothing, bedding, tableware, tools and jewellery, estates, animals and Gypsy slaves, each endower filling the form to the best of their abilities.

<sup>41</sup> DJAN Dolj, 3/1837, dowry contract no. 29 from 24 April 1848.

starting with Caragea's Law (1818), excluded women from parental inheritance in order to prevent the dissolution of the family patrimony. It was however only a partial exclusion, because women could still inherit movable goods when they married but not the family estate, which could only be passed on down the male line of the family.<sup>42</sup> Nonetheless, it should be mentioned that local custom and some legal codes allowed for equality between male and female inheritance even though the male side still remained "privileged."<sup>43</sup> It seems the indecision regarding the right of female inheritance was due to the clash of various judicial codes and practices.<sup>44</sup> Slavic influence does not guarantee the right to a dowry, if we are to take into account the Bulgarian case; as for the Russian situation, we see a slight, albeit later, improvement in that women of the nobility did get to inherit their share of their parents' wealth upon marriage.<sup>45</sup> In contrast, Roman and Byzantine legislation was more permissive, and it guaranteed the dowry system by allowing daughters to receive property, as was the case in the Romanian lands and in Greece.<sup>46</sup> Registering a dowry contract protected both the married woman and the third party involved, the heir and/or the creditors.<sup>47</sup> We see the husband or his family brought to court by lenders or when money or property went missing. In 1850, for instance, the state ledger recorded twenty public trials in Dolj County and Craiova, the area where I focus my analysis, moving from local to higher courts, in which the main legal dispute regarded protection against lenders and creditors.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Ovidiu Sachelarie, Nicolae Stoicescu, *Instituții feudale din țările române: dicționar*, Bucharest, 1988, pp. 521–522.

<sup>43</sup> Under *Legiuirea Caragea* (1818), Bucharest, 1955, chapter III, p. 118, § 17 c), f) and g) the sons inherit the estate which gives the family name. See also p. 124, § 20. However, the editor of the critical edition of the law, Andrei Rădulescu, analysing the historical context, finds that the initial intention was to acknowledge the inheritance right of daughters "without a dowry. In the draft of the law there were even provisions made guaranteeing the dowry"; Andrei Rădulescu, *Pagini despre Legiuirea Caragea*, in *Pagini inedite din istoria dreptului vechi românesc*, Bucharest, 1981, p. 86; Ovidiu Sachelarie, Nicolae Stoicescu, *op. cit.*, p. 522 argue that the male privilege was predicated on the right of the male heir to buy back the goods granted to one of his sisters via the dowry, according to a custom coming from Transylvania.

<sup>44</sup> Georges Fotino, *Droit romain et droit oriental: phénomènes d'interpénétration. La représentation en matière de successions féminines dans l'ancien droit roumain*, in *În memoria lui Vasile Pârvan*, Bucarest, 1934, pp. 5–13.

<sup>45</sup> Maria N. Todorova, *op. cit.*, p. 120; Michelle LaMarche Marrese, *Gender and the Legal Order in Imperial Russia*, in *Russia*, vol. I, *Imperial Russia, 1689–1917*, ed. by Dominic Lieven, Cambridge, 2006, p. 326, who mentions the women's right, gained in Russia at the end of eighteenth century, to have "one-fourteenth, or 7 per cent, of their parents' immovable property, as well as one-eighth of their personal assets, after which their brothers received equal shares of the estate" (p. 327).

<sup>46</sup> N.J. Pantazopoulos, *Church and Law in the Balkan Peninsula during the Ottoman Rule*, Amsterdam, 1984, p. 52; Evodxios Doxiadis, *Kin and Marriage in Two Aegean Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century*, in *Across the Religious Divide. Women, Property and Law in the Wider Mediterranean (ca. 1300–1800)*, ed. by Jutta Gisela Sperling, Shona Kelly Wray, Abingdon, 2010, p. 239.

<sup>47</sup> *Legiuirea Caragea* (1818), *Anexa III*, pp. 262, 263.

<sup>48</sup> "Buletin Oficial al Prințatului Țării Românești," 1850, nos. 1, 14, 21, 75, 85, 96, 104, pp. 2, 58, 82, 298, 339, 383, 415.

Differences between norms and practices with regard to dowry systems can only be outlined if we analyse an entire corpus of documents from a well-defined period of time. A likely contender for such an endeavour, the capital city of Wallachia, Bucharest, was a large city with a cosmopolitan population that is difficult to assess. In addition, Bucharest boasted an important social class, that of the boyars, who had all sorts of legal advantages and who put special emphasis on consumption and wealth transmission. However, the boyars were hesitant to register their wealth in courts of law and instead preferred to record it in family ledgers or in the registers of churches they had helped build and endowed; even in the case of divorce, which was previously settled by the archbishop of the metropolitan church, rank and wealth played a major role. As such, focusing my study on Bucharest would have been too much of a stretch, requiring the analysis of a vast number of documents too difficult to locate; instead, I have chosen to focus on Craiova and Oltenia. Not only was the province of Oltenia known as Little Wallachia, its elites provided the country with ruling princes such as Gheorghe Bibescu and Barbu Știrbei, and other dignitaries originated from here.

## I.2. CRAIOVA AND ITS INHABITANTS

The city of Craiova was the second most important city of the Principality of Wallachia; throughout its history, it struggled to hold prominent political decision-making power and flourished from the fourteenth century on due to the old commercial routes towards Hungary and Vidin.<sup>49</sup> The eighteenth century brought a short but beneficial Habsburg dominion over the city and the entire region of Oltenia<sup>50</sup>; following failed attempts to transform it into the capital of the principality, Craiova ultimately remained only a local political, economic and administrative centre. Local boyars came from old Romanian families<sup>51</sup> and opposed as far as possible the influence of the Phanariots, remaining partially hostile to any matrimonial alliances with them.<sup>52</sup> This so-called *pământeană* (native, indigenous) boyar class supported the revolution of Tudor Vladimirescu (1821) and the members of Eteria in the removal of the Greeks appointed by the Ottoman Porte. The city was also an

<sup>49</sup> Laurențiu Rădvan, *At Europe's Borders. Medieval Towns in the Romanian Principalities*, Leiden, 2010, p. 272.

<sup>50</sup> Șerban Papacostea, *Oltenia sub stăpânire austriacă (1718–1739)*, Bucharest, 1998.

<sup>51</sup> The majority of these families can be traced back to the fifteenth–seventeenth centuries, their members belonging to the courts of Matei Basarab or Mihai Viteazul: for instance, the families Bengescu, Brăiloiu, Grădișteanu, Greceanu, Glogoveanu, Kretzulescu, Lecca, Obedeianu and Oteteleșanu; Octav Lecca, *Familiiile boierești române: istoric și genealogie*, Bucharest, 1899, pp. 68–70; 84–89; 73–76; 60–62; 263–265; 248–251; 300–305.

<sup>52</sup> On the matrimonial alliances as a political strategy see Neagu Djuvara, *Les grands boyars ont-ils constitué dans les principautés roumaines une véritable oligarchie institutionnelle et héréditaire?*, in “Südost-Forschungen Sonderdruck Band,” XLXV, 1987, pp. 1–55; Paul Cernovodeanu, *Clanuri, familii, autorități, puteri (Țara Românească, secolele XV–XVII)*, in “Arhiva genealogică,” IV, 1994, nos. 1–2, pp. 77–86.

important and thriving commercial centre, which kept in continuous relations with Austrian Transylvania through commercial companies such as Hagi Pop, Stamu, Manicati, etc., with which merchants established here like Ioan Băluță<sup>53</sup> or Dimitrie Aman had connections. In a report following an 1852 journey from Trieste via Vienna to Constantinople, the theologian and traveller Francesco Nardi (1808–1877) writes that “goods travel to Bucharest by way of Craiova and Slatina.”<sup>54</sup> He compares the economic importance of the city to that of the ports of Brăila, Giurgiu and Galați and shows, like other travellers, the impact that this aspect had on the growth and welfare of the population and, especially, on urban development. Even earlier, another traveller mentions that “the boyars of all ranks resided in the capital and in the few towns, such as Craiova and Pitești, which, having become populated centres, could offer some comfort and safety of living.”<sup>55</sup> And this brings us to a feature that distinguishes the boyars from these areas among those of Wallachia in general. Regarding their habitat and their residences, it is worth mentioning the existence of *cule*, fortified defensive dwellings, starting especially from the eighteenth century, following frequent Turkish attacks from the south of the Danube. These were becoming more and more the attribute of low- and middle-ranking boyars and merchants, during a time when the highly-ranking boyars were moving their residence to Bucharest and Craiova for safety reasons. Gradually, during the nineteenth century, this type of dwelling became a high-status symbol among the elites of Oltenia, who chose it as a type of residence on their estates.<sup>56</sup> Such houses spread in neighbouring counties such as Mehedinți or Gorj, becoming a sort of network that incorporated the functions both of shelter in times of military conflict and comfort and prestige during peacetime. Furthermore, the city itself was described in 1837 in official publications as having around 12,000 inhabitants and being “regulated and important for trade and industry,” with schools, beautiful architecture and public gardens for boyars and city folk.<sup>57</sup>

### I.3. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS FOR OLTENIA

While they contain no information about peasants' dowry contracts, the records of the local tribunal of this wealthy city do hold many such contracts belonging

<sup>53</sup> Gheorghe Lazăr, *Mărturie pentru posteritate: testamentul negustorului Băluță din Craiova*, Brăila, 2010.

<sup>54</sup> *Călători străini despre țările române în secolul al XIX-lea*, n.s., vol. VI, (1852–1856), ed. by Daniela Bușă et al., Bucharest, 2010, p. 18.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. V, (1847–1851), Bucharest, 2009, p. 70.

<sup>56</sup> The term derives from the Turkish *kule*, which means tower. Radu Crețeanu, Sarmiza Crețeanu, *Culele din România*, Bucharest, 1969, pp. 5–13; Iancu Atanasescu, Valeriu Grama, *Culele din Oltenia*, Craiova, 1974, p. 24. This type of dwelling is also found in Serbia, Albania, Macedonia and Bulgaria, but the Oltenia (Romanian) distinct architectural feature is the watchtower with poles, “a concession made to the demands of comfort and beauty”; Teohari Antonescu, *ibidem*, p. 11.

<sup>57</sup> *Almanahul statului din Prințipatul a toată Țara Românească pe anul 1837*, Buda, 1837, pp. 195–196.

preponderantly to a burgeoning social class, that of the bourgeoisie, of merchants and craftsmen. As mentioned before, as a supremely privileged class, boyars kept their dowry contracts privately and consequently there are only a handful of such contracts to be found in the court archives. Of the few contracts we have at hand, for example, many belong to families of low-ranking boyars who had lost much of their fortune or whose members, although wealthy, were involved in the local administration and were asked to implement the new legislation that was just beginning to come into force, namely the Organic Regulation. They are an example of the class to which they belonged, but their example was only followed later, towards the end of the century. They entered matrimonial alliances with foreigners, with other boyar families, or with what we might call liberal professionals or freelancers, such as magistrates and officers. The boyar lady Aristița Grădișteanu, for instance, married her daughter Fedonia to Raoul de Pontbriant, the descendent of an impoverished French family working as a teacher in Wallachia.<sup>58</sup> The daughter inherited an estate from her grandmother, which the son-in-law could sell only if “he buys another estate closer to Bucharest”; in addition, she inherited a thousand *galbeni* (gold coins) and Gypsy slaves.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, when she married the Russian captain Ioan Vasilie Grugopov, Zinca Greceanu received from her mother and brothers a vineyard worth 1,200 *galbeni*, 1,000 *galbeni* in cash, jewellery worth 250 *galbeni* and clothing worth the same sum.<sup>60</sup> Constantin Lecca, a teacher in Craiova hailing from a merchant family in Transylvania, married Victoria Oteteleşanu in 1836. The dowry contract he received from his mother-in-law Catinca is substantial: half of the Loloiești estate, an empty lot to build a house in the Petru Bojii neighbourhood, money, livestock, clothing, jewellery, silverware, mirrors and furniture.<sup>61</sup> The owner of a printing house and promoter of cultural life, Lecca went on to become a well-known painter, especially a portraitist of his family and of the Oltenian elite, before moving to Bucharest as a teacher.<sup>62</sup> Thus, matrimonial alliances were not just a means of transmission of goods, but also showcased the formative role played in society by the networks of power behind those partnerships. Local boyars wanted to establish themselves as the elite, to acquire their own power, far from the overbearing influence of the capital, and, if possible, to hold higher administrative positions. Marrying a less well-off person was permitted only if the suitor was a foreigner of good reputation and respectable origin; if the suitor was Romanian, he had to be a good practitioner in a profession valuable to the group.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Raul de Pontbriant (1811–1891) is the author of a Romanian-French dictionary (1862) and of a manual of French language (1867), his works being subsidised by the state.

<sup>59</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 7/1844, dowry contract no. 13, of 12 September 1848, not numbered.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, dowry contract no. 33 of 5 January, not numbered.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*, 2/1841, dowry contract no. 4, not numbered.

<sup>62</sup> Barbu Theodorescu, *Constantin Lecca*, Bucharest, 1969, pp. 22–23.

<sup>63</sup> Giovanni Montroni, *Nobilul*, in *Omul secolului al XIX-lea*, ed. by Ute Frevert, H.-G. Haupt, Iași, 2002, p. 292, who makes an analysis of the Italian aristocracy and observes the same pattern for the urban provincial representatives.

These considerations, however, only apply to those boyars whose dowry contracts are kept in the court archives. The situation is radically different with regard to the other social classes, where a gender comparison (Table 1) surprisingly shows cases where the wife endowed the husband.

**Table 1**  
Persons Receiving the Dowry as Shown in 250 Dowry Contracts

| Person receiving the dowry        | Number of cases | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Daughter                          | 178             | 71%        |
| Husband                           | 36              | 14%        |
| Sister                            | 22              | 9%         |
| Niece                             | 5               | 2%         |
| Orphan girl                       | 5               | 2%         |
| Maid                              | 2               | 1%         |
| Wife                              | 1               | 0.5%       |
| Unnamed lady ( <i>jupâneasă</i> ) | 1               | 0.5%       |
| TOTAL                             | 250             | 100%       |

Source: DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, registers nos. 2/1837, 3/1837, 1/1838, 2/1841, 7/1844–1850, 4/1849, 1/1856–1859.

In these situations, either the dowry was a gift from the bride's parents or the future bride had worked very hard to put it together. Whichever the case, one thing was certain: the bride belonged to the lower classes and her dowry represented her only power. When widows remarried, they might, if possible, want to emphasise the differences of gender and age within the couple. In fact, this is what Maria did on 23 May 1850 when she named her new husband owner of half of her store: "due to his youth (*junia*) because I am a widow and I had two husbands and upon my death I want him to inherit the other half of the store."<sup>64</sup> Many other women proceeded in a similar manner. In the rare case of a deceased father, the sons would join the mother to give the dowry to her daughter on behalf of the missing head of the family.

During this period, dowries tended to incorporate also premarital gifts (*darul dinaintea nunții*) from the future groom and his family, which were consequently protected in a court of law and passed down to future heirs. In fact, dowry contracts include at the end a number of conditions regarding the future status of certain properties, in the event of their being sold, exchanged or co-used, which proves the existence of a partial transfer. Sometimes the comments accompanying such conditions show how the endower perceives the law and how he wants the succession among his children to proceed. For instance, here is a father passing down his estate, with the daughter receiving: "the third part of the Coțofeni estate, the dowry of her mother, and after my passing half of all the land, and before that a third belongs to her brother Todorache and another third is my right as long as I

<sup>64</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 7/1844, dowry contract no. 11, not numbered.

live as described here by the law, while my son-in-law as an only child will inherit his parents' whole fortune."<sup>65</sup>

Dividing the estate in three parts does not mean a gender-equal succession because the family estate, which also bears the family name of Gigartu-Viișoara, was passed down to the son. The estate mentioned in the dowry contract was in fact passed down from the mother's side and the fact that the daughter receives fewer properties than her brother is conveniently compensated for by the well-off situation of her husband. Here, the father easily adjusted the dowry to the future social status of his daughter.<sup>66</sup>

## II. CIRCULATION OF GOODS

### II. 1. TRANSFERRED PROPERTY, MOVABLE PROPERTY REAL ESTATE PROPERTY, TRANSFERRED WITHIN THE FAMILY

"[T]hey left with their dowry from the parental wealth."<sup>67</sup> So declares Tiță Protopopescu in the summer of 1844, when he gives his daughter Ioana as dowry on her marriage two pieces of land (one, he explicitly states, being for the construction of a house), twenty *rubiyas* for a necklace of gold coins, silver belt clasps, together with other movable goods, all valuable. Like all parents who came to the law court to register and authenticate a dowry contract, he was asked about his right of possession over the properties that he was giving. In the first place what mattered was the situation of the land and buildings, and only in the second place that of the movable goods. The father states that one of the places was bought and the other inherited, and his presentation of the situation of his family reveals part of the sources of inheritance in Wallachia: "[T]his [place] remained [to him] as inheritance from his parents and he has owned it for more than thirty years because he had no other siblings except some sisters and they left with their dowry [*i.e.* in place of an inheritance] from the parental wealth."<sup>68</sup>

For the father, the dowry constitutes the girls' inheritance from the parental wealth. And he asks that it be the same for his son-in-law, especially as he has been correct and has given all the goods "now, at the wedding." If Ioana does not have children, then after her death the goods will return to her blood family; at the same time, having received her dowry, the daughter "should have no reason to seek anything more from the house of my heirs."<sup>69</sup> But is this an exceptional case? The problem of the connection between dowry and inheritance has long been debated in

<sup>65</sup> Ioan Gigartu for his daughter Marsica (Maria), married to I. Broșteanu; DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 7/1844, dowry contract no. 40.

<sup>66</sup> Anna Bellavitis, *Women, Family, and Property in Early Modern Venice*, in *Across the Religious Divide*, ed. by Jutta Gisela Sperling, Shona Kelly Wray, p. 177, who shows that the dowry should not be "proportional to family wealth or to the sons' inheritance."

<sup>67</sup> "au ieșit cu zestrea lor din averea părintească."

<sup>68</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 7/1849, dowry contract no. 5 of 20 June 1844, not numbered.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*.



Romanian historiography, and Violeta Barbu's analysis of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century practice shows clearly that *înfrățirea* and substitution were possible responses under customary law.<sup>70</sup> Women started out as heiresses to paternal and parental wealth, but as the dowry became a practice in itself (the carrying out of a specific action, at the wedding), they no longer figured in the discussion of the division of what was left of the parental wealth. Thus by the middle of the seventeenth century, the dowry was their form of access to their inheritance,<sup>71</sup> and in the following period the provisions for its juridical protection grew.<sup>72</sup> Caragea's Law Code (1818), which excluded endowed daughters from the parental inheritance, did no more than confirm what was already happening. Endowed daughters had already received their share of the inheritance on marriage.<sup>73</sup> For the period of the Organic Regulation and the years leading up to it, it has already been shown how the valuation of the dowry and its being guaranteed against creditors served to protect it and were rights that women made use of. They were granted properties and, in the case of the present corpus, it is almost solely when these are included in the dowry contract that their history is recorded. The history was necessary to demonstrate their provenance and the right to grant them. It was on the basis of this information that the contract was authenticated. Thus we can see the existence of a plurality of situations: the properties might be part of the parental wealth (received as sole heir or together with brothers/sisters), from the father's wealth, from the mother's dowry or from the goods owned jointly by the couple. The majority of cases in which no explanatory details are given concern dowry contracts listing only movable good such as jewels or clothes, in which case there was little danger of litigation; in the rare cases where immovable properties come without such details it is stated that the documentary evidence has been lost and that the person in question is "in rightful possession" as confirmed by witnesses.

**Table 2**

Source of Origin / Previous Ownership of Properties Given in Dowry Contracts

| Origin / previous ownership of the immovable goods               | Number | % of total |
|--|--------|------------|
| Not stated   | 37     | 15%        |
| Father's property (inherited, bought by him)                     | 75     | 30%        |
| Mother's property (dowry, inheritance)                           | 46     | 18%        |
| Parental patrimony (common goods i.e. <i>avere părintească</i> ) | 79     | 31%        |

<sup>70</sup> Violeta Barbu, *Familia și sistemele succesoriale în țara obiceului. Substituția*, in eadem, *De bono coniugali. O istorie a familiei din Țara Românească în secolul al XVII-lea*, Bucharest, 2003, pp. 100–118, using 67 documents from *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, Seria B, Țara Românească collection for the period 1400–1653.

<sup>71</sup> Eadem, *Ordo amoris*, p. 210.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 214–215.

<sup>73</sup> See the works of G. Fotino on the matter, who argues that the Slavic influences were not so powerful in the Romanian Principalities; G. Fotino, *Curs de istoria dreptului românesc*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1940–1941, p. 507.

|  |     |      |
|--|-----|------|
| Received by the woman on her first marriage  | 11  | 4%   |
| Donation (by other persons than her parents) | 5   | 2%   |
| TOTAL  | 253 | 100% |

Source: DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, registers nos. 2/1837, 3/1837, 1/1838, 2/1841, 7/1844–1850, 4/1849, 1/1856–1859.

Thus, shops, houses or estates were inherited not only by sons, but also by daughters. Daughters might choose to pass given property down the female line. This is the case of the Chintescu *cula*, whose construction, started in 1818 by the low-ranking boyar Răducan Cioabă, was completed by his widow and her new husband in 1822. The property was inherited by their daughter, Stanca, who, in turn, passed it on to her daughter Maria when she married Dinu Bălteanu. Their daughter Aritia then became next in line.<sup>74</sup> In 1845, in addition to an inn, Păuna Burlănoaia endowed her daughter Elenca with jewellery and clothing and “forty *stânjeni*<sup>75</sup> from our estate, endowed by my parents, in Mălăești, Dolj county [...], a vineyard which I own according to my dowry contract.”<sup>76</sup> Even if they administered and inherited the land or property received by their wives as dowry, the husbands also perceived it as property transmissible to daughters. Furthermore, in the case of considerable wealth, customarily dowries became the transitory channels through which property was transferred among women of the same family. Being placed in a position of financial superiority allowed women the privilege of choice. When he endowed his daughter Saftica with a large amount of property in 1850, Dincă Furtiță makes sure to mention both at the beginning and at the end of the dowry contract the role his mother-in-law had played in establishing the estate in Raznic, Dolj County. On land endowed to his wife, he had built a house and he now endowed his daughter with “two hundred *stânjeni* from the Raznicu estate, which I also received as dowry from her ladyship my mother-in-law Manda Amărasca, on which I built the brick houses and other annexes.”<sup>77</sup>

Still alive at the time of her granddaughter’s marriage, the logothete’s wife Amărasca rises to the occasion by adding at the end of the document that she is also endowing part of the estate on which she lives (Cureaua Mărului), a property almost equal to that already given by the bride’s father. Basically, this is a property

<sup>74</sup> Radu Crețeanu, Sarmiza Crețeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 29; Iancu Atanasescu, Valeriu Grama, *op. cit.*, p. 98. At the same time, each new owner enlarged and beautified the house. These additions were removed during the communist period restoration of the house in 1966–1967 by a team led by Iancu Atanasescu. For more on Stanca’s relationship with her parents, especially after she eloped with the young Grecescu, see Nicoleta Roman, *Deznădăjduită muiere n’au fost ca mine. Femei, onoare și păcat în Valahia secolului al XIX-lea*, Bucharest, 2016, pp. 135–137.

<sup>75</sup> Unit of length used before the introduction of the metric system. It varied between 1.96 m and 2.23 m.

<sup>76</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 3/1837, dowry contract no. 11; similarly, no. 20 from the same year.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibidem*, 1/1856, dowry contract no. 43 of 2 June 1850.

created and enlarged exclusively by women for women. In this situation, the contract is made without any claims, but there are cases when dowry contracts specifically state that the endower (an elderly relative, either a parent, an uncle or an aunt) lives on the estate and the property transfer will be complete only after their passing.

Another important feature that emerges from the analysis of the present corpus is that although these women receive properties, there is a tendency not to give them those that imply an active participation. They get estates (or parts of them, measured in *stânjeni*), vineyards, orchards and/or houses (or a place to build upon), but less often inns, shops, taverns or stores. This is to be expected if we consider the mentality of the time and the association between commerce and masculinity; despite all this, however, even the small percentage we do find represents a change, a reflection of a much more diversified reality. The law can be interpreted, and the transmission of goods takes into account the family and their economic situation.<sup>78</sup>

In most cases, the husband undertook the management of such a property, but it had to be kept and transmitted as an inheritance and a family business. And this generally happened (as in the case of the parental home) only for sons; where women are included, this might show that the family business was also made through them. Half (12) of those who gave such properties that imply commercial activities were women, mothers who made this transfer in favour of their daughters.

**Table 3**  
Type of Properties Given in Dowry Contracts

| Type of immovable goods (property)               | Number | Percentage |
|--|--------|------------|
| Land / estate                                    | 88     | 35%        |
| Vineyards, orchards                              | 72     | 28%        |
| Houses   | 67     | 26%        |
| Property with a commercial activity (inn / shop) | 26     | 10%        |
| Total  | 253    | 100%       |

Source: DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, registers nos. 2/1837, 3/1837, 1/1838, 2/1841, 7/1844–1850, 4/1849, 1/1856–1859.

## II.2. MOVABLE GOODS: OLD AND NEW DOWRY ITEMS

From the beginning it should be pointed out that there is no correlation between quantity and money value. Clothes might be numerous, but in terms of price they do not represent very much in relation to the entire sum of the dowry. Among the most valuable items – apart from real estate – we find jewellery, means of transportation (including carriages from Vienna), silver and Gypsy slaves prior

<sup>78</sup> Angela Groppi, Agnès Fine, *Femmes, dot et patrimoine*, in “Clio. Femmes, genre, histoire,” 7, 1998, p. 3.

to the abolition of Gypsy slavery in February 1856 (Table 4).<sup>79</sup> In fact, it might be argued that in the case of the town dwellers of this region, the fewer the objects the more valuable the dowry.

**Table 4**  
Category of Dowry Items, Considered after Their Number and  
Their Average Value

| Category of items (movable and immovable) included in dowry contracts | Number of items | Percentage | The average value in Romanian lei per item (only if the sum is mentioned) <sup>80</sup> |
|---|-----------------|------------|---|
| Clothes   | 1995            | 27.2%      | 2003.33   |
| Tableware   | 992             | 11.8%      | 104.11  |
| Bed linen   | 941             | 12.5%      | 83  |
| Kitchen accessories   | 624             | 8.6%       | 29.77   |
| Jewels  | 618             | 8.4%       | 397.55  |
| Accessories   | 475             | 6.2%       | 23.31   |
| Objects for godparents and parents-in-law                             | 455             | 5.9%       | 74.88   |
| Furniture   | 321             | 4.0%       | 46.47   |
| Carpets, rugs   | 302             | 4.0%       | 127.79  |
| Money   | 281             | 3.0%       | 9834.64   |
| Properties  | 253             | 0.2%       | 1916.67   |
| Footwear  | 175             | 2.2%       | 16.35   |
| Tools   | 96              | 1.2%       | 11.29   |
| Hygiene supplies  | 93              | 1.2%       | 62.48   |
| Patch of materials  | 46              | 0.8%       | 105.96  |
| Animals   | 42              | 0.7%       | 150.51  |
| Gypsy slaves  | 40              | 0.1%       | 911.5   |
| Other   | 19              | 0.5%       | 79.07   |
| Religious items   | 22              | 0.0%       | 10  |

<sup>79</sup> In Moldavia and especially in Wallachia, Gypsies were legally slaves (*robi*), living in family/kinship groups (*sălaș*). Legally unfree, they could be bought and sold, although they enjoyed limited customary rights to own and inherit property and testify in court. Starting from the eighteenth century, the status of *robi* gradually entered the political and intellectual debate. On this topic, see Viorel Achim, *The Roma in Romanian History*, Budapest, 2004; Florina Manuela Constantin, *Liens de parenté et liens sociaux chez les esclaves tsiganes de Valachie. Le sălaș au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in *Couleurs de l'esclavage sur les deux rives de la Méditerranée (Moyen Âge – XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, ed. by Roger Botte, Alessandro Stella, Paris, 2012, pp. 283–296; Bogdan Mateescu, *Mixed Marriages Involving Gypsy Slaves in Nineteenth Century Wallachia: State and Church Policies*, in *Intermarriage throughout History*, ed. by Luminița Dumănescu, Daniela Mârza, Marius Eppel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2014, pp. 212–231; Nicoleta Roman, *Caught between Two Worlds: The Children from Gypsy and Romanian-Gypsy Families in Wallachia (1800–1860)*, in “Romanian Journal of Population Studies,” 8, 2014, no. 1, pp. 63–86.

<sup>80</sup> For the documents where the price was in *galbeni* (either Austrian or Turkish), we converted into Romanian *lei* using the conversion from that time. The exchange rate mentioned in the dowry contracts is 1 *galben* = 31.5 *lei*.

|                        |    |      |         |
|------------------------|----|------|---------|
| Transportation         | 12 | 0.1% | 1030.67 |
| Silver priced by drams | 6  | 0.1% | 261     |
| (Indecipherable words) | 70 | 1.4% | 234.96  |

Source: DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, registers nos. 2/1837, 3/1837, 1/1838, 2/1841, 7/1844–1850, 4/1849, 1/1856–1859.

A feature of this corpus is the frequency of Austrian gold coins (*galbeni chesaro-crăiești*) when the items are priced, followed by the Romanian currency (*lei*) and Turkish gold coins (*galbeni turcești / constantinopolitani*). This raises questions about the regional economy, about the population's financial confidence and monetary oscillations. As in the case of other autonomous provinces, for political reasons, Wallachia was allowed to have its own currency<sup>81</sup> without affecting the revenues of the Ottomans. In 1831 the Organic Regulation instituted the *leu* as an accounting unit, based on the Dutch *leeuwendaaler* (known in the Ottoman Empire as *esedi gurus*). By mid-nineteenth century, the empire was already experiencing financial distress due to unrest and wars. The measures taken to improve the situation implied financial centralisation, bureaucratic modernisation, and a debasement of silver coins. Finally, from 1843, new gold coins (*liras*), made with Western technology, were introduced, which weighed 7.216 grams, one Austrian florin being worth 0.11 *lira*.<sup>82</sup> The Romanian population did not refer to these coins by the official name of florins / kroners or *liras*, but rather accepted the homogenous picture of similar gold coinage (and the single term *galbeni*) with different economic values. In the corpus, we find especially Austrian *galbeni* and rarely Turkish *galbeni*, I would argue that in this last case the reference is most likely also to Austrian coinage, showing that in this region there is no preference for the local currency (*lei* are mentioned on 81 occasions) or for that of the suzerain Ottoman state, but rather for that of a neighbouring foreign empire. In itself this is an acknowledgement of Austrian economic power and influence in the Balkan space.

The objects that are included in the dowry contracts do not always remain the same; transformations appear even here and the items and the categories to which they belong “convey and condense value.”<sup>83</sup> Thus we can trace a regional identity, a distinctiveness in use or interpretation as well as variations in the price and how this identity circumscribes itself within a larger, European space.

#### A) JEWELLERY, PRECIOUS METALS AND HABERDASHERY

If rings, brooches or pearls are a habit of luxury, another adornment to be mentioned here is the *salbă* (necklace made of valuable coins) or, equally important,

<sup>81</sup> Sevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge, 2000, pp. 88–89.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 188–189, 195–196, 208–209; Edhem Eldem, *A History of the Ottoman Bank*, Istanbul, 1999, p. 21 mentions this action in connection with “the creation of a financial market open to banking activity.”

<sup>83</sup> Fred R. Myers, *Introduction*, in *The Empire of Things: Regimes of Value and Material Culture*, ed. by Fred R. Myers, Santa Fe, 2001, p. 1.

the *galbeni* given for making it. However, not all coins fitted the bill and Austrian royal *galbeni* were preferred both because of their value and because, if need be, their aesthetic function could easily be changed into practical exchange value as currency. The *salbă* was an adornment specific to the Balkans, being found in Serbia, Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria in a variety of models proudly worn at weddings of wealthy families. Throughout the Romanian space, young peasant women wore a less valuable *salbă* made out of lower-value coins (*creițari*, *bani*) at various festive moments in their villages. This was a way of imitating the elite and gaining status in the rural community. In their turn, boyars were influenced by the West to which they aspired and by the Orient, to which they belonged and where they travelled for political and economic purposes. However, this mobility and hierarchy of influences from the outside to the inside was not definitive. For instance, in the period leading to the 1848 revolution, together with the traditional garb, the *salbă* became an element used by the elite in a process of national identification.<sup>84</sup> Thus a synthesis was created between the simplicity of the folk costume and the luxury of the high-ranking boyar women, adorned with buckles, ermine fur and multilayered Austrian *galbeni* necklaces. This symbol of feminine identity sought both to resonate with the European romantic ideal of the nation and to determine an acceptance of the individual by all social milieux. The portraits made in this period by Carol Popp de Szathmari, C.D. Rosenthal and Mihail Lapaty are the proof. The *salbă*, *galbeni* and *pafta* (silver belt clasp) were taken from dowry contracts and dowry chests and reinterpreted as decorative elements of a national myth. After the 1860s, when Romania was recognised as a state, such a costume came to serve as a gift in the diplomatic milieu. Empress Eugenie (1826–1920) of France (1853–1870) received it and used it in a photographic session.<sup>85</sup> Thus, we may observe how an object can be both a “commodity” and a “treasure” in different social strata; and, furthermore, how it can prove the co-existence of multiple regimes of value.<sup>86</sup>

Another important feature dating from the Organic Regulation period was the weighing of jewellery using the *dram* (plural *dramuri*) as a standard unit of weight (3.18 grams), which enhanced the appreciation given to metals. This practice also applied to silverware: pairs of belt clasps of “silver, sixty-six *dramuri*” with “another gilded pair, forty *dramuri*,”<sup>87</sup> “small silver bowl with teaspoons of one hundred and ten *dramuri*, with one *dram* costing sixty *parale*”<sup>88</sup> or “430 silver *dramuri* in spoons, trays and others”<sup>89</sup> and so on. Even though it is particularly characteristic of merchant families or of families with merchant ties, inventorying goods by weight and price is attributed to the practice started during the eighteenth century of marking objects

<sup>84</sup> Cătălina Mihalache, *Costumul “național” românesc: geneza unui simbol identitar*, în “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie ‘A.D. Xenopol’,” LIV, 2017, pp. 207–228.

<sup>85</sup> Adrian-Silvan Ionescu, *Modă și societate urbană*, p. 172.

<sup>86</sup> Fred R. Myers, *op. cit.*, pp. 6, 9.

<sup>87</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj, Secția III, 3/1837, dowry contract no. 23 of 7 February 1849.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, 1/1856, dowry contract no. 1 from 1850.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, dowry contract no. 11 of 12 February 1855.

and especially pieces made out of precious metal. Quality control was no longer performed by craftsmen's corporations but by individual states in various ways, with silverware for instance bearing one or more marks, depending on the region, as was the case in Russia.<sup>90</sup> There is no way of knowing whether all sets of silverware were completely marked, but sometimes their provenance is specifically indicated in the dowry contract, as in the case of the set Gheorghe Coțofenescu gave to his daughter Zinca, which is mentioned as having been "bought in Russia and weighing one thousand one hundred and twenty."<sup>91</sup> It is therefore obvious that objects included in dowry contracts were not exclusively created locally or regionally, but were part of an intense cultural and consumer goods exchange between neighbouring empires which made certain luxury goods such as *paftale* (belt clasps) highly desirable items in any dowry contract. Another aspect worth mentioning is the more and more frequent presence of items of jewellery made from "French gold"; this is a reference to the gold marked in that country and not to a special type of gold. After the Napoleonic wars, France became once again an important actor in fashion and renewed its favoured relations with the Ottoman Empire, through which its goods reached Wallachia. In comparison, Britain started to take an interest in this market relatively late, and it was only at the end of the eighteenth century that it achieved a status that France already had.<sup>92</sup>

## B) DISHWARE AND SILVERWARE

According to an old bourgeois concept, the comfiture set attested to the hostess quality of the wife, the so-called mistress of the house in charge of hospitality. This attribute was not negligible because it contributed to the public image of the family and especially of the husband. Romanian custom (possibly found in the Balkans, too) required that guests should be greeted with water, lemonade, coffee and jam. I shall not present here the civilising effect the adoption of silverware had on the boyars because this has already been interpreted for the Romanian space.<sup>93</sup> The conclusion drawn shows that silver cutlery as "an object of

<sup>90</sup> *Mobilier și argintărie în Europa secolului XIX: catalog de expoziție*, Bucharest, 1999, pp. 20–23. For instance, this happened in Austria in 1784 and in France in 1797.

<sup>91</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 1/1838, dowry contract no. 2 from 1838.

<sup>92</sup> Christine Laidlaw, *The British in the Levant. Trade and Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*, London, New York, 2010, pp. 17–18; Constantin Ardeleanu, *Evoluția intereselor economice și politice britanice la gurile Dunării (1829–1914)*, Brăila, 2008, pp. 35–38. For the Romanian situation see Paul Cernovodeanu, *England's Trade Policy in the Levant and Her Exchange of Goods with the Romanian Countries under the Latter Stuarts*, transl. by M. Lăzărescu, Bucharest, 1972, followed by *Relațiile comerciale româno-engleze în contextul politicii orientale a Marii Britanii (1803–1878)*, Cluj-Napoca, 1986. The English diplomatic reports were published by Paul Cernovodeanu, *Rapoarte consulare și diplomatice engleze privind Principatele Dunărene (1800–1812)*, Brăila, 2007.

<sup>93</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Patimă și desfătare. Despre lucrurile mărunte ale vieții cotidiene în societatea românească (1750–1830)*, Bucharest, 2015, pp. 123–170. For references to

prestige, came in late and with difficulty”<sup>94</sup> and was only used occasionally, though the proliferation of imitations made out of less expensive metals such as tin shows that cutlery entered everyday use.<sup>95</sup> In a city such as Craiova, where the inhabitants enjoyed prosperity and considered the urban space where they lived to be another capital city,<sup>96</sup> the adoption of silverware happened much faster than might have been expected. Most dowry lists include silverware sets, small ones for the married couple and/or larger ones, with silver cutlery, plates and bowls for six or twelve people. Extremely expensive crystal bowls are also present. Cheap comfiture trays were made from common material and those valued at around 50–63 *lei* were imported. In some cases, we know they originated in Leipzig; in other cases foreign provenance may be guessed at from the price. Porcelain, another exotic element, is rarely mentioned and only appears later on.

### C) CLOTHING, FOOTWEAR AND TEXTILES

Romanian peasant blouses (sg. *ie*, pl. *ii*), dresses and calico skirts formed the basis of a wardrobe. These items of clothing were cheap and affordable, usually homemade (*de casă*) or bought on the local market. Expensive textiles were muslin, silk, and satin together with combinations between these materials and lace. As a peculiarity, there are a significant number of cases when, in addition to ready-made clothes, women bought materials which were later used to tailor “new dresses.” As for fur, we might expect to find a whole variety of furs during the period under examination, but in fact only the most common rabbit and fox furs were used. The term *nafea*, which designates the fur on the fox’s belly, is often associated with long garments, a reminder of the Oriental *giubele* (long overcoats) that boyars wore at the beginning of that century. The *cațaveică* (from the Ukrainian *kakavejka*), originating in the rural areas, is another item of clothing which incorporates fur. It was a rustic fur-lined medium-length long-sleeved women’s coat, typical of the South-East European region, made out of ordinary cloth, or velvet in the most expensive version. The *malotea* (also called *scurteică*, occasionally fur-lined), a more stylised version, with furred collar and cuffs, is frequently

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silverware and especially the use of forks, see pp. 140–147, 149–154. Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu shows that individuals ate with their hands at the beginning of the eighteenth century and that only boyars, following the example of Ruling Prince Constantin Brâncoveanu adopted spoons, two-pronged forks for large pieces of meat and three-pronged forks for regular dishes. Eastern and Western etiquette were different from each another (p. 145) and the Russian occupation brought about the imposition of Western good manners. For the way in which the French and Western influence was felt at the level of Romanian society via the Russian presence see Pompiliu Eliade, *Influența franceză asupra spiritului public în România: originile. Studiu asupra stării societății românești în vremea domniilor fanariote*, Bucharest, 2006.

<sup>94</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Patimă și desfătare*, p. 142.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 146.

<sup>96</sup> Neagu Djuvara, *Între Orient și Occident: țările române la începutul epocii moderne (1800–1848)*, Bucharest, 2005, p. 201.



mentioned in the dowry contracts studied. Such clothing items, of local origin, were used by the elite as indoor clothes.<sup>97</sup> During the 1840s and 1850s, the overcoat is also mentioned, albeit rarely. With regard to textiles in Craiova, although we may observe a growing fusion between rural products and those coming from the capital, we cannot point towards profound Westernisation yet. Most likely, in smaller provincial towns, common materials, homemade or locally crafted, outnumbered imported textiles.

Of course, there are also novelties: the already mentioned overcoats, the English calico, the dressing gown, which was worn more and more often from the end of the 1840s. Materials and cloths such as *madipolon*, *percal*, *tradidan* or *dimicoton*, which could hardly be found on the Romanian market at the beginning of the century, were now accessible, cheap and commonly-used, having lost the status of luxury items.

In terms of shoes, we may distinguish three types: made of velvet, of carpet material and of *brunel*, with *ștrimfi* (socks). The *brunel* shoes, a consequence of contacts with the Austrian Empire, were made out of dark wool cloth; the name comes from the German *brunelle* and is associated with the socks of the same origin. *Cipici* (cloth shoes) and *papuci* (house slippers) are also worth mentioning.

The wedding dress, with the much-sought after veil, was a relatively new item. Before Queen Victoria's lavish wedding, which took place on 10 February 1840, the wedding dress could be made out of almost any material and could be almost any colour (although white was preponderantly preferred)<sup>98</sup>; but the publicity that accompanied this event allowed the model gradually to spread and finally to be imposed as a unique gown, different from any other dress. The moment of the wedding had the same meaning for all women and, regardless of social class, the dress had to reflect the very best and the very latest in fashion at that time.<sup>99</sup> In the document corpus I am working with, gowns bearing the specific name of wedding dress ("for the bride") appear only nine times and, only once, as if by chance, is a wedding dress mentioned before 1840.<sup>100</sup> As far as the material of the dress was concerned, silk was preponderantly used and in 1842 one endower even opted for creating a wedding set comprising the dress itself accompanied by a bonnet; as for the colour, this was either not mentioned or was an evanescent pastel.<sup>101</sup> Wedding rings, as items accompanying the bride's wedding set, are only

<sup>97</sup> Ion Ghica, *Opere*, vol. I, ed. by Ion Roman, Bucharest, 1967, p. 128.

<sup>98</sup> *From Queen to Empress. Victorian Dress, 1837–1877, An Exhibition at the Costume Institute. December 15, 1988 – April 16, 1989*, ed. by Caroline Goldthorpe, New York, 1988, pp. 61–62 shows that women could marry even in a travel dress.

<sup>99</sup> Madeleine Ginsburg, *Women's Dress before 1900, Four Hundred Years of Fashion*, ed. by Nathalie Rothstein, London, 1984, p. 37.

<sup>100</sup> Mentioned for 1839, 1842, 1844, 1847 (2 cases), 1849, 1850.

<sup>101</sup> This coincides with the analysis of other types of sources: Adrian-Silvan Ionescu, *People Who Loved Style, Chic Fashion, Memorable Times*, in *Clothes Make the Man. Six Centuries of Clothing History. Garments, Costumes, Uniforms, Accessories. Exhibition Catalogue*, Bucharest, 2014, p. 21.

mentioned two times, both after 1850, but separately from the wedding dress.<sup>102</sup> Thus, it can be said that the diffusion and acceptance of the wedding dress model was still in flux, especially since the Romanian countries were in the sphere of influence of France rather than that of England.

#### D) FROM AN EXOTIC TO A COMMON ITEM IN A DOWRY CONTRACT

Here we may distinguish three categories: the flat iron, umbrellas and watches, and furniture. While ironing was customary in the Balkans, the frequency of the flat iron itself increases during the 1850s, especially that with “two tongues.” Similarly, parasols are found in almost all dowry lists from the period, each priced according to the value of the material from which it was made. Although they had a rapid circulation in mid-eighteenth-century Western societies like England,<sup>103</sup> pocket watches remained luxury items for the Romanian bourgeois milieu of Craiova, mirroring to an extent the situation in the Ottoman Empire. Those listed are rather expensive, one made out of *madem* (alloy) being priced around 50–90 *lei*, compared to the less expensive table clocks costing around 22 *lei* and 20 *parale*. For Western societies, some of the accessories (parasols, gloves, fans and vanity set) might be seen as “middle-class adjustments to aristocratic style.”<sup>104</sup> Although I accept this idea, in the Romanian case it applies only to the first two categories as their number is quite high in my corpus. When it comes to furniture, various items start to appear in documents during the late 1850s. On 12 February 1855, Maria *sin* Popa Barbul, without apparently belonging to a merchant or low-ranking boyar family, endowed her daughter not only with money, jewellery, silverware, dishware and clothing, but also with: a round table, a corner table, a cypress chest, a large vanity mirror with two rows of sills, a walnut mirror with three rows, five chairs with damask upholstery and two clocks. These are among the most expensive objects listed in the document, which mentions no real estate property. However, one single object is present on all dowry lists: the so-called dowry chest, where garments and bedding sheets were kept. Almost always, the box is “padlocked, from Braşov,” but there are also instances where it was made in Leipzig or where we can assume (in the absence of any indication) that it was made in Oltenia. The small coffer and the trunk are novelties and should be considered more as objects which represent the West than as imports from the neighbouring empire. The first one indicates the intimacy of private papers and precious jewels while the second leads us to the

<sup>102</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj, Secția III, 1/1856, dowry contract no. 13 from 4 August 1853 and 4/1849, dowry contract no. 9, date unspecified.

<sup>103</sup> Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution*, Cambridge, 2008; John Styles, *The Dress of the People. Everyday Fashion in 18<sup>th</sup> Century England*, New Haven, 2007, pp. 97–107, associated with work and factory for the urban population; Avner Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, alla Turca. Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Chicago, 2015, p. 7 argues that by the eighteenth century watches were already used in the Ottoman world, but the Muslims incorporated them to “the inner logic of their temporal culture.”

<sup>104</sup> Ariel Beaujot, *Victorian Fashion Accessories*, London, New York, 2012, p. 5.

image of a voyage. The dowry contracts show specialisation in the function of these objects: the chest (*ladă*) is for the dowry items, while the coffer (*sipet*) and the trunk (*cufăr*) are not used for such storage.

### III. MEETING THE INDIVIDUAL TRADE, WOMEN AND DOWRY. CASE STUDY: THE AMAN FAMILY

In (pre)modern Craiova, the name Aman stands out as that of a family who gradually gained status and prestige, becoming known for trading in the border areas and recognised for their promotion of art. With the generous and interested support of local princes, during the mid-eighteenth century, several families of Macedo-Romanian and Greek merchants settled in the Romanian principalities and Transylvania, started businesses, and formed commercial companies.<sup>105</sup> Among these many families,<sup>106</sup> the most important are Petrovici-Armis, Meitani, Hagi Moscu, Solacolu, Paapa, Dimitriu, Pherekyde, Burno and Dimo. For instance, brother Dimitrie and Mihai Dimo started businesses in Craiova, Sibiu and Vienna.<sup>107</sup> For as yet unknown reasons, Dimitrie gradually gave up the name Dimo, adopted the name Aman instead, and started doing business with the state. Thus he became the main provider of butter to Vidin and of wool to the Tatars in Bugeac, while shipping his own products to Europe via Orşova on the Danube and Turnu Roşu at the entry into Transylvania through the valley of the Olt.<sup>108</sup> Over time, he diversified his commercial portfolio by taking over the monasteries' wine tax, sheep farms throughout the province, and the management of customs in Oltenia.<sup>109</sup> By working

<sup>105</sup> Olga Cicanci, *Companiile greceşti din Transilvania şi comerţul european în anii 1636–1746*, Bucharest, 1981; Olga Katsiardi-Hering, *Commerce and Merchants in Southeastern Europe, 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> Centuries: "MicroDistricts" and Regions*, in "Études balkaniques," LI, 2015, no. 1, pp. 19–35; eadem, *Greek Merchant Colonies in Central and South-Eastern Europe in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*, in *Merchant Colonies in the Early Modern Period*, ed. by Viktor N. Zakharov, Gelina Harlaftis, Olga Katsiardi-Hering, Abingdon, 2016, pp. 127–140; Mária Pakucs, *Between "Faithful Subjects" and "Pernicious Nation": Greek Merchants in the Principality of Transylvania in the Seventeenth Century*, in "Hungarian Historical Review," 6, 2017, no. 1, pp. 111–137.

<sup>106</sup> On merchants and their families in Wallachia see especially the works of Gheorghe Lazăr, *Les marchands en Valachie (XVII<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, Bucharest, 2006; idem, *La route vers la haute société. Les marchands et leur stratégies matrimoniales (Valachie, XVII<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, in *Social Behaviour and Family Strategies in the Balkans (16<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, ed. by Ionela Băluţă, Constanţa Vintilă-Ghiţulescu, Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu, Bucharest, 2008, pp. 39–57; idem, *De la boutique à la terre. Les marchands grecs et leurs stratégies d'insertion sociale (Valachie, XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, in "Studii şi materiale de istorie medie," XXVI, 2008, pp. 51–67, who also published a corpus of documents for this social category, *Documente privitoare la negustorii din Ţara Românească*, 2 vols., Iaşi, 2013–2014, and followed in his other studies the history of several merchant families such as Pepano, Hagi Ianuş, Papazoglu, Dimitriu etc.

<sup>107</sup> Another brother, who died in 1829, seems to have been a revenue officer.

<sup>108</sup> Anastase N. Hâciu, *Aromânii: comerţ, industrie, arte, expansiune, civilizaţie*, Focşani, 1936, p. 479.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibidem*; Nicolae Iorga, *Corespondenţa lui Dimitrie Aman, negustor din Craiova (1794–1834)*, Bucharest, 1913, pp. 12, 28, 31–32, 39–40.

directly with the state, Dimitrie Aman came to control trade in the border areas and established for himself a large power network. From a strictly economic point of view, Dimitrie strategically changed his family name in order to distinguish himself commercially from his brother and other related merchant families.<sup>110</sup> However, even though he tried to make a new name for himself, Dimitrie did not stop collaborating with his brother and relatives; he merely did so in a less visible way.

Living in a conflict zone, constantly disputed during the Russian-Austrian-Turkish wars, ravaged by foreign powers as well as by plague, was no small feat. It was individuals who suffered as their families were broken apart and their communities struggled to preserve their unity and way of life. The Amans and other Greek families from south of the Danube were not exempted from the difficulties of Oltenian life. Married to Zamfira, who bore him Constantin (1801–1837), Dimitrie only enjoyed family life for about twelve years, as his wife died in 1813 when their son was still young. Furthermore, for almost half of his married life, Dimitrie had to witness the Russian-Turkish war, an event all family members were worried about from its inception in 1806 until its end in 1812, just a year before the death of his wife. Here is how his uncle Mihail described the war from Vienna in 1807: “the English in Constantinople coming through the Dardanelles; they frighten the city so that peace between the Turk and the Russian can never be achieved.”<sup>111</sup> The impact of the war on the Aman brothers’ commerce was clear and Western Europe did not look too safe for their business either.<sup>112</sup> In 1813, at the time of his wife’s death, Dimitrie was a merchant well-known among his peers, but who still had much to do to make his mark. Together with his brother Mihail, Dimitrie was creating his own commercial network, with he himself working in Ottoman Wallachia and his brother trading in Transylvania and Austrian Vienna. This seems to have been the moment when he decided to focus on doing business with the state and, together with two other Greek merchants, started “delivering butter in Vidin.”<sup>113</sup> For his son Constantin, however, Dimitrie envisioned a liberal and more bourgeois profession. He sent him to study medicine in Vienna, but the son had no such “inclination.”<sup>114</sup> The question of marrying again was raised from the beginning and even his brother encouraged him not to stay a widower for too long: “do not get bitter and do not suffer, but do your human duty, that is, make sure you marry again and do not leave your little home without care, because you yourself are well used to having a wife: for this find a good soul and marry her.”<sup>115</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Alexandru-Constantin V. Perietzianu, *Despre familiile unor neguțători veniți de la sud de Dunăre în a doua jumătate a secolului al 18-lea și în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea, ce s-au așezat în România*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1985, p. 17. Perietzianu mentions that the Pherekyde, Aman and Dimo families have a common origin.

<sup>111</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 172.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 22–23, Constantin’s letter of 12 November 1816.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 173, letter of 23 September 1813.

The perspective on the role that the woman had to have in the Aman family is clear: she had to remain strictly private. In line with the unwritten edicts of the times, the spheres of action were clearly separated: the man dealt with everything relating to public space and family representation, while the woman took care of the house and children. But, as in the case of other merchant families, the two spheres intertwined; gender roles did not remain static but overlapped and alternated in various moments.<sup>116</sup>

Dimitrie Aman decided to marry Despina Paris,<sup>117</sup> a woman from the same Greek community to which he belonged. The merchant then became a *serdar*, a middle-ranking boyar,<sup>118</sup> and had five children by his new wife, three sons (Gheorghe, Alexandru and Theodor) and two daughters (Lucsandra and Sevastița). Although posterity selectively remembers the names of the last two sons, Alexandru as a magistrate and philanthropist and Theodor as a painter and academician, both men of culture, their personalities are not of interest here. For the purposes of the current case study, we will focus on the women of the Aman family and on their positions concerning the dowry system with regard to judicial aspects and to the transmitted goods. We can better see this dynamic at work after 1833, the year when Despina Aman became a widow and was forced to administer the patrimony her husband had left behind.

The 1838 census registers the Aman household in the blue section of Craiova<sup>119</sup> number 851 as having 12 Gypsy slaves, 4 horses, 2 oxen, 6 pigs, 2 vineyards and orchards. Still young, the thirty-five-year old widow lived in the house with her children<sup>120</sup> and, according to her contemporaries, was “superiorly cultivated,” and had a good knowledge of legislation and of common law.<sup>121</sup> Trying to recover some debts in order to restore the family patrimony, Despina Aman called several of the local boyars to court, where she represented herself or sought legal representation by a lawyer. Among the many trials she started, the one that best showcases

<sup>116</sup> For South-Eastern Europe see Evguenia Davidova, *Balkan Transitions to Modernity and Nation-States: Through the Eyes of Three Generations of Merchants (1780s–1890s)*, Leiden, 2013, pp. 101–128; Nicoleta Roman, *Women in Merchant Families, Women in Trade in Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century Romanian Countries*, in *Women, Consumption, and the Circulation of Ideas in South-Eastern Europe, 17<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, ed. by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Leiden, 2017, pp. 169–199, who both argue for a discreet presence of women on the economic market.

<sup>117</sup> Despina, known after her marriage by the nickname Pepica (Pipi/Pepi), also appears in the documents as Didica or Didina. This reflects the manner in which she presented herself in front of the others and the degree of closeness between the individuals (in the case of diminutives).

<sup>118</sup> The *serdar* was a boyar of the third class, eighth rank in the Romanian hierarchy. *Arhondologiile Țării Românești de la 1837*, ed. by Dan Cernovodeanu, Irina Gavrilă, Brăila, 2002, p. 5. In this period, the Organic Regulation (1831) established three classes and nine ranks for the boyars. *Regulamentul organic, Anexa*, lit. A, B, C, D.

<sup>119</sup> Wallachian cities were divided into sections named colours (*vopseli*): green, blue, red, black, yellow.

<sup>120</sup> Direcția Arhivelor Naționale Istorice Centrale, Catagrafii. According to the ages mentioned in the census: Sevastița (18 years), Alexandru (16 ani), Gheorghe (14 years), Ruxandra (12 years) and Theodor (8 years).

<sup>121</sup> C.I. Istrati, *Theodor Aman. Biografie*, Bucharest, 1904, p. 8.

her legal knowledge was against Iancu Lahovari, the chairman of the Vâlcea County Tribunal. In 1835, shortly after her husband died, she requested a hold on Lahovari's assets for not having paid a decade-old debt to Aman; moreover, her claim took into account the income from his estates, his mill, inn and houses, as well as his wages and the "horse carriage from Vienna with two dark horses." That is, she claimed everything that had a price. In his defence, the boyar Lahovari said he could not afford the hold as claimed by the widow because the estates and the vineyard were his wife's dowry, while the inn had already been leased "to pay for his children's expenses." Under these circumstances, the claim was revised because Despina Aman understood that a dowry was guaranteed as part of a family patrimony on which no hold could be imposed. Lahovari in turn showed the judges which assets and how much of his income were part of his wife's dowry, what properties were mortgaged and the assets the hold could be put on. He estimated that his total net worth of 30,000 *lei* would allow him to pay the 8,000 *lei* debt and still have enough money left, but according to Despina's estimations his debt to her late husband including interest was the equivalent of about 17,586 *lei*. The dispute was finally settled in court and Lahovari had to pay up his debt.

This case is relevant because it demonstrates two important aspects regarding the dowry system: 1. the dowry was a means of creating and enlarging the family patrimony which was protected by law against any damage or harmful claim, and 2. irrespective of gender, this provision was collectively understood and respected in a court of law. Women thus had the power to pass their dowries down, manage them, and recover them if they were squandered by their husbands, but they could under no circumstances raise any claims regarding any dowry in the patrimony of another family, even if needed to repay a debt. That Despina Aman fully understood this to be the case is further proven by the fact that, immediately after the trial with Lahovari, she started drafting her daughters' dowry contracts. The first document was registered on 15 May 1840 – Sevastița marries Ioan (Iancu) Socolescu –, and the second on 17 March 1847 – Ruxandra marries *pitar*<sup>122</sup> Gheorghe Urdăreanu. For both contracts, Despina Aman obtained the seal of approval of the tribunal, together with the signed confirmation of both sons-in-law that the goods had been received.

The two dowry contracts are similar to others belonging to the same social class in that they contained a short inventory of the transmitted goods, with an emphasis on their value and not their quantity. The properties are inspected by the tribunal to see that they are not mortgaged, under litigation or in a state of degradation that may not be acceptable to the sons-in-law. Despina Aman provides all the documentation needed, including the property deeds, showing the estates had been purchased by *serdar* Dimitrie Aman between 1806 and 1818. This is further proof that the widow "as a mother and legal guardian owns the estates and according to common law she is allowed to pass them down to her daughters via dowry contracts."<sup>123</sup>

<sup>122</sup> The *pitar* was a boyar of third class, ninth rank in the Romanian hierarchy. *Arhondologiile Țării Românești*, ed. by Dan Cernovodeanu, Irina Gavrilă, p. 6.

<sup>123</sup> DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 3/1837, dowry contract no. 18, f. 23v.

Even though it was considered immovable property, which could only be inherited, an estate passed down via a dowry contract could nevertheless be replaced by another estate of similar value, in which case that property became inalienable. The transaction which allowed this replacement was called *antipricon* and was fully recognised by law.<sup>124</sup> Despina Aman herself helped her son-in-law Ioan Socolescu with an affidavit registered in court in 1843 allowing Socolescu to replace the Zănoaga estate, acquired through his wife's dowry, with an estate in Valea Seacă.

Both daughters married representatives of the future bourgeoisie, and obtained a significant patrimony, including immovable properties, almost on a par with the wealth brought into the marriages by their husbands. The mother only retained some of the income and kept ownership over some real estate because she still needed to care for her youngest son, Theodor, with whom she shared the house in Craiova before he left to study first in Bucharest and then in Paris.<sup>125</sup> One feature that we may observe in the Aman case is that women did receive properties and that dowries were seen as advanced shares of inheritance. Two other characteristics, featured mainly in merchants' dowry contracts from that period, concern the valuation of the goods not in *lei* but in Austrian *galbeni* (at a corresponding exchange rate) and the exclusive mention of items necessary to a merchant's business. The wardrobe is not listed in detail, being valued as less than one fourth of the total dowry. For boyars and merchants, real estate property, such as land and houses, and movable property, such as jewellery, silverware and Gypsy slaves, were very important, with these last having a higher value according to their skills (tailors, chefs, masons, etc.). Clothes, bedding and everyday dishware were an insignificant addition. In contrast, for workers, servants or peasants each of these items had an important role in the household.

## CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of dowry contracts in Craiova provides us with several insights regarding both family economic strategies and the transfer of wealth along the female line. The corpus shows that women were seen as a channel of transmission for properties and movable goods into their new families. When noted, the information shows that immovable goods (estates, houses, shops, etc.) came from various sources: parental wealth, the mother's own dowry, the father's properties and so on. The analysis does not show a clear pattern of gender exclusion, but it argues for the existence of a variety of family situations, with parents often considering this process as a way to give their daughters their share of inheritance. In general, the dowry was a mix of these movable and immovable goods, with sums of money also being present.

<sup>124</sup> Legiuirea Caragea, which is used from 1818 until 1864, when the Civil Code was issued.

<sup>125</sup> Theodor received the parents' home in Craiova. Adrian-Silvan Ionescu, *Mărturii noi privitoare la Theodor Aman*, in "Studii și cercetări de istoria artei," 40, 1993, pp. 85, 91.

At the top of the social ladder, the elite was inclined to trade quantity for value, transferring fewer but far more valuable items. Investments were made in land, houses, money and jewellery, and occasionally instead of clothes the bride received a lump sum that she could spend as she wished on her wardrobe. The lower classes, on the other hand, pursued a different strategy, providing a great number of modest objects, intended for everyday use.

The practice took into consideration the accelerating pace and unstable nature of fashion, with relatively few garments and accessories (such as shawls) retaining their importance from one generation to the next. There was also a co-existence of Ottoman objects and fabrics with Western products, but at the same time the evidence of dowry contracts shows that local models still predominated until the middle of the nineteenth century. This is somewhat to be expected due to the continuous conflicts and turmoil in the region, which affected commerce and the circulation of objects. People in the provinces (such as those of Oltenia) did not immediately embrace the new models radiating from the capital (Bucharest), and the tangled history of the region likely extended the process by hampering commercial exchange. Only in the second half of the century did westernised material culture predominate among the elite and gradually spread to the other social strata. Since the only European powers which had an influential presence in the Balkans were the Ottomans, Austrians and Russians, it is no wonder that they should have been among the common providers or intermediaries. The period we have worked upon is one in which empires were still in the phase of creating their own infrastructure to reach the periphery. Thus, the trends in consumer culture converging upon the region continued to be filtered through Ottoman, Austrian, and Russian models until “a plurality of expansions” of Western commercial and political powers integrated it into the wider circuit of global flows.<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, where the territory was autonomous (as in our case), there was also a locally adapted use of legislation which made the inheritance pattern different from that of other Ottoman provinces such as Bulgaria.

## APPENDIX

### 1

*Dowry contract made by Despina Aman for her daughter, Sevastița, on 15 May 1840*

No. 18.<sup>127</sup> 1840, May 15. The tribunal authentication for the contract through which *serdăreasa* Didica Aman endows her daughter, Sevastița.

<sup>126</sup> Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, *The Spanish Empire, Globalization, and Cross-Cultural Consumption in a World Context, c. 1400 – c. 1750*, in *Global Goods and the Spanish Empire, 1492–1824. Circulation, Resistance and Diversity*, ed. by Bethany Aram, Bartolomé Yun-Casalilla, Basingstoke, 2014, pp. 278–279.

<sup>127</sup> The number of the dowry contract in the register.



In the name of the Holy Trinity, (I make) the dowry contract for my daughter Sevasti(ța), as the share she is entitled to from the parental patrimony and it is given at her marriage with Mr Ioan Socolescu, as is shown below.

| No. | Lei   | [The description of the received item]   |
|-----|-------|--|
| 1   |       | the estates called Strâmba and Zănoaga from the south of Romanați [county], <i>plasa</i> <sup>128</sup> Câmpul with all the deeds and the property map                       |
| 2   |       | an arable place in Dealu Sasului on the princely estate, which was previously a vineyard with all its deeds  |
| 3   |       | three Gypsy souls [slaves] that is two boys and a girl   |
| 4   | 60000 | That is sixty thousand <i>lei</i> , from which forty thousand were already given, and the remaining twenty thousand <i>lei</i> to be given within ten years without interest |
| 5   | 7800  | That is seven thousand eight hundred <i>lei</i> one pair of diamond earrings   |
| 6   | 2800  | That is two thousand eight hundred <i>lei</i> in three hundred and eighty-four pearls (in a necklace) and a diamond ring   |
| 7   | 1000  | That is one thousand <i>lei</i> for a good shawl   |
| 8   | 500   | That is five hundred <i>lei</i> in a brooch with eight diamond stones  |
| 10  | 600   | That is six hundred <i>lei</i> in a sable fur coat   |
| 11  | 300   | That is three hundred <i>lei</i> in two silver candlesticks  |
| 12  | 290   | That is two hundred ninety <i>lei</i> in a silver [indecipherable word]  |
| 13  | 7500  | That is seven thousand five hundred <i>lei</i> , wardrobe and bedding  |

#### The Commercial Tribunal of Craiova

Following the request made by *serdăreasa* Didina Aman, signed on the recto of this contract and received at no. 1835 with the request to authenticate this contract by which she endows Sevastița her daughter on her marriage to Iancu Socolescu, there presented themselves in the courtroom of the tribunal the endower represented by the lawyer Ghiță Ioan with his status as lawyer authenticated this same year by the authorities of this city under no. 1227 together with Iancu Socolescu the son-in-law. And the dowry contract being read aloud, the endower stated that she is content with it, and likewise the son-in-law stated that he is content and that he has received all that is shown in the contract apart from twenty thousand *lei* which it remains for him to receive as is specified in the contract. Then documents of her ownership over the properties and the Gypsies that are given as dowry being requested from the endower, she showed that these were the wealth of her husband the late *serdar* Dimitrie Aman, who had them in ownership through purchase, the following documents being presented as proof:

For the estate of Strâmba and Zănoaga in the south of Romanați, of which [?] which was authenticated in the year 1818 October 28 by the honoured Divan of Craiova and from its contents the judges were satisfied that the late *serdar* Aman had bought through the Sultan's princely auction.

For the arable place were presented two deeds, one dated 1806 September 12 and the other of the year 1810 signed by Andrei from Florești, from the contents of which it was noted that the late *serdar* had also bought the vineyards that in these deeds are shown to be on the Hill of Sasau, the princely estate, the endower saying that these vineyards make up the aforementioned place that is given as dowry.

For three Gypsy souls was presented a deed of the year 1806 May 5, signed by *serdar* Alecu Bengescu and in its contents that the late *serdar* Aman sold four Gypsy souls

<sup>128</sup> Administrative subdivision of a county.

of [undecipherable word] namely Pană the coachman, Rada his wife, Anița and Dincă their sons, the endower saying that these three Gypsy souls that are given as dowry are among those shown to be bought by this deed, whom she states and the son-in-law has confirmed that he had also received in ownership. After the presentation of these documents, the tribunal being satisfied of the endower's ownership of the properties that are given as dowry, and next to know whether they are not subject to some circumstances of sequestration or mortgage. To this end, on the one hand, the honoured tribunal of Romanați was invited to provide information for the estate of Zănoaga as one that lies within the bounds of that county, and on the other hand, for the others the records were sought that are within this tribunal. And both from the aforementioned honoured tribunal came the answer by report no. 4024 of the 14<sup>th</sup> of the present month for the estate of Zănoaga that there it is not subject to any such circumstance, and also those here again likewise were not found to be subject.

Consequently, because after the enquiries that are shown above into this dowry contract no legal impediment was known. Thus the tribunal on this basis and according to art. 336 of the Organic Regulation authenticates it and duly enters it in the register.

President A[lexandru] Samurcaș, C. Rătescu, Constandin Dimitriu

1843, September 22

Clerk, Iancu Anghelovici

[Later annotation] Because the dowry estate that is entered in this contract, namely Zănoaga, has been replaced by *antipricon* with a portion of the estate of Valea Seacă through the fulfilling of all the formalities. As this is proven by the act of *antipricon* duly entered in the register, at no. 27, from which the honoured Department of Justice was also informed by the report of [indcipherable] deed, the year 1848, no. 174. Thus for information have signed here.

President A[lexandru] Samurcaș, C. Lăiceanu, I. Hagiad

Source: DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj, 2/1841, fols. 21v–22, copy.

## 2

*The gift offered before the wedding by Ioan Socolescu to his wife, Sevastița Aman, on 20 May 1840*

19. 1840, May 20. In name of the Lord I write all that I give as a gift before the wedding to my wife, Sevastița.

No. Lei

- |   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 1 | 12600 | In four hundred <i>galbeni</i> as 31 (lei) and 20 (paras)   |
| 2 | 2800  | A gold bracelet with a single great diamond stone and other small diamond stones around it of two thousand eight hundred <i>lei</i> |
| 3 | 1200  | A gold necklace priced at one thousand two hundred <i>lei</i>   |
| 4 | 1800  | Other small items valued at one thousand eight hundred <i>lei</i>   |

-----  
18400 That is (a total) of eighteen thousand four hundred *lei*, the gifts before

the wedding

Ioan I. Socolescu

Source: DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj, 2/1841, fol. 22, copy.

## 3

*Dowry contract made by Despina Aman for her daughter, Lucsandra<sup>129</sup>, on 17 March 1847*

No. 18. 1847, March 17. Contract that shows the movable and immovable goods that I give as dowry to my daughter, Lița, who marries the *pitar* Gheorghe Urdăreanu. Also, all those that might suffer destruction, objects and prices as clearly shown below.

- 1iu Income from the land of Cornățelu estate, from Mehedinți country, seven thousand *lei* each year, which money my son-in-law will receive from me, as long as I live, and after my death, the estate will be divided into four parts and my son-in-law will get out of two one, of his choosing, that is, either a quarter of the land as his brotherly share or four thousand Austrian *galbeni* from my heirs'
- 2 A brick-built inn which I have in the city of Craiova on the road to Bucharest with all the land enclosed and the vineyard that is on the land, together with other additional buildings, stable and shed. [undecipherable words] for which I empower my son-in-law to sell them. And the money, the price he will receive on this inn will count as dowry
- 3 A [set of] silverware valued at one hundred and fifty Austrian *galbeni*, or four thousand seven hundred and twenty-five lei
- 4 strings of pearls as a necklace with a gold fastening and a diamond stone in the middle, valued at one hundred *galbeni*
- 5 a pair of diamond earrings valued at one hundred Austrian *galbeni*
- 6 a ring with a big emerald stone valued at thirty Austrian *galbeni*
- 7 a shawl valued at sixty Austrian *galbeni*
- 8 a pair of gold and turquoise earrings valued at ten Austrian *galbeni*
- 9 a gold and turquoise brooch valued at five Austrian *galbeni*
- 10 a pendant medallion with two gold and turquoise portraits valued at fifteen *galbeni*
- 11 a Gypsy called Ilie, ladies' dressmaker
- 12 wardrobe and bedding [valued at] one hundred and fifty Austrian *galbeni*

That is everything comes to twelve [dowry] items, for which on the basis of this contract we give under my signature, [and] my son-in-law will be free to incur any expense until the term we agreed verbally, and I have signed myself.

The wife of late *serdar*, Pipi Aman

Everything included in this contract I have received in full, precisely.

Gheorghe Urdăreanu

I also give to my wife, Lița, a gift before the wedding, ten thousand *lei*. No. 10,000

Gheorghe Urdăreanu

The Commercial Tribunal of Craiova

*Serdăreasă* Pipi Aman, endowing her daughter Luța with the items shown in this contract when she marries *pitar* Gheorghe Urdăreanu. She has asked by the request received at no. 33 that according to the legislation this contract be authenticated.

In consequence (undecipherable word) of the request she presented herself in the courtroom of the tribunal represented by the lawyer her son-in-law Iancu Socolescu with his status as

<sup>129</sup> Lucsandra appears in the documents as Lița, Luța or Luxița.

lawyer authenticated on 9 January of the present year, under no. 17, by the honoured administration of this city together with the son-in-law in person. And the records of this contract being read aloud, the aforementioned lawyer stated that the contract was happily made by his client, and that his client had given all the items that are listed in the contract. And the son-in-law said that he had received them. And that with the same happiness the gift has been given before the marriage that is listed in the contract. After this, documents of her ownership over the properties and the Gypsy that are given as dowry were requested from the endower. And she showed that the estate and the inn together with the vineyard were bought by her husband, the parent of the endowed, and the Gypsy is from the race of Gypsies that her husband, the parent of the endowed, obtained by purchase, presenting as evidence for this the following documents:

The year 1815, 30 September. Document of *clucer*<sup>130</sup> Ioan Vlădăianu authenticated on 1 October of that year and by the honoured Divan of Craiova by which it is proved that the estate of Corlăţeni was bought at auction by *serdar* Dimitrie Aman the parent of the endowed.

The year 1819, March 29. Deed undersigned by Floarea, wife of Ioniţă, and authenticated by the honoured Department of Four, from here, from which it has been noted that a vineyard on the Bucharest road with all its contents and on which the inn is also built was bought from the abovementioned [Floarea] by the same aforementioned *serdar* Aman.

The year 1818, April 16. Deed signed by Dimitrie Faroene [probable reading] by which he sells to *pitar* Aman some Gypsies in whose family it is said that the Gypsy that he is giving as dowry can be seen.

Thus, because both from these documents and from various investigations that have been made and that are shown in the notifications received at nos. 247, 376 and 660 it is proven that the estate that is entered in the contract and the inn and the Gypsy are the rightful properties of the parent of the endowed, obtained by purchase, and that the endower as a mother and guardian owns them and is free according to the law to give them as dowry. Which properties both by the confirmation that is given by the honoured tribunal of Mehedinţi for the Corlăţelu estate in its county, and after the search that has been made through the registers of this tribunal, have not been found to be subject to any circumstance of mortgage or sequestration and consequently regarding the authentication of this contract no impediment has been found.

Therefore, on these bases and according to the dispositions provided for by article 226 of the Organic Regulation the tribunal authenticates this contract to take effect, duly entering it in the register.

1848, March 31

President, *clucer* A[lexandru] Samurcaş    Şt. Romăneanu    *pitar* V. Pavlovici    I. Hagiad  
Clerk, *pitar* Iancu Anghelovici

The inn with all its contents that is entered in this contract being sold by auction at the h[onoured] commercial tribunal of Craiova for the price of ten thousand *lei*, which price of ten thousand *lei* I have received in full, I testify to this here for it to be known regarding this inn the stated price and for confirmation I sign. G. Urdăreanu

1852, August 12

<sup>130</sup> The *clucer* was a boyar of second class, sixth rank in the Romanian hierarchy. *Arhondologiile Țării Românești*, ed. by Dan Cernovodeanu, Irina Gavrilă, p. 5.

## The Commercial Tribunal of Craiova

The brick-built inn with all its contents which is in this town and in this contract, entered as being given as dowry, has been sold by auction<sup>131</sup> at the request of *pitar* Ghiță Urdăreanu, for the price of ten thousand *lei*, no. 10,000, which price *pitar* Ghiță Urdăreanu has rightly received from *parucic*<sup>132</sup> Scarlat Parescu the buyer. As he himself gives confirmation in writing above.

1852 August 12

President, Șt. Romăneanu [indecipherable signature] V. Pavlovici Teodor G. Preda

This contract is authenticated and received. *Pitar* G. Urdăreanu

I have received the contract. G. Urdăreanu

Source: DJAN Dolj, Tribunalul Dolj. Secția III, 3/1837–1849, fols. 22v–23v, copy.

DOWRY CONTRACTS, WOMEN'S OBJECTS AND THE CIRCULATION  
OF GOODS IN MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY ROMANIAN  
FAMILIES. THE CASE OF OLTENIA

*Abstract*

The paper aims to investigate the nexus between family life, consumption, and socio-cultural changes in nineteenth-century Wallachia through the lens of dowry contracts. It also investigates the link between dowry and inheritance in an urban milieu and the type of goods and properties a woman could obtain at the moment of her marriage. By analysing a corpus of 250 dowry contracts registered in the Wallachian city of Craiova between 1831 and 1856, the study examines a gradual shift in the material culture of the province at the watershed marking the transition from Ottoman-style models, that had characterised the province throughout the early modern period, to the newly-emergent consumer culture influenced by the penetration of Western European commodities. Engaging in a quantitative analysis of the dowries, as well as their legal framework and social impact, the study depicts a complex process of cultural change associated with the Europeanization of tastes in the peripheral society of South-Eastern Europe.

**Keywords:** South-Eastern Europe; Ottoman Empire; Wallachia, women history; dowry; inheritance; commodities; movable and immovable goods

<sup>131</sup> For the auction see "Monitorul oficial," July–August 1852.

<sup>132</sup> Military rank (Russian *porucik*), similar to lieutenant.



# URBAN TRANSFORMATION OF THE MYTILENIAN BOURGEOISIE: THE CASE OF THE KOURTZIS FAMILY\*

ANASTASIA FALIEROU\*\*

## INTRODUCTION

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, Mytilene was moving rapidly towards urban transformation. The town followed the broader trajectory of the Eastern Mediterranean ports, whose trade and industry flourished in this period<sup>1</sup>; these cities, situated between East and West, had a mixed character, which accounted for an extremely fertile fusion and coexistence of foreign elements and the local Greek population. In the busy harbor of Mytilene, with a burgeoning local industry based mainly on the processing of olive oil, the Greek element of the Ottoman Lesbos played a key role in the economic development and managed to prevail economically.

This article aims to examine both the process of urban transformation and the westernizing trend of the Greek bourgeoisie in Mytilene in the second half of the nineteenth century, focusing on the Kourtzis family. In the first part of the study, I tackle the reasons which make the family a particularly useful case for studying consumer practices and bourgeois cultural influence in the late Ottoman Empire. Subsequently, I examine the world of the Mytilenian bourgeoisie, presenting the political and socio-economic factors that contributed to the island's prosperity and the emergence of the upper middle class. Then, I analyze the ways members of the Kourtzis family tried to express their new status and cultural outlook through the adoption of Europeanized material culture and the networks they used to both shape their new way of life and acquire commodities necessary to do so.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the Ottoman port cities, see Keyder Çağlar, Y. Evüp Özveren, Donald Quataert, *Port Cities in the Ottoman Empire: Some Theoretical and Historical Perspectives*, in "Review (Fernand Braudel Center)," 16, 1993, no. 4, pp. 519–558; *The Ottoman City Between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir and Istanbul*, ed. by Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, Bruce Masters, Cambridge, 1999; Malte Fuhrmann, Vangelis Kechriotis, *The Late Ottoman Port Cities and Their Inhabitants: Subjectivity, Urbanity and Conflicting Orders*, in "Mediterranean Historical Review," 24, 2009, no. 2, pp. 71–78; *Cities of the Mediterranean: From the Ottomans to the Present Day*, ed. by Biray Kolluoğlu, Meltem Toksöz, London, New York, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> The Kourtzis family papers are in the Public Library of Mytilene. Researchers are able to access most of the original archival material through the Historical Archive of the Aegean "Ergani" repository <http://www.ergani-repository.gr/ergani/>.

Covering the entrepreneurial, personal, and social life of four generations of the Lesbos businessmen, the papers of the Kourtzis family constitute one of the most important private collections of the island. The wealth of the material is even visible from the sizable corpus of the exhibits (photographs, postcards, wills, marriage contracts, Ottoman property titles and appointments, school notebooks, films from the period 1925–1927, newspapers, magazines, commercial correspondence, personal letters, handwritten notes and revenues-expenses notebooks, diaries, architectural designs of residences and industrial facilities) that the papers include and which cover the period from the early nineteenth century up to 1985.

My decision to focus on the Kourtzis family<sup>3</sup> stems from its fascinating trajectory across time and space,<sup>4</sup> and the involvement of its members in multifaceted business activities, which covered a wide spectrum of social, political, and economic developments of the late Ottoman Empire.

The main protagonist of the archive is Panos Kourtzis<sup>5</sup> (1850–1931), a brilliant, insightful, and competent man, who managed to exploit the political and economic conjuncture of the time and become one of the most important Greek businessmen. Panos was born in Mytilene and, at the age of twenty, moved to Constantinople, where he gradually developed a wide range of business activities, involving commerce, banking, industry, and tourism.

Some of Kourtzis' most important entrepreneurial activities were the olive press at the "Center" (*Kentron*), the Steamboat of the Aegean,<sup>6</sup> the Kozlu mines<sup>7</sup> and the Bank of Mytilene. Undoubtedly, Panos' acquaintance and close cooperation with the banker Georgios Zarifis must have played a decisive role in the development of his business. In 1896, Kourtzis was appointed vice-consul of Germany in Mytilene

<sup>3</sup> For the Kourtzis family, see *Archeio Kourtzi: istoriki tekmiriosi*, ed. by Kristis Konnaris, Mytilene, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> The story of the Kourtzis family in the Ottoman Empire started when, in the late eighteenth century, Anastasios Kourtzis, a refugee from Tiflis (Tbilisi) in Georgia, settled with his son, Panagiotis, in Lesbos. Panagiotis married twice, and had one daughter, Amersouda (1815–1834), and three sons: Konstantis (1792–1835), Mihail (1817–1905), and Dimitrios (1810–1835?). Mihail produced five children from his marriage with Eirini Tzatzou. Their first-born son, Panos, married Myrsinio Vasileiou, with whom he had two children: Mihail/Mitsa (1884–1944), and Giorgio (1899–1952); Kristis Konnaris, *Archeio Kourtzi: istorika simeiomata epiheiriseon kai prosopon*, in *Archeio Kourtzi*, ed. by Kristis Konnaris, pp. 26–27.

<sup>5</sup> For an analysis of Panos Kourtzis' life and business activities, see Yannis Yannitsiotis, *Oi 'metamorfoseis' tou epiheirimatikou eautou: I synkrotisi tis andrikis hypokeimenikotitas stin autoviografia tou Panou Kourtzi*, in *Archeio Kourtzi*, ed. by Kristis Konnaris, pp. 133–150.

<sup>6</sup> Evrydiki Sifneos, P.M. *Courdgis and the Birth of a Greek-Ottoman Liner Company: The Aegean Steamship Company*, in *Following the Nereids. Sea Routes and Maritime Business, 16<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup>*, ed. by Maria Chatzioannou, Gelina Harlaftis, Athens, 2006, pp. 121–135.

<sup>7</sup> For the Kozlu mines see Evrydiki Sifneos, *Was the Extraction of Coal at Kozlu and Zonguldak Mines Profitable? An Attempt at an Answer from the Courdgi Papers*, in *The Economic and Social Development of the Port Cities of the Southeastern Black Sea Coast and Hinterland, Late 18<sup>th</sup> – Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, ed. by Edhem Eldem, Sophia Laiou, V. Kechriotis, Corfu, 2017, pp. 109–122.



and remained in this position until 1928.<sup>8</sup> Panos' firstborn son, Mitsas (1884–1944), also features prominently in the papers, as is the case for Mitsas' son and Panos Kourtzis' grandson, Nellos (1911–1998). On the women's side, Panos' wife Myrsinio born Vasileiou, played a similarly crucial role within the family network.<sup>9</sup> The daughter of the wealthy merchant and landholder Panagiotis Vasileiou and Efthymia born M. Simandiri, she also hailed from the island's elite. Apart from these main characters, the papers preserved in the archive provide information on other members of the family, as well as on other prominent households of Lesbos, with whom the Kourtzis family was connected both through kinship and professional interests.<sup>10</sup> Seen from this perspective, the Kourtzis archive provides us with a glimpse into the social and economic world of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie in Mytilene.

The present study focuses on the period between 1881 and 1892, when, following her marriage to Panos Kourtzis, Myrsinio moved to Constantinople, staying in touch with her relatives through frequent exchange of letters. Myrsinio's personal correspondence with her kin and members of the extended family provides us with valuable information about the family life and the everyday concerns of the wealthy urban family of Mytilene, active on the social and economic stage.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the reconstruction of the past through feminine correspondence allows us, as historian Maria Stamatogiannopoulou points out, to better understand the links between people and to investigate on a deeper level “the context in which people move, think and act.”<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, by comparing the ways of life, the Kourtzis papers offer scholars the opportunity to detect common trends or variations that may exist at the level of mentalities and cultural influences between the Vasileiou family,<sup>13</sup> which belonged to the local elite of Mytilene, and their daughter Myrsinio, who lived in the Ottoman capital.

At this point, some observations on the structure and content of these letters are in order. The correspondence between the members of the Kourtzis and Vasileiou families follows the more general conventions of letter-writing in this period, replete with stereotypical expressions at the beginning and at the end of each letter.<sup>14</sup> One should not be surprised by the lack of originality that characterizes these letters. However, the variety of the subjects one can find in the letters is impressively rich. Health issues, eating habits, child-raising issues, clothing and new consumer practices,

<sup>8</sup> *Archeio Kourtzi*, ed. by Kristis Konnaris, p. 27.

<sup>9</sup> Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *O kosmos ton gynaikon: paradosi kai neoterikotita sti Mytilini kata to telos tou 19ou aiona (eisagoniki meleti stin idiotiki allilografia tou Archeiou Kourtzi)*, in *Archeio Kourtzi*, ed. by Kristis Konnaris, pp. 96–131.

<sup>10</sup> *Archeio Kourtzi*, ed. by Kristis Konnaris, p. 27.

<sup>11</sup> Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 97.

<sup>13</sup> For information about this eminent family see Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki kai koinoniki istoria (1840–1912)*, Mytilene, 2016; Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>14</sup> Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

upcoming engagements and marriage strategies, leisure time and recreation seem to monopolize the interest of the women of the Vasileiou family.<sup>15</sup>

#### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN MYTILENE DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Covering an area of over 1,600 square kilometers, Lesbos<sup>16</sup> is one of the largest Greek islands located in the north-eastern Aegean Sea. In September 1462 the island was surrendered to the Ottomans by the last Genoese ruler, Nicola Gattelusi, and remained under the Ottoman rule until 1912.

From 1490 until the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Lesbos was one of the *sancaks* (sub-provinces) of the *beylerbeylik* of Roumeli, which included all the European territories of the empire. In 1533 the island became a *sancak* of the *beylerbeylik* of Archipelago, renamed to *eyalet* of Archipelago from the 1590s onward, under the direct authority of the kapudan pasha, the commander in chief of the Ottoman fleet. With the promulgation of the *Vilayet Law* in 1864, as part of the administrative reforms in the Ottoman Empire, the *eyalet* of Archipelago was replaced by the *vilayet* of Archipelago, which consisted of the islands of Rhodes, Chios, Lemnos, Lesbos and Moschonisia.

The *sancak* of Lesbos was governed by a *nazir* or *mutassarif*, who, according to the *iltizam* (tax farming) system, was charged with the right to collect the Porte's tax revenues. The state auctioned taxation rights to the highest bidder, who had to pay a predetermined sum of taxes from specific regions to the imperial treasury. Moreover, the *nazir* appointed the vice-governors (*kaymakams*) of the islands' districts (*kaza*) and was also vested with juridical powers.<sup>17</sup>

Until the end of the 1860s, Lesbos was subdivided into the three *kazas* of Mytilene, Kalloni, and Molivos.<sup>18</sup> The town of Mytilene, the economic and cultural center of the island but also the administrative seat of the Ottoman political and military officials of the time, was the administrative capital of Lesbos. The *kazas*, in turn, were divided into *nahiyes*, which consisted of a number of villages. However, the exact number of Lesbos' *nahiyes*, together with the included villages, are until today unknown for the period concerning the early decades of the Ottoman rule.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 102.

<sup>16</sup> For Lesbos' history and economic development see the well-documented studies by Stratis Anagnostou, *I oikistiki exelisi tis Lesvou (1462–1912): I metavasi apo tin agrotiki synkrotisi tou horou stin astiki diarthrosi tou*, Ph.D. diss., Aegean University, 2004, and Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki, passim*.

<sup>17</sup> Maria Mandamadiotou, *The Greek Orthodox Community of Mytilene between the Ottoman Empire and the Greek State, 1876–1912*, Bern, 2013, p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> During the second half of the nineteenth century the *kazas* of Kalloni was replaced by that of Plomari, while the *kazas* of Sigri and Moschonisia were established as separate administrative units. *Ibidem*, p. 19.

<sup>19</sup> Stratis Anagnostou, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

The *nahiye* was governed by a *müdür*, while the headman of each village was the *muhtar*, who answered to the *müdür*.<sup>20</sup>

Demographic data on Lesbos are insufficient to provide us with a detailed picture of the island's population. Both primary sources and contemporary works reveal that the Greek Orthodox element was predominant. According to Maria Mandamadiotou, Mehmed Tevfik Bey, the assistant governor of the province of the Aegean Archipelago, records in his memorandum, in 1891, 94,528 inhabitants in the island of Lesbos, of whom only 13,559 were Muslims.<sup>21</sup> Apart from the Orthodox and Muslim population, a few Armenians, French and Jews also lived in Mytilene, although they did not constitute distinct communities.<sup>22</sup>

The Orthodox communal affairs were administrated by the council of Elders (*dimogerontes*), who exercised administrative, financial and legal functions. It should be mentioned, however, that this institution was often implemented with many variations in the different regions of the Ottoman Empire. The *dimogerontes* were charged with the task of collecting the taxes of their village and returning them to the *nazir* or *mutassarif*, they were responsible for the operation of the ecclesiastic court and for solving differences arising between the members of the community. Moreover, as members of the council of wardens (*epitropoi*) they handled the secular affairs of the Church and took care of the maintenance of religious buildings.<sup>23</sup>

Lesbos' development during the nineteenth century was undoubtedly driven by a variety of factors. Historians have repeatedly stressed Lesbos' proximity to the Anatolian coast and Dardanelles Straits in order to highlight the island's privileged geographic position from Antiquity to modern times.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, special emphasis must be placed on the historical conjecture of the period. Lesbos' move towards urbanization and modernization cannot be studied apart from the general political, economic and social Ottoman context.

The eighteenth century marked a turning point in the history of world economy, with a profound impact on the sultans' "well-protected domains." This period saw the consolidation of the patterns of trade between Western Europe and the Ottoman Empire that had been in the making since the late sixteenth century. Within this new commercial order, the Ottoman Empire became a source of foodstuff imports and raw materials, exchanged for manufactured and colonial products.<sup>25</sup>

From the eighteenth century onwards, Lesbos joined the wider network of Mediterranean and European commerce, which shifted the island's economy towards

<sup>20</sup> Maria Mandamadiotou, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that although Muslims were overwhelmingly less than the Orthodox Christians in Lesbos, their proportion was larger in comparison to other islands in the Archipelago province. *Ibidem*, p. 15.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 15–16.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 19–25.

<sup>24</sup> Ioannis D. Kontis, *Lesvos kai I Mikrasiatiki periohi*, Athens, 1978.

<sup>25</sup> Elena Frangakis-Syrett, *The Commerce of Smyrna in the Eighteenth Century (1700–1820)*, Athens, 1992.

a monoculture of olives and provided an impulse for the growth of associated industries, mainly the production of olive oil and soap. However, oil exports and commercial ties with the hub of Marseille were incidental rather than systematic, on the one hand due to the Ottoman government's repeated embargos on the exports of olive oil abroad and, on the other hand, due to the deteriorating social and economic conditions in post-1789 revolutionary France.<sup>26</sup>

However, despite the lack of any sort of "commercial and social dynamism" in Lesbos during this period, this rudimentary export trade with Marseille led to the rise of a new social group in Mytilene, which began to play an active role in the Orthodox community's affairs through its participation in the city's communal administrative system. This trading group is considered the forerunner of the new Greek bourgeoisie, which emerged half a century later.<sup>27</sup>

The process of urban transformation and westernization in Lesbos and particularly in its capital, Mytilene, was accelerated during the nineteenth century. Two major events played a crucial role in this development. The conclusion of the Anglo-Ottoman commercial treaty of Baltalimanı in 1838 granted British traders the same rights as their local counterparts, thus ushering the period of the Ottoman economy's closer integration with the European capitalist system and the abolishment of all imperial monopolies.<sup>28</sup> The following year, the proclamation of the Gülhane Edict initiated the Tanzimat reform program, aiming at a general overhaul of the Ottoman polity along Western models.<sup>29</sup>

The period between 1840 and 1880 witnessed a series of spectacular changes in the local economic and social life. The agrarian and self-sufficient economy was gradually transformed into an international commercial economy relying on exports of local agricultural products, the introduction of Western machines in the countryside, modern banking, and maritime activities.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the abolition of the oil-trading monopoly, which until then was the privilege of the Ottoman governor, was a decisive step in the formation of the island's Greek Orthodox bourgeoisie,<sup>31</sup> whose economic power derived from "a single circle of activities which spanned from the land and oil to usury including such enterprises as modern industrial facilities and trading houses with branches abroad."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Stratis Anagnostou, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>28</sup> Şevket Pamuk, *Ottoman Empire and European Capitalism: 1820–1913*, Cambridge, 1983.

<sup>29</sup> Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, p. 52.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 91–193.

<sup>31</sup> For the formation of the bourgeoisie in the Ottoman context, see Haris Exertzoglou, *Investments and Investment Behavior in the Ottoman Empire: The Development of a Greek-Ottoman Bourgeoisie, 1850–1914*, in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, Economy, and Society in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Dimitris Gondicas, Charles Issawi, Princeton, 1999, pp. 89–115; Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change*, New York, 1996.

<sup>32</sup> Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, p. 334.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Mytilene was transformed into “a significant trade center and future core of the island’s industrialization.”<sup>33</sup> The introduction of new technologies gave new impetus to agricultural production. Productivity and exports increased as a result. Industrial plants such as olive presses and soap factories began to appear. Endowed with financial power and lured by the European habits and life-styles, the emergent Greek bourgeoisie, engaged in both entrepreneurial and banking activities, merged with the landowner class, coalescing into a new local elite that dominated Lesbos’ political and economic life. At the same time, some of the ambitious Mytilenian businessmen migrated to Constantinople, Smyrna, Russia, Romania, Egypt, and Marseille to expand their financial activities.<sup>34</sup>

The rise of the bourgeois class was very much linked to the radical transformation of the urban image of the city.<sup>35</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century Mytilene experienced – as many other Ottoman port cities – a striking demographic growth. The neighborhoods of Mytilene were ethnically organized. Christians, the largest group, lived in the southern part of the city, while Muslims lived in the north. Foreign merchants and consuls lived in the “French quartier” near the neighborhood called *Kioski*.<sup>36</sup>

Besides, a series of natural disasters,<sup>37</sup> such as fires and earthquakes, also played a major role in restructuring the city’s urban fabric.<sup>38</sup> New urban practices were established, and new buildings were constructed.<sup>39</sup> Major infrastructure works took place during this era, which also witnessed the construction of grandiose and costly public buildings. In the aftermath of these transformations, Mytilene projected the image of a modernized and westernized city. Along with the public buildings, majestic mansions were also built, either as main or country residences for the island’s bourgeois, and rich expatriate communities mainly from Istanbul, Egypt and Russia.

Finally, the construction of a decent road network and the improvement of the maritime transportation system with the advent of steamships both facilitated the connection of Mytilene with Lesbos’ hinterland, the Anatolian coast, and Constantinople. Situated at the crossroads of Istanbul-Alexandria and Marseille-Piraeus-Smyrna sea routes, nineteenth-century Mytilene grew into one of the empire’s busiest ports. Gradually, Mytilene became an important waypoint for all shipping companies, with transit trade becoming the linchpin of the island’s economy. Apart from being Lesbos’ main shipping hub, Mytilene also supplied secondary ports on the Anatolian coast, such as Ayvalık, Edremit and Dikili. The connections became even more frequent with the growth of foreign trade, linking the island with the ports of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 94.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 91–96.

<sup>36</sup> Stratis Anagnostou, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

<sup>37</sup> Zannis P. Kampouris, *Theominies sti Lesvo ton 19o aiona*, Mytilene, 1978.

<sup>38</sup> Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, p. 94.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 95.

<sup>40</sup> Stratis Anagnostou, *op. cit.*, p. 76; Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, pp. 74, 233.

## THE ADOPTION OF WESTERN CULTURE AND LUXURY CONSUMPTION

Western influence on “our near East” was, according to Haris Exertzoglou, systematic enough as to establish a new framework of identity formation for the Christian elites of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>41</sup> Culture became associated with concepts originating from the West, and the adoption of European lifestyle became the primary means to accumulate social capital, accompanied by specific consumption practices,<sup>42</sup> and identified with specific social groups and, more specifically, with the rise of the bourgeoisie.<sup>43</sup> In this context, the Greek bourgeoisie that emerged in Mytilene in the second half of the nineteenth century asserted their new social status, displaying those elements of Western novelty<sup>44</sup> that differentiated them from the other social strata and ensured their newly-found prestige.<sup>45</sup>

But what were those elements which Western novelty consisted of, and therefore served as the criteria that differentiated the bourgeoisie of Mytilene from the other social classes?<sup>46</sup> The main element in the social differentiation of the bourgeoisie from the lower classes was their clothing. The traditional folk costume of the women of Mytilene was gradually abandoned when French clothing was introduced to the island. Our information regarding the traditional women’s costume of Lesbos comes mainly from the dowry contracts of the eighteenth and nineteenth century and the testimonies of foreign travelers. From these sources, it becomes obvious that there was no unified model for women’s outfits, but rather a considerable variation from one area to another.<sup>47</sup>

In Mytilene, the traditional attire of the women in the nineteenth century had as its main element the dress called *foustani* or *f’stan* (from Turkish *fistan*).<sup>48</sup> As Maria Anagnostopoulou points out, the dress consisted of a skirt with thick and narrow unpressed pleats, supported with a thin belt on the waist. Under the dress, the women of Mytilene wore undergarments of “large four-paneled petticoats, adorned with

<sup>41</sup> Haris Exertzoglou, *Ek Dysmon to fos? Exellinismos kai Orientalismos stin Othomaniki Autokratoria (mesa 19ou – arches 20ou aiona)*, Athens, 1996, pp. 46–51.

<sup>42</sup> For the notion of consumption and its multiple symbolic uses in the Ottoman Empire, see *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1922. An Introduction*, ed. by Donald Quataert, New York, 2000. For consumption in Southeastern Europe, see *Women, Consumption, and the Circulation of Ideas in South-Eastern Europe, 17<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, ed. by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Leiden, Boston, 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Haris Exertzoglou, *Ek Dysmon to fos?*, pp. 47, 145.

<sup>44</sup> On Western novelty and its cultural uses see idem, *The Cultural Uses of Consumption: Negotiating Class, Gender and Nation in the Ottoman Urban Centers during the 19<sup>th</sup> century*, in “International Journal of Middle East Studies,” 35, 2003, no. 1, pp. 77–101.

<sup>45</sup> Idem, *Ek Dysmon to fos?*, pp. 147–151.

<sup>46</sup> On this issue, see Maria Anagnostopoulou, *I lesviaki foresia*, Mytilene, 1996.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 33.

<sup>48</sup> It appears that in the northern and north-eastern part of the island of Lesbos, as well as the town of Mytilene, women preferred to wear the dress (*foustani*) and not the *salwar* worn in other regions. Of course, in some cases we observe that the two types of outfits coexisted, and we find *salwar* (*vraka*) in areas where *foustani* dominated, especially among the labor class; Maria Anagnostopoulou, *I lesviaki foresia*, p. 70.

embroidery” to keep the skirt puffed. This outfit was complemented by the long silk shirt, open at the chest, with wide sleeves, the bust, which was a small sleeveless vest fitted to the upper part of the dress supporting the chest, and finally the *kamikozi* or *libade*, a type of short fitted jacket with rich decoration.<sup>49</sup> In the winter, the women wore a *kontogouni*, which was either a short jacket or a longer fur coat.<sup>50</sup>

The upper social classes, as one would expect, were the first ones to abandon the traditional attire, gradually assimilating European fashion trends. Without doubt, the island’s merchants and students – mainly the offspring of prominent families studying in Marseille –, who were in close contact with Europe, played a significant role in the proliferation and adoption of European fashion, and so did the publication of fashion magazines that upper-class ladies frequently consulted. These magazines were illustrated with numerous dress and purse patterns, jewels, hats, corsets, hair accessories, shoes, fans, gloves, umbrellas, hairdos, as well as men’s and children’s outfits. Later, we see numerous advertisements in the local press for fashion stores, as their owners tried hard to meet the sartorial demands of the rich bourgeois of Mytilene. A typical example in this respect is the fashion magazine of the St Joseph department stores.<sup>51</sup>

But how did the prominent women of Mytilene procure clothing items of the latest Western fashion? It appears that the ladies either ordered the fabrics they wanted from Europe and had their clothes sewn in Mytilene, or – as in the case of the Vasileiou family – they acquired them from the large urban centers of the Ottoman Empire, mainly from Smyrna and Constantinople. As the family’s private correspondence reveals, their first-born daughter, Myrsinio, upon her move to the imperial capital, became the main recipient of frequent requests from her female kin, asking her for shipment of luxury goods, mainly clothing items. Myrsinio’s mother and two younger sisters, Harikleia and Penelope – who wished to benefit as much as possible from her stay in the Ottoman capital –, ordered not only dresses tailored according to the latest fashion but also hats, jewelry and shoes. In one of such letters, Efthymia asked her first-born daughter to order “two hats, one for Harikleia and one for Penelope. I won’t tell you the specific color, as you can find out what is the most popular color and shape nowadays, and have it made like that.”<sup>52</sup> Apparently, on several occasions, Myrsinio sent fabric swatches – without providing exact descriptions of the fabric or quality – for her mother, who responded: “I received the swatches and I thank you dearly for your effort. I liked one of them, which I enclose, along with the lining.”<sup>53</sup>

Although, according to a common saying “clothes do not make the man,” there was no doubt that clothes “revealed the man.” Thus, the European fabrics and clothes offered their owners multiple advantages, since – by subscribing to European

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 33.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>51</sup> Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, p. 320.

<sup>52</sup> Ιστορικό Αρχείο Αιγαίου “Εργάνη,” Mytilene, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0669.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0663.

fashion trends – Harikleia and Penelope played an important part in maintaining, if not enhancing, the family's social standing in the local society.

Myrsinio considered the French style and sophistication an asset, as did the majority of upper-class women. In a letter to her sister Harikleia, in June of 1892, she noted that there were not many women in London who dressed tastefully, in contrast to Paris, where one was more beautiful than the other, and she continued: "yesterday we went to the woods frequently visited by the finest people of London [...] And during this walk we did see fine, but not so beautiful, people [...]"<sup>54</sup>

Living in Istanbul and mingling with the capital's elite, Myrsinio spent large amounts of money for cashmere, silk and velvet fabrics, furs, ribbons, lace, hats, shoes, fans, dresses, gloves for herself and her husband. As one can read in her personal expenses book, where she recorded all her expenses in detail, in August of 1883, Myrsinio paid Justine, a dressmaker, for mending three of her dresses, the amount of 216 *kuruş*, at a time when an *okka* (1,280 grams) of sugar cost merely five *kuruş*. A visit to the dentist at the same time meant an expenditure of 20 *kuruş*, while Myrsinio's shoes with galoshes cost 94 *kuruş*. In June of 1884, the same dressmaker received 540 *kuruş* for five dresses, almost four times as much as a nanny's salary. In October the following year, Myrsinio paid 60 *kuruş* for a travel dress, about 90 *kuruş* for luxury fabrics, and only 20 *kuruş* to her gardener. Next month, Mrs. Kourtzis' expenses for garments and accessories included 486 *kuruş* spent on a dress and two coats, 20 *kuruş* for her husband's gloves and 108 *kuruş* for an umbrella for Panos, whereas a ten-day wage to Efthalia, for ironing Kourtzis' clothes, amounted to 60 *kuruş*.<sup>55</sup>

The importance that wealthy women placed on their clothing as an indication of their social position is clearly reflected in the request to Myrsinio, which Efthymia Vasileiou made in May of 1885, to send her the hats she had ordered for her two younger daughters "this week, because they have no others to wear when they go out."<sup>56</sup> Penelope made a similar request in her letter of April 1888, asking her older sister to send her "this week" the hat she had sent for repair, as well as the shoes she had ordered since she was planning to go and pay some social visits: "Myrsinio, I ask you kindly to take care of mending the hat and sending it to me. As you know, I don't have another one, and I need it; as for the shoes you tell me, it is true that they are very expensive and as you tell me the heels are low, I do not like them so if you can please look somewhere else and send it together with the hat because I need them. Please send them this week because I want to visit certain relatives' houses as well as the hat."<sup>57</sup>

These social calls and pleasant walks in the countryside<sup>58</sup> constituted convenient *loci* for the display of consumer goods, and therefore arenas for young girls on the

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT1054.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0064.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0666.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0709.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0706.



local wedding “market” to compete with one another. In a letter dated 22 May 1888, Penelope Vasileiou informed her sister that she impressed her girlfriends when she appeared wearing her new dress and recounted the competition between the young girls, which went as far as sartorial espionage. Penelope’s friends used an experienced seamstress, Mrs. Theodora, as their spy to try to copy the dresses she had received from Constantinople: “I forgot to tell you about Mrs. Theodora’s tricks. After having seen me in that dress she immediately came to the house and asked to see it, as well as all the others, but it appears that the other girls put her up to it. I told her that you had not sent me the others yet, so she was asking for this one and kept coming back, three days in a row.”<sup>59</sup>

The orders from Constantinople, however, also had the purpose of putting together the trousseau for the girls of the family.<sup>60</sup> Marriage at the time was an indirect way to increase one’s wealth. The upper classes of Mytilene, in particular, tried to protect their economic and social status by following the strategy of cross-marriages with members of other prominent families of the island.<sup>61</sup> The dowry, which, apart from cash, included jewelry, furniture, clothing, and household items, reflected the social position of the bride’s family and, therefore, constituted yet another area for competition and conspicuous consumption.<sup>62</sup> For that reason, the Vasileiou family matriarch ordered ready-made trousseau items from seamstresses in Constantinople.<sup>63</sup> She particularly stressed that she wanted the pillows to have nice “four-lira” designs and to bear the firm’s mark.<sup>64</sup>

In contrast to the luxurious garments that made their way from the Ottoman capital to the “provincial” city of Mytilene, food parcels traveled in both directions. Kinsmen in Mytilene supplied Panos and Myrsinio with local products, such as chests with olives, quinces, traditional sweets, lamb, milk, and cheese made by Efthymia Vasileiou, while Myrsinio sent back home candies, strawberries, caviar, and butter.<sup>65</sup>

Moreover, the papers contain information about the domestic equipment of the Kourtzis family. Myrsinio thoroughly inventoried dinner sets and cutlery, the

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0705.

<sup>60</sup> For the institution of dowry and the habit of endowment in the island of Lesbos see Maria A. Anagnostopoulou, *I kentitiki sti Lesvo (18os–20os ai.)*, Athens, 2004; Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, pp. 150–180, 288–304. Especially for the Church’s opposition to the use of extremely expensive embroideries and clothing for the dowries of the daughters see Maria A. Anagnostopoulou, *Rythmistikes apofaseis gia ta ethima tou gamou sti mitropolitiki eparhia Mytilinis kata ton 18o ai*, in “Lesviaka,” 16, 1996, pp. 5–16.

<sup>61</sup> Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, p. 168.

<sup>62</sup> For bourgeois women’s consumption and its symbolic meaning see Leora Auslander, *The Gendering of Consumer Practices in Nineteenth-Century France*, in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Victoria de Grazia, Ellen Furlough, Berkeley, 1996, pp. 79–112.

<sup>63</sup> Ιστορικό Αρχείο Αιγαίου “Εργάνη,” GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0670, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0672, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0667, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0661.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0671.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0711 and GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0705.

silverware, towels and bedding linen in her houses in Constantinople and Mytilene. More precisely, in 1883, the list with her used silverware at her house at Constantinople comprises eight small fruit forks, seven stewed fruit spoons, eight small knives, nine soup spoons, eight forks, eight large knives, a pilaf spoon, a soup ladle, two nutcrackers, nine coffee cups, fifteen dessert spoons, two champagne buckets, two silver candlesticks, a sugar bowl and other items. The domestic equipment also included towels, napkins, tablecloths of different quality and colors, big bolsters, and *mahramades*.<sup>66</sup> Finally, she noted in detail the loss of some pieces of her dinner sets, cutlery, and dishes she had brought from Europe.<sup>67</sup>

Apart from their economic rise, the rich bourgeois of Mytilene also tended to their intellectual aspirations. They were cosmopolitans, fluent speakers of foreign languages, reading books of Greek classical and world literature, as well as magazines and newspapers from Istanbul, Smyrna, and European cities. For example, Alexandros Vasileiou, in a letter dated May 1882, asked his sister Myrsinio to send him from Constantinople collected works by Achilleas Paraschos<sup>68</sup> and D. Paparrigopoulos,<sup>69</sup> which he required but was unable to find in Mytilene.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, several years later, in a family expenses book that belonged to the family of Eleni Karamanou, Panos Kourtzis' sister, one can find an entry regarding subscriptions to the newspaper "Amaltheia" and the magazines "Paidikos Kosmos" and "Filokalos Pinelopi," as well as expenses for tutors and books of music, and language lessons in English, French, Turkish, and German.<sup>71</sup>

In accordance with the general bourgeois cultural pattern of the period, playing the piano and knowledge of French emerged as two additional signifiers of European influence and social distinction in the daily life of the Ottoman Greek bourgeoisie of Mytilene.<sup>72</sup> Wealthy bourgeois families were eager to showcase their social status through women's leisure time and activities. Being often used for leisure, the piano stood as a testament of a family's position on the socioeconomic ladder. A letter from Myrsinio to her mother dated 22 November 1881 informs us that two months after her move to Constantinople, Panos Kourtzis' wife had

<sup>66</sup> *Mahramades* were long towels of various lengths, most of which were white or red, of linen and silk. For the embroidery and growth of needlework in the island of Lesbos see Maria A. Anagnostopoulou, *I kentitiki sti Lesvo*, pp. 19–63.

<sup>67</sup> Ιστορικό Αρχείο Αιγαίου "Εργάνη," GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0064.

<sup>68</sup> Achilleas Paraschos (1838–1895) was a Greek romantic poet of the nineteenth century. He was a representative of the First Athenian School.

<sup>69</sup> Dimitrios Paparrigopoulos (1843–1873) was a Greek theatrical writer and poet. He was one of the main representatives of the First Athenian School. His father was the famous Greek historian Constantine Paparrigopoulos.

<sup>70</sup> Ιστορικό Αρχείο Αιγαίου "Εργάνη," GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT1891.

<sup>71</sup> I would like to thank Mrs. Maria Grigora for this piece of information.

<sup>72</sup> For the piano and French as elements of social distinction and membership of a group, see Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, "Curls and Forelocks": *Romanian Women's Emancipation in Consumption and Fashion, 1780–1850*, in *Women, Consumption, and the Circulation of Ideas*, ed. by Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, pp. 135–137.

already acquired a piano, and asked her mother to send her books with the piano pieces as soon as possible, since she was upset that she could not play as she could not remember them by heart.<sup>73</sup>

However, a further reading of the letter reveals that it was not only Myrsinio who spent time learning to play the piano. Her younger sister Penelope, who remained on the island and was a member of the local elite, followed her elder sister's footsteps. Myrsinio remarked that "if Penelope needs three or four pieces [from the book, she can] write down their names, so I copy them and send them back to you."<sup>74</sup> It is thus clear that piano acquired a particular cultural and social allure both in the Ottoman capital and in the imperial periphery, becoming a symbol of cultural status and the economic power of its owner and user.

Good knowledge of French similarly became a hallmark of good manners adopted by the upper classes in this period. For male bourgeois, French constituted the basic working language; in turn, women considered it primarily a language of culture. As one can judge from the existing correspondence, Panos Kourtzis was fluent in French, while Myrsinio's brothers Mihailos and Alexandros studied in Marseille.<sup>75</sup> They were by no means exceptions in this respect, as attending university in Europe, and particularly the Commercial School of Marseille was a standard practice for eminent families from Lesbos.<sup>76</sup>

In one of his letters to Myrsinio from 1882, Alexandros expressed his joy at seeing her, and having a French lesson together,<sup>77</sup> while in a letter to his brother-in-law he emphasized that all his classmates from Mytilene had gone abroad a long time ago, and asked Panos to intercede with his father to change the latter's mind about studying in Europe.<sup>78</sup>

Thus, it becomes obvious from the correspondence that in 1885 Alexandros had already started learning French. In one of his letters to his sister Myrsinio, he noticed: "I have also started learning French, which I have wanted to do for a long time. However, it seems that I will not make much progress since my teacher is very unskilled."<sup>79</sup> Alexandros was eventually allowed to go abroad, and in 1887 he wrote to his sister from Marseille: "I am learning the language, so the money is not spent in vain [...] I live the life of a student."<sup>80</sup>

Mastering French was also the great ambition of Myrsinio's sister, Penelope. Penelope's effort to learn French and piano<sup>81</sup> is undoubtedly part of the general program of education followed by young girls of the eminent families of Lesbos.

<sup>73</sup> Ιστορικό Αρχείο Αιγαίου "Εργάνη," GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT1923.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT1910.

<sup>75</sup> Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

<sup>76</sup> A good example is the Kampouris family, whose sons Panagiotis and Nikolaos also studied in the Commercial School at Marseille. Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, p. 275.

<sup>77</sup> Ιστορικό Αρχείο Αιγαίου "Εργάνη," GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT1891.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0001.IT1896.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0608.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0001.IT1887.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT1926.

Therefore, it seems that young Penelope did her best to follow Myrsinio's steps and perceived her older sister as a role model.

Another essential element of the identity of the bourgeoisie that emerged in Mytilene, as well as the symbol of its hegemony, was residential housing. Traders, industrialists, bankers, and land owners would invest their funds in buying land and building lavish residences, thus showing off their wealth and high social status. Panos and Myrsinio Kourtzis owned two houses. Their main residence, located on Isavron Street in the historical center of Mytilene, was purchased by Panos in 1884 and renovated in the Constantinople style in the 1890s.<sup>82</sup> According to the typology by Ioanna Sotiriou-Dorovini, the Kourtzis' residence displays the main features of 'middle-period' houses, while at the same time retaining elements of the early period. More specifically, we can discern four stories, three belonging to the main residence, and a fourth one used as auxiliary, including a loft and the single-storey wing of the elevated ground floor on the garden side, where the kitchen, laundry room, and cellar were located. The ground floor is divided into two sections, and the other levels into three parts. The residence has a fully-fitted bathroom and two water closets.<sup>83</sup>

The summer residence of the Kourtzis couple, known as the Midhat Villa, was located in the *Epano Skala* neighborhood and was purchased in 1880. In his application to the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Protection in 1925, in which he requested compensation for the destruction from the fire at the Midhat Villa, Panos Kourtzis included an eloquent description of the splendor and luxury of the building: "The residence, known as the Midhat Turkish Mansion of historical value, with its luxurious relief ceilings, details of pure gold, consisted of twenty-five large rooms on two floors, with all required installations for kitchen, laundry rooms, bathrooms etc., surrounded on all sides by a large garden, used to serve as my residence until 1916 [...] The building, as well as its numerous valuable furnishings and appliances, which remained locked in four large rooms upon the building's requisition, were exposed to fire risk."<sup>84</sup>

Finally, another criterion of differentiation among the urban and the other social classes of Mytilene was the employment of servants. Evridiki Sifneos points out that the employment of young girls in wealthy urban households freed the rural family from the need to provide food, clothing, and dowry to at least some of their female offspring, while at the same time provided the latter with an opportunity to improve their future.<sup>85</sup> From the revenues-expenses notebook kept by Myrsinio, it becomes obvious that the Kourtzis had three female servants (Marigo, Milia, and Harikleia), a steward, a certain "old Yiannis," and a nanny.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Archeio Kourtzi*, ed. by Kristis Konnaris, p. 25.

<sup>83</sup> Ioanna Sotiriou Dorovini, *I architektoniki ton katoikion tis anoteris astikis taxis tis Mytilinis (1850–1930)*, Athens, 2001, p. 112.

<sup>84</sup> I would like to thank Maria Grigora for providing me this piece of information.

<sup>85</sup> Evridiki Sifneos, *Lesvos oikonomiki*, p. 316.

<sup>86</sup> Ιστορικό Αρχείο Αιγαίου "Εργάνη," GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT064, mentioned in Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *op. cit.*, pp. 120–121.

Moreover, Myrsinio's correspondence with her mother reveals that several female servants in Kourtzis' household in Constantinople originated from Mytilene.<sup>87</sup> Efthymia sent her daughter servants that she considered trustworthy, as well as candidate nannies to help Myrsinio with managing the households and raising Mitsas. The mother's and daughter's criteria for the choice of servants – referred to as “slave” in Efthymia's letters – seem to have differed, and Myrsinio did not hesitate, despite her mother's good word, to send back to Mytilene a candidate servant that had not satisfied her needs.<sup>88</sup>

Meanwhile, Efthymia also found a nanny from Lesbos for her daughter and grandson. In one of her letters, she described the perfect nanny as a woman without a husband and thus ready to move to Constantinople, and who had given birth merely five days after Myrsinio and had plenty of nutritional milk, since her baby was growing well. Furthermore, the candidate had one more advantage, as she could live in the household and help with the domestic tasks. Moreover, since Efthymia did not think the nanny was particularly good-looking, she considered her no threat to Myrsinio's family life.<sup>89</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The town of Mytilene and its port undoubtedly played a crucial role in the formation of the financial capital and social status of several eminent families of the island, one of them being the Kourtzis family. As an outlet for the local agricultural products and related industry, the port of Mytilene was connected to other ports of the Mediterranean world (Trieste, Constantinople, Smyrna, and Alexandria) as well as Western Europe and Russia. From this perspective, the history of the Kourtzis family reflects the gradual transformation of a local agrarian economy, which was mainly based on the monoculture of olive, into a globalized commercial and financial economy.

The Kourtzis family papers provide researchers with valuable information on the entrepreneurship and everyday life of a wealthy bourgeois family. Although a comprehensive study of the Lesbos' society would require a more in-depth analysis of the families that made up the emerging bourgeoisie of Mytilene in the second half of the nineteenth century, it is clear that the archive accounts for a fascinating case study, providing us with a “compass for mapping out the profile of the majority of businessmen, bankers and other Greek Orthodox financial actors in the Ottoman Empire at that time.”<sup>90</sup>

<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 121.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT00679, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT0677. See also Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibidem*, GR HAA FO0001.SF0004.FI0002.IT1918 also mentioned in Maria Stamatogiannopoulou, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

<sup>90</sup> Maria Mandamadiotou, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

But what can the Kourtzis family papers tell us about the emerging consumer behavior in the late-nineteenth-century Mytilenian bourgeoisie? Comparing Efthymia Vasileiou's letters with those of Myrsinio and her sisters, it is possible to identify two different and somewhat contradictory value systems that differentiate the two generations, intricately entangled in the political, socio-economic, and cultural changes that took place during the nineteenth century in the Ottoman Empire in general, and on the island of Lesbos in particular.

European material goods such as furniture, clothing, porcelains, and expensive musical instruments were the first sign of the penetration of Western influence in the society of Mytilene. As historians of consumption and social scientists have noted, material goods could carry a wide range of meanings. In the words of Elisabeth Wallace, consumer objects not only conveyed status but quickly "became an expression and guide to social identity."<sup>91</sup> By adopting the European fashion, playing the piano, and learning French, Myrsinio Kourtzis and her sisters managed not only to highlight existing social boundaries and differentiate their social position from other social classes, but also mark their elevated position within the ranks of the local elite. In other words, the Vasileiou family gained a lot of clout through the marriage alliance with the Kourtzis family. Moreover, several commodities mentioned above were successfully employed by Harikleia and Penelope Vasileiou as vehicles for forging new marriage alliances with members of other eminent families of Mytilene.

#### URBAN TRANSFORMATION OF THE MYTILENIAN BOURGEOISIE: THE CASE OF THE KOURTZIS FAMILY

##### *Abstract*

The paper aims to examine both the process of urban transformation and the westernizing trend among the Greek bourgeoisie in Mytilene in the second half of the nineteenth century. By focusing on the papers from the Kourtzis family archive, the study examines the social and cultural world of Lesbos' elite and the utility of the archive for tracing the changes in the manners and pursuits of the emergent bourgeoisie. The paper investigates the ways members of the family tried to express their new status and cultural outlook through the adoption of Europeanized material culture and the networks it utilized to both shape their new way of life and acquire commodities necessary to do so.

**Keywords:** Mytilene; Ottoman Greek bourgeoisie; Kourtzis family; material culture; luxury consumption

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<sup>91</sup> Elisabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, 1997, p. 6.



**Figure 1.** Panos Kourtzis, Vice-Consul of Germany in Mytilene (source: GR.HAA.FO0001SF0004.FI0001.IT1691).



**Figure 2.** Myrsinio and Panos Kourtzis dressed according to the latest fashion with their first-born son Mitsas in Constantinople around 1880 (source: GR.HAA.FO0001.SF0004.FI0001.IT1722).





**Figure 3.** Mitsas Kourtzis with his grandmother Efthymia Vasileiou at Mytilene in 1900  
(source: GR.HAA.FO. 0001.SF0004.FI0003.IT1721).



**Figure 4.** Myrsinio's sister Penelope Vasileiou  
(source: GR.HAA.FO0001.SF0004.FI0007.IT1780).



**Figure 5.** Panos and Myrsinio at Villa Midhat in Mytilene with guests and two members of their staff (1898)  
(source: GR.HAA.FO0001SF.0004.FI0001.IT1797).



# MEDICAL CONSUMPTION AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

## THE PRICE OF HEALTH. THE COST OF MEDICAL TREATMENT IN PREMODERN MOLDAVIA\*

SORIN GRIGORUȚĂ\*\*

To discuss the physical sufferings of the Moldavian population two hundred years ago is by no means an easy task: the priorities of most of them did not involve writing testimonies of the ailments affecting their lives. When they were forced to do so in order to justify their absence from the court case or fulfilling their duties, they merely mentioned the fact of being sick rather than elaborating on the character of their affliction, its intensity or duration. Almost always, they failed to discuss the means they resorted to recover. However, by analysing scraps of evidence scattered across existing sources on the physical sufferings of early nineteenth-century Moldavians, we are able to gain some insights into the topic.

By the late 1820s, in the aftermath of epidemic outbreaks of bubonic plague and cholera that swept the principality, a decision was made to compile reports regarding the “state of inhabitants’ health” to identify those suffering from contagious diseases and determine the causes of death.<sup>1</sup> From this type of sources, we learn that the most common afflictions in early nineteenth-century Moldavia included colds (comprising virtually all diseases, whose symptoms included fever and shivering), *troahnă* (flu), *frență* (syphilis), *gâlci* (swelling caused by the inflammation of ganglions in the throat or tonsil), *giunghiu* (most likely pneumonia), *lungoare* (typhoid fever), *oftică* (pulmonary tuberculosis), *orbalț* (contagious disease causing inflammation and reddening of skin), *pânticărie* or *treapăd* (dysentery), *podagră* (gout of the foot), *strânsu* (cramps, colic), coughing, and *vătămătură* (affliction of internal organs). The documents also mention those whose head, throat, cheek, teeth, eyes, heart or legs were affected.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout Europe, the practice of comprehensive reporting on causes of death – which initially had not been part of the medical profession – was closely related to the bubonic plague epidemics: George C. Alter, Ann G. Carmichael, *Classifying the Dead: Toward a History of the Registration of Causes of Death*, in “Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences,” 1999, pp. 117–118.

<sup>2</sup> National Archives Iași [hereafter: ANI], Colecția Litere, B/618–624, Ci/146; idem, Isprăvnicia Iași, file 425/1832; idem, Isprăvnicia Botoșani, tr. 1333, op. 1513, file 145/1833; idem, Isprăvnicia

The most important observation we can draw from the documents is the way these ailments were perceived, particularly under the threat of epidemic outbreaks. The illnesses listed above seem to have constituted part of normal everyday life, involving going down with an illness, and suffering; some managed to recover, while others passed away, following the natural course of life. In turn, the threat of epidemic outbreaks – bubonic plague or cholera – due to the unpredictability of their spread and multiple deaths they caused, irrespective of the victims' age and social status, caused a major disruption in the established patterns of social and individual life. Throughout the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the territories east of the Carpathians witnessed numerous outbreaks, bubonic plague wreaking most havoc.<sup>3</sup> While some cases were incorrectly or confusingly identified, this can be explained by the similarities in the symptomatology of some diseases and limited medical knowledge of that period. We have to keep in mind that in some instances, particularly during outbreaks, due to a limited number of physicians, determining the cause of death fell on the shoulders of local officials, such as *vorniceii*. With regard to physicians, it is important to point out that in the first decades of the nineteenth century, their number in Moldavia was still small and most of them operated in the capital, Iași, and offered their services to the elite.<sup>4</sup> In the 1750s, Saint Spiridon hospital was established in Iași to serve the wider public, but its impact was limited.<sup>5</sup> Most of those sick, particularly in the countryside, treated the new establishment with suspicion and relied on popular medicine,<sup>6</sup> or turned to the “foot soldier” of medical assistance, more affordable financially: barbers.<sup>7</sup>

The general impression we get from analyzing a large number of documents from the period is that Moldavians of the early nineteenth century considered health a gift bestowed upon them by “God’s grace”<sup>8</sup>; disease and suffering also originated from God, who was not only merciful, but also just, and thus did not allow human sins to go unpunished.<sup>9</sup> However, despite being considered a *priceless*

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Dorohoi, tr. 444, op. I–485, file 40/1832; idem, *Isprăvnicia Neamț*, file 306/1832. I have used some information from these reports in my doctoral dissertation, Sorin Grigoruță, *Boli, epidemii și asistență medicală în Moldova (1700–1831)*, Iași, 2017, pp. 29–31.

<sup>3</sup> Pompei Gh. Samarian, *Din epidemiologia trecutului românesc. Ciurma*, Bucharest, 1932.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Pruteanu, *Medici în Moldova înainte de Regulamentul organic*, in *Din istoria medicinei românești și universale*, ed. by V.L. Bologa, Bucharest, 1962, pp. 233–260.

<sup>5</sup> G. Brătescu, *L'attitude roumaine face à l'hôpital*, in “Revue roumaine d'histoire,” 4, 1983, p. 322.

<sup>6</sup> Simion Florea Marian, *Vrăji, farmece și desfaceri. Descânțecul poporului român*, Bucharest, 1996; Mariana Sefer, *Descânțecul, poezie populară medicală*, Bucharest, 1999; Silvia Ciubotaru, *Folclorul medical din Moldova. Tipologie și corpus de texte*, Iași, 2005; Emanuela Timotin, *Descânțecul manuscris românesc (secolele al XVII-lea – al XIX-lea)*, critical edition, Bucharest, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Sorin Grigoruță, *Body Healers: Barbers and Surgeons in Moldavia during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*, in “Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Central and Eastern Europe,” VI–VII, 2014–2015, pp. 77–95.

<sup>8</sup> “I praised God so that he keeps you in perfect help” (ANI, Documente, 98/6); “today, thank God, there was no new case [of plague]” (idem, *Colecția Litere*, Ci/146, fol. 53r).

<sup>9</sup> “In the year 1816, [...] for our multiple sins, God’s punishment fell upon us with plague and everyone was in fear [...]” (Ioan Antonovici, *Mănăstirea Florești din plasa Simila, județul Tutova. Studiu istoric cu hărți și ilustrațiuni urmat de documente, inscripții și însemnări*, Bucharest, 1916, p. 108).

gift received from God, health also acquired a specific price whenever, for various reasons, its integrity was undermined and affected.

On the pages that follow, I will examine the financial and material effort undertaken to recover from illness and maintain good health. In doing so, my goal is to provide an answer to the following questions: what were the consequences of deteriorating health? Did these outcomes differ depending on the social status of those afflicted? How much were the victims ready to pay to recover and to what extent these expenses affected the quality of their lives?

The sources of this text are mainly the documents, published or unpublished, the narrations of the foreign travellers as well as some notes with a memorial character from that period or with a reference to that period. Of particular importance are the financial ledgers, wills and correspondence of local boyar households,<sup>10</sup> which contain information regarding treatments and prices of remedies.

How was health conceptualized two centuries ago? According to a simple and concise definition found in contemporary dictionaries, health constitutes the normal state of an organism in which all organs and bodily functions operate in a normal and regular manner.<sup>11</sup> Was this the case in the nineteenth century? From traditions and beliefs collected and published by Tudor Pamfile at the beginning of the twentieth century we learn that, without thinking too much about the physical or physiological facts, people of that time perceived health as “their fundamental wealth [...] on which labour depended, the latter being the source of all things.”<sup>12</sup> I see no reason to believe the situation in the first half of the nineteenth century was different in any substantial manner. In the documents of that time, health is constantly described as “precious” and “blissful”; much of the correspondence of this period opens with news and inquiries about the health of the correspondents and their families.<sup>13</sup>

Obviously, however, one’s physical condition could deteriorate and prove vulnerable to accidents, violence, but also – and most importantly – endemic and epidemic diseases. In the present contribution, rather than discuss the diseases themselves, I will focus on their social consequences and the cost people paid to recover.

Two cases illustrate how the socioeconomic position of those affected led to radically different outcomes. The first one regards Grand Treasurer (*mare vistiernic*) Matei Cantacuzino, whose life took a sharp turn during the first week of Great Lent in 1790. According to the account by Ilie Catargi,<sup>14</sup> the treasurer suffered from “delirium

<sup>10</sup> Gh. Ungureanu, *Veniturile și cheltuielile unei mari case boierești din Iași în anul 1816. Casa Roset Roznovanu*, in “Studii și articole de istorie,” I, 1956, pp. 125–135; idem, *Însemnări pe marginea unui manuscris cuprinzând cheltuielile unei case boierești din Iași în anii 1818–1819*, in “Studii și articole de istorie,” II, 1957, pp. 369–378; Vasile Panopol, *Pe ulițele Iașului*, ed. by Mihai Sorin Rădulescu, Bucharest, 2000, pp. 33–37; ANI, Documente, 1023/2.

<sup>11</sup> *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Bucharest, 1996, p. 950.

<sup>12</sup> Tudor Pamfile, *Boli și leacuri la oameni, vite și păsări după datinile și credințele poporului român adunate din comuna Țepu (Tecuciu)*, Bucharest, 1911, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> ANI, Documents, 98/6, 413/112.

<sup>14</sup> A former Moldavian boyar, who at the time of giving this testimony served as general-major in the Russian army (Valentin Constantinov, *Registrul bunurilor mobile și imobile, al veniturilor și*

asprum,” since “when a gunshot was fired [in the vicinity of his house], he was struck by apoplexy and, due to the shock, his tongue, right hand and leg were hurt and he fell unconscious.”<sup>15</sup> According to Ilie Catargi, his health did not improve “despite him being treated by every doctor in Iași.”<sup>16</sup> The story of one of the doctors that treated Matei Cantacuzino was preserved. He was General Potemkin’s physician and was sent on his order to treat the sick. The condition of the ailing person found by the doctor was the one described by Catargi. Due to the efforts of the doctor, some weeks after, the condition of the sick improved: he started to walk, “but the hand, especially the palm and the tongue were in the same condition, so much that at that time he wasn’t able not only to say a word and to express his thoughts, but he can’t even sign with his own hand.”<sup>17</sup> The second case originated from the town of Bârlad, where on 12 April 1818 three burghers testified that Ion, son of Neculai, the grocer from Bârlad, because of an apoplexy attack suffered ten years prior, was left “mute, and with his arm and legs affected,” not being able anymore to take care of his house and his children.<sup>18</sup>

Both cases illustrate radically different consequences of the same condition, depending on their social status and material resources. Whereas the fit of apoplexy deprived the burgher of Bârlad of the ability to support his family, Cantacuzino’s financial standing did not suffer from the boyar’s ailment. For the treasurer, the most important consequences were not financial in nature, but rather affected his emotional and social life, making him unable to communicate with others and manage his property by signing documents.

Thus, from the point of view of those afflicted and their families, disease constituted a disruptive factor and justified all efforts to recover. Attempts to convalesce could prove expensive, though. On 10 June 1739, Moldavian Prince Grigore Ghica relieved former gardener at the palace, Costandin, and his wife from some taxes, since they were sick and poor: “this helpless Costandin, who used to be a gardener at the court, complained to me that due to an affliction he became crippled and his eyes were affected so that he could no longer see; he and his wife spent all their money on him [recovering] from the disease and thus they fell into poverty.”<sup>19</sup> From a petition to the prince dated 27 September 1785, submitted by Dumitrașco Săcară high steward at the Court (*vornic de poartă*), we find out that he had been robbed by burglars and “with God’s assistance, I protected myself with guns and

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*cheltuielilor lui Matei Cantacuzino din anul 1792*, in *Avere, prestigiu și cultură materială în surse patrimoniale. Inventare de avere din secolele XVI–XX*, ed. by Dan Dumitru Iacob, Iași, 2015, p. 276).

<sup>15</sup> Valentin Constantinov, *Încercarea fiilor lui Matei Cantacuzino să recupereze averile tatălui său după anul 1812*, paper presented at the conference *Inventare de averi din secolele XVII–XIX*, organized by the Institute of Social Studies and Humanities, Sibiu, 26–27 September 2014.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>18</sup> *Documente bărlădene*, ed. by Ioan Antonovici, vol. II, Bârlad, 1912, p. 224.

<sup>19</sup> *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași* (hereafter: *Documente Iași*), ed. by Ioan Caproșu, vol. IV, *Acte interne (1726–1740)*, Iași, 2001, p. 269.



for eight months I didn't get up from the bed and I spent all my fortune on doctors."<sup>20</sup> In his will, Captain Andrei PISOȚCHI established that his wife, Maria, would inherit landed estates and some Gypsy slaves, since she had been by his side and looked after him for twenty years, going as far as to "sell the jewellery she had from her parents, as well as animals: cows, sheep, horses, spending her money on physicians and taking care of him."<sup>21</sup>

That treating family members involved spending considerable sums and could lead to financial ruin was common knowledge in the community composed of relatives and neighbours, whose testimonies were invoked in certain moments. On 20 May 1835, inhabitants of the suburb Muntenimea de Sus from Iași testified about huge amounts of money Colonel (*polcovnic*) Pavăl Postăvariu spent on medical care for his wife, Zmaranda: "he lived with Zmaranda for four years and a half and since the first year of their marriage she has been sick. The colonel acquired treatments for her from the pharmacy, spending 500 *lei*."<sup>22</sup> Shortly thereafter, his wife was sick again and "thanks to his money, he was able to help her recover." The improvement was temporary, though, as she passed away soon thereafter, while the expenditure associated with the treatment made Pavăl exhaust his entire fortune and forced him to seek employment "working for the boyar families."<sup>23</sup> Once financial resources dried up in the pursuit of health, the sick inevitably sought recourse by selling moveable property and real estate and turned to neighbours for assistance and loans. In July 1812, Maria Săbăoi wrote to the president of the *Divan*,<sup>24</sup> Vasiliy Krasno-Milashevich, recounting her dire situation to explain her failure to cover her debts: "I have been sick for three months and I was constantly spending my money and ran into debt in all shops, pawning my garments; I am left with no choice but to go from door to door, asking Christians for charity."<sup>25</sup>

In such instances, assistance from those with wealth and authority could be life-saving. A *postelnic*,<sup>26</sup> whose signature is unfortunately illegible, intervened with

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. VIII, *Acte interne (1781–1790)*, Iași, 2006, p. 405.

<sup>21</sup> ANI, Documente, 275/82.

<sup>22</sup> To provide context regarding the value of the sums spent on Zmaranda's treatment, Pavăl Postăvariu sold two *pogoane* (ca. one hectare) of vineyards in Putna county, an important zone of viticulture, for 660 *lei* (*ibidem*, 85/56).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>24</sup> In the context of the Russian military occupation of Moldavia between 1806 and 1812, the Moldavian *Divan* had both administrative and judiciary powers (*Documente privind istoria Moldovei sub ocupație militară rusă (1806–1812)*, Chișinău, 2012, pp. 6–8).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 404; this is not the only example. On 19 August 1823, Zamfirache Ralli was asking for a loan of 1,000 *lei*, "as I have to pay 500 *lei* for the medicines alone" (L.T. Boga, *Documente basarabene*, vol. II, Chișinău, 1928, p. 95).

<sup>26</sup> In medieval Moldavia, *postelnic* was a high-ranking office, whose holder was included in the Princely Council. The *postelnic*'s duties included taking care of the ruler's bedroom and subsequently of organizing audiences; by the beginning of the nineteenth century, his duties made the position equivalent with that of minister of Foreign Affairs, although most appointees held it more as an honorific title rather than an actual office (August Scriban, *Dicționarul limbii românești (etimologii, înțelesuri, exemple, citațiuni, arhaisme, neologisme, provincialisme)*, Iași, 1939, p. 1023).

Chancellor (*logofăt*) Iordache Cantacuzino on behalf of Dumitrache Botezatul, “a poor man with a house full of children and being sick is coming to Iași. I ask you to show him mercy and take care of him at the hospital, as he – being sick – cannot do by himself.”<sup>27</sup> Along these lines, we have to specify that such assistance provided to neighbours by the wealthiest sometimes had a collective character. It is worth mentioning those who could afford the luxury of helping the others. An issue of journal “*Albina românească*,” published on 17 January 1832 included a text where the Commission of Physicians eulogized a charitable act of boyars Constantin and Gheorghe Balș, who covered the cost of medicines for the sick poor from the village of Tătărași (nowadays a neighbourhood of Iași).<sup>28</sup> Boyars also took upon themselves the establishment of institutions meant to provide health care and medicine to the populace. The first pharmacy in Tecuci was opened on 17 March 1836 on the initiative and with the financial backing of Chancellor Costache Conachi. The business was run by Ioan Abrahamfi – brother of pharmacist Anton Abrahamfi from Iași –, who was required to provide free medicine for those unable to afford it.<sup>29</sup> A decade later, the same Costache Conachi sought to bring physicians to his village of Țigănești (Tecuci county) and the town of Nămolosa (Putna county).<sup>30</sup> Charitable impulses aside, we can assume that Conachi’s interest in providing medical care had a more pragmatic aspect, since ensuring good health of the workforce in his estates would benefit him financially.

Further examples come from physicians, some of which provided their services without charge to those who lacked the means to pay for treatment. On 23 August 1826, the head of the Austrian imperial agency in Bârlad issued a clarification regarding the activity of Neculai Lafari, a physician, whom some had accused of “not bothering to pay visits to humble people, [and] being a doctor only for the boyars.” Consequently, doctor Lafari, “as a friend of all the people, ... feels sorry to see people dying, with no help from the doctors or left at the hand of some unwise men.”<sup>31</sup> That is why the head of the Austrian imperial agency in Bârlad wanted to be known that “the doctor [was] willing to serve the humble people without asking for money” and the fact that sometimes the physician paid with his own money the treatments for the poor.<sup>32</sup>

Another example of this kind took place several years later, when Ioan Ilașciuc, who worked as the quarantine physician in Iași, “moved by the love of the people, devoted himself to serve the public by taking care of the people who were sick.”<sup>33</sup> The doctor received patients in his house. The examinations took place between

<sup>27</sup> ANI, Documente, 404/413.

<sup>28</sup> “*Albina românească*,” IV, 17 January 1832, no. 5.

<sup>29</sup> ANI, Documente, 237/24.

<sup>30</sup> G.T. Kirileanu, *Câteva știri despre C. Conachi*, in “*Arhiva românească*,” X, 1945–1946, pp. 444–449.

<sup>31</sup> *Documente bârlădene*, ed. by Ioan Antonovici, vol. IV, Bârlad, 1924, p. 311.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>33</sup> “*Albina românească*,” III, 30 April 1831, no. 8, p. 29.

7 and 8 am in the morning and from 3 to 4 pm in the afternoon, and on Monday and Sunday from 4 until 5 pm. During visiting hours, Ilașciuc provided free vaccinations for children from families of modest means.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, since the second half of the eighteenth century, the idea of helping the poor who suffered from illness took shape,<sup>35</sup> particularly during epidemic outbreaks.<sup>36</sup> It took several steps for the transition from individual acts of charity to official government initiatives to occur. This process, which progressed more decisively and at a quicker pace in the capital than in other towns of the principality, at the behest of some doctors and local philanthropists, contributed to the improvement of living conditions for the sick who did not have the means to pay for treatment.

But what were the costs of medical assistance? No doubt, there were considerable differences between individual cases, depending on the seriousness of the affliction and the expertise of the physician. Expense records of elite families provide us with some insight into the matter.<sup>37</sup> It is clear that starting from the second half of the eighteenth century, but particularly in the early 1800s, the boyars came to appreciate the advantages of the medical treatments and invested in their health. In 1762, while travelling through Moldavia, Ruđer Josip Bošković observed that “a large amount of money leaves the country by way of pharmacies and luxuries introduced among the nobility.”<sup>38</sup>

Indicative of this trend is the ledger of *vornic* Dracache Rosetti’s household, one of the few financial records providing relatively detailed information on medical expenses. From these notes, we clearly see that a considerable share of household revenue was spent on providing healthcare to Rosetti’s wife, Zoe. Already in 1813, the ledger contains the expense of 20 gold coins paid to “doctor (doftorul) Firiș for treatment, when Lady Zoe fell ill in Iași.” A few years later another physician, “Petelenz,” received five hundred *lei* for his services. Another five hundred *lei* was paid to doctor Simion Romantzai for providing health care for the family over the previous two years<sup>39</sup>; afterwards, the family’s health was entrusted to a “doctor Fumete,”<sup>40</sup> who received a more generous remuneration. Neither was

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> Ligia Livadă-Cadeschi, *De la milă la filantropie: instituții de asistare a săracilor din Țara Românească și Moldova în secolul al XVIII-lea*, Bucharest, 2001, *passim*.

<sup>36</sup> During the cholera epidemic in Moldavia in the summer of 1831, the publishers of “*Albina românească*” were spreading the message on behalf of doctor Mihai Zotta, who had received 20 gold coins from a boyar in order to buy the medicines for the poor patients (“*Albina românească*,” III, 31 May 1831, no. 17, p. 68).

<sup>37</sup> Mihai Mirza, *Cheltuielile marelui vistiernic Toader Palade după o samă din 1752*, in “*Analele științifice ale Universității ‘Al. I. Cuza’ din Iași*,” LIX, 2013, pp. 333–408; Gh. Ungureanu, *Veniturile și cheltuielile ... în anul 1816*, pp. 125–135.

<sup>38</sup> *Călători străini despre țările române*, vol. IX, ed. by Maria Holban, Maria M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu, Bucharest, 1997, p. 475.

<sup>39</sup> Vasile Panopol, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>40</sup> The physician in question was Franz Egon von Fumetti, doctor of medicine and surgery and a graduate of the Faculty of Medicine in Göttingen (ANI, Colecția Litere, D/395, fol. 39r).

Lady Zoe spared health issues when out of the city. In 1829, during her visit at the estate of Deleni, she fell sick and doctor Samurcaș<sup>41</sup> was brought from Botoșani, receiving payment of 630 *lei* for his services. In 1831, she came down with cholera but managed to recover with the help of doctors. Following this fit of illness, she offered 1,880 *lei* “to the servants that took care of her during cholera from which God spared her.” At the beginning of April 1832, during her sojourn at her estates in Hoisești, she got sick again; the already-mentioned doctor Samurcaș was brought in again and compensated for his services with a sum of 1,980 *lei*. Apart from expenses for care provided by physicians, Rosetti’s ledger also lists 800 *lei* paid to the metropolitan of Moldavia for holding prayers for Zoe’s recovery in forty churches in Iași. The family also turned to saints’ relics: 48 *lei* were spent on bringing the head of Saint Pantelimon, a saint venerated in Orthodox tradition as a patron saint of the sick.

Zoe Rosetti passed away on 18 September 1832, but the expenses incurred by treating her did not come to an end with her death. *Vornic* Rosetti had yet to pay 3,500 *lei* owed to the Lochmann pharmacy, and in April 1833 Vasile Ghica received 445 *lei* that he had paid to doctors in Vienna to examine suffering Zoe. Although these sums seem considerable, it is important to keep in mind that the family had ample financial resources, which allowed them to spend 3,000 *lei* for a fashionable carriage or disburse 2,200 *lei* as tips for household servants.<sup>42</sup> His wife’s long suffering seem to have mollified Rosetti, who after her passing paid for 270 shirts and pieces of underclothing for prisoners and further 1,200 *lei* for a dressing gown that he offered to Saint Spiridon hospital.”<sup>43</sup>

In seeking medical expertise abroad, Zoe Rosetti was by no means an exception among the elite, since travelling to a well-known specialist outside of Moldavia was considered a viable solution for wealthy households. Those unable to consult famous specialists in Vienna and Paris resorted to a stop-gap solution of emulating treatments prescribed for others. Upon his arrival in Istanbul, on 19 September 1819 *Hatman* Constantin Canta wrote to Cupbearer (*paharnic*) Vasile Filimon on a serious issue. While travelling to Focșani in the company of another boyar, Sword-bearer (*spătar*) Iordache Drăghici, he found out that one of his companion’s nephews had been suffering from the same disease as the *hatman* and managed to get rid of the ailment after his trip to Vienna. Drăghici promised Canta to send the prescription but apparently forgot to do so. Therefore, the *hatman* asked Filimon to remind the boyar and prompt him to dispatch the papers.<sup>44</sup>

After some hesitant beginnings, when the doctor was regarded with distrust, especially when he had to examine and to treat women from the aristocratic families,

<sup>41</sup> Vlad Zirra, *Medici din Moldova veacului trecut: Dimitrie Samurcaș și descendența sa*, part I, in “Anuarul Institutului de Istorie ‘A.D. Xenopol’,” XXVI, 1989, 1, pp. 719–732; part II, *ibidem*, XXVII, 1990, 1–2, pp. 259–268; part III, *ibidem*, XXVIII, 1991, pp. 391–408.

<sup>42</sup> Vasile Panopol, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–35.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 36–37.

<sup>44</sup> ANI, Documente, 589/85.

young wives and daughters,<sup>45</sup> gradually the elite's relationship with medical specialists normalized, and Moldavian boyars, particularly those residing in Iași,<sup>46</sup> began to appreciate their expertise.<sup>47</sup> At the level of the Moldavian elite, we can even speak about the established practice of keeping a family physician. Extant sources provide us with numerous examples of this kind: household accounts of former Treasurer Ioan Canta frequently mention a doctor Fotache, who treated the members of the family, but also played cards with other guests and clients of the boyar.<sup>48</sup> However, he was not the only "healer" to pay visits to Canta's house: we also meet a German doctor, doctor Luchi, surgeon Costandin, but also pharmacist Hristodor and barber Mihai.<sup>49</sup> On 26 October 1795, Treasurer Ianachi Cantacuzino, unable to reach Iași due to illness, asked his brother-in-law Lupu Balș to send one of two physicians – Wolf or Schmeltz – from the capital. According to the letter, Cantacuzino had been suffering from a cough for a month, which affected his lungs and made him so weak he was unable to get off his bed. He had already dispatched a letter to Schmeltz, but the doctor refused for unknown reasons. Thus, as he was unable to go to the capital, he implored his kin to intervene. The treasurer was to cover travel expenses, and insisted on prompt action, claiming he was near death.<sup>50</sup>

Along with the possibility to pay the visits of the doctor, another fact can be decisive for healing in the case of the rich. The fact that the treatment was taking place within the comfort of their own house, with the patient surrounded by friends and kin,<sup>51</sup> "could offer the perception of an aura of hope," even if it did not ameliorate suffering effectively.<sup>52</sup> As for physicians' house call fees, there seems to have been

<sup>45</sup> Andreas Wolf remarked that "not even when she is sick, the doctor couldn't visit the unmarried patient unless he is accompanied by lots of people, together with the family" (*Călători străini despre țările române*, vol. X/2, ed. by Maria Holban, Maria M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu, Bucharest, 2001, p. 1270). The same doctor mentions some misconceptions of the locals: trying to cure the daughter of an aga from the Cantacuzino family, the doctor recommended to refresh the room "to get the cold air, although an old servant opposed this practice" (*ibidem*).

<sup>46</sup> For several decades, the capital of Moldavia was the only city where doctors could be met regularly, first in the vicinity of the princely court, and subsequently at Saint Spiridon hospital. Only at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the medical profession spread into the provinces. But this development happened in a similar manner throughout Europe: "in Paris it is easier to get an examination from a doctor; in the suburbs it is more difficult to be treated – to write to a doctor" (Arlette Farge, *La déchirure. Souffrance et déliaison sociale XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 2013, p. 49).

<sup>47</sup> Stephan Ignaz Raicevich mentioned that on 11 October 1782, being in Iași, he stopped to the house of surgeon Felice Bartolozzi from Florence, who lived in Iași for serving the people: "he had a good reputation and was protected by the boyars" (*Călători străini despre țările române*, vol. X/1, ed. by Maria Holban, Maria M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, Paul Cernovodeanu, Bucharest, 2000, p. 518).

<sup>48</sup> ANI, Documente, 1023/2, fols. 12, 18.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, fols. 31, 40.

<sup>50</sup> *Documente Iași*, ed. by Ioan Caproșu, vol. IX, *Acte interne (1791–1795)*, Iași, 2007, p. 377.

<sup>51</sup> Micheline Louis-Courvoisier, Séverine Pilloud, *Consulting by Letter in the Eighteenth Century: Mediating the Patient's View?*, in *Cultural Approaches to the History of Medicine. Mediating Medicine in Early Modern and Modern Europe*, ed. by Willem de Blécourt, Cornelia Usborne, Basingstoke, 2004, p. 84.

<sup>52</sup> Arlette Farge, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

no fixed price for the service, which fits into the realities of the profession at that time. The fee varied depending on the doctor's skills, the distance he had to cover to reach the patient's home, the time of day, the seriousness of the affliction, the chances of success and, particularly, the patient's financial standing and his determination. A good illustration of these multiple factors at play can be found in a letter from 18 March 1829 that physician Alexandru Teodori from Roman sent to Cupbearer Costachi Costandachi, demanding that the latter pays for the doctor's services:

"It was not my intention to upset you with my letter, but only to bring to your knowledge that I want to be paid for my effort. As I wrote yesterday, so I write today: I want 1 #, that is 1 gold coin for each home visit I perform, as I do not want to keep a record of my visits. Since May, when you had your last illness, until now I have not received any compensation for the treatment and medicine I provided you with. [Thus], to avoid any complaint, I want to be paid each time I come [to your home]. And while you insist you will pay the same fee as boyars from Dorohoi and Botoșani do, this is impossible; I can sell my services as I want, and you live in Trestiana and not in Botoșani. And if you want to be treated by doctors from Botoșani, this will not concern me, since they accept less money. So, forgive me, but I cannot treat you anymore.

Your friend and servant,

Dr Teodori."<sup>53</sup>

On the lists of expenses for the family of *Vornic* Dracache Rosetti mentioned above, we can see sums of money paid by an aristocratic family for the effort of the doctors and for treatments. More details regarding affordable treatments are provided by documents regarding a small surgical cabinet founded by Emanoil Holzdräger in Botoșani, at this point (1837) one of the most important towns of the principality. Holzdräger, who was the doctor of the First Department,<sup>54</sup> which encompassed three counties in northern Moldavia, was well-poised to identify major issues inhabitants faced. His proposal submitted to the Health Committee laid out a plan to establish a small emergency cabinet, which Holzdräger considered to be "of great use for the people in case of sickness, whether [it struck them] during the day or at night."<sup>55</sup> From the prices proposed by the doctor from Botoșani we mention some of them:

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| for diagnosis, curing and treating wounds .....                   | 2 lei and 20 para |
| for the first diagnosis of all kind of bruises and blisters ..... | 2 lei             |
| for applying leeches (with the doctor's leeches) .....            | 30 para           |
| for any kind of wounds .....                                      | 30 para           |

<sup>53</sup> Romanian Academy Library, Bucharest [hereafter: BAR], Documente istorice, DCXLVIII/744; G.Z. Petrescu, *Lefuri și onorarii medicale în trecutul țării noastre*, in "Revista de medicină legală," II, 1938, nos. 3–4, p. 60.

<sup>54</sup> In spring 1832, in order to improve the organization of health care, Moldavia was divided into five departments, each encompassing three or four counties, with the exception of the Fifth Department in Galați, which included only a single county, Covurlui (ANI, Comitetul Sănătății, 17/1832, fol. 66).

<sup>55</sup> Vasile Binzar, *Oficina de chirurgie a doctorului Emanoil Holzdräger din Botoșani*, in *Apărarea sănătății ieri și astăzi. Studii, note și documente*, ed. by Gh. Brătescu, Bucharest, p. 148.

for letting blood ..... 1 *leu* and 10 *para*  
 for extracting a tooth..... 1 *leu* and 10 *para*

In case a home call was necessary, the patient would be charged one *leu* if the distance the physician had to travel was more than “a quarter of an hour.” The Health Committee revised some of the proposed items on the price list and introduced additional services. For instance, 1 *leu* was deemed too much to ask for the distance within the city limits; instead, the fee was reduced to 30 *para*, while proposing that a 1 *leu* charge would apply if the doctor had to walk fifteen minutes outside the city limits to visit the patient.<sup>56</sup>

As for treatments prescribed by the doctors, they were bought from the pharmacies. Along with some general names such as medicine or decoction, we can find in doctors’ prescriptions and lists made by the pharmacists emulsions, syrups, infusions, balms, creams, pills, drops, teas, alcohol, medicines for teeth, but also mustard, almonds, peanut butter, citric acid.<sup>57</sup> This fact is proof that the pharmacy was for a long time the place for selling all kind of spices and cosmetic products.<sup>58</sup> The medicines and all kind of products were bought frequently, almost daily in the case of some aristocratic families,<sup>59</sup> which led to the spending of large amounts of money,<sup>60</sup> especially when they were not paid on time. On 15 December 1819, pharmacist Ioan Lochmann wrote to Grand *Stolnic* Petrache Sturza, demanding the payment of 895 *lei* and 34 *para* for the medicines he had delivered two years prior.<sup>61</sup>

Health was not the only concern; beauty was one, too, and a large share of the pharmacies’ clientele in this period were women.<sup>62</sup> One more proof for the use of beauty products is a text from the “*Albina românească*,” which encouraged its female readership “to hate all the chemical substances; using them deceives others, and [women] do harm to themselves, since using such plaster destroys delicate veins of skin on their faces, so that it soon wrinkles and they quickly turn old.” Instead, the author recommended waking up early, washing one’s face with cold water and “not tying their body with the chain brought from Paris by the name of a corset.” The author also advised against “drinking tea, reading novels and harbouring envy,” and instead urged Moldavian women to take care of their children’s education, since this way “their beauty, like the love and devotion of their men, would remain

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 149.

<sup>57</sup> BAR, Documente istorice, DCCCXLIX/57; ANI, Documente, 134/19; *ibidem*, 479/94; *ibidem*, 815/1; see Maria Magdalena Székely, *Bucate și leacuri de altădată*, in “Revista de istorie socială,” VIII–IX, 2003–2004, pp. 205–236.

<sup>58</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *Farmacia în țările române*, in idem, *Istoria românilor în chipuri și icoane*, Bucharest, 2012, pp. 250–254.

<sup>59</sup> In September 1844, pharmacist Lochmann from Iași made 30 deliveries for the family of Treasurer Nicolae Roset-Roznovanu, the amount being of 325 *lei* (ANI, Documente, 479/94).

<sup>60</sup> Dracache Rosetti paid to pharmacist Kraus 657 *lei* and 26 *para* for “the medicines that are given for the use of his house” between 13 April 1818 and 24 April 1819 (BAR, Documente istorice, DCCCXLIX/109); five years later, between 7 September and 25 November, Dracache Rosetti bought from the same pharmacist medicines for 159 *lei* (*ibidem*, DCCCXLIX/48).

<sup>61</sup> ANI, Documente, 588/59.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*, 1008/23, 27, 32, 104–108.

undiminished from the wedding day until their death.”<sup>63</sup> Leaving aside the author’s irony, it is clear that the boyar elites of both genders sought to take care of their health and appearance, gradually adopting new means to that end.

When all treatments suggested by doctors and medicines bought from pharmacists had no discernible effect, there remained an option of changing the environment. Specifically, the patient would move out of town to the countryside, into the mountains or travel abroad. Over time, this was replaced by the fashionable practice of “going to the baths.”<sup>64</sup> Such journeys did not constitute only an attempt to improve one’s health: they also provided an opportunity to see the world and confirm social status.<sup>65</sup> Upon his arrival to Borsec on 20 July 1843, doctor Constantin Vârnav wrote to Smaranda Sturza: “I went to Borsec on Sunday evening, and I found good weather and a whole crowd of Moldavians, Wallachians and Hungarians there; I began my three-week treatment. In D. Pașcanu I found a true enthusiast of Borsec; like a lion, he jumps in the water and stays there for two minutes; he then gets out without trembling. [...] In the person of Alecu Catargiu we have a veritable ‘second Borsec’ – he came here to socialize and not for the treatment.”<sup>66</sup>

Being already known and acknowledged as “healing and delightful,” mineral water from Borsec began to be imported to Moldavia. By 1829, a man called Rujița from the town of Piatra was distributing bottled water from Borsec, “which had the healing gas (or the air of the gas).” The prices ranged depending on the destination, from 1 *leu* 14 *para* in Piatra, Bacău, Roman, and Fălticeni, six *para* more in Iași and Galați, and 1 *leu* twenty-two *para* in northernmost Botoșani. In Iași, the orders were received by doctor Czihak.<sup>67</sup>

Gradually, mineral springs within Moldavia were discovered and came into vogue. Doctor Andreas Wolf, on the advice of Nicolae Roset Rozovanu, analysed the mineral content of the springs in Neamț county, comparing them to the water from Borsec.<sup>68</sup> He was not the only one to do so. Doctor Mihail Zotta, who researched water from Strunga, concluded that it should be used for baths, since its sulphurous taste made it difficult to drink; he recommended such treatment for those suffering from skin ailments and rheumatism.<sup>69</sup> Another spring in Borca in 1811 received a monograph study by doctor Ignatie Plusck,<sup>70</sup> which Vornic Alexandru Callimachi brought up as evidence to support his project of harnessing the waters’ medical

<sup>63</sup> “Albina românească,” X, 2 March 1839, no. 18, pp. 71–72.

<sup>64</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Patimă și desfătare. Despre lucrurile mărunte ale vieții cotidiene în societatea românească 1750–1860*, Bucharest, 2015, *passim*.

<sup>65</sup> The journey of Hatman Răducanu Rosetti and Eufrosina Manu to Mehadia baths was their only travel abroad, except for the honeymoon trip to Vienna (Radu Rosetti, *Amintiri. Ce am auzit de la alții. Din copilărie. Din prima tinerețe*, Bucharest, 2013, p. 52).

<sup>66</sup> ANI, Documente, 329/15.

<sup>67</sup> “Albina românească,” I, 20 June 1829, no. 7, p. 28.

<sup>68</sup> Al. Șaabner-Tuduri, *Apele minerale și stațiunile climaterice din România*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Bucharest, 1906, p. 3.

<sup>69</sup> “Albina românească,” II, 20 July 1830, no. 55, pp. 235–236; 24 July 1830, no. 56, p. 240.

<sup>70</sup> Ignatie Plusck, *Dezertație sau descrierea apelor minerale de la Borca din ținutul Sucevii în Moldova*, Iași, 1834.



potential and open a healing fountain for the public. This cause was also taken up by doctor Mihail Zotta, who drafted a summary of Plusck's work to convince other boyars interested in establishing a charitable society, which would construct some buildings in Borca, which could allow these waters to be valued. As was typical of the presentations of all mineral springs in this period,<sup>71</sup> the advocates of Borca's potential insisted on the pristine natural environment, which made the water "given by Nature to heal people's sufferings."<sup>72</sup> The properties of the water from Borca make it close to the waters from Wiesbaden, water known by the Moldavian boyars from the magazine to be drunk with wine and sugar."<sup>73</sup> In case local waters did not satisfy the expectations of the elite, doctor Iacob Czihak declared his duty to bring from "foreign countries healing mineral waters," like those of Cheb,<sup>74</sup> Marienbad and Kreuzbrunn,<sup>75</sup> which had a beneficial impact on those suffering from nervous breakdowns, haemorrhoids and liver ailments.<sup>76</sup>

At the end of this paper, after going through several pages on suffering, patients, treatments and prices, some conclusions may be drawn from strategies the sick pursued in early modern Moldavia to prevent sickness and recover once it struck. Sickness was without any doubt experienced differently depending on one's social status and financial means. Although it seems clear that lower orders of Moldavian society were more frequently affected by diseases due to hard living conditions, as well as cramped and unhygienic accommodation, their sufferings are rarely registered. Whereas a wealthy individual could choose between multiple options, summoning – depending on his financial abilities – a barber, a surgeon or a physician to take care of his needs, a sick poor was struck by illness doubly: his capacity to earn his livelihood was reduced and he could not afford to "buy" healthcare.<sup>77</sup> A manuscript from 1818 confirms this sombre reality; it lists "medicines that every poor man should have in his house, whereas the wealthy will be able to satisfy their needs from pharmacies through prescriptions from the doctors."<sup>78</sup>

In this paper, my focus was on those who could afford the treatment and left written testimonies of their struggles. Without being necessarily regarded as a "luxury," medical treatment provided by specialists was by no means available for everyone. As we could see in the examples cited above, even those who enjoyed a relatively secure financial position (small landholders, vineyard owners and ranchers) were sometimes affected by the cost of taking care of ailing family members. Because

<sup>71</sup> Al. Şaabner-Tuduri, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

<sup>72</sup> "Albina românească," II, supplement to 12 June 1830, no. 44, pp. 189–190.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, II, 13 June 1830, no. 53, p. 226.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*, III, 5 April 1831, no. 2, p. 8.

<sup>75</sup> In fact Marienbad and Kreuzbrunn (Leopold Herzig, *The Mineral Waters and Baths of Marienbad*, Frankfurt, 1846, *passim*).

<sup>76</sup> "Albina românească," III, 5 April 1831, no. 2, p. 8.

<sup>77</sup> Patricia Skinner, *Health and Medicine in Early Medieval Southern Italy*, Leiden, New York, Köln, 1997, p. 62.

<sup>78</sup> Constantin Iordăchescu, *Catagrafia muzeului "N. Iorga" de la vechea şcoală gospod, azi "Marchian" din oraşul Botoşani*, in "Buletinul Comisiei Istorice a României," XV, 1936, p. 129.

of this, for a long time, treatment was often an assemblage of magical-religious beliefs, familial networks, friendly advice and experience derived from past instances of sickness. Taken together, these measures can be subsumed under the umbrella term of “folk medicine,” that fused into a strategy of combating illness, employed in a different manner, depending on circumstances. Due to this, the doctors and the authorities strived to expand the medical system by establishing hospitals, by offering free examinations and medicines, but it took some time to see the effects of these measures. Folklorist Tudor Pamfile expressed perfectly this situation at the beginning of the twentieth century: “a decisive struggle against folk medicine is possible, but at the moment two things have yet to happen: it has to be declared dangerous and something has to be provided in its stead. This moment seems so far away.”<sup>79</sup> As for the upper echelons of the society, medical expenses did not affect the family’s financial stability. Moreover, these expenditures, although sometimes considerable, only confirm the fact that those with financial possibilities understood that diseases affect not only the length of life, but also its quality,<sup>80</sup> so they did not negotiate anything for regaining “the joy of health.”

#### THE PRICE OF HEALTH. THE COST OF MEDICAL TREATMENT IN PREMODERN MOLDAVIA

##### *Abstract*

In premodern Moldavia as everywhere else, the cost of treatment was an important impediment to having a good and healthy life. Factors such as wealth, status and the presence and the accessibility of a trained medical personnel were crucial in this sense. The present study explores the strategies pursued by individuals to prevent and treat the diseases. From the doctors’ initiatives, their relationship with the patients and the significance of religious beliefs in the people’s lives, they are all discussed in connection with the subject.

**Keywords:** health price, physicians; medical elite; plague; Moldavia

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<sup>79</sup> Tudor Pamfile, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

<sup>80</sup> Miri Shefer-Mossensohn, *Ottoman Medicine. Healing and Medical Institutions, 1500–1700*, Albany, NY, 2009, p. 1.

## THE DANUBIAN LEECH TRADE IN THE 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY. THE GLOBAL MARKET OF A TINY PRODUCT

CONSTANTIN ARDELEANU\*

Several voyagers travelling along the Lower Danube from the mid-1830s to the 1850s described in their accounts the strange ritual in biological hygiene that they accidentally witnessed: the daily ablutions performed to a living cargo regularly carried onboard Austrian steamers – leeches. Hans Christian Andersen, the famous Danish author, left a vivid depiction of the “washing and rinsing” of leeches in the forepart of the vessel: “We had taken several French leech dealers on board at Nicopoli; they had been to Bulgaria for their living wares, – millions of leeches emigrate annually to France. They had to be washed and taken care of, and therefore, as I have said, there was a washing and rinsing. The poor animals were then put in bags and hung up on cords, so that the water might drip from them. Several of them crawled away down the deck or up the balustrade. One of the cabin boys limped about with bleeding feet, for a leech had laid fast hold of him.”<sup>1</sup>

A couple of years later, French Viscount Alexis de Valon, bored by the rather monotonous landscape of the Wallachian and Bulgarian plains, turned his attention to the same activity. It was conducted under the coordination of a Venetian leech merchant, who had “in his pay, not counting the natives who were fishing for him in the marshes, more than a hundred servants, most of them Frenchmen, employed in the transport of his merchandise.”

Steamers, he added, had given his trade a great facility: “The leeches, which formerly had to be carried on horseback, now arrive, without great expense, without accidents, and with great rapidity, as far as Semlin. There, carriages expressly wait for them, and the leeches are taken to France. There were several hundred quintals on board, I would say. They were packed in several ways: some of them travelled in small chests, half filled with clay and moss; the others were stacked in wet canvas bags. Every evening, after sunset, the leeches were given a bath in the following manner: an enormous vat full of water was brought on deck, and all the contents of the barrels and bags were poured into it. Imagine a layer of these hideous beasts, three meters wide, three feet deep, teeming with envy in this vessel, and you can have an idea about this very disgusting spectacle. To empty this bathtub, the servants of our Venetian merchants rolled up their sleeves to the shoulders, plunged their

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<sup>1</sup> Hans Christian Andersen, *A Poet's Bazaar. Pictures of Travel in Germany, Italy, Greece, and the Orient*, New York, 1871, pp. 283–284.

arms into that horrible boiling, and took the leeches by the handful. The wretched beasts, hungry no doubt, were clinging instantly to this fresh flesh, and the unhappy servants had every difficulty in tearing them from their bloody arms.”<sup>2</sup>

Austrian Orșova and, further upstream the Middle Danube, Belgrade / Semlin served as hubs for the harvest of the Ottoman Balkan provinces, of Wallachia, and Hungary. At Orșova, some merchants had established, according to another description, “a great pond in which they collect all they get, and from there they transport them to Paris, it is said, in fourteen days. The wagons are very carefully constructed for the purpose they are intended for, in the form of a huge chest pierced with holes, and divided inside by a kind of trellis work into a great number of compartments, each capable of containing a bag weighing six okkas, that is sixteen pounds and half of leeches. This chest is very carefully placed on springs to avoid jolting.”<sup>3</sup>

As these contemporary sources account for a complex and prosperous trade that is little known in Romanian and international historiography, it is the aim of this paper to refer to the organisation of the Danubian leech trade in the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was a period in which it seems to have grown tremendously, in the context of a large demand for this product on the Western markets. The focus of this research falls on the economic and logistical aspects related to the leech trade, and only randomly touches upon the medical practices related to the contemporary use of leeches. More research is needed in order to detail all aspects of this spectacular trade, as well as the local and global conditions that shaped its development.

#### A NATURAL PANACEA AND ITS GLOBAL MARKET

Leeches have been used for medical purposes since the earliest historical times, but their modern success is related to the activity of French doctor François-Joseph-Victor Broussais (1772–1838). Influenced by the medical theories of Scottish physician John Brown, Broussais became an influential author during the late imperial age and especially during the Restoration. His doctrine was revolutionary and practical, being extremely popular among the liberal and bourgeois strata of the French society. In his rational understanding of disease called “medical physiology,” Broussais explained that many diseases were consequences of tissue irritation due to its “excitation” or “stimulation.” The irritation primarily occurred in the gastrointestinal tract and was transmitted to the other organs, which were all interconnected. Broussais advocated two simple treatments for healing his patients: rest (diet) and depletion

<sup>2</sup> Charles Marie Ferdinand Alexis, Vicomte de Valon, *Une année dans le Levant*, vol. II, Paris, 1846, pp. 193–194 (my translation).

<sup>3</sup> J.G. Kohl, *Austria. Vienna, Prague, Hungary, Bohemia, and the Danube; Galicia, Styria, Moravia, Bukovina, and the Military Frontier*, London, 1844, p. 296; the fragment is also mentioned in *An Interesting Inhabitant of Wallachia*, in “Leisure Hour. A Family Journal of Instruction and Recreation,” 25 January 1855, no. 161, p. 54.

(bloodletting). Leeches were therefore preferable to the lancet, which posed an unnecessary stress upon the heart and the body's natural blood flow.<sup>4</sup>

Using leeches for medical purposes was a mark of Broussais' huge influence in France, and its global success was a direct consequence of French cultural prestige. Bloodletting by leeches was more than a medical practice. It was the natural and liberal thing to do, a fashion that was soon disseminated all over the world. By the 1820s, leeches were used for many affections, from the simplest to the most serious ones. One could use them for a cold, for typhoid fever or cholera. Their entry into dentistry plunged them into common, every-day use by barbers and customers without any medical training.

With a huge internal consumption, France started to import the much-desired product, but it also served as a trading hub for supplying it to other markets. According to some quantitative details, total imports in France reached 33.6 million leeches in 1827, 44.5 million in 1829, 57.5 million in 1832, then declined to an annual average of about 20 million pieces from the mid-1830s to the mid-1840s and further decreased to averages of about 10 million pieces until the Crimean War.<sup>5</sup> The Ottoman Empire contributed with more than half of total importations towards the early 1850s, an amount which included the quantities supplied from the Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia.

That it was not at all a purely French business results from the data provided by Kohl, who mentioned that Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, and northern Germany were furnished from Poland, and Hamburg was a large loading port for London, "where they fetch a much higher price than anywhere else – often five or six times as much as in Berlin."<sup>6</sup> By the mid-1830s "four only of the principal dealers in London import 7,200,000 annually, while in Paris alone 3,000,000 are annually used."<sup>7</sup>

**Table 1**  
Imports of Leeches into France

| Country              | 1852      | 1853      | 1854      |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| German Confederation | 1,781,000 | 2,146,000 | 1,297,000 |
| Belgium              | 396,000   | 649,000   | 319,000   |
| England              | 843,000   | 320,000   | 220,000   |
| Sardinia             | 304,000   | 170,000   | 187,000   |
| Switzerland          | 378,000   | 114,000   | 0         |
| Turkey               | 5,109,000 | 6,824,000 | 5,620,000 |

<sup>4</sup> Michel Valentin, *François Broussais, empereur de la médecine: jeunesse, correspondance, vie et œuvre*, Dinard, 1988; Robert G.W. Kirk, Neil Pemberton, *Re-imagining Bleeders: The Medical Leech in the Nineteenth Century Bloodletting Encounter*, in "Medical History," 55, 2011, 3, pp. 355–360; idem, *Leech*, London, 2013, pp. 55–60.

<sup>5</sup> The quantitative data, including the tables, are taken from Elie Ebrard, *Nouvelle monographie des sangsues médicinales*, Paris, 1857, pp. 327–333.

<sup>6</sup> J.G. Kohl, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

<sup>7</sup> *The Penny Cyclopaedia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, vol. 13, *Intestines – Limoges*, London, 1839, p. 384.

|                 |                   |                   |                  |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Algeria         | 996,000           | 858,000           | 850,000          |
| Spain           | 405,000           | 0                 | 0                |
| Barbary States  | 0                 | 139,000           | 116,000          |
| Other countries | 207,000           | 226,000           | 279,000          |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>10,419,000</b> | <b>11,446,000</b> | <b>8,888,000</b> |

**Table 2**  
Exports of Leeches from France

| Country              | 1852             | 1853             | 1854                         |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| German Confederation | 155,000          | 112,000          | 79,000                       |
| Belgium              | 151,000          | 373,000          | 362,000                      |
| England              | 183,000          | 110,000          | 116,000                      |
| Two Sicilies         | 63,000           | 134,000          | 177,000                      |
| Spain                | 526,000          | 649,000          | 355,000                      |
| Sardinia             | 52,000           | 0                | 0                            |
| Switzerland          | 84,000           | 99,000           | 106,000                      |
| United States        | 86,000           | 111,000          | 0                            |
| Brazil               | 35,000           | 0                | 0                            |
| Guadalupe            | 79,000           | 176,000          | 108,000                      |
| Martinique           | 391,000          | 399,000          | 301,000                      |
| Cayenne              | 44,000           | 0                | 0                            |
| St. Pierre           | 113,000          | 382,000          | 0                            |
| Other countries      | 0                | 0                | 273,000                      |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>1,962,000</b> | <b>2,545,000</b> | <b>1,877,000<sup>8</sup></b> |

#### THE MEDICAL USAGE OF LEECHES IN THE DANUBIAN PRINCIPALITIES

Leeches were equally popular in Wallachia and Moldavia in the 1830s,<sup>9</sup> when they were recommended in both principalities for their curative effect during the cholera epidemics of 1831.<sup>10</sup> The Romanian version of a popular medical hand-book advertised leeches as “some of the most heroic [medical] means,” which had to be preserved in all households. They were recommended for “chronic diseases, and especially in all diseases with inflammation, i.e. for the brain, eyes, ears, gums, of the necks (swelling of the throat), of mothers’ wombs, breasts, haemorrhoidal swellings and others, especially when it is not necessary to make use of general phlebotomy (bloodletting), because the patient’s health would be affected or the disease has a nervous character. Leeches may be applied exactly on the inflamed body parts, or if it is not possible, such as in case of ophthalmia (eye inflammation)

<sup>8</sup> 1,876,000 in the original source.

<sup>9</sup> Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Patimă și desfătare. Despre lucrurile mărunte ale vieții cotidiene în societatea românească 1750–1860*, Bucharest, 2015, pp. 423–424.

<sup>10</sup> I. Felix, *Istoria igienei în România*, part II, in „Analele Academiei Române,” II, 1901–1902, 24, p. 242.

where the sight organ may be at risk, the application is to be done as close as possible to the inflamed areas. For children of less than one year, one, two, and very rarely three leeches can be applied; four leeches for the older children, and for adults no more than twenty. For every leech, one can amount to five *drams*<sup>11</sup> of blood lost, *i.e.* from the moment they are applied until they fall down and after the wound is left to bleed for one more hour, and thus one can regulate the quantity of the blood let by means of leeches.”<sup>12</sup>

More details referred to the preservation of leeches, by pouring coal into the water and changing the water every second day. They could be equally kept in clean and wet earth, preserved in a cool place during the summer, in a cellar in winter, and taken out every two months to be fed with beef blood.<sup>13</sup>

Bloodletting by leeches and their use for dental emergencies resulted in incidents, as it happened in the city of Ploiești in 1841. The local chief physician was unhappy with the abuse of leech therapy by barbers, and required to regulate the practice. He insisted that all bloodletting procedures be prescribed by a licensed physician, a measure he managed to legalise, but which was hardly respected in everyday practice.<sup>14</sup> Many licensed doctors continued to recommend them, and doctors and patients regularly used them, as it results from the large purchases made by hospitals.

Using leeches was a vital part in the activity of medical nurses and barbers. In 1841, at the medical school founded at the Colțea Hospital by doctor Nicolae Krețulescu, students were taught how to blood let, put leeches and suction cups, remove and clean teeth, vaccinate.<sup>15</sup> In 1854, the Medical Department of Bucharest organised an examination of the barbers in Bucharest and authorised 73 of them, *i.e.* those with minimal medical knowledge, including the proper use of leeches.<sup>16</sup>

By the early 1830s, a period when the demand reached its climax in France and throughout Western Europe, the leech trade witnessed a tremendous growth in the Danubian principalities. Large quantities were exported, and their price boomed on the local market, making leeches a luxury product hardly accessible to its customers. The issue was firstly discussed by the guilds of barbers in Wallachia's largest cities (Bucharest, Brăila, and Craiova), and they lobbied the central authorities to regulate the market. Interesting debates took place in the medical department of the Quarantine Committee about the leeches' strategic importance for public health, but also with reference to environmental concerns: with commercial overexploitation of leech resources, the country would be soon depleted of such a valuable

<sup>11</sup> A local measurement unit equal to about 3.2 grams.

<sup>12</sup> *Spîțărilea casnică sau de drum al vestitului H.F. Hufeland*, transl. by Iordachi Samurcaș, Iași, 1848, pp. 20–21 (available at <https://tipariturioromanesti.wordpress.com>).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 21–22.

<sup>14</sup> George Potra, *Practica lipitorilor în terapeuica românească din secolul al XIX-lea și comerțul cu lipitori în Țara Românească*, in *Din istoria medicinei românești și universale*, Bucharest, 1962, pp. 284–285.

<sup>15</sup> *Eforia spitalelor civile 1832–1932*, Bucharest, 1932, p. 33.

<sup>16</sup> I. Felix, *op. cit.*, part I, in „Analele Academiei Române,” II, 1900, 23, p. 218.

product, as it happened in France or Italy. The official decision was to recommend to the government a total ban on leech exports, and save all production for the domestic market, in an early instance of national protectionism. The Wallachian authorities acted accordingly, and since October 1835 Wallachian leech exports were forbidden.<sup>17</sup>

### THE EXTENSION OF THE OTTOMAN MARKET

It was the moment when the demand of leeches reached its climax, and French merchants established profitable contacts in the Ottoman Empire, in Wallachia, Serbia, Bosnia, Albania, Bulgaria. As local consumption was lower than in the West and marshes were abundant, French wholesalers came to South-Eastern Europe and took over the business of their former Italian, Greek or Jewish providers. Going further inside the empire and using the newly introduced steamboats, they also opened entrepôts in Asia Minor or Georgia. The Bourlet company leased the marshes in several Ottoman pashaliks and organised leech stations at Radomir (eastern Bulgaria) and Sérres (northern Greece), whence they forwarded the cargo to France. Another large player was the Frère company, which in 1837 partnered with several influential notables from Belgrade and secured a trading monopoly from Prince Milosh, allowing the company to buy at a fixed price all leeches coming from the Ottoman Empire. The privilege was lost later that year, but Bourlet and Frère continued their operations from Belgrade, apparently the biggest hub of the Balkan leech trade. Other merchants who were active on this market were Chanterelle, Brod, Popovich, etc.<sup>18</sup>

The leeches of Bosnia were exported by Kostajnica and Brod, going either to Belgrade or Trieste, while those from Herzegovina were traded via Dubrovnik. In 1837 a certain Deligny leased the marshes of the pashaliks of Skopje and Schköder, and exported via the latter place in order to avoid the monopoly of his Belgrade rivals. In 1838 Joachimo rented for a large price (15,000 piastres) the marshes of Upper Albania, and exported the local leech harvests via a maritime network.<sup>19</sup>

In the Ottoman Bulgaria and Dobrudja, leeches were fished in the lakes and marshes stretching between Vidin and the Black Sea, and the centre of the export trade was Ruse.<sup>20</sup> From Wallachia, as already mentioned, they were exported via Orșova, where there were not only reservoirs to preserve and refresh the living cargo, but also agents ready to take over the products when their original carriers were

<sup>17</sup> G. Potra, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

<sup>18</sup> Ami Boué, *La Turquie d'Europe ou Observations sur la géographie, la géologie, l'histoire naturelle, la statistique, les mœurs, les coutumes, l'archéologie, l'agriculture, l'industrie, le commerce, les gouvernements divers, le clergé, l'histoire et l'état politique de cet empire*, vol. III, Paris, 1840, pp. 144–145.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 146.

<sup>20</sup> Ion Ionescu de la Brad, *Opere agricole*, Bucharest, 1968, p. 69 (Romanian translation of his *Excursion agricole dans la plaine de la Dobrodja*, Istanbul, 1850).



confined to a period of compulsory quarantine. Moldavia's marshes were not extremely productive, though sources mention the trade of this good.<sup>21</sup>

These transnational trading connections completely changed the value of otherwise useless marshes, and in Serbia they started to be leased yearly to a contractor, as it was also the case in other Ottoman provinces. The "capitalist leech," as coined in a recent book, radically transformed the business environment of several Balkan provinces.

### THE PROFITABILITY OF THE LEECH TRADE

The leech trade was a very complex and risky business. The first difficult part was to fish them in highly hostile environments, in marshes and swamps. They were harvested with horses or by men dressed in costumes of Russian leather. They needed to be well sorted, and only the healthy animals were put in wet bags, carefully arranged, in their turn, in boxes with wooden shelves and fences to be carried on horseback. From Belgrade, they were loaded onto especially designed carts. They needed to be washed during the journey, and the dead animals were removed, as "the decomposition of a few leeches may spoil a whole bag."<sup>22</sup>

Weather hazards had to be taken into account with such a valuable merchandise, as a sudden summer storm could ruin a whole cargo. The trade was very risky, so highly profitable when successful. The fastest routes were usually chosen, but despite the introduction of steamboats in the Mediterranean they were not very popular, as, for the health of the medical cargo, they made too many detours. However, in the Ottoman area, with poor roads, Danubian steamers were a great advantage for merchants.<sup>23</sup>

Profits were accordingly high: in the Ottoman provinces, an okka (about 1.2 kilos) of leeches cost about 2.80 francs, but prices varied extensively. By late autumn 1838, they cost at Brod as much as 16.60 francs an okka, whereas in Belgrade a quintal (containing 50,000–55,000 leeches) was bought for 375 francs. Leech merchants had to pay large custom dues for the export of their merchandise. However, in 1835 a quintal was sold in Semlin for 500 francs, and in Paris five times more.<sup>24</sup>

According to French sources, their price in France increased from 10–15 francs per 1,000 pieces in 1806 to 30–35 in 1815, 60–70 francs in 1818, 90–230 francs in 1844, and 240 francs in the early 1850s.<sup>25</sup> There were different types of leeches, classified according to weight, colour, etc., but also to their medicinal quality in absorbing blood. The best ones were "the green sort of Hungary," "the grey sort of Hungary," "the black sort of Sweden and France," "the green sort of the Danubian provinces, Turkey and Greece," "the yellow sort of Wallachia and neighbouring countries."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> A. Boué, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 143.

<sup>23</sup> I. Ionescu de la Brad, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

<sup>24</sup> A. Boué, *op. cit.*, pp. 146–147.

<sup>25</sup> E. Ebrard, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 214.

## THE REGULATION OF THE WALLACHIAN DOMESTIC MARKET

Local merchants reacted differently to the prohibition of leech exports. Some took advantage and offered to supply the local market in exchange for a monopoly of fishing in all internal marshes. Such a contract was signed in August 1836 with Ilie Munteanu, a leech merchant who farmed Wallachian markets in exchange for the obligation to supply Bucharest. Barbers could buy leeches for a fixed price of 1 para, and sell them for maximum 10 paras apiece. Protests and disputes followed in relation to the number of leeches offered to barbers and to their price.<sup>27</sup>

A new contract was signed for 20,000 pieces, this time by Herș Finkelstein, who was allowed to fish them throughout the country. The real owner of the monopoly seems to have been Iancu Manu, grand vornik of Wallachia, who used several middlemen in order to control the market. The privilege was renewed in 1839, this time for a quantity of 60,000 leeches requested by the barbers of Bucharest and of other towns, sold at a price of 5 lei per 100 pieces or 2 paras apiece, whereas the barbers could apply a leech for a maximum of 20 paras.<sup>28</sup>

In Moldova, in 1835 the authorities granted a monopoly for exportation to Th. Ghica, who leased it to a certain Samuel Friedmann. The latter was to export the merchandise via Tesăuți, where Ghica had an assistant to watch over the trade.<sup>29</sup> Soon enough the export and even the transit trade of leeches were forbidden in order to cover the domestic needs.

Wallachian exports were officially forbidden, but this greatly encouraged smuggling. State officials were often involved in such illegal operations. A smuggler was caught in 1835 at Căineni, on the Wallachian-Transylvanian border, with 145 okkas of leeches, but he was allowed to continue its voyage following the intervention of the hospodar's brother, Mihail Ghica. A year later, another merchant was caught at Vârciorova with 300 okkas, and Honter, a French subject, was caught with 335 kg of leeches.<sup>30</sup> In 1839 several employers of the Giurgiu quarantine were caught smuggling leeches, as it also happened to an Italian "subject," Spadoni, who wanted to export a quantity of 160 okkas. To reduce the phenomenon, authorities introduced a fine of 3 ducats per okka, plus the confiscation of the cargo.<sup>31</sup> Leeches were hidden in all possible places, in parcels, the postal wagon's structure, diplomatic suitcases, tallow vats, etc.<sup>32</sup>

Kohl was at Teregova, in Habsburg territory close to the Wallachian border, when a Frenchman with "a waggon-load of leeches" crossed through the village. His host explained that "he had for many years furnished horses for these French

<sup>27</sup> G. Potra, *op. cit.*, pp. 289–290.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 290–292.

<sup>29</sup> D.Z. Furnică, *Documente privitoare la comerțul românesc, 1473–1868*, Bucharest, 1931, p. XIV.

<sup>30</sup> G. Potra, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 293.

<sup>32</sup> Georgeta Penelea, *Relații comerciale între Țara Românească și Transilvania, 1829–1848*, in "Studii și materiale de istorie modernă," IV, 1973, p. 55, note 184.

leech dealers, and that these animals were obtained mostly from Walachia, Hungary being no longer able to supply the demand of Paris for leeches, any more than that of Vienna for beef. This leech trade is quite a separate trade, and the waggons pass from stage to stage through all Hungary, Austria, and Germany, directly to Paris. The French traders are supposed to belong all to one company, some members of which reside in Orșova, where they contrive to get the leeches smuggled in small parcels from Walachia, whence their exportation is prohibited.”<sup>33</sup>

Another method to avoid customs regulations was the so-called transit trade, controlled by “sudit” merchants. The transit trade was complicated due to quarantine procedures, as leeches had to be sealed, which did not allow for their good washing and which corrupted the integrity of the cargo.

### THE GRADUAL LIBERALISATION OF EXPORTS

With strong lobbying to liberalise exports, the Wallachian state allowed in 1847 the export of 1,320 okkas a year, through well-established customs stations. The contractor had to cover the domestic demand (for hospitals and barbers), and leeches were sold for 8 paras apiece. In 1848 Iancu Hagi Alexandridi was the contractor, and later the contract was granted to Elias David and Solomon Rosenthal.<sup>34</sup>

In 1850 the treasury decided to allow free exportation for a total of 2,000 okkas, and the export stations were Breaza, Căineni, Vârciorova, Brăila, and Giurgiu. A tax of 2.5 ducats was paid for every okka, and the contractor was also to cover the domestic demand. The income brought to the state budget amounted to about 58,000 francs a year, a significant sum if compared to about 53,000 francs from the exportation of cattle or about 96,000 francs from the exportation of tallow and other animal products.<sup>35</sup>

By the 1850s, the price of leeches on the domestic market had grown, as the contractor wanted to sell them to barbers for 14 paras apiece. Other cities concluded their own supply contracts, and at Brăila a leech was sold wholesale for 16 paras. Another bid was done in 1858, on condition of the contractor covering the needs of the entire country and of being a Romanian subject. Hagi Dimitrie Găițanaru was granted the contract and he was to sell the leeches for 8 paras apiece. In 1862 barbers could sell them for 16 paras apiece if applied on a patient, and 12 paras for home use, and every barber had to keep at all times 50 good leeches in his shop.<sup>36</sup>

Similar concerns for covering the domestic demand existed in Moldova. A project in the same sense was drafted in 1847, and it proposed the abolishment of the monopoly contract. To supply the inhabitants with this vital product, the authorities decided to liberalise the domestic trade. The country was full of ponds

<sup>33</sup> J.G. Kohl, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>34</sup> G. Potra, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>35</sup> Thibault Lefèbvre, *Études diplomatiques et économiques sur la Valachie*, Paris, 1855, pp. 157, 273.

<sup>36</sup> G. Potra, *op. cit.*, pp. 298–300.

and lakes where leeches could grow, and a reasonable catch of the leeches was advised. The Jews were forbidden from “speculating with this cure necessary for the people,” and any Jew caught trading them was fined and, in case of repeated guilt, exiled from the country. Pharmacists, physicians and barbers were compelled to keep in their shops a number of 300 leeches.<sup>37</sup>

### ILLEGAL PRACTICES IN LEECH GROWING

For such a product with a small weight and a high price, farmers and merchants used different means to increase their profits. The breeders of Bretagne (France) allegedly drove horses and cattle into the ponds in order to make leeches gain more weight.<sup>38</sup> A similar case was reported by another news outlet, as “wholesale dealers purchase them by the weight, and, in order to increase their own profits, gorge the leeches with the blood of mammiferous animals, the sheep, the calf, the ox, for increase; so that a thousand middle sized leeches, weight two pounds and a half, value 75£, are changed, by the addition of two pounds of blood, into large leeches weighing four pounds and a half, and sold at 180£ or 200£.”<sup>39</sup> A similar incident occurred with the Bucharest contractor, who fed smaller leeches with cattle blood. A local medical commission condemned the practice, as the animals were no longer safe for the patients.<sup>40</sup>

### CONCLUSIONS

The story of Danubian leeches is remarkable from several historical perspectives. The massive use of this medical product came, most probably, from the importation of this fashionable procedure from France. Sources mention the use of leeches before the 1830s, but it was hardly a common practice. Broussais contributed to turning a traditional habit into an accepted medical practice in France. He gave it a medical doctrine, equally revolutionary and practical, to the liking of liberal and bourgeois strata in France and throughout the world. Broussais’ “medical physiology” was imported in the Danubian principalities by physicians trained in Western Europe, and it became extremely popular among urban classes as another instance of French cultural dominance.

<sup>37</sup> *Proiect pentru îndeșterea Principatului Moldovei cu lipitori*, Iași, 1847, in *Manualul administrativ al Principatului Moldovei, cuprinzătoriu legilor și dispozițiilor introduse în țară de la anul 1832 până la 1855, înorânduite de o comisie din naltul ordin al Înălțimei Sale Princepului Domnitoriu al Moldovei Grigorie A. Ghica vv.*, vol. II, *Departamentul de Finanțe, Secretariatul de Stat, Departamentul Bisericesc și al Învățăturilor, Departamentul Lucrărilor Publice, Comitetul Sănătăței, Controlul, Spitalul Sf. Spiridon, Porto-Francul Galați, Regule pentru administratori, privighitori, i săteni și alte dispoziții*, Iași, 1856 (online at <https://tiparituriromanesti.wordpress.com/?s=lipitorile>).

<sup>38</sup> *An Interesting Inhabitant*, p. 55.

<sup>39</sup> *Leeches*, in *The Christian Miscellany and Family Visitor*, vol. I, 1846, p. 117.

<sup>40</sup> G. Potra, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

The popularity of leeches is visible in how the state tried to regulate their consumption. Leeches became a strategic good, with a huge medical and social value. The prohibition of exports in the mid-1830s came as a result of environmentalist concerns of public authorities, which referred to the penury of this product in Western Europe and related it to the overexploitation of resources. Leeches were not an inexhaustible resource, and the product required a proper management of its consumption so as to preserve the good for future generations.

The regulation of the national market came with protectionist policies and with the gradual introduction of social and medical care programs for the benefit of the entire population. Leeches were part of the compulsory “emergency medical kit,” and a sufficient number had to be preserved in all barber shops, pharmacies, and hospitals. By the mid-1840s a disposition of the Moldavian government required that a reserve of 200 leeches had to be stored in every village in the house of the priest or of some local notability.<sup>41</sup>

State policies also attempted to regulate its cost, but they proved rather ineffective, due to the huge demand on the local market and to leech smuggling. As prices continued to increase during the 1830s and 1840s, this sparked new social policies meant to secure the availability of the product for the poorer classes. In Moldavia, different prices were set for “richer” and “poorer” clients: 40 paras for the former, 25 for the latter.<sup>42</sup> The leech market was by far the most regulated one, and it brought important revenues to the state budget.

Not least of all, as a large number of Jews were involved in the leech trade, authorities started to introduce anti-Semitic policies that excluded Jewish merchants from trading this strategic cargo.

The Danubian leech trade remained highly profitable throughout the 1830s until the 1860s, and it was part of an extensive trading route with connections all over Europe. Its popularity decreased in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the coming of other medical practices.

## THE DANUBIAN LEECH TRADE IN THE 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY. THE GLOBAL MARKET OF A TINY PRODUCT

### *Abstract*

This paper refers to the organisation of the Danubian leech trade in the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a period when it grew tremendously, in the context of increasing demand for this product on the Western markets. By the early 1830s, the leech trade witnessed a tremendous growth in the Danubian principalities. Large

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<sup>41</sup> *Bibliografia analitică a periodicelor românești*, ed. by Ioan Lupu, Nestor Camariano, Ovidiu Papadima, vol. I, 1790–1850, part III, Bucharest, 1967, p. 845 (information from the “Official Bulletin” of Moldavia, 1845).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 871 (information from the “Official Bulletin” of Moldavia, 1848).

quantities were exported, and their price boomed on the local market, making leeches a luxury product hardly accessible to its customers. Given the product's strategic importance for public health, but also with reference to environmental concerns, authorities in Wallachia and Moldavia regulated the trade in leeches. It was the moment when the demand of leeches reached its climax, and French merchants established profitable contacts in the Ottoman Empire, in Wallachia, Serbia, Bosnia, Albania, and Bulgaria. As local consumption was lower than in the West, and marshes were abundant, French wholesalers came to South-Eastern Europe and took over the business of their former Italian, Greek or Jewish providers. These transnational trading connections completely changed the value of otherwise useless marshes. The paper details several aspects related to the profitable leech trade until the 1860s, when its popularity started to decrease, with the coming of other medical practices.

**Keywords:** leech trade; medical practices; Wallachia; Moldavia; Danube navigation

## SCIENTIFIC LIFE

### INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP: *CIRCULATION OF PEOPLE, OBJECTS AND KNOWLEDGE ACROSS SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN*

European University Institute, Florence, 11–12 May 2017

The purpose of this event co-organized by the European University Institute (EUI), Florence and the New Europe College-Institute for Advanced Study, Bucharest was to follow the circulation of people, objects and knowledge across the territories of four great powers (Venice, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire and the Habsburg Empire) from the fourteenth century to the nineteenth century. The organizers Giulia Calvi, Luca Molà and Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu brought together the members of their research projects to analyze concepts such as Ottomanization and Westernization in connection with the activities of local elites, of merchants, and of diplomats. The panels were divided into sessions on: trade ships and crews; the Muslim world; luxury and fashion representation; women, fashion, and material culture; the circulation of goods and, last but not least, economic and diplomatic exchanges.

The first day was dedicated to presentations made by researchers from the European University Institute on three different areas: politics and diplomacy, trade, and society and culture. The first two papers emphasized the importance of naval technology in the struggle for power in the Mediterranean Sea. Giancarlo Casale (University of Minnesota & EUI) analyzed the Ottoman fleet in Suez (1538), comprising two types of vessels: oar-powered vessels and sailing vessels; he then gave an overview of the fleet in the Indian Ocean, between 1531–1585 and noticed a diminished influence starting with 1550. Similarly, Casale analyzed the ratio between the two types of vessels within the Portuguese fleet fighting the Ottomans from the 1510s to the 1560s.<sup>1</sup> Antonio Musarra continued the conversation by analyzing the daily life of the crews sailing across the Mediterranean Sea during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>2</sup>

Vera Constantini in her paper *Venetian Interests in Ottoman Bosnia (Late 16<sup>th</sup> – early 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries)* showed the political and economic importance of this province as a borderland space. With regards to commerce, Luca Molà (EUI) analyzed the trade records/registers of shipwrecked vessels in order to find out more about the goods circulating between Venice and Asia. Thus, for instance, regarding the annual import of silk to Venice during the 1590s, we discover the following origin: Syria and Persia (value of 1,250,000 ducats), followed by Greece and Albania (500,000 ducats) and southern Italy and Spain (125,000 ducats). Francisco Apellániz (Université d'Aix Marseille & EUI), researcher in the ERC Project Mediterranean Reconfigurations,<sup>3</sup> further emphasized the importance of commercial

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<sup>1</sup> More details in Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, Oxford, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> For other works of Antonio Musarra see *Genova e il mare nel Medioevo*, Bologna, 2015; *La marina da guerra genovese nel tardo medioevo. In cerca d'un modello* in "Revista Universitaria de Historia Militar," 6, 2017, no. 11, p. 79–108.

<sup>3</sup> More information about the project leader Wolfgang Kaiser (Université Paris 1 – EHESS) and his extended team is available at <https://configured.hypotheses.org>.

routes established by Europeans in the trade with Asia. For instance, there were about five copper convoys a year sent from Hungary to Indian markets. In addition, we now know that the sources corroborating the information provided by the trade records are more numerous than previously thought. That is the case here as well and Apellániz analyzed the 1503 memorandum of understanding between the Egyptian administration and Venice regarding trade with Asia.<sup>4</sup> The document lays out the merchant routes connecting Italy to Cambay, Calicut or Malacca and details the problems merchants and administrators had to overcome in the process.

The debates then moved from the ship that opened trade routes and from commercial regulations to objects and their historical and social meaning. Historians Mariusz Kaczka and Sinem Casale showed, from a Polish and an Iranian perspective, the role and symbolism of objects when they were used as diplomatic gifts. Mariusz Kaczka analyzed porcelain as luxury object when it was gifted among elites while Sinem Casale gave a historical overview of the region and its relationship with the Ottoman Empire. This approach also included an analysis of the ideology of movies and their role in interpreting medieval and pre-modern political history. To Romanians familiar with Sergiu Nicolaescu's movies, the videoclips Sinem Casale showed can easily bring to mind the imaginary/imagined encounters between Mircea the Old and Sultan Mehmed I in which guarantees, and tribute were presented in a favorable light for the Romanian prince.

The second day, the symposium continued covering the same research areas but with a focus on South-Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Ottoman Empire. Michał Wasiucionek (New Europe College) analyzed the reign of Ștefan Tomșa II (1611–1615, 1621–1623) in the context of Polish-Ottoman relations and of his interactions with those boyars who remained partially faithful to the Movilă family. He argues for a reevaluation of the prince in light of his efforts to adopt an Ottoman identity (garments, *tughra*-style cipher), efforts which are part of a larger process of Ottomanization of the Moldavian elite. From the seventeenth century the conversation then moved to the nineteenth century and continued the exploration of identity formation in South-Eastern Europe. Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu ("Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History & New Europe College) investigated the 1814–1817 memoirs of a young Wallachian, Dumitrache Merișescu, together with his public representation. She analyzed the mechanisms that defined the notion of *mobile identity*. As a case in point, Merișescu's identity had been built at the crossroads of Greek, Romanian, and Bulgarian cultures and as a consequence of his self-discovery journeys abroad. Nicoleta Roman ("Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History & New Europe College) focused her presentation on dowry contracts from Dolj, an important county in Wallachia, and analyzed the property rights of women over movable and immovable assets. Moreover, Roman underlined the ways in which accessories such as *salbă* (coin necklace) and *pafta* (waist buckle) were reinterpreted via national representation and mutual influence between social classes (boyars and peasants). To prove her point for the 1840–1860 timeframe, Roman analyzed the portraits of Marițica Bibescu (painted by Carol Popp de Szathmari), Maria Rosetti (painted by Constantin D. Rosenthal) and Maria Catargi Obrenovici (painted by an anonymous artist). Anastasia Falierou focused her presentation around a single object (*entari*), a garment which passed through interesting transformations in tailoring and decorations during the eighteenth century (shorter and lighter; fitted sleeves, U-shaped neckline, etc.) and which entered the universe of what is commonly known today as *turquerie*.

<sup>4</sup> Francisco Javier Apellániz Ruiz de Galarreta, *News on the Bulaq: A Mamluk-Venetian Memorandum on Asian Trade, AD 1503*, EUI Working Paper 2016/01.



David Celetti (University of Padua & New Europe College) analyzed commerce in the Mediterranean Sea and the importance of *échelles*, as they were presented in consular reports. He studied the period between 1691 and 1779 from the perspective of several centers, with some of them only entering trade exchanges starting with the eighteenth century (Thessaloniki, Morea, Satalie). Around that time, French merchants began to control Izmir economically, and those who headed to Marseille brought with them sheep wool and mohair. The researcher also analyzed the situation of merchants from Smirna who had been selling certain products (indigo, wool clothes) at a much lower price than the one established by the French ambassador. The following three presentations focused on regulations concerning the distribution and diffusion of goods such as cotton, ceramics, and fur throughout the South-Eastern European territories. In her presentation *Turkish Textiles in Transylvanian Sources in the Early Modern Period*, Mária Pakucs ("Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History & New Europe College) used the customs registers of the cities of Sibiu and Cluj and showed that between 1500 and 1690 trading in Turkish merchandise was preponderantly dedicated to spices. Using the same sources, Pakucs analyzed the cotton trade as well as the economic exchanges with textiles made out of cotton. Artemis Yagou (Deutsches Museum & New Europe College), studied the role of Casali and Callegari firms in the diffusion of Pesaro ceramics in Greek territories (Yannina and Kalarrytes). Yagou argued that Greek merchants who commissioned pots decorated with lyrics were the select members of a rising bourgeoisie in need of public recognition. Liviu Pilat (Faculty of History, Iași & New Europe College) investigated the diplomatic conflict between Moldavia and Poland started in the aftermath of the 1546 robbery of a Moldavian diplomatic mission by the servants of the house of Wisnowiecki. The goods, mostly sable pelts, were in fact the gift the Moldavian delegation intended to offer the sultan, and Liviu Pilat used this incident as a premise to analyze *positional goods* which transfer power and prestige.

At the end of this symposium, Antonio Musarra announced the official opening in Genoa of an important Italian museum dedicated to Ottoman and Islamic art curated around the collection of the Bruschettini Foundation.

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: *MOVABLE GOODS AND IMMOVABLE  
PROPERTY. GENDER, LAW AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN  
EARLY MODERN EUROPE (1450–1850)*

German Historical Institute, London, 19–21 July 2018

This scientific event was attended by specialists in the history of women and law who analyzed the connections between movable and immovable goods of women in the ever-changing legislation of the nineteenth century. The organizers' introduction brought to the forefront the historiographical context (Hannes Ziegler, German Historical Institute, London) and the definition of the two concepts via the German example of female type objects

represented under the term *Gerade* (Annette Cremer, University of Giessen). The participants focused on three areas (gender and inheritance patterns; inheritance practices and objects; material culture and gender), which they explored through a variety of archival sources (land and real estate sales contracts, dowry leaflets, marriage contracts, wills, criminal proceedings, family funds, trade registers).

The conference was organized by merging the chronological axis with the thematic axis, starting from the West toward the East and passing through colonial Jamaica and Brazil. Amelie Stuart (Graz University) opened the proceedings by using comparatively the writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau and John Locke in order to showcase a philosophical approach to women's rights to property. During a time when being a citizen and head of family was a male prerogative, the first philosopher denied women the right to own property, while the second saw it limited by the natural differences between the two genders. However, these views remained uncontested since female philosophers were lesser known at the time and those who were known only engaged with the works of Descartes or Spinoza. In her intervention, Janine Maegraith (Vienna) analyzed the negotiation strategies women used in Tirol. Figuratively speaking, fences became symbols of property rights and landmarks which made property clearly visible. Nonetheless, crosses and boundary stones remained unstable markings, partially invisible and movable. Against all expectations, Maegraith proved that single or married women had a growing contribution to rural property exchanges. However, one needs to point out that women had limited access to the local credit networks, which were still managed following kinship lines and male succession rights. Susan Anett Pedersen (Trondheim) analyzed gift exchanges between Norwegian noble husbands and wives in the late Middle Ages. Gifts were both donation and bequest and were primarily used to ensure the economic survival of the widow or widower. In time, the practice would become a carefully legislated institution. For Luisa Stella de Oliveira Coutinho Silva (Lisbon), the Brazilian women included four types: white bourgeois, lascivious black, silly Indian and slicker mestizo, each with her own literature and legal representation. According to the old Portuguese legal system, in effect in Brazil, women had property and inheritance rights and only virgin brides had dowries. Still related to colonialism, in Jamaica, the largest slave colony of the British Empire, Christine Walker (NYU-Singapore) argues that local practices were significantly different than in the metropolis. As movable property, different than real estate, slaves were part of the brides' inheritance or dowry. Since mothers favored their daughters in an effort to level differences between male and female heirs, over time not only did women become important and wealthy slaveholders but they also outlived men. Similarly, contrary to continental European practices (see for instance Mediterranean countries), male slaves (working on plantations) were more valuable than female slaves. In her intervention, Ida Fazio (University of Palermo) analyzed the role of women in costal economy, with a focus on the island of Stromboli, situated at the intersection of French (the Kingdom of Naples) and British (the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies) trade interests. A breeding ground for contraband, where property was passed down preponderantly through family (only through parents – 47%, no kinship – 30%, and other relatives – 23%), women could engage in small economic activities such as seafaring, selling silk, oil, wine, etc. Furthermore, the 1811 trial against Bourbon pirates brought to the forefront the likelihood of women to be part of contraband networks; thus, 21 women were called in either as suspects or as witnesses, with some of them hoping to marry the defendants. Gabor Bradács analyzes the notion of female inheritance in the

Kingdom of Hungary, using as a source the *Stadtbücher*, an early Middle Ages urban legislation applicable to Transylvanian Magyars, Saxons and Romanians<sup>5</sup>; thus, Bradács showed that women could pass down their property matrilineally, but they had a limited role in doing so as testifiers. Kaat Cappelle underlines the unique status of Antwerp among other cities from the Low Countries in that it showed preference toward mutual wills between spouses and growing acceptance of marriage contracts. Furthermore, women could close trade deals for their own benefit or for the benefit of the business run by their husbands, and, in doing so, they could negotiate their own place in society. In a much too ambitious presentation, Siglinde Clementi (Bolzano) explored the various ways in which provincial aristocrat women from around Innsbruck acquired goods (gifts before the wedding, dowry, counter-dowries, trousseau). The debates then headed east via Rome and Venice. Michael Gasperoni (CNRS) investigated the Jewish residencies from the Italian capital, called *cazachod*; he analyzed 1399 marriage contracts over a period of a century (1640–1750) and noticed an intense fragmentation of the wealth of poorer classes caused by goods being passed down via dowry as opposed to the elites, whose wealth remained unchanged due to consanguineous marriages. The case of the house of Ascarelli is illustrative in this respect. Anna Bellavitis (University of Rouen) emphasized the importance of the trousseau, as a third part of dowry, in situations when women did not acquire real estate or land properties. At the same time, Venetian legislation allowed women to change immovable goods into movable ones, depending on location. Thus, properties outside the city walls, rivers, salt mines or mountains had a different status than properties inside the city, and consequently widows inherited considerably more goods outside the city than inside. Nicoleta Roman (“Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History & New Europe College) and Evdoxios Doxiadis’ interventions focused on dowries and their transformations during the nineteenth century. Byzantine-inspired legislation regulated both movable and immovable goods until the 1830s and 1840s, when things were about to change thanks to monetary, economic, and state bureaucratic transformations. The compulsory registration of dowries was widely contested by urban populations. The Greek law of 1843 even stipulated a 3–5% tax on dowries, which made lower classes resort to granting dowries informally. Earlier, in 1839, Romanian authorities circulated a decree in order to prevent misreporting the value of a dowry so that money lenders could accurately appraise their share. In eighteenth-century Vidin and Antakya, two cities analyzed by Fatma Karagoz (Galatasaray University), women could own two different types of land in rural areas: *miri* and *mulk* (depending on the various crops harvested on those lands). Local economy highly influenced the value of the two types of land and it was incumbent on wives and not on husbands to fight family mismanagement in court. Furthermore, some women would rather sell those properties than spend time and effort administering them. Analyzing the middle and poorer classes of eighteenth-century Turin, Beatrice Zucca Micheletto’s intervention brought the conversation back to an urban environment. A survey of 122 documents from 1750–1780 showed clothing representing 72% of goods registered in trousseaus, which ended up, together with other accessories and jewelry, as collateral in pawnshops. This goes to prove that women’s contribution to the economic welfare of the family was never ending since widowers continued using these goods even after they were redeemed.

The conference had two keynote lectures by Margareth Lanzinger (University of Vienna) and Amy Erickson (Cambridge University), who analyzed women’s property rights and, more

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<sup>5</sup> Sources from Buda, Zsolna, Braşov and Szepesvaralja were used.

importantly, women's active role as economic agents on the labor market starting with the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Conferences such as this one, organized by the German Historical Institute, London, in summer 2018, which call into question gender, material culture, work and property paradigms, are an open invitation to increased cooperation between various European research teams and institutions.

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## NOTES AND REVIEWS

IEROMONAHUL ANDRONIC, *Călătoria la Muntele Athos (1858–1859)*, ed. by PETRONEL ZAHARIUC, Edit. Universității “Alexandru Ioan Cuza,” Iași, 2015, 254 pp.

Hieromonk Andronic (1820–1893) is one of those characters who remain part of the history of the Church, irrespective of how controversial their choices and activity were during their lifetime. He is remembered as an admirer of Russian civilization, as a proponent of using Russian as language of religious service, and most importantly as an opponent of state interference in the life of the Church. His whole life revolved around these three main activities and the 1858–1859 trip he took to Constantinople and Mount Athos, beyond its religious component, must be seen as a journey of self-discovery and personal growth. The ample introduction signed by historian Petronel Zahariuc retraces the hieromonk's biography and intellectual becoming, clarifies some aspects concerning his work, and underlines the local (the situation of monasteries and of the Moldavian Principality) and foreign socio-political context (the significance of the Crimean War and the Russian influence).

Originating from a family of monks and priests, with his father a country priest and one of the grandfathers a monk at the Neamț Monastery, Andronic was destined to follow a similar path. However, as the introduction shows, his spiritual and professional training was much better than that of any other member of his family and he knew how to take advantage of the opportunities that the monastery system had to offer. Moldova, much more than the neighboring Principality of Wallachia, had a long tradition of monasteries as centers for the preservation and dissemination of ecclesiastical culture: Romanian translations of works from Greek, Bulgarian, Russian and Slavonic; printing presses and training locations for disciples. The practice of writing the history of a holy place or of jotting down the important events of the time was considered by the Romanian monks an important task because “we see in whole Europe, let alone the whole world, that this task was and still is important” (p. 20). However, as the editor points out, by mid nineteenth century, they could not fully comprehend the changes taking place in their own societies (p. 28). The secularization of monasteries' properties in Romania would be the culmination of the struggle between state and Church, and monasteries such as Neamț and Secu started the inventory of their goods and the recovery of their history as early as 1856. Hieromonk Andronic, who was involved in this process, took advantage of this opportunity to write about the recently found things. He presented himself as sick in order to go on a pilgrimage to the holy lands; at first, his brethren and superiors objected to his departure, but they soon gave in once he told them about the apparitions and visions he had had during lent. Apparently, in his visions, he saw a warning of the dangers that might befall the monastery if they gave up using Russian as the language of service and if they accepted the state policy. Thus, nothing was left to hazard and the problems of the present were joined with the founders' principles in a projection meant to reach the innocent contemporaries.

In their journeys abroad, Romanian monks would always travel to an important Orthodox destination: Mount Athos, Jerusalem, Kiev, Russia, Greece. By 1858, hieromonk Andronic had already traveled two times to Constantinople, according to his own writings

„Revista istorică”, tom XXIX, 2018, nr. 1–2, p. 195–205

found in the Chişinău archive, which the editor cites in the introduction. He starts his journey, together with his disciple, in August 1858 and goes to Constantinople – Mount Athos – Jerusalem, returning home to Moldova a year later via Thessaloniki and, again, through the capital of the Ottoman Empire. The description of his journey covers all the tropes of similar travel writing: curiosity, detailed descriptions and commentary of all the Orthodox churches and monasteries he visited, analysis of founding acts and profound admiration for Russian actions and politics. Some aspects are surprising and worth mentioning. Firstly, there is the way in which he describes cities in an imaginary cartography of the Orient: Varna is “the key to Constantinople” (p. 51), which in turn is the “key of the world,” “the center of all kingdoms and the heart of the whole world” (p. 57). While this observation is made during a time when the Ottoman Empire was in decline and was mostly considered the sick patient of Europe, the monk did not necessarily refer to the political and economic interests the Great Powers showed toward the Porte but rather to the fact that Constantinople was the heir of Byzantium. The Turks’ celebration of Russia is not presented from a diplomatic point of view either, and the narrative’s lack of political tension is obvious. Secondly, the travelogue praises the modernizing efforts of the Ottoman Empire, and Andronic is quick to mention the construction of many bridges (p. 55) and the respect the Turks have toward the Christian-Orthodox churches, which they also protect. Thirdly, besides the inventory of the Mount Athos monasteries (Vatopedi, Pantocrator, Iviron, Filotheou, St. Pantelimon, etc.), which are indeed important for the local ecclesiastical history, the narrative emphasizes the geographical position of these monasteries in reference to Careia, “which is like a head of the Holy Mountain” (p. 66). Unfortunately, hieromonk Andronic’s account stops here and does not include the remaining parts of the journey to Jerusalem and the return home. By the time he reached Mount Athos his health was in poor condition and only his firm belief that the pilgrimage to another holy site could bring him some reprieve made him travel further to Jerusalem. Sadly for him, Jerusalem did not offer him the reprieve he needed so much.

Andronic’s sickness could also be seen as a longing for an unburdened soul and a clear mind during a time when “evil” came from outside the monastic universe. His suffering was not an imaginary disease, but it was surely influenced by Andronic’s concern regarding the growing power of the state. In fact, less than five years after his return home, the inevitable happened: the 1864 secularization of monasteries’ properties. In an act of rebellion and defiance, Andronic convinced some of the monks from Neamţ Monastery to seek refuge in Russia and start a new monastery on the banks of the river Dniester, in today’s Republic of Moldova, a monastery which they would call the New Neamţ. Thus, even when he was almost accused of treason, Andronic was able to safeguard his livelihood and remained faithful to his old traditional faith. In this respect, the 1858–1859 journey is a mere preamble to his deliberate biographical reinvention. Comparing the text with similar travelogues would have been useful here to show the extent to which Andronic’s account is different. One thing is for sure however: Andronic’s journey is an indirect plea for tradition, orthodoxy and respect for the power and goods of the Church; since pagan Turks do the same right in the heart of the Empire why wouldn’t Romanians do so at home?

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ALEX DRACE-FRANCIS, *Geneza culturii române moderne. Instituțiile scrisului și dezvoltarea identității naționale, 1700–1900*, transl. by Marius-Adrian Hazaparu, Polirom, Iași, 2016, 264 pp.

The present work represents the Romanian translation of the book published in 2006 by the I.B. Tauris Publishing House, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture: Literacy and the Development of National Identity*. The book signed by Alex Drace-Francis is part of the “Romanian Studies” (“Studii românești”) series, inaugurated in 2015 by the Polirom Publishing House, consisting of studies of historians living outside Romania, specializing in Romanian history. A professor at the University of Amsterdam, the author is particularly known for his interest in the studies concerning the imaginary and cultural identity in the Balkan area<sup>1</sup>; however, this contribution is a landmark for any study concerning the press, learning and nationality.

The work is chronologically divided into three parts, with a good and welcomed contextualization of each period. The declared purpose was to follow the relation between the prints and the national conscience and, not last, the position of identity in this triumvirate (book-ideas-nationalism). Or, in short, “to reconstitute the political dimensions of the speeches concerning alphabetization and, as a consequence, the public offices in the context of the formation of the Romanian state” (p. 19). For the first part of the discussion, the 18<sup>th</sup> century maintains projections that keep the Romanians in a world dominated by exoticism and barbarism alike, the Ottoman Empire. The clichés and overtakes are part of a continuous game of representations “in order to better clarify the qualities of civilization” (p. 49), the West being perceived as Europe. Writing and literacy were a privilege of the elite, however a new ideal, of the “common written culture,” was forming. There was, indeed, a discrepancy between the culture of the elite that, beyond any subjective mentions from the travelers, was connected at least to a regional knowledge and directly linked with its immediate preoccupations, and that of the majority, mainly rural population. This explains the libraries of *stolnic* (high steward) Constantin Cantacuzino for the earlier period and that of N. Mavrocordat for the Phanariote era. Such libraries were used for writing history works (Cantacuzino’s *History of Wallachia*), for the refinement and manifestation of literary knowledge (the Cantemir family) or as a source of documentation for reform measures. For the boyars and the merchants there was always the model of private education, while on the opposite side, until the time of the Organic Regulation, the princes had no coherent and constant policy of rural education. Everything depended on the willingness of the boyar to establish a school on his estate. Priests were the connecting element, however, as it can also be seen from the work of Alex Drace-Francis, their personal preparation varied and was often unfit for this task. Often, due to the lack of trained personnel, priests were at the same time both teachers and vaccinators.

<sup>1</sup> *Balkan Departures. Travel Writing from Southeastern Europe*, ed. by Alex Drace-Francis, Wendy Bracewell, Oxford, New York, 2010; *Under Eastern Eyes. A Comparative Introduction to East European Travel Writing in Europe*, ed. by Alex Drace-Francis, Wendy Bracewell, Budapest, 2008; *A Bibliography of East European Travel Writing on Europe*, ed. by Alex Drace-Francis, Wendy Bracewell, Budapest, 2008; Alex Drace-Francis, *Traditions of Invention. Romanian Ethnic and Social Stereotypes in Historical Context*, Leiden, 2013; idem, *European Identity: A Historical Reader*, Basingstoke, 2013.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, book printings consisted mostly of ecclesiastical subjects, the interest of the Church being that of providing “manuals” for the priests on various subjects, such as treaties against pagan beliefs or instructions regarding the drafting of documents (dowry lists, wills). There were few printing centers and books were still seen as a luxury of public display, while “reading, as a cultural and consumer practice, was not yet systemized” (p. 80). Thus, we reach the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the desire to enter the “great European family” (p. 103) increases. The author is however right in placing this modernizing spark before the time of the Regulations (p. 110), since the Phanariotes were a reformatory class, while Pavel Kiseleff and the Russians are seen as the bearers of French civilization, who integrated the Romanian space into the European world (p. 112).

Education during the age of the Regulations is the subject of a comparative analysis for the two Principalities, that presents a series of common traits (the importance of private education, the difficulty in maintaining public schools, the predominance of the Transylvanian element among teachers, the favoring of the French language in teaching compared to Romanian etc.), but also several differences (for example: a better developed network of rural primary schools in Wallachia). “The pluralization of the press” and the struggle to break a monopoly seem to be better represented in Wallachia, where there were seven printing houses in 1848, and “Bucharest had replaced Buda as the main center of Romanian editorial activity” (p. 131). This activity was divided between Romanian literary works and translations, the emergence of a schoolbooks’ market and a feeble attempt at discussing Romanian history. The Romanian press mirrors the social transformations, being volatile and depending on numerous factors in order to maintain itself, so the author characterizes it in an inspired way as “a kaleidoscopic filter (...) through which the whole Romanian nation had to see the rest of the world” (p. 142). It would have been useful to provide alternative work directions, such as censorship (the example of Mihail Vitlimescu for the reign of Mihail Sturdza or that of Constantin N. Brăiloiu for Wallachia) and the appearance of several periodicals in foreign languages, especially French, corresponding to the promotion of Romanian ideals (such as “Le Journal de Bucarest,” “La Voix de Roumanie”). What information and for which reasons it was eliminated, but also how the intellectual elite used its friends and networks of familiars from outside the country for a “national” interest (Ulysse de Marsillac, A. Ubicini etc.), was determined by the work strategy of the 1848 generation. The case studies that were inserted for the end of this century (the relation between the various Romanian literary works; Botoșani and Giurgiu, as models for the development of provincial press; the Maiorescu-Gherea disagreement) are genuine examples of the thorough examination of the subject. Alex Drace-Francis recognizes the role of statistics, with a prudent relativity for the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and increasing confidence for the period of the Old Kingdom. Thus, with the help of correspondence and journals, we are presented with a balanced register of sources, not depending on the image promoted by the foreign travelers. The printed culture, seen both as an “ideological structure” and as an instrument, remains a manifestation of modernization and of a continuous link between Europe and the Romanian space (pp. 212–213). This is a conclusion to which further research will add new branches, given the fact that the foundation was already laid.

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POSTELNICUL MANOLACHI DRĂGHICI, *Istoria Moldovei pe timp de 500 de ani pînă în zilele noastre*, ed. by ANDREI PIPPIDI, Edit. Academiei Române, Bucharest, 2017, 327 pp. + annexes

*The History of Moldavia for 500 Years until Our Days* of Manolachi Drăghici has long awaited a critical edition. Published for the first time in 1857, by Gheorghe Asachi,<sup>1</sup> his history will know a contemporary edition only in 1998. This edition was far too contemporary, presenting amusing – if not painfully incompetent – adaptations of the Moldavian language from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> This edition willingly massacred the chronicle of the *postelnic* (minister of foreign affairs) under the justification that the Moldavian language of 1857 was too “obnoxious” and “the speech was too hard to understand,” being “exceedingly archaic and regional,” that Manolache the *postelnic* proves to be rather uncultured, since there was no other explanation for the “multitude of grammatical errors.” Therefore, Constantin Mihăescu-Gruu transposed the text into “our present language and speech,”<sup>3</sup> the result being more than hilarious. Despite all these shortcomings, the book was reedited in 2014. In these conditions, the critical edition that was carefully supervised by professor Andrei Pippidi is more than welcomed.

Manolachi Drăghici was born in 1801, as the son of Iordache Drăghici and Maria (born Nacu). Iordache Drăghici was actively involved in Moldavia’s political life during the first 30 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The same thing cannot be said about Manolachi Drăghici, who held an “utterly minor political part.” However, as Andrei Pippidi writes, Manolachi Drăghici “sought to contribute through his literary activity to the opening of new possibilities for the Romanian culture and civilization” (p. 17). Educated at home and at the “pansion” (boarding school), Manolachi held some minor offices: *căminar* (tax collector), *spătar* (police chief), *ispravnic* (governor) of Dorohoi and later president of the court in Covurlui. From this second echelon he observed, made notes and was inspired to write a history of Moldavia. His intellectual activity is reflected by the translation, adaptation and editing of the *Manual of Rural and Domestic Economy* (1834) and by the translation of the *Rețete cercate* (*Tried Recipes* – 1846), a most original cookbook, through its language and adaptation to the needs of the Moldavians. All these details and many others concerning the life of the chronicler are provided by Andrei Pippidi in the *Introduction* to the *History* of Manolachi Drăghici (pp. 9–32).

*Postelnic* Manolachi Drăghici writes a history of Moldavia “since the time of Dragoș until Grigore Alexandru Ghica vvd (voivode)” in 1856. The first six books offer information concerning the name of the country and the origin of its inhabitants (p. 39), the boundaries and climate (pp. 41–44), the waters (pp. 44–47), mountains and precious metals (pp. 47–49), the land and “the products of the land” (pp. 49–54) and end with an account of the traditions and character of the Moldavians (pp. 54–62). The seventh book presents information concerning the administrative divisions of Moldavia (pp. 62–79), an important part being dedicated to “Besarabia” (Bessarabia), which is presented as “the third and largest part of Moldavia” (p. 75). The eighth book is dedicated to the population and social status, including

<sup>1</sup> Manolachi Drăghici, *Istoria Moldovei pe timp de 500 de ani. Pînă în zilele noastre*, Iași, 1857.

<sup>2</sup> Idem, *Istoria Moldovei pe timp de 500 de ani pînă în zilele noastre*, 2 vols., transposed into modern spelling and language and with comments by Constantin Mihăescu-Gruu, Chișinău, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> See also Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Masacrarea ultimului cronicar*, in “Dilema veche,” VIII, 3–9 February 2011, no. 364.

a description of all offices, followed by information about the financial resources, army, legislation (pp. 86–96). With the tenth book commences the history of events since Dragoș vodă until the reign of Grigore Ghica (pp. 193–286). Historical events are presented in detail only since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the author has better knowledge of them, through the stories of others, the chronicles and texts he had read, or from his personal experiences.

The history of Manolachi Drăghici offers an insight into the impact that certain reforms and regulations had on Moldavia, how they were born, but also how they were received by the population. For example, Scarlat Calimachi had prepared and printed a code of laws of which he was very proud, but those around him did not share his opinion. Here's how Manolachi presents it: "After they printed it, they saw it was of no good in court, since almost no one of the old judges understood it, and they were not accustomed to quoting paragraphs in the decisions, while the scribes of the Divan, who wrote the courts' orders and reports were using the local customs as justifications" (p. 209). Another innovation that took place under Calimachi's reign was the introduction of the potato, but the population did not know how to use this tuber that was hidden in the ground. This required the intervention of the government, as Manolachi Drăghici writes, which had to make great efforts in order to persuade the villagers to consume it and to convince them that it was a necessary ("trebincioasă") culture (p. 209).

Manolachi Drăghici presents ample details on the voyage of the Moldavian boyars to the Porte in 1822, providing vast information concerning their route, the way they were received in Istanbul, the various ceremonies held in the Ottoman capital and, above all, their impressions and wonder caused by *something else*: "at the eleventh hour (5 PM in European time) they were seated at the table, at a gold covered Turkish low table, with embroidered napkins for each one, and other with silk but all too beautiful, and they brought them marvelous and tasteful dishes, on good and savory bread, since this was the Turkish custom" (p. 228). The boyars from the suites of the two princes, Ioniță Sandu Sturdza and Grigore Ghica, were impressed by Istanbul and the luxuriant wealth of its inhabitants.<sup>4</sup> This is followed by information about governor Pavel Kisellef and Prince Mihail Sturdza, who are praised for their moderation and benefactions, about the 1848 *Revolution*, seen as "a prideful movement of some of the boyars," whose main consequence was "the arrival of the Russians."

The history of Manolachi Drăghici also contains a series of documents meant to spread light on the personality of *postelnic* Manolachi Drăghici: the dowry list of Maria Nacu, his letters to Pavel Kisellef, the lists of persons who were to receive his books.

The present edition, under the care of Professor Andrei Pippidi, will prove helpful to many in their research, but also an example of a well-done work that endures.

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<sup>4</sup> The voyage was amply presented by Petronel Zahariuc, *Bacșișuri, mătășuri și argintării. Călătoria boierilor moldoveni la Constantinopol în 1822*, in *Inventare de avere în secolele XVII–XIX*, ed. by Dan Dumitru Iacob, Iași, 2015, pp. 318–370.

H.H.A. HÖTTE, *Atlas of Southeast Europe. Geopolitics and History*, vol. II, 1699–1815, ed. by BÉLA VILMOS MIHALIK, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2017, iv + 108 pp.

The *Atlas of Southeast Europe. Geopolitics and History* by Hans H.A. Hötte covers present-day Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Cyprus, as well as parts of Italy, Turkey, Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Ukraine and Poland. The first volume, *Atlas of Southeast Europe. Geopolitics and History*, vol. I, 1521–1699, was published in 2015. The two atlases are part of the Brill series *Handbook of Oriental Studies (Handbuch der Orientalistik). Section I The Near and Middle East*, edited by Mirabel Fierro, M. Şükrü Hanioglu, Renata Holod and Florian Schwarz. The second volume offers a survey of the history of Southeast Europe from the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699) until the eve of the Second Serbian Uprising (1815).

The atlas was conceived and produced by Hans H.A. Hötte, a Dutch professional ophthalmologist (PhD in 1970) and amateur map-maker who died in 2007. Hötte's intention was to create an electronic historical atlas of Southeast Europe, but due to the technical challenges involved, it was decided to publish the atlas in print.

The volume begins with the *Editor's Preface* and a project outline offering background information on the late Hans H.A. Hötte (*The Author & the Atlas*). The historical evolution of Southeast Europe between 1699 and 1815 is presented chronologically in the following section (*General Historical Survey*). The text has seven subsections and is followed by three tables listing the names and reigning years of the Ottoman, Habsburg/Austrian and Russian sovereigns of the period. A *Selected Bibliography* containing 27 titles is inserted after the tables. The bibliography mentions recent publications dealing with the political and military aspects of the period, but also comprehensive volumes such as *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. III, *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839* (2006), Sima M. Ćirković's *The Serbs* (2004) or Keith Hitchins' *The Romanians, 1774–1866* (1996).

Before the *Maps* section we find the legends showing the interpretation of the diverse cartographic symbols and color schemes used in the atlas. The symbols depict various objectives such as fortresses, monasteries, cities, international borders and administrative limits, while the background colors might differentiate between territories under direct rule and autonomous fiefs, or between various types of subdivisions (for example the Hungarian counties and the Saxon and Szekler seats and districts in Transylvania).

The atlas contains two types of maps, static survey maps, which represent the situation at the beginning of a calendar year and detailed maps which zoom in to a particular event. The *Maps* section contains ten parts, dedicated to the year 1699 and the intervals 1699–1703, 1703–1711, 1711–1718, 1718–1739, 1751–1774, 1774–1783, 1783–1792, 1792–1796 and 1796–1815. Each of the ten subsections begins with a general “survey map,” printed at a scale of about 1:6,000,000. In the final portion we find five subsets, comprising small and medium scale maps cropped from the general ones and focused on Transylvania (Survey 1), Slavonia and Croatia (Survey 2), the Habsburg Empire (Survey 3), Greece and the Aegean Islands (Survey 4) and Budzhak (Survey 5). At the end, the atlas is provided with an *Index*, with names for places, events and historical personalities mentioned in the *General Historical Survey* or in the comments accompanying the maps.

The main focus of the volume is the political and administrative outline of Southeast Europe, with an emphasis on border changes and the military conflicts. In fact, over 50% of the maps are depicting troop movements, occupied territories and battles fought across the region during the frequent wars of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>1</sup> On almost every page, the detailed maps are presented together with a short description of the related historical event.

The maps contain some inaccuracies, which may be attributed to the inadequate processing or verification of the raw digital data left by H.H.A. Hötte. One of the most evident mistakes is the premature demarcation of the Ottoman “*raya*” of Hotin in 1699–1714<sup>2</sup> and the incorrect eastern border of this subdivision (the *raya* overlapped with the former Moldavian county of Hotin<sup>3</sup>). Likewise, the border between Poland and Moldavia and the administrative limits of the Hungarian counties of Zaránd and Máramaros (Maramureş) are those from the Later Middle Ages and not from the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup> The county of Máramaros (part of the Principality of Transylvania before 1732) is left without the upper valley of the Borzhava river,<sup>5</sup> while the county of Zaránd (the western part of which belonged to the Principality of Transylvania before 1732) is excessively extended west of the Arad–Gyula line.<sup>6</sup> Other important faults are the assignment of the region of Međimurje (Muraköz in Hungarian) to Croatia between 1792 and 1815<sup>7</sup> and the marking of Slavonia and the Banat of Temesvár with the same color as Hungary proper on maps depicting the political situation before 1745 and 1778, respectively.<sup>8</sup> In Slavonia, the precise demarcation of the military jurisdiction in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (the area of the Sava–Danube military border) is also missing.<sup>9</sup>

A couple of placement mistakes can be noticed as well. For instance, *Agiud*<sup>10</sup> is sited close to *Roman*, 100 km north of its real location on Maps 8, 8.2b, 8.3b and 8.6b, while *Medgyes* (Medias/Mediasch) in Transylvania is placed some 20 km away from the course of the Nagy-Küküllő (Târnava Mare) river on all the maps where it appears.

When looking at the toponyms, a certain lack of linguistic standardization can be observed. For example, in Dalmatia and Croatia the Italian *Scardona* is used instead of the

<sup>1</sup> The major military conflicts of this era were Rákóczi’s War of Independence (1703–1711), the Ottoman-Venetian War of 1714–1718, the Austro-Turkish (1716–1718, 1737–1739, 1787–1791) and Russo-Turkish Wars (1710–1711, 1735–1739, 1768–1774, 1787–1792, 1806–1812), the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813) and the Napoleonic Wars of 1803–1815.

<sup>2</sup> The Hotin *raya* was only formed in 1715.

<sup>3</sup> See Ion Gumenăi, *Contribuții privitoare la istoria raialei Hotinului*, in “Ioan Neculce. Buletinul Muzeului de Istorie a Moldovei,” 2–3, 1996–1997, pp. 66–68.

<sup>4</sup> On Maps 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, as well as on several other detailed maps.

<sup>5</sup> The town of Dolha (Dovhe in Ukraine) is positioned slightly to the east of its real location on Maps 2.2, 3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.5.

<sup>6</sup> See the depiction of the county’s borders in *Mappa comitatus Zarandiensis methodo astronomico geometrica concinnata*, National Széchényi Library, Map collection, TK 1069.

<sup>7</sup> According to *Hrvatski povijesni zemljovidi*, Zagreb, 2007, p. 31, the area was transferred to Hungary in 1720. In the atlas, Međimurje/Muraköz is correctly shown as part of Hungary proper on Maps 6, 7, 8 and 8.3a.

<sup>8</sup> Slavonia is marked with a special pattern only on Map 4.9a, but the background color is still the same as the one used for the counties in the Kingdom of Hungary.

<sup>9</sup> For an excellent map of the Habsburg military border see Josef Wolf, Richard Szydlak, *Die Österreichische Militärgrenze: territoriale Entwicklung*, in *Die Türkenkriege des 18. Jahrhunderts. Wahrnehmen – Wissen – Erinnern*, ed. by Wolfgang Zimmermann, Josef Wolf, Regensburg, 2017, p. 221.

<sup>10</sup> An archaic form of the name Adjud, a small town in southern Moldavia.

Croatian Skradin, the German *Zengg* instead of the Croatian Senj and the Hungarian *Varasd* instead of the Croatian Varaždin (or the German Warasdin). This comes in stark contrast to the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania, where all place names are uniformly given in Hungarian. Unfortunately, multilingual labels are rarely used. The only prominent exceptions are *Corfu (Kerkyra)*, *Ragusa (Dubrovnik)* and *Castel Nuovo (Hercegnovi)*.

In short, the atlas is an admirable publication and the military maps – accompanied by excellent comments on the specific campaigns and battles – are particularly revealing. It is beyond doubt the best and most informative atlas when it comes to the geopolitical issues of Southeast Europe in the modern period. The academic or casual reader will surely desire to further his or her research into the history of this part of the continent. On the other hand, one cannot ignore the frequent errors and inconsistencies, doubled by a certain lack of care in the final editing of the maps. A more thorough content verification and a few graphic edits would have been needed to produce a first-class work.

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BARBARA STOLLBERG-RILINGER, *Maria Theresia. Die Kaiserin in ihrer Zeit. Eine Biographie*, C.H. Beck, Munich, 2017, 1083 pp., ill. + maps

An exceptional book such as the recent biography of Maria Theresa, written by the renowned historian and university professor Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, that received the Leipzig Book Fair Prize in 2017, cannot pass unnoticed by Romanian historiography. The monumental biography of the Habsburg empress has already reached its fourth edition, given its success with a wide readership. This is a well-deserved achievement, the more so as Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger addresses a large audience, but also manages to provide a lesson of historiographical mastery to her guild colleagues. The book has a vast critical apparatus and bibliography.

The work consists of 15 chapters, including a prologue, an epilogue, annexes with genealogical tables and a glossary of juridical and administrative terms. The arguments of the book are highlighted for each chapter by color or black and white illustrations. The prologue reveals the motivation for writing such a biography and the author's methodological perspective. The main argument for this book is based on the idea that the historical character of Maria Theresa was shadowed by the monumental historiography of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The declared intention of Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger's endeavor is to dismantle the historiographical discourse of continuity, although the author herself admits that not even a postmodern and post national approach can guarantee the impartiality of the historian. Instead, she maintains the distant perspective of a historian/researcher not related to that age, "eine Perspektive der Fremdheit" (p. XIV), that can be noticed throughout the book. This is a non-sentimental approach, even if there is an obvious parallelism between the ascension of Archduchess Maria Theresa and the political changes that took place in the empire. One of the paradoxes of the House of Austria, reminded by the author, is the fact that the state governed by the Habsburg dynasty had no official name in the age, but was known under the expression "Allerhöchstes Erzhaus."

An exciting subtitle of the first chapter is “Männerphantasien” (“Men’s Phantasies” – p. XV): the entire life and posterity of Maria Theresa were marked by the tension between the sex of the empress and the eminently manly role she had to assume. The attitude of the contemporaries and the Romantic (men) historians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century varied between a complete ignorance of the fact that Maria Theresa was a woman and attributing manly virtues and qualities to her. In other words, Maria Theresa embodied a formidable “combination of manly bravura and womanly virtue” (p. XV); one of the preferred attributes by the authors of the age was that of “mother of the country.” Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger argues that the empress was remarked for her personal involvement in the affairs of the monarchy. This was interpreted by contemporaries and historians alike as a criticism against men and, once more, the final result was the confirmation of the hierarchical roles of the two sexes. The contemporaries, and the empress herself, had to settle this conflict of the genders in various situations and to find satisfying solutions for accommodating biology and policy.

The author considers that the biography of a monarch should not reflect only the official, courtly discourse, but also that the figure of the empress cannot be instrumentalized by imposing a gender perspective, according to which Maria Theresa managed to attain the perfect balance between career and family (p. XIX). Therefore, this new biography of the empress, the first one in German since 1917, places Maria Theresa in the context of her age, however maintaining the three-century distance (*Fremdheit*) that separates us. Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger warns that history cannot be known through itself, but it must be deciphered through hermeneutics (p. XXV). Maria Theresa, as an exceptional personality of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, can only be understood within the context of her age; however, the opposite perspective is also true to the extent in which through Maria Theresa we gain access to the age in which she lived.

Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger’s approach is, of course, influenced by her previous historiographical preoccupations, focused on the political normative ritual of life at the imperial court and on premodern societies in general. “Rituals are entrusted with making the beginnings not beginnings, but repetitions of what was already known” (p. 6), states the author when she presents the baptism of the infant Archduchess Maria Theresa; the same statement is valid also for her wedding with Francis Stephen of Lorraine or the coronations of the empress in Bratislava and Prague. The author makes a short presentation of the “European theatre” of the courts of the age and of the important part played by courtly culture, chivalry and masculinity. Maria Theresa herself complained that, due to her childhood education, made for a female member of the House of Austria, she was not prepared for the power struggles at the court.

The chapters of the book follow the various stages in Maria Theresa’s life in chronological order: her childhood and adolescence (about which not much is known), the War of the Austrian Succession, the coronation, her reforms, courtly life, the 7 Years War and her old age. Between these chapters with conventional titles, the author inserted interpretative chapters, concerning the policy of social control, courtly life, political relations with the collaborators of the empress, the relationship with Joseph II, the religious policy of the monarchy, communities and minorities and Maria Theresa’s relationship with her subjects. Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger deciphers the mechanisms of life at court, the role of the monarch and the relationship with the subjects and the role of the rituals. Maria Theresa’s personal life, her becoming as a young archduchess and empress, mother and, eventually, widow also marked the evolution of the Viennese court. The chapter on the

“Capital of the Monarchy” (chapter VII) reveals the current meanings of gestures and symbolic representations for the readers. First of all, the children born by Maria Theresa represented the most potent form of legitimizing the House of Habsburg, since they not only ensured the continuity of the dynasty, but also allowed the maintenance of the network of matrimonial alliances and consequently the political alliances with the other royal houses of Western Europe. The archdukes and archduchesses of the House of Habsburg received a rigorous and pious education, in accordance with their mother’s strict instructions, but far from her direct presence. The children spent very little time with their parents, being entrusted to their teachers and tutors, among whom were members of the high aristocracy. The training of Habsburg descendants for their role as adults began in their first years of life; the author shows that, in fact, Maria Theresa introduced many innovations concerning the involvement of children in courtly life: the presence of small children at diplomatic events and daily ceremonies or promoting boys to high military ranks. These rituals were eliminated from the ritual of the court by the austere Joseph II, much to his mother’s disappointment.

Having varied and abundant historical sources at her disposal, Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger reconstituted all aspects of the private and public life of the Habsburgs in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the smallest detail. Moments such as the death of Francis of Lorraine are described up close, with a detailed chronology and with a director’s attention. The historian objectively presents the emotions of the empress, shares excerpts from the letters addressed to her children (who were instructed to burn them, but luckily not all obeyed their mother’s command), but also provides us with the divergent perspectives of other observers, who witnessed life at court. In the end, the result is an impressive panorama, that deciphers how the ritualized society of the 18<sup>th</sup> century worked, what were the prerequisites and limits for the members of the imperial family and their entourage. The historian’s language is simple and direct, however filled with charm and metaphors.

The monumental book of Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger already enjoys its well-deserved success in the German speaking cultural space; we signal its appearance and encourage all those interested to read it.

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„REVISTA ISTORICĂ” publică în prima parte studii, note și comunicări originale, de nivel științific superior, în domeniul istoriei vechi, medii, moderne și contemporane a României și universale. În partea a doua a revistei, de informare științifică, sumarul este completat cu rubricile: *Surse inedite, Probleme ale istoriografiei contemporane, Opinii, Viața științifică, Recenzii, Note, Buletin bibliografic, Revista revistelor*, în care se publică materiale privitoare la manifestări științifice din țară și străinătate și sunt prezentate cele mai recente lucrări și reviste de specialitate apărute în țară și peste hotare.

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