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Maria Cantacuzino și Olga Cantacuzino-Miclescu, ed. și trad. FLORIN ȚURCANU, Humanitas, București, 2018, 207 p. (*Alin Ciupală*); ZOLTÁN PÉTER BAGI, *Stories of the Long Turkish War*, GlobeEdit, Beau Bassin, 2018, 152 p. (*Florin Nicolae Ardelean*); STEFANO BOTTONI, *Stalin's Legacy in Romania. The Hungarian Autonomous Region, 1952–1960*, Lexington Books, Lanham, Boulder, New York, London, 2018, 398 p. (*Cristian Vasile*); OANA MIHAELA TĂMAȘ, *Între uz și abuz de alcool în România. Sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului al XX-lea*, Edit. Academiei Române, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj-Napoca, 2015, 307 p. (*Iuliu-Marius Morariu*)..... 195

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WELFARE AND SOCIAL PRACTICES BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT. THE CASE-STUDIES OF SOUTHERN ITALY AND ROMANIA

THE SACRUM INFIRMARIUM OF THE CONVENT OF SAN GREGORIO ARMENO*

GEMMA COLESANTI**, MIRIAM PALOMBA***

INTRODUCTION

From the analysis of the edited documentation¹ of one of the oldest and richest convents in Naples, at least until the fourteenth century, dedicated to San Gregorio Armeno (Saint Gregory of Armenia) a series of questions arose that suggested some reflections on the strategy, activism and feminine management of a monastic space open to the city. First of all, we asked ourselves how this enormous patrimony managed exclusively by nuns was formed; and then how it was possible to measure the protagonism and authority of these nuns both within the community and within the city of Naples itself.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONVENT

Before entering into the merits of the text, it seems useful to quickly go over some data that help to frame the monastic body within the history of the city of Naples. The convent is still located in the heart of the ancient city and its history begins in the eighth century. The foundation is probably due to a group of nuns of the order of Saint Basil, who fled Constantinople after 729, almost certainly following the development of the iconoclastic struggle. The nuns arrived in Naples, found hospitality near the diaconia of San Gennaro all'Olmo and organized themselves in

* This article is in part the result of Miriam Palomba's master thesis discussed at L'Orientale University of Naples, and is written under the framework of the project *Paisajes monásticos. Representaciones y virtualizaciones de la realidad espiritual y material en el Mediterráneo Occidental* (s. VI–XVI), 2019–2022 (PGC2018-095350-B-I00).

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¹ Jole Mazzoleni, *Le pergamene del monastero di S. Gregorio Armeno di Napoli*, Naples, 1973; *Le pergamene di San Gregorio Armeno (1141–1198)* (hereafter: SGA), [vol. I], ed. by Rosalba Pilone, Salerno, 1996; SGA, vol. II, (1168–1265), ed. by Carla Vetere, Salerno, 2000; SGA, vol. III, (1267–1306), ed. by Carla Vetere, Salerno, 2006.

a first convent dedicated to San Pantaleone and the Holy Savior.² This convent was probably joined by two other communities, that of San Gregorio and that of San Sebastiano. In 1025, in fact, a decree of Sergius IV, duke of Naples, ratified the unification of two other small communities of nuns into a single convent of Basilian nuns, dedicated in the following centuries only to San Gregorio Armeno, also known as San Liguoro. In 1340, the community entered under Benedictine rule, and its first abbess belonging to this order was Alessandra Caracciolo Ruxa.

THE ROLE OF THE ABESESSES IN TRAINING AND HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

The abbesses of San Gregorio Armeno, beginning with Teodonanda (968),³ through donations, sales and transfers, managed an enormous patrimony, made up of urban and rural real estate that we could compare to several farms, with contracts of different nature, as demonstrated by the about 500 documents published from 988 to 1306.⁴ The main feature of this economic strategy, promoted by the abbesses and leading to a substantial accumulation of assets, is not expressed only through donations. As already pointed out elsewhere,⁵ the nuns of San Gregorio Armeno adopted a new way to take possession of goods and monetary fortunes that they would manage autonomously until their death, that of the appanages. Each nun, upon entering the convent, bought an asset with the money received from her family of origin. A dowry was an asset that either was kept by the nun, during her natural life, as her own possession, from which she could derive income, and then, upon her death, entered the patrimony of the convent, or was given by the nun at the moment of entering monastic life directly to the convent's infirmarium: "cunctis diebus vite tua tener et dominare et frugiare debeas et de ipsa frugias faciendi quod volueris vite tua et post tuum tranxitum ipsa integra petia de terra fiat de suprascripto infirmario ad abendum et possidendum illud in ipsu infirmariu usque in sempiternum."⁶

Through this "juridical instrument," in Norman times and even later, the abbesses of the convent succeeded to put into practice their economic strategy, to

² In an act of 1020 the title "monasteri et cenobi beatissimi Gregori, vel Sebastiani atque domini Salvatoris nostri Iesu Christi et sancti Pantaleoni puellarum Dei" is already reported. See J. Mazzoleni, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 42–43.

⁴ *Ibidem*; SGA, vols. I–III.

⁵ Amedeo Feniello, *Napoli, società ed economia (902–1137)*, Rome, 2011; Gemma Teresa Colesanti, Fiorella Fragnoli, *Donne meridionali tra "terra e mercato": note per uno studio delle operatrici economiche del Mezzogiorno medievale*, in *Il genere nella ricerca storica. Atti del VI Congresso della Società Italiana delle Storie (Padova-Venezia, 12–14 febbraio 2013)*, ed. by Saveria Chemotti, Maria Cristina La Rocca, vol. II, Padua, pp. 579–591.

⁶ For the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the land purchased from the convent of San Gregorio, see A. Feniello, *op. cit.*, pp. 152–155.

become the major “investors” in land. At the same time, the demand for entry into the institution increased, thus triggering the race of the richest families to buy land of value to donate to the convent, which became “one of the most sought-after places of status in the urban context.”⁷ In the end, through these two forms of accumulation (donations and prerogatives), the abbesses together with their community took possession of a considerable and most productive part of the territory of the Neapolitan area.⁸ The same women took action by re-introducing the goods received into the overall demand circuit for arable and productive land, which gained new momentum from the Norman period through the implementation of rents.

It is evident then that the nuns belonging to the most important and noble families of the city (Vulcano, Abbinabile, Caracciolo, Protonobilissimo, Capece, Brancaccio, Filangieri, etc.) were elected abbesses of the convent, independently from the community. They had a training in both the administrative and the legal field and acted with absolute independence,⁹ without any interference, neither episcopal nor ducal. As documented by the well-known privilege of Duke Sergius IV, the first procurators appear in the sources only as late as 1331.¹⁰

Their awareness of being the “queens” of their convent, and their resourcefulness led them to act and interact with any power that could question their heritage and autonomy.¹¹ Abbess Galia from Naples went to Palermo (Sicily) between 1168 and 1170, to obtain personally from King William II and Queen Mother Margaret the remission of the *fidancie*, which had to be paid to the royal *curia* every year, both by the convent and the infirmary. Galia also sought the approval and confirmation of the privileges obtained over the years from the previous monarchs. Thus, even earlier, in 1115, Gaita secured the recognition of a servant disputed with Sergio de Turre, for 40 *tari* of Amalfi, and she finally obtained permission to use the mills of the state property of Capua to grind 100 measures of wheat and the free allocation of income of 12 measures of salt.¹²

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 153: it is known that “the convent of San Gregorio invests in solid lands 1763 and 1/2: incomparable orders of magnitude compared to other institutions, families or individuals, six times larger than the male monastery of St. Severino and Sossio, the most important in the city.”

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 155.

⁹ We do not know much about the preparation and training of the Neapolitan abbesses in medieval times, whether they had received a minimum of education before entering the convent or after they arrived in the monastic space. Some indications for the modern era are found in *Sacro, pubblico e privato. Donne nei secoli XV–XVIII*, ed. by Elisa Novi Chavarría, Naples, 2009, p. 161.

¹⁰ J. Mazzoleni, *op. cit.*, pp. 5–6.

¹¹ M.T. Guerra Medici rightly states that “the abbess of a great institution exercised a power that only some queens have known. The abbess exercised all the temporal powers of abbots and feudal lords,” see Maria Teresa Guerra Medici, *Sulla giurisdizione temporale e spirituale della abbadessa*, in *Il Monachesimo femminile in Italia dall’alto Medioevo al secolo XVII a confronto con l’oggi*, ed. by Gabriella Zari, San Pietro in Cariano, 1997, p. 76. This is also valid for the convent of San Gregorio Armeno, see SGA, [vol. I], doc. 5, pp. 15–17.

¹² J. Mazzoleni, *op. cit.*, p. 17; SGA, [vol. I], doc. 5, pp. 15–17; *ibidem*, vol. II, doc. 1, 2, 3, pp. 3–6.

However, it is during the years of the government of four formidable abbesses that an unequivocal strategy of running the community, marked by the authority of these women of the thirteenth century,¹³ can be retraced: Gailtegrima (1207–1214), Luca de Abbinabile (1216–1235), Iudecta Filangieri (1235–1248) and Maria de Domno Ebulo (1268–1288). During these same years, the autonomous management of the infirmary was also organized by other exceptional nuns: Mira Friccia (1207), Gaita Caracciolo (1221–1235), Stefania Filomarino (1221–1235), Gaitelgrima (1233), Gaitelgrima Rapista (1237), Sica Bulcana (1237–1265), Melagaita Franco (1240–1248) and Stefania Protonobilissimo (1258–1265). These abbesses, mostly belonging to the city nobility, coming from the Nido and Capuana seats,¹⁴ as administrators, with the consent of the community (“cunctas congregaciones monacharum”) gave away pieces of churches and houses in exchange for arable and productive land. A comprehensive survey of the extension of their real estate is provided by all the certificates, donations, sales and rents, in which different plots scattered throughout the Neapolitan territory appear.¹⁵ Their lands extended in the territories of Calvizzano, Casoria, Santa Anastasia, on Mount Erasmo and Capodimonte, in addition to many properties in the city of Naples. Here, in the former capital of the dukedom, the abbesses were able to obtain the right to build, demolish and sell at their discretion.¹⁶ Thanks to the managerial skills of these abbesses, together with the heads of the infirmary, real estate was exchanged and sold as part of a strategy aimed at meeting the needs of the entire community. The documentation testifies to a policy aimed at expanding or organizing the land that can be traced back to 1141, when the nun Gaudibisa bought from Gregorio, Giovanni and Marotta Brancaccio, for the infirmary, half of two lands located in “Sanctum Petrum qui dicitur in Paternum”¹⁷ to join them to two others plots of land, previously bought by Anna and Gaita, nuns in the same entity. It is clear that there was a plan to acquire neighbouring plots of land, which would make up larger estates, more easily manageable to meet the needs of their community: the provision of food for all the nuns or people who gravitated around the institution for various reasons, and the sale of surplus products. In the many contracts of lease of land given “ad pastinadum, ad laborandum, ad meliorandum,” the abbesses stipulated being granted in exchange half of the products, a part of the seeds – in some cases of macerated flax that could then be worked in the

¹³ Before the dispositions of Gregory XIII (1583), who introduced the three-year regime, abbesses were elected almost for life.

¹⁴ Starting from the twelfth century in Naples, each city region produced a group of “nobiliores,” an initial nucleus of what would later become the nobility of the seats: Nido and Capuana would give rise to the most important and influential city nobility.

¹⁵ SGA, [vol. I], pp. 3–6, 18–20, 48–51, 71–74, 79–81, 96–99; *ibidem*, vol. II, pp. 32–35, 83–85, 99–102, 125–128, 175–178, 199–202, 216–218, 226–228, 231–233, 258–260, 264–267, 327–330, 341–342, 368–370, 370–372; *ibidem*, vol. III, pp. 15–17, 27–29, 33–40, 62–64, 75–76, 78–82, 102–106, 123–127, 137–139, 141–144, 149–154, 175–178, 217–220.

¹⁶ J. Mazzoleni, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

¹⁷ SGA, [vol. I], doc. 1, pp. 4–7.

convent –, and of the wood, and also the sustenance of one or two persons, lay or religious, who at the time of the harvest went to the land they owned. In a “*carthula promissionis*” of 1277,¹⁸ Abbess Maria de Domino Ebulo tells their tenant, Pascali de Malito, a farmer of certain lands in Calvizzano, that during the weeks of the harvest the community would send a few nuns to participate in the agricultural work, to check the practices and the quantity of the goods collected, and underlines, finally, that the payment of the nuns would be charged to the farmer.

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE *SANCTUM INFIRMARIUM*

The independent management of the infirmary appears in the sources since 1141.¹⁹ These nuns certainly knew not only the basics of the medieval pharmacopoeia but also the main notions of agriculture which allowed them to grow medicinal herbs.²⁰ During the abbacy of Gaitelgrima, a certain Mauro Friccia, father of the nun Mira, with the title of active nurse in the monastic infirmary, appears in a document of land transfer, dated 3 August: “... et domna Mira humilis moncha ipsius monasterii Sancti Gregorii, filia quidem domno Mauro qui nominabatur Friccia, infermasane de illu sanctu infirmariu de ipsius sancto monasterio Sancti Gregorii.”²¹ This is a significant testimony in that it allows us to assert that nursing services were offered not only to the monastic community, but also to the “social body.”²² In the following years we find explicitly nominated, but with few distinctions of their tasks, the nuns responsible for the infirmary: Stefania Filomarino, Gaita Caracciolo, Gaitelgrima Rapista, Sica Vulcano, Melagaita Franco, Stefania Protonobilissimo, Sicelgaita Capece de Romania, Flore Brancaccio, Maria Siginulfo, Gaitelgrima Filomarino, Truda Capece Paparone, Marotta Capece Zambarella.²³

The autonomy of the organization became even more evident in the Swabian era, starting from 1221, during the long and busy government of the noble Abbess

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. III, doc. 19, pp. 72–74.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, [vol. I], doc. 1, pp. 3–6; doc. 6, pp. 18–20; doc. 17, pp. 48–51; doc. 21, pp. 60–65; doc. 25, pp. 69–71; doc. 26, pp. 71–74; doc. 29, pp. 79–81; doc. 34, pp. 91–95; doc. 36, pp. 96–99; doc. 40, pp. 107–112; *ibidem*, vol. II, doc. 14, pp. 32–35; doc. 32, pp. 83–85; doc. 39, pp. 99–102.

²⁰ For an overview of the infirmaries of women’s monasteries in Italy, see Sharon T. Strocchia, *The Nun Apothecaries of Renaissance Florence: Marketing Medicines in the Convent*, in “*Renaissance Studies*,” 25, 2011, no. 5, pp. 627–647.

²¹ SGA, vol. II, doc. 14, pp. 32–35.

²² Cristina Cuadra García, María Del Mar Graña Cid, Ángela Muñoz Fernández, Cristina Segura Graño, *Notas a la educación de las mujeres en la Edad Media*, in *Las sabias mujeres: educación, saber y autoría (siglos III–XVII)*, ed. by María Del Mar Graña Cid, Madrid, 1994, p. 36.

²³ SGA, vol. II, doc. 14, pp. 32–35; doc. 39, pp. 99–102; doc. 49, pp. 125–128; doc. 66, pp. 175–178; doc. 84, pp. 216–218; doc. 88, pp. 226–228; doc. 90, pp. 231–233; doc. 102, pp. 258–260; doc. 104, pp. 264–267; doc. 132, pp. 237–330; doc. 137, pp. 341–342; doc. 147, pp. 370–372; *ibidem*, vol. III, doc. 1, pp. 15–17; doc. 6, pp. 27–28; doc. 8, pp. 33–38; doc. 9, pp. 38–40; doc. 16, pp. 62–64; doc. 20, pp. 75–76; doc. 22, pp. 78–82; doc. 31, pp. 104–106; doc. 37, pp. 123–127; doc. 42, pp. 137–139; doc. 47, pp. 149–154; doc. 56, pp. 175–178; doc. 71, pp. 217–220.

Luca de Abbinabile. To her we owe the authorization received from Frederick II for the copying of the documents attesting the properties and privileges received during the course of already two centuries of history of the convent.²⁴ The patrimony of the infirmary was extensive by then,²⁵ thus we can imagine that the welfare services carried out outside the convent, in a system that we could define as *economy of gift*,²⁶ allowed the infirmary to receive a large number of donations of land and other real estate from many noble Neapolitan families such as: Cacapece, Caracciolo, Capecelatro. These bequests were located not only in the city of Naples but also in the hinterland: Pianura, Soccavo Casoria, Capodimonte, Afragola, San Pietro Paterno, Mugnano, Arzano, and Calvizzano. This enormous patrimony and the opening of the sanitary garrison towards the city compelled the monastic community to a new division of tasks, so in the documentation the nobles responsible for the infirmary appear for the first time, but with a clear title, *i.e.* as rector and governor²⁷ and in a single document as treasurer²⁸: "... domina Stephania, humile monacha de ipso monasterio Sancti Gregorii Maioris, filia suprascriptis quondam domini Mathei Filomarini et iamdicta domina Gayta humile monacha ipsius monasterii, filia suprascriptis quondam domini Landolfi Caracculi, hoc est insimul rectrices et gubernatrices de ipso sancto infirmario, quod est de ipso monasterio Sancti Gregorii Maioris."²⁹

Other data that can help us understand the educational path to become rector or governor of the *sanctum infirmarium* do not exist. We know little about the training of noble women in medieval times, but it is attested that the education received from the parents in the family was inspired by the rules spread at the time through a series of treaties dedicated to the training and education of children. These provided for women of the upper middle class, in addition to religious and moral education, the possibility of learning to read, and write, as tools necessary for the management of a family.³⁰ In the documentation examined by us, we found no reference that would allow us to understand the methods and timescales of a secure education received by these women, both before entering the convent and in the monastic environment itself, as provided for by the Basilian rules. The noble origin of the women in charge of the infirmary – Protonobilissimo, Vulcano, Capece – is the only clue that allows us to hypothesize that they were already educated before

²⁴ Annamaria Facchiano, *Monasteri femminili e nobiltà a Napoli tra Medioevo ed età moderna. Il Necrologio di Santa Patrizia (secc. XII–XVI)*, Naples, 1992, p. 158; SGA, vol. II, doc. 39, pp. 99–102; doc. 66, pp. 175–177; doc. 84, pp. 216–218.

²⁵ A list of sickbay land is contained in an inventory from 1272; SGA, vol. III, doc. 13, pp. 52–56.

²⁶ Gemma Teresa Colesanti, Salvatore Marino, *L'economia dell'assistenza a Napoli nel tardo medioevo*, in "Reti Medievali Rivista," 17, 2016, no. 1, pp. 309–344, <http://www.rmojs.unina.it/index.php/rm/article/view/503>, accessed 15 March 2019.

²⁷ SGA, vol. II, pp. 216–218.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, doc. 132, pp. 327–330.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, doc. 39 (1221), pp. 99–102.

³⁰ Cr. Cuadra Garcia, M. Del Mar Graña Cid, A. Muñoz Fernandez, Cr. Segura Graiño, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–43; Gemma Teresa Colesanti, *I libri di contabilità di Caterina Llul i Sabastida*, in "Genesis. Rivista della Società Italiana delle Storiche," IX, 2010, no. 1, pp. 135–160.

entering the convent, both in the administrative and juridical fields,³¹ followed by a further educational path led by the mother superiors and those in charge of the infirmary, who transferred their knowledge to the young girls and nuns who entered the community around the age of ten. As was often the case in practical learning pathways, the transmission of knowledge took place orally, so it is difficult to follow the traces.³² Through the analysis of the chronotaxis of the infirmary managers,³³ it was also possible to hypothesize that within the same structure members of the same family alternated, with an exchange of knowledge between generations: in 1221–1253 Stefania Filomarino and in 1276–1277 Gaitelgrima Filomarino. In addition, the people in charge of the infirmary never had control of the convent, which was the responsibility of nuns who came from other noble families: Protonobilissimo, Filangieri, Caracciolo, Cacapice, Giundazzo and Capece.

An examination of the published documentation shows how the abbesses and nuns of San Gregorio Armeno were among the main economic operators of the city: together they operated with the full awareness of acting in a market of land and urban real estate in full transformation, they organized and managed a company that we can define all-female at least in governance until the fifteenth century.³⁴

The bestowal of such large movable and immovable property to the convent corresponded not only to a privileged means to obtain the salvation of the donor's soul, but helped create a network of "help and solidarity" organized by the heads of the infirmary and the abbesses. It is the entire city – nobles, professionals, artisans, women and men³⁵ – that contributed to the expansion of the healthcare heritage created and carried out by this community of noble and cultured women in one of the most dynamic urban contexts of the entire Italian peninsula between the eleventh and the

³¹ See doc. 51, 6 February 1224: Luca de Abbinabile, abbess of the convent, armed with the letter of the master executioner of the kingdom Enrico de Morra, summons Pietro Greco, son of the deceased Giovanni Greco and Maria, because in time of famine he had bought from the convent two lands at Cava, Riu Cesari, for less than half of the just price. Pietro Greco claimed that, at the time of purchase, the lands were deserted and barren, and therefore their value corresponded to the purchase price, and he had since made them productive at his own expense. Pietro Greco won the case in court, but after the nuns' prayers, he donated two ounces of gold in Sicilian *tari* to the convent for the needs of the monastic community; SGA, vol. II, p. 130.

³² Gabriella Piccini, *La trasmissione dei saperi delle donne*, in *La trasmissione dei saperi nel Medioevo (secoli XII–XV). Diannovesimo Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, Pistoia, 2005, pp. 205–247.

³³ "Chronotassium" of the infirmary managers: 1207 – Altruda de domino Sicenolfo; 1207 – Mira Friccia; 1221–1235 – Gaita Caracciolo; 1221–1253 – Stefania Filomarino; 1233 – Gaitelgrima; 1237 – Gaitelgrima Rapista; 1237–1265 – Sica Vulcano; 1240–1248 – Melagaita Franco; 1258–1265 – Stefania Protonobilissimo; 1267–1271 – Sica Vulcano; 1267–1279 – Stefania Protonobilissimo; 1276–1277 – Gaitelgrima Filomarino; 1279–1289 – Sicelgaita Capece de Romania; 1280–1296 – Maria Signulfo; 1303 – Truda Capece Paperone; 1303 – Marotta Capece Zambarella.

³⁴ A. Facchiano, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

³⁵ See tables I and II in SGA, vol. III, doc. 11 (1271), pp. 42–48: Pandelfo Guindazzo left 6 ounces of gold to the infirmary and lands in Pianura and Soccavo to the convent; *ibidem*, vol. II, doc. 132 (1258), pp. 237–330: Pietro Capece and his brother-in-law, Pietro Capece Turcello, donated to the infirmary a land of two and a half *moggi* with trees and their fruit in the locality of "Toru de illa Bepula."

fourteenth centuries. The abbesses of San Gregorio Armeno, together with those in charge of the infirmary, had not at all renounced worldly life and accepted to be excluded from the economic and social life of the city, but, in the exercise of their authority, always within the monastic rules – first Basilian and then Benedictine – were able to create reciprocity with the body of the city during the central centuries of the Middle Ages.

Table 1
Concessions and Exchange of Goods

Date	Donators	Beneficiaries	Goods received	Site
[1178] September 28, Naples ³⁶	Cacapice Giovanni	Abbess Gemma	Two <i>moggi</i> , and a “starzia campise” of land	Casoria
[1180] August 20, Naples ³⁷	Caracciolo Adinolfo	Abbess Gaitelgrima	An entire piece of land in exchange for a land plot located in Casoria, offered to the infirmary by the nun Gemma, with the consent of Abbess Stefania	Calvizzano
[1184] July 20, Naples ³⁸	Abbess Gemma	Nun Giulia	A piece of land in exchange for an entire plot of land located in Marigliano and previously given to the infirmary by Gemma’s sister, the deceased nun named Giulia	Calvizzano
1207 August 3, Naples ³⁹	De Fuscardi Maria and her daughter De Aldelmari Gerolima	Siginulfo Altruda and Friccia Mira, daughter of the late Mauro, nurse of San Gregorio Armeno	A small plot of land in exchange for a land in Polvica, in the locality “campu de illu Arileum,” sharing communal pools with other pieces of land of the convent	Capodimonte, Naples
1217 April 7, Naples ⁴⁰	Capecelatro Maria	Infirmary of San Gregorio Armeno	Money for land purchase	

³⁶ *Ibidem*, [vol. I], pp. 71–74.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 79–81.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 96–99.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. II, pp. 32–35.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 83–85.

1237 September 30, Naples ⁴¹	Rapista Pandolfo	Rapista Gaitelgrima and Vulcano Sica, responsible for the infirmary	Income of six Amalfi <i>tari</i> obtained for a land owned by the infirmary in Calvizzano, Cesine, in exchange for half the land located in San Giovanni a Teduccio	
1258 November 15, Naples ⁴²	Capece Pietro and his brother-in- law Capece Turcello Pietro	Vulcano Sica and Protonobilissimo Stefania, treasurer of the infirmary	A land of two and a half <i>moggi</i> with trees and its fruit	<i>Toru de illa Bespula</i>
1270 March 28, Naples ⁴³	Guindazzo Simeone, archdeacon of the church of San Giovanni Maggiore	Vulcano Sica and Protonobilissimo Stefania, respon- sible for the infirmary	A land and twenty ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	<i>Sanctus Petrus ad Neubarbarum in Calvizzano</i>
1281 [...] 4, Naples ⁴⁴	Carmignano Griffo	Capece Sichelgaita de Romania and Brancaccio Flora, responsible for the infirmary	A land with trees and its fruit	Corigliano
1289 April 25, Naples ⁴⁵	Buccino Pietro, presbyter and cimeliarch of the Neapolitan church	Capece Sichelgaita de Romania and Brancaccio Flore, responsible for the infirmary	A land in exchange for the celebration of an annual mass for the salvation of the soul as well as the distri- bution of ten gold <i>tari</i> derived from the exploitation of the land	Arcora
1291 January 15, Naples ⁴⁶	Francesco, Riccardo, Tommaso, Alligranzia and Maria Cacace, inhabitants of Calvizzano	Siginulfo Maria and Brancaccio Flore, responsible for the infirmary	A <i>moggi</i> of land in exchange for a fourth piece, a ninth piece and a half piece of land in Calvizzano, and five ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Calvizzano, locality Cesine

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 216–218.

⁴² *Ibidem*, pp. 327–330.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, vol. III, pp. 33–38.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 102–106.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 141–144.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 149–154.

1296 [...], Naples ⁴⁷	De Domna Romita Matteo	Brancaccio Flore and Siginolfo Maria	A land plot of four <i>moggi</i> with trees and its fruit in exchange for some houses in Naples at the Fontanula square near the church of San Giovanni Maggiore	Mugnano
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Table 2
Purchased Land

Date	Purchasing	Sellers	Goods	Site
[1141] December 17, Naples ⁴⁸	Nun Gaudibisa Friccia	Gregorio, Giovanni and Marotta Brancaccio	Two pieces of land divided in half with trees and fruit and with a masonry swimming pool	San Pietro a Paterno
[1153] April 28, Naples ⁴⁹	Nun Caracciolo Mira	Strognulo Pietro	A land for seventy-four Amalfi <i>tari</i>	Calvizzano, in the place <i>ad Sorba</i>
[1173] September [1]3, Naples ⁵⁰	Abbess Galia	Buccatorzio Mala	A piece of land for two hundred and sixty-six solids and a half of Amalfi <i>tari</i>	Baccilianu, above <i>Capu de Cliu</i>
1221 March 26, Naples ⁵¹	Filomarino Stefania and Caracciolo Gaita, responsible for the infirmary	Scriniario Altruda	A land, for fourteen ounces of gold in <i>tari</i> , and trees and their fruit	Calvizzano, locality <i>Cesa Adstricta</i>
1223 September 8, Naples ⁵²	Filomarino Stefania and Caracciolo Gaita, responsible for the infirmary	Caraccilo Maria	Five <i>moggi</i> of estate with fruit trees for five ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Arzano, locality <i>Spadaru</i>
1233 November 7, Naples ⁵³	Filomarino Stefania and Gaitelgrima, responsible for the infirmary	Pignatelli Giovanni	A land for six ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Calvizzano

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 175–178.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, [vol. I], pp. 3–6.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 18–20.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 48–51.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, vol. II, pp. 99–102.

⁵² *Ibidem*, pp. 125–128.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, pp. 175–178.

1235 December 5, Naples ⁵⁴	Abbess Filangieri Giuditta, on behalf of the infirmary	De Citro Guglielmo	Two <i>moggi</i> of land with trees and fruit and three quarters for eight and a half ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	<i>Campu Rside</i> near Mugnano
1240 February 10, Naples ⁵⁵	Vulcano Sica and Franco Melagaita, responsible for the infirmary	Virticillo Giovanni	Five and a half quarters of land with trees and fruit for five ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Antignano
1247 November 20, Naples ⁵⁶	Vulcano Sica and Franco Melagaita, responsible for the infirmary	Turzulo Giovanni and his cousin Turzolo Arminia	Five quarters of land for two ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Calvizzano, locality <i>Arculana</i>
1248 February 15, Naples ⁵⁷	Vulcano Sica and Franco Melagaita, responsible for the infirmary	Orimina Pietro	Purchase for three and a half ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Calvizzano, locality Cesine
1267 August 11, Naples ⁵⁸	Vulcano Sica and Protonobilissimo Stefania, responsible for the infirmary	The brothers Capece Giovanni, Capece Andrea and Capece Roberto	A fund with its own fruit for eight ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Calvizzano
1277 April 12, Naples ⁵⁹	Protonobilissimo Stefania and Filomarino Gaitelgrima, responsible for the infirmary	Caracciolo Letizia	The annual income of Sicilian <i>tari</i> obtained from a plot of land in Calvizzano for an ounce of gold and seven Sicilian <i>tari</i>	
1279 January [...],	Protonobilissimo Stefania and Capece	Executors of the	Land and funds do- nated by the deceased	Arzano, locality <i>Curbulino</i>

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 199–202.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 226–228.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 258–260.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 264–267.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. III, pp. 15–17.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 75–76.

Naples ⁶⁰	Sicelgaita	deceased Bartolomia, daughter of the late Giovanni de domno Sari of Sorrento	Giovanni <i>de domino</i> Ebulo, late brother of Abbess Maria <i>de domino</i> Ebulo	
128[6] July 26, Naples ⁶¹	Capece Sicelgaita di Romania and Brancaccio Flora, responsible for the infirmary	The Calvizzano and Cacace Flore brothers	An orchard and a road connected to it for four ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Calvizzano
1303 March 21, Naples ⁶²	Capece Paparone Truda and Capece Zambarella Marotta, responsible for the infirmary	Storcimilite Matteo	A <i>moggi</i> of land with its chestnut woods for eight ounces of gold in Sicilian <i>tari</i>	Corigliano, locality Conocchia

THE SACRUM INFIRMARIUM OF THE CONVENT OF SAN GREGORIO ARMENO

Abstract

Research on the convents of the Kingdom of Naples in the Middle Ages has never deepened the role of some of these institutions in the social sphere. Our study analyzes the emergence, functioning and organization of the infirmary of the convent of San Gregorio Armeno between the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries. The focus is above all on the reciprocity established between the body of the citizens and the monastic community of women, with special attention given to the activity of the abbesses and the governors of the infirmary.

Keywords: convents; infirmary; Southern Italy; Middle Ages

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 78–82.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 123–127.

⁶² *Ibidem*, pp. 217–220.

URBAN GOVERNANCE AND WELFARE IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY TRANSYLVANIA

MÁRIA PAKUCS-WILLCOCKS*

In this paper I intend to examine discourse and norms concerning welfare and healthcare assistance in the major Transylvanian towns during the sixteenth century. My aim is to analyse political discourse in town statutes, decisions of town councils and other legislative documentation available from this period. First, I will examine the extant literature on medieval and early modern hospitals in Transylvanian towns, then I will proceed to investigate the sources and how they reflect the concepts of “poor,” “poverty”¹ and what were the expressed duties of political magistrates. For the Saxon towns, I will discuss the main text that created the discursive and administrative blueprint for action on relieving poverty and caring for the vulnerable with the Reformation. In the case of Cluj, I will rely mostly on the town statutes and decisions of the council from the sixteenth century, where a different approach to social assistance can be discerned.

SCHOLARSHIP ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE IN TRANSYLVANIA

Owing to the nature of the available primary sources, scholars have focused mostly on hospitals established in the urban centre of Transylvania. From the Middle Ages onwards, account books of hospitals in the main towns of the region have been preserved, thus channelling the avenues of research towards the analysis of income, expenditure, or costs of living.²

The most comprehensive study, providing an overview of the known medieval and early modern urban hospitals, was published by Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi in 2007,³ pioneering and bringing major contributions to the theme of Transylvanian hospitals. Under her supervision, a team of researchers have published recently the account

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¹ Bronislaw Geremek, *Poverty. A History*, Oxford, 1997, with the definition of concepts and the long-term perspective of the European ideas and attitudes concerning poverty.

² Certain publications are now so obscure to the point of not circulating in literature: Gustav Seivert, *Aus dem Archive. Das Register der Erberen Hans-Mossich Spital Masters yn der Hermanstath auff Entphang wnd Auszgeben des Spitals des Jars 1528*, in “Transsilvania. Monatsschrift für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde, Literatur und Landeskultur,” 3, 1863, pp. 175–180; Frederic Roth Kepp, *O socoteală a spitalului sibian din anii 1537 și 1538*, Cluj, 1934.

³ Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Transylvanian Hospitals in the Early Modern Age*, in “Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung,” 115, 2007, pp. 290–311.

books of two hospitals in Cluj, valuable sources for the social history of the town.⁴ The same author dedicated a monograph to the hospital (almshouse) of the Holy Spirit in Cluj, which functioned between the end of the fifteenth century and the second half of the seventeenth century.⁵

In 2010, a special issue of “Historia Urbana” compiled studies dedicated to social assistance in towns over the centuries, where contributions from various parts of nowadays Romania and from different periods offer a good insight into the diversity of solutions and policies over time. For the centuries of interest here, the articles of Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi, Júlia Derzsi, Lidia Gross, Ágnes Mihály and Petre Munteanu Beşliu cover significant aspects on urban healthcare provisions.⁶ The last author published the result of the archaeological investigations carried out at the church of the medieval hospital in Sibiu, offering a synopsis of the history of this institution, first in 2008, then in an extended discussion in 2012.⁷

Of late, Andrea Fara has provided an extensive overview of the primary sources related to Transylvanian medieval urban hospitals and poor relief, integrating them into the larger framework of similar institutional setups in other Western medieval states.⁸ Confraternities and guilds had similar roles in poverty relief; recently studied by Carmen Florea⁹ and Lidia Gross,¹⁰ these associations took on the task of caring for their members struck by illness or adverse life circumstances.

While the institutional history of the hospitals has received attention lately, there are aspects of medieval poor relief that are not discussed in depth in secondary literature, especially concerning the role of the mendicant orders in the local social

⁴ *A Szentlélek ispotály számadáskönyvei. 1601–1650*, ed. by Tűnde Márton, Ágnes Mihály, Ágnes Flóra, Budapest, 2006; *A Szent Erzsébet ispotály számadáskönyvei, 1601–1650*, ed. by Ágnes Flóra, Tűnde Mária Márton, Ágnes Mihály, Budapest, 2010.

⁵ Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Egy elfeledett intézmény. A kolozsvári Szentlélek-ispotály kora újkori története*, Budapest, 2012, p. 8.

⁶ Eadem, *Asistența socială și orașele din Transilvania epocii Principatului*, in “Historia Urbana,” XVIII, 2010, pp. 5–16; Júlia Derzsi, *Organizarea întreprinderilor caritabile în Sibiu în deceniile de după Reformă*, *ibidem*, pp. 63–76; Lidia Gross, *Exercițiul carității în viața confreriilor medievale din Transilvania (secolele XIV–XVI)*, *ibidem*, pp. 77–90; Ágnes Mihály, *Bunurile, gospodăria și administrarea așezămintelor ospitaliere din Cluj (secolul al XVII-lea)*, *ibidem*, pp. 141–148; Petre Munteanu Beşliu, *Evoluția clădirii bisericii azilului și a spitalului medieval (postmedieval) din Sibiu*, *ibidem*, pp. 157–168.

⁷ Petre Munteanu Beşliu, *Spitalul medieval din Sibiu*, Sibiu, 2008, pp. 10–12; idem, *Hermannstädter Spital und Spitalskirche, 13.–18. Jh. / Spitalul și biserica spitalului din Sibiu, secolele XIII–XVIII*, Sibiu, 2012.

⁸ Andrea Fara, *Fonti e documenti per lo studio delle strutture assistenziali e ospedaliere nella Transilvania medievale (XIV–XVI sec.): il caso dell’Ordine di Santo Spirito*, in *Memoria dell’assistenza. Istituzioni e fonti ospedaliere in Italia e in Europa*, ed. by Gemma Teresa Colesanti, Salvatore Marino, Pisa, 2019, pp. 305–351.

⁹ Carmen Florea, *Exersarea carității în Clujul medieval*, in *Cluj/Kolozsvár/Klausenburg 700. Vároštörténeti tanulmányok / Studii de istorie urbană*, ed. Mária Lupescu Makó et al., Cluj, 2018, p. 271.

¹⁰ Lidia Gross, *Bresle și confrerii sau despre pietatea urbană în Transilvania medievală (secolele XIV–XVI)*, Cluj-Napoca, 2014, p. 197.

assistance networks.¹¹ Little is mentioned, either in the sources or in the specialist literature, of how their banishment from all Transylvanian towns that embraced the Reformation affected the provisions of charity for the poor. We know that during the Middle Ages testamentary donations were channelled towards the mendicants as well,¹² therefore their disappearance from the urban landscape must have had an impact on the charitable activity of individuals.

Thus, charity and social assistance in the medieval and early modern periods seem to be two parallel strands of scholarship as far as Transylvania is concerned, albeit they have a strong connection and a significant amount of overlapping documentation. The methods and the questions asked are naturally guided by the sources, which, as all authors mentioned here, are scarce and not varied enough; however, a more integrated approach would offer a better image of urban societies in Transylvania.

WELFARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AS AN URBAN AFFAIR

The network of institutions providing social assistance in Transylvania was established in the Middle Ages. Urban hospitals as refuge for the sick and elderly had been part of the social and institutional fabric of towns early on after their founding, at the same time as similar institutions were set up all over the medieval Hungarian Kingdom.¹³ Rűsz-Fogarasi has shown that, while medieval hospitals are relatively well documented, there is a scarcity of known (published or identified in archives) sources for the early modern period for most, especially smaller towns.¹⁴ Nevertheless, social assistance and poor relief are not confined to the study of hospitals. In this study I want to address several questions that have escaped the attention of previous scholars. My focus is on what was considered admissible for public assistance and whether such policies were reflected in the political discourse. Can we even identify a political and religious discourse on poverty and welfare in early modern Transylvania? To this end, I examine town statutes, political and religious ordinances from the sixteenth century. I am thus interested in governance,

¹¹ For the pre-Reformation history of the mendicant orders in Transylvanian towns see Carmen Florea, *The Third Path: Charity and Devotion in Late Medieval Transylvanian Towns*, in *Communities of Devotion. Religious Orders and Society in East Central Europe, 1450–1800*, ed. by Maria Crăciun, Elaine Fulton, Abingdon, 2016, pp. 91–120; Măria Lupescu Makó, *Ordinele mendicante în Transilvania în pragul Reformei. Exemplul mănăstirii dominicane din Cluj*, in *Cluj/Kolozsvár/Klausenburg 700*, ed. Măria Lupescu Makó et al., pp. 287–295; Mihaela Sanda Salontai, *Așezămintele monastice ale ordinelor cerșetore din Cluj și Sibiu la sfârșitul Evului Mediu*, *ibidem*, pp. 279–286.

¹² Carmen Florea, *Exersarea carității în Clujul medieval*, pp. 274–275; eadem, *Beyond the Late Medieval Economy of Salvation: The Material Running of the Transylvanian Mendicant Convents*, in “Hereditas Monasteriorum,” 3, 2013, pp. 104–105; Măria Lupescu Makó, *Poverty or Not? Economic Aspects of the Mendicant Friaries in Medieval Transylvania*, *ibidem*, pp. 111–133.

¹³ Katalin Szende, Judit Majorossy, *Hospitals in Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*, in *Europäisches Spitalwesen. Institutionelle Fürsorge in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. by Martin Scheutz, Andrea Sommerlechner, Herwig Weigl, Alfred Stefan Weiss, Vienna, 2008, pp. 409–454.

¹⁴ E. Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Transylvanian Hospitals*, pp. 292–293.

in political action towards poor relief and aid. Considering the availability of sources, I will inherently focus on the major urban centres: Cluj, Sibiu and Braşov.

These urban centres had the status of royal towns, thereby enjoying great autonomy in electing their council and collecting taxes, while their citizens were allowed ownership and inheritance of property in town. Furthermore, they sent their own representatives to the sessions of the Transylvanian Diet.¹⁵ The mentioned towns were also the most populous, in a region that was overwhelmingly rural and sparsely populated: Braşov had around 10,000 inhabitants in the sixteenth century, while Sibiu around 5,500–6,000.¹⁶ Estimates for Cluj are between the two figures, at 7,500–8,000 inhabitants at the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁷ The two Saxon towns on the southern border of Transylvania, Braşov and Sibiu, were important commercial centres for the trade with the Ottoman Empire, connecting it to East-Central Europe along trade routes established in the fourteenth century.¹⁸ Political institutions had been put in place, and a yearly elected council was in charge of towns.¹⁹ In Sibiu, the head of the magistrates was a burgomaster (*magister civium*, *Bürgermeister*), in Braşov there was a judge, while in Cluj there were two judges at the head of the political leadership, elected from the Hungarian and the German communities, respectively.²⁰ At the end of the fifteenth century, in many Transylvanian towns, outer councils of a hundred men were created, as a counterbalance to the small councils of twelve members.²¹ Political participation was open to all adult married men who owned property in town, and elections were well-established mechanisms for securing the balance of power between the small and the great councils as well as for ensuring an even representation of all guilds in the magistracy.²² The autonomy of towns to issue internal legislation was enhanced by the period of geopolitical and religious re-alignment that followed the disintegration of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom after 1526.²³

¹⁵ Rolf Kutschera, *Landtag und Gubernium in Siebenbürgen 1688–1869*, Cologne, 1988, p. 34.

¹⁶ István Draskóczy, *Az erdélyi Szászföld demográfiai helyzete a 16. század elején*, in “Erdélyi Múzeum,” LXI, 1999, nos. 1–2, p. 25.

¹⁷ Elek Csetri, *Kolozsvár népessége a középkortól a jelenkorig*, in *Kolozsvár 1000 éve*, ed. by Tibor Kálmán Dáné, Ákos Egyed, Gábor Sipos, Rudolf Wolf, Cluj, 2001, p. 9.

¹⁸ Zsigmond Pál Pach, *Levantine Trade Routes to Hungary 15th–17th Centuries*, in “Acta Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae,” 33, 1987, no. 1, pp. 57–65; Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiu-Hermannstadt. Oriental Trade in Sixteenth Century Transylvania*, Cologne, 2007, pp. 67–69.

¹⁹ For a detailed analysis of urban governance in Cluj and Sibiu see the excellent monograph by Ágnes Flóra, *The Matter of Honour. The Leading Urban Elite in Sixteenth Century Transylvania*, Turnhout, 2019.

²⁰ Georg Eduard Müller, *Stühle und Districke als Unterteilungen der siebenbürgisch-deutschen Nationsuniversität, 1141–1876*, reprint, Cologne, 1985, pp. 31–35; Maja Philippi, *Die Bürger von Kronstadt im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*, Cologne, 1986, pp. 113–115.

²¹ G.E. Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

²² Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiul în veacul al XVI-lea. Rânduirea unui oraş transilvănean*, Bucharest, 2018, p. 35.

²³ *A Divided Hungary in Europe: Exchanges, Network, and Representations, 1541–1699*, vol. I, ed. by Gábor Almási *et al.*, Newcastle, 2014, pp. ix–xii.

The care for the poor and the needy was first and foremost a Christian duty, that remained thus after the Reformation.²⁴ Medieval hospitals had flourished under the patronage of the Catholic Church, but social assistance reached beyond healthcare and providing for the elderly. Town councils had been keen on being involved in the supervision of charitable institutions, hospitals and leper houses.²⁵ Hospitals were also supported with donations from the inmates, bequests, management of assets and property income,²⁶ thus political control over their administration had important economic interests as well.

By the late Middle Ages, town councils took on the role of the fathers of the city, therefore the duty of care for the vulnerable became a key component of their symbolic power and legitimised their authority. Across Western and Central Europe, this process of self-legitimation was underway in the fifteenth century, with the crystallization of town autonomy and the reception of humanist ideas.²⁷ Similar developments can be detected in Transylvanian towns. For instance, the oath written in the *Codex Altemberger* (1481), that was sworn by the Sibiu council members, at the beginning of their annual term, included a clause regarding the less fortunate: “I swear to God [...] to do right by the poor and the rich upon my judgement, and not to expect friendship, profit or gifts, and to take into my care the widows and the orphans and I will defend them in their rights [...]”²⁸

A similar oath is mentioned in the town protocols of Bistrița at the beginning of the sixteenth century, where the new council members swore to “stand by the poor as by the rich, in their rights, to take care of widows and orphans in their misery.”²⁹

In the first decades of the sixteenth century, significant steps were taken in many Transylvanian towns towards the formalised acts of governance: town councils began to keep their own protocol books (*libri civitatis*, *Stadtbücher*).³⁰ I interpret

²⁴ Ole Peter Grell, *The Protestant Imperative of Christian Care and Neighbourly Love, in Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe, 1500–1700*, ed. by Ole Peter Grell, Andrew Cunningham, London, 1997, pp. 42–63, showing that the Catholic and Protestant attitudes towards the poor were fundamentally similar. Also, Natalie Zemon Davis, *Poor Relief, Humanism and Heresy: The Case of Lyon*, in “Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History,” 5, 1998, p. 219.

²⁵ E. Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Transylvanian Hospitals*, p. 296.

²⁶ J. Derzsi, *Organizarea ıntreprinderilor caritabile*, pp. 67–68.

²⁷ Eberhard Isenmann, *Ratsliteratur und städtische Ratsordnungen des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit. Soziologie des Rats – Amt und Willensbildung – Politische Kultur*, in *Stadt und Recht im Mittelalter – La ville et le droit au Moyen  ge*, ed. by Pierre Monet, Otto Gerhard Oexle, G ttingen, 2003, p. 219.

²⁸ Konrad G ndisch, *Das Patriziat siebenb rgischer St dte im Mittelalter*, Cologne, 1993, pp. 84–85.

²⁹ Otto Dahinten, *Geschichte der Stadt Bistritz in Siebenb rgen*, Cologne, 1988, p. 384.

³⁰ A few examples: *Torda v ros tan csi jegyz k nyvei (1603–1678)*, ed. by Ruldof Wolf, Cluj, 1993; *Gyulafeh rv r v rosk nyve (1588–1674). Gyulafeh rv r v ros torv nykez si jegyz k nyvei (1603–1616)*, ed. by Andr s Kov cs, Cluj, 1998; *Hermannstadt und Siebenb rgen. Die Protokolle des Hermannst dter Rates und der S chsischen Nationsuniversit t (1391–1705)*, ed. by K the Hienz, Bernd Heigl, Thomas  indilariu, Sibiu, 2007, digital edition.

this development as an increased self-awareness of the town council, of their role as legitimate authority (*Obrigkeit*) over the community of obeying (*gehorsam*) citizens.³¹ The first extant town protocol book of Sibiu and the Saxon University, begun in 1521, holds a surprising piece of legislation, applicable to all Saxon communities. In December 1525, the congregation of the Saxon delegates decreed that pious donations, intended for the salvation of the soul, to churches and monasteries be eradicated in favour of legating goods to the immediate family and relatives, or, when the testator had no relations, the citizens be offered the right to purchase or redeem the value of the inheritance.³² To date I found no evidence that this statute was observed, and that donations to religious institutions ceased. My interpretation is that it is an exceedingly early sign that the anti-Catholic movement had followers at the highest echelons of the Saxon officials, especially in Sibiu. The budding movement of the Reformation in Sibiu and the Saxon Land was, however, stopped short by the events of the following year, bringing down the political establishment of the Hungarian Kingdom and causing upheaval.³³ Religious change was taken up a few years later in Braşov.

THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE ERA OF THE REFORMATION

The Protestant Reformation, which swept across Transylvania beginning with the 1520s, enhanced the humanist ideas of a pious and paternal town council and provided the political magistracy not only with the legitimation tools but also with a blueprint for action in certain respects. To support this argument, I have examined the theological writings that served as basis for the religious renewal. For the Saxons, after veering away from the Catholic Church and trying to find a religious expression that suited their needs within the composite setting of Transylvania, the Church Ordinance composed by the Braşov reformer Johannes Honterus in 1547 (*Reformatio ecclesiarum Saxonicarum in Transylvania/Kirchenordnung aller Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*) offered a solid foundation for the needs of each community but also for the entire 'nation'.³⁴

³¹ See more on this argument in Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, 'Policey' und 'Obrigkeit': *The Ideology of Political Power in Sixteenth-Century Sibiu (Hermannstadt)*, in *Reform and Renewal in Medieval East and Central Europe: Politics, Law and Society*, ed. by Alexandru Simon, Éva B. Halász, Suzana Miljan, Cluj-Napoca, Zagreb, London, 2019, pp. 643–663.

³² "zu urkandt in das Stadbuch lassen einschreiben" ... *Die ältesten Protokolle von Hermannstadt und der sächsischen Nationsuniversität (1522–1565)*, ed. by Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, Sibiu, 2016, pp. 47–48.

³³ The Mohács disaster of August 1526 altered the previous setup in Transylvania as well, and the ensuing political struggle for the Hungarian crown eventually put Sibiu under siege from John Szápolya, thus impeding the town from being a centre for the Reformation. Harald Roth, *Hermannstadt. Kleine Geschichte einer Stadt in Siebenbürgen*, Cologne, 2006, p. 65.

³⁴ See Edit Szegedi's recent contribution to his biography and activity in Luka Ilić, Michael S. Springer, Edit Szegedi, *Protestant Reformers: Johannes Honterus, Primus Truber, and Johannes a Lasco*, in *A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe*, ed. by Howard Louthan, Graeme Murdock, Leiden, 2015, pp. 145–152.

In this text, we find one of the few instances where a definition of the poor, people in need of assistance, is provided. In one section of the ordinance, Honterus was concerned whether ill people could receive the sacraments; for people who were too weak to attend mass, he advised that communion be taken to them and that each person be involved in the service as much as their condition allows (“wo man nit thun kan, wie man thun sol, ists doch gwisser, das man thu, wie viel man vermag”).³⁵ A different section deals with the “care of the poor” (*De cura pauperum/Ordnung, die armen zu erhalten*), where Honterus pleaded for the communal care of all deprived individuals: “It is not proper for our confession to follow the old customs to be cruel towards sick, old or impoverished people, who lie all over the street in cold and rain, seeking alms and help with their pitiful wailing. But, similarly to the usual treatment of other poor in the hospitals, these too should be cared for by the community, in towns, so that they receive proper food and clothing.”³⁶

Thus, the ordinance spells out the duty of care to be taken on by the civic body and the town government, with the creation of a dedicated office that would manage and distribute the alms and the charitable bequests in testaments. In order to establish this work of mercy (*opus pietatis/Barmherzigkeit*), Honterus also suggested assigning members of the small and great councils to collect donations in church on Sundays and on every other occasion, and distribute the alms every week, to alleviate the penury of the poor (“inopia illorum ... succurant”). Furthermore, Honterus voiced his disdain for the old forms of charity and legations through last will, echoing the decision of the Saxon University from 1525: “Should such donations and alms of people not be enough, because of scarcity, it is possible to transfer goods given for useless purposes [...] The incomes of the old brotherhoods and unholy foundations, or the foolish donations made through testaments and the legations of the monasteries should be turned for the upkeep of the poor and the pupils.”³⁷

The exact meaning of “foolish donations” is not explained in the final form of the Church Ordinance of the Transylvanian Saxons, but in its first version, the one printed in 1543 for the town of Braşov and the dependant Burzenland, Honterus listed these as money spent “for candles lit at midday and other similar things.”³⁸ Honterus advised for a judicial use of donations that supported charity outside the former channels of the Catholic institutions, thus reshaping the relationship between being a Christian and being a citizen, that is an individual actively involved with all the issues of the community. Furthermore, he advised that measures for sustenance should

³⁵ *Die evangelische Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, vol. XXIV, *Siebenbürgen. Das Fürstentum Siebenbürgen. Das Rechtsgebiet und die Kirche der Siebenbürger Sachsen*, ed. by Martin Armgart, Tübingen, 2012, p. 234. A newer edition of the original Church ordinance, that Honterus printed only for his home town (1543): *Reformatio Ecclesiae Coronensis ac totius Barcensis Provinciae*, ed. by Bernhard Heigl, Thomas Şindilariu, Braşov, 2017, p. 56.

³⁶ *Die evangelische Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Martin Armgart, vol. XXIV, p. 238.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

³⁸ *Reformatio Ecclesiae Coronensis*, ed. by Bernhard Heigl, Thomas Şindilariu, p. 56.

be taken locally, in order to keep people from moving from one place to another, converging and becoming a heavy burden for some places.³⁹ This is the closest that we come to a definition of vagrants, of travelling poor in a Transylvanian setting.

A Cluj town statute of 1557 legitimizes the political magistrate as the custodian of the Gospels and of the peace, and creates the discourse of the Christian council: "... first of all, those in the office of the magistrate should be diligent servants and guardians of the ten commandments and of the true word of Jesus Christ ... so that the unfortunate people as well as the laws of the town should be united together by divine and human laws, to live a peaceful and tranquil life in a good civil society."⁴⁰

With the Reformation, town councils established themselves more strongly as the legitimate authority over their citizens; their duty to govern for the common good was divinely preordained, and it was imbued with piety.

POLITICAL ACTION AND GOVERNANCE TOWARDS POOR RELIEF AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

For the Saxons in Transylvania, this connection is clearly expressed in their active policy towards creating their own "national" Church. Political magistrates and ecclesiastical authorities worked for the same goal; their relationship was settled in 1559, when a joint decision was taken that "temporal authority of the German nation together with the churchmen should be as one."⁴¹ In his Church Ordinance, Johannes Honterus created a very pragmatic set of responses to issues related to poor relief. He had originally written this text for his native town of Braşov, but after positive feedback from Wittenberg, the University of Saxons adopted the ordinance in 1550.⁴² In Braşov, the first "poor box" (*Armenkasten*) was created in 1545, and its accounts were supervised by the town council. The charitable foundations had various sources of income: land, mills, orchards, donations and so on.⁴³ Júlia Derzsi has explained on the example of Sibiu that the existent relief network, consisting of hospitals and a leper house, was extended with the creation of the alms box and the officers of charity (*domini elemosinarii*).⁴⁴ While there is no formal statute for their foundation, the first account books for both institutions started after the publication of Honterus's Church Ordinance.⁴⁵ We can thus presume that the town council of

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ *Corpus statutorum Hungariae municipalium*, vol. I, Budapest, 1885, p. 181: "in primis in magistratu et legitima functione officii ipsorum decalogii et veri verbi Jesu Christi servatoris nostri ministerii que diligentes custodes et adiutores sint ... ut miserrima plebecula et respublica certis legibus cum divinis tum humanis coniuncta ac coadunata in bona societate civili quietam et tranquilam ducant et transigant vitam."

⁴¹ *Die evangelische Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Martin Armgart, p. 267.

⁴² *Schriften des Johannes Honterus, Valentin Wagner und Markus Fronius in deutscher Übersetzung*, ed. by Julius Groß, Braşov, 1927, p. 50; *Corpus statutorum*, vol. I, p. 522.

⁴³ J. Derzsi, *Organizarea întreprinderilor caritabile*, p. 71.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 72–74.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

Sibiu took heed of the prescribed actions and put them into practice, just as Braşov had done a few years previously. It is my argument that the stronger involvement of the town councils in the administration of the established institutions on the one hand, and the creation of a more streamlined distribution of alms on the other hand can be attributed to the guidelines set by Johannes Honterus.

The relief systems put in place by the Saxon towns in Transylvania are similar to other welfare and support schemes created in Protestant towns in the Holy Roman Empire, which followed the prescription of Martin Luther's *Leisnig Ordinance for a Common Chest* (*Leisniger Kastenordnung*) of 1523. However, authors state that poor relief was not a high priority issue for the urban political factors.⁴⁶ This fact seems to be valid for the Transylvanian case as well. Apart from the prescriptive text of the Church Ordinance of the Transylvanian Saxons, there is little normative effort discernible in the sixteenth century legislation concerning the poor.

In the town of Cluj, the politics of the Reformation were more complex and took longer to play out.⁴⁷ Here, in the sixteenth century there were three active hospitals, which disposed of their own assets, benefited from the support of Queen Izabella (1556–1559), and were under the supervision of the town council.⁴⁸ From the analysis of Enikő Rűsz-Fogarasi, an interesting aspect is revealed: the town council decided who received care in the town's hospitals.⁴⁹ Selective charity is a known phenomenon,⁵⁰ unfortunately we do not dispose of documentation on how the admissions took place, whether certain criteria were at play or arbitrary decisions were made. In Cluj, as opposed to the other Saxon towns, the actions and concerns of the council towards the beggars and vagrant poor are also better documented. A council decision of 1571 describes beggars as "people sleeping under the church," advising either for their accommodation in hospital or banishment from the town.⁵¹ A Cluj council decision of 1600 ordered a census of the poor, to find out "who deserves alms and who does not." The "deserving" were also eligible for a place in a hospital or for homecare.⁵²

⁴⁶ Alexander Wagner, *Rechtstheorie und Rechtsordnungen in Norm und Praxis der Armenfürsorge*, in *Norm und Praxis der Armenfürsorge in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. by Sebastian Schmidt, Stuttgart, 2004, p. 41.

⁴⁷ Mihály Balázs, *Tolerant Country – Misunderstood Law. Interpreting Sixteenth-Century Transylvanian Legislation Concerning Religion*, in "Hungarian Historical Review," 2, 2013, no. 1, p. 95; Edit Szegedi, *Klausenburg als antitrinitarische Stadt*, in "Konfluenzen. Jahrbuch der Abteilung Protestantische Theologie des Departements für Geschichte, Kulturerbe und Protestantische Theologie an der Lucian Blaga Universität Hermannstadt/Sibiu/Nagyszeben," 16–17, 2016–2017, pp. 117–123.

⁴⁸ E. Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Egy elfeledett intézmény*, p. 11.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 15, 125.

⁵⁰ Marjorie Keniston McIntosh, *Poor Relief in England, 1350–1600*, Cambridge, 2012, p. 16.

⁵¹ E. Rűsz-Fogarasi, *Egy elfeledett intézmény*, p. 54, note 199.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 54, note 202. The practice of identifying the poor in the neighbourhoods was also discussed by Anton Tatner, *Policeyliche Hausbeschreibungen als Massnahmen gegen Fremde Bettler/Innen in der Habsburger Monarchie*, in "PolicyWorkingPapers. Working Papers des Arbeitskreises Policy/Polizei in der Vormoderne," 13, 2007, pp. 2–3, http://www.univie.ac.at/policy-ak/pwp/pwp_13.pdf, accessed 12 November 2019.

Town councils dealt with short-term or conjunctural poverty,⁵³ when citizens were unable to pay their taxes. In Sibiu, after the great fire of 1556, nearly half of the homes had been destroyed, therefore people were exempt from paying the census. Similarly, Julia Derzsi has shown recently that the same measures were taken by the town council in 1570, when another fire engulfed certain streets in town. Houses damaged by fire were exempt for three years from paying the census tax.⁵⁴ In Cluj, the inhabitants also suffered fire damage several times during the sixteenth century, and the town council included this issue in their statutes. Thus, a statute of 1587 stipulated that: “On the matter of the people affected by fire (»égett emberek») it was decided that the tax collectors should help them out with 2 florins each, on the condition that they build new houses with it. Apart from this, the same people are exempt from paying the tax for three years.”

Of the few welfare-related decisions taken by the Transylvanian Diet, the three-year tax exemption was set as a fiscal relief measure in 1552 for the population paying the *dica*, the regular tax of the land.⁵⁵ In 1594, another decision of the Diet regarding the taxes offered exemption to “beggars” and soldiers; on the eve of the Thirteen Years War, the estates needed to maximise the collection of taxes to the treasury.⁵⁶ Otherwise, there is an evident lack of concern of the central legislature for the fate of the poor, as their care and support were, traditionally, relegated to the local communities.

In 1581, an entry in the town protocols of Sibiu is an illustrative example for how the city fathers were seen as providers of succour for their subjects. On 28 March of that year, a certain Hanns Kutscher approached the town council and declared that “because of constant illness, infirmity and other great deprivations, he [was] in deep poverty and need.” The entry is not finished, thus we cannot infer what help or assistance he was expecting.⁵⁷ The recent digitization of the medieval archives of Romania has brought to light other similar documents, such as the request of a Francz Brueden to the council and high officials of Sibiu, as his “beloved lords and fathers,” to offer him “help and support.”⁵⁸ These pleas for succour show that, towards the end of the sixteenth century, the town council had become the main provider of assistance for the needy.

⁵³ See the work of Paola Avallone, *Monti frumentari in the Kingdom of Naples (Seventeenth–Eighteenth Centuries)*, in this issue.

⁵⁴ Júlia Derzsi, *Incendiul de la Sibiu din 1570. Câteva lămuriri privitoare la data declanșării dezastrului și la amploarea sa*, in “Historia Urbana,” XXVI, 2018, p. 23.

⁵⁵ *Monumenta comitialia regni Transylvaniae. Erdélyi országgyűlési emlékek* (hereafter: EOE), ed. by Sándor Szilágyi, vol. I, Budapest, 1876, p. 548.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, vol. III, Budapest, 1877, p. 441.

⁵⁷ Direcția Județeană Sibiu a Arhivelor Naționale (hereafter: DJAN Sibiu), Magistratul orașului Sibiu, Inv. 211, Town Protocols, no. 2, p. 110: “Ist der Hanns Kutscher hermannstedtter für einem ersamen weisen radt erschinnen, hatt engecezeigt, das er stetes krankthumbs, verlammbus unnd anderes grosses mangels halben in grosses armutt und nott.”

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, Acte Fasciculate, series M, no. 169, fol. 1.

CARE FOR ORPHANS / *DE CURA PUPILLORUM*

Another form of social assistance in the Saxon towns was the juridical attention given to orphans. Johannes Honterus in his Church Ordinance of 1547 outlined for political magistrates the principles of assistance and supervision for keeping the order and justice in matters pertaining to testaments and inheritance of minors.

After the prescription for the poor, the next duty of care is towards the orphans, which God, in the Old Testament, had entrusted to the authorities, to be their protector and guide.⁵⁹

In several sections, Honterus instructs how this duty of care should be fulfilled: by keeping diligent records of the estates left to orphans, and, more importantly, by making sure that no transaction with the goods of a minor should be conducted without the approval of the authorities. This directive can be followed in the administrative practice of Sibiu: after 1548, numerous cases were brought to the attention of the council concerning property inherited by minors. In the last decades of the sixteenth century there was a visible increase in the requests for family members to obtain permission for selling the houses of children, who had no means to repair or upkeep real estate property until adulthood.⁶⁰ In Sibiu, this control over inheritance and sale of homes in the city was a great concern for the council: the statutes of 1589 and 1689, which are the most elaborate constitutions of the town, extol the crucial significance of observing the customs and the written laws in passing inheritance in town on the one hand, and instruct on keeping non-natives out of the inheritance chain.⁶¹ Thus, the ideas on the good order (“gute Policey”) and the care for orphans and their future merge in the political discourse and action in Sibiu.⁶²

Parentless children remained most often in the care of other family members, who could ask for retribution for their raising. There were situations, as mentioned above, where the extended family turned to the council for approval to sell the property inherited by orphans to release the cash necessary for their upbringing. There is also the case when the family decided to hold on to the orphans’ house but, in return, they requested a decreased tax on that property. Such was the case of the town priest of Sibiu, Christianus Lupinus, who addressed the town council on behalf of the orphaned children of his sister-in-law, asking for the tax on their inherited house to be reduced, since it stood empty. Moreover, he argued, his earnings did not stretch to the extent that he could pay the census on his own home and the children’s house as well.⁶³

⁵⁹ *Die evangelische Kirchenordnungen des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by Martin Armgart, p. 218.

⁶⁰ *Inventarul protocoalelor primăriei Sibiu, 1521–1700*, ed. by Gheorghe Duzinchevici, Evdochia Buta, Herta Gündisch, Bucharest, 1958, *passim*.

⁶¹ EOE, vol. I, p. 543.

⁶² M. Pakucs-Willcocks, ‘Policey’ und ‘Obrigkeit’, p. 657.

⁶³ DJAN Sibiu, Acte Fasciculate, series M, no. 169, fol. 44.

Another directive for the care of orphans in Honterus's Church Ordinance was the close supervision of estates left to children through probate inventories, drawn up by executors named by the city council. Beginning with the 1570s, such probate inventories (*Teilungbücher*) were started in Sibiu (1573), Braşov (1578), and Bistriţa (1573).⁶⁴ This practice precedes therefore the official sanctioning of the written laws of the Transylvanian Saxons, the *Eigenlandrecht*, which took place in 1583. Hence, there is a strong argument to be made in favour of the influence that Johannes Honterus's Church Ordinance had not only over the legitimization of town councils and divinely sanctioned authority, but also over their political action and governance.

In Cluj, the probate inventories are preserved from 1603, when the city council decided to create the institution of executors.⁶⁵ An interdiction for non-citizens to purchase houses in town had been in place since 1536; furthermore, the inheritance act of 1603 prescribed that houses, which were the main grounds for citizenship and burgher rights, could not come into the ownership of non-locals.⁶⁶

IN GUISE OF CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I dabbed into the underexplored territory of religious and political discourse over poverty, welfare, and social assistance in sixteenth-century Transylvania. In the rich literature on urban hospitals, there is hardly any theoretical framing of questions related to poverty, to the poor and the needy. Institutions such as hospitals and leper houses existed since early on in many Transylvanian towns, therefore the sixteenth-century town councils, emerged as the overarching political authorities that worked for the common good, had a base to rely on for their social issues. By examining town statutes of the major urban centres in Transylvania, it can be argued that the town of Cluj was more involved with legislating civic poor relief, taking measures in response to crises rather than following a programmatic text, such as the Saxon towns. The range of concerns in Cluj was also wider: the town council acted to alleviate begging and initiated a census of the poor, which were acts of governance unparalleled elsewhere in Transylvania.

In early modern Transylvania, the care for the poor was entirely relegated to the local community as a matter of fact; the Diet, as the central legislative body, was not concerned with issues of social assistance. Further research can reach more fruitful results by integrating existing scholarship into a more coherent analytical framework, where healthcare and social assistance in the medieval and early modern Transylvania are the subject of a more diverse palette of questions.

⁶⁴ Franz Zimmermann, *Das Archiv der Stadt Hermannstadt und der sächsischen Nation*, Sibiu, 1887, p. 48.

⁶⁵ *A kolozsvári osztóbírói intézmény és a kibocsátott osztálylevelek*, ed. by Gyöngy Kovács Kiss, Cluj, 2012, p. 7.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 20.

URBAN GOVERNANCE AND WELFARE IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY TRANSYLVANIA

Abstract

The article investigates the policies of urban councils towards welfare and social assistance in early modern Transylvania. By asking questions related to a coherent and systematic set of measures taken by town councils in this respect, I examine how the medieval charitable institutions, mostly hospitals, were viewed and integrated into their political vision by the urban governments after the Reformation. The *Church Ordinance of the Transylvanian Saxons* (1547) set out the duty of care for town councils, thus shaping the policies of civic magistrates in Sibiu and Braşov after the Reformation.

Keywords: welfare; social assistance; town councils; statutes; governance; poor; early modern Transylvania

CHARITÉ ET HONNEUR. LE FINACEMENT DES DOTS À NAPLES AU COURS DE L'ANCIEN RÉGIME*

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UNE CAPITALE DÉVOTE

Nous aimerions commencer notre récit par une brève citation extraite d'une *Chronique* de la fin du XVI^e siècle écrite par le jésuite Giovan Francesco Araldo et adressée aux supérieurs de la Compagnie pour rendre compte de l'activité de ses membres depuis leur installation à Naples en 1552¹. Ce rapport répondait à une exigence partagée par un grand nombre d'ordres réguliers qui transposaient dans un contexte religieux le devoir de légitimer sa famille dévouée selon le même besoin répandu dans la culture aristocratique, et surtout soutenue par des familles de la récente aristocratie implantée en milieu urbain, engagée à promouvoir l'historiographie d'anoblissement². Il s'agissait de valoriser leur propre histoire à travers la définition identitaire de leur présence active sur le territoire : un choix qui devenait stratégique pour les congrégations nouvellement fondées et attentives à la construction de leur enracinement et à leur représentation spirituelle et dévotionnelle³. En annexe,

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¹ La *Chronique* s'interrompt en 1596, suite au décès de l'auteur. Elle a été publiée sous la direction de Francesco Divenuto in *Napoli sacra del XVI secolo*, Naples, 1990. Une référence exhaustive sur l'histoire de Naples demeurent les volumes de Giuseppe Galasso, *Il Regno di Napoli*, 6 vols., Turin, 2008–2010.

² Voir, par exemple, Samuel Clark, *State and Status : The Rise of the State and Aristocratic Power in Western Europe*, Montreal, London, Buffalo, 1995, en particulier p. 208–360 ; Roberto Bizzocchi, *Genealogie incredibili. Scritti di storia nell'Europa moderna*, Bologne, 2009 ; Charles T. Lipp, *Noble Strategies in an Early Modern Small State. The Mahuet of Lorraine*, Rochester, 2011, p. 32–57 ; José Antonio Guillen Barrendero, *La edad de la nobleza : identidad nobiliaria en Castilla y Portugal (1556–1621)*, Madrid, 2012 ; idem, *Reyes de armas, blasones y discursos : algunas notas en torno a los conflictos sobre la nobleza y su definición en el Barroco*, dans « Atalanta », III, 2015, 1, p. 53–95.

³ Pour le thème de la personnalité institutionnelle et spirituelle des ordres religieux, qui a récemment intéressé les spécialistes, voir, par exemple, les numéros spéciaux de plusieurs revues dédiés à ces questions : « Dimensione e problemi della ricerca storica », I, 2005, *Identità religiose e identità nazionali in età moderna*, éd. par Marina Caffiero, Franco Motta, Sabina Pavone, p. 7–96 ; « Cheiron », 43–44, 2005, *Religione, conflittualità e cultura. Il clero regolare nell'Europa d'antico regime*, éd. par Massimo Carlo Giannini ; « Quaderni storici », 119, 2005, 2, *Ordini regolari*, éd. par Simona Feci, Angelo Torre ; Flavio Rurale, *Monaci, frati, chierici. Gli ordini religiosi in età moderna*, Rome, 2008. Excellentes suggestions méthodologiques dans certaines des contributions recueillies dans *Religious Orders and*

Araldo avait ajouté un répertoire des espaces religieux napolitains, *vademecum* utile pour s'orienter dans la réalité urbaine et ecclésiastique de la cité. C'était une habitude qui, en évoquant la tradition de la description des villes contaminée par des relations de voyage, allait bientôt être mise en place dans les milieux ecclésiastiques comme en témoigne, par exemple, la relation écrite peu après par un autre père de la Compagnie, Giovanni Battista Confalonieri, en marge de sa visite à Naples en 1616⁴.

Selon plusieurs études, à la fin du XVI^e siècle, la capitale du royaume devait compter plus de 300 000 habitants, sûrement la cité la plus importante parmi celles de la péninsule italienne et, en Europe, la deuxième après Paris. Mais l'une de ses spécificités était que, à l'époque moderne, elle était habitée par un très grand nombre d'ecclésiastiques, ce qui ne se justifiait ni par les exigences pastorales, ni par le besoin de sacré bien répandu dans la population méridionale.

En effet, le jésuite enregistrait, outre les nombreuses chapelles, vingt-huit paroisses, soixante-dix églises administrées par des prêtres séculiers, soixante-seize églises à la charge des ordres réguliers, vingt-sept couvents de « sœurs vierges – dit-il –, dont le nombre s'élève à plus de trois mille et qui obéissent à différentes règles ..., leur dévotion et leur vie exemplaire étant bénéfique et profitable non seulement à la ville, mais également à tout le royaume [... plus] sept conservatoires de demoiselles et d'autres dames, dont le nombre passe à trois mille cinq cents et qui, pour conserver leur pudicité, sont accueillies dans ces lieux ; une grande partie d'entre elles se marient ensuite grâce aux aumônes de ces mêmes lieux et des autres qui entrent au couvent pour servir toujours le Seigneur »⁵.

Il y aurait sans doute beaucoup à dire sur ces chiffres, qui changèrent au cours du siècle suivant, quand la construction de bâtiments conventuels aurait transformé l'aspect de la ville. Cependant, par ces indications, il ressort quelques lignes autour desquelles nous aimerions articuler notre étude, c'est-à-dire l'augmentation de la valeur identitaire attribuée à la présence religieuse féminine dans les centres urbains et dans la culture sociale post-tridentine, mais également l'ancrage dans l'organisation de l'aide sociale des destins des femmes. Tout cela entre dans un discours public

Religious Identity Formation ca. 1420–1620. Discourses and Strategies of Observance and Pastoral Engagement, éd. par Bert Roest, Johanneke Uphoff, Leiden, Boston, 2016.

⁴ Le manuscrit inédit qui décrit Naples, ses édifices religieux et leurs patrimoines est conservé dans l'Archivio Segreto Vaticano ; en cours de publication : *Napoli 1616. Architettura, monasteri e collezioni secondo il diario di viaggio di Monsignor Giovanni Battista Confalonieri (1561–1648)*, éd. par Sabina de Cavi, Naples. À propos de Confalonieri, voir *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Rome, édition en ligne : www.treccani.it, *sub voce*.

⁵ Citation tirée du *Repertorio delle fabbriche religiose napoletane nella cronaca del gesuita Giovan Francesco Araldo*, d'après F. Divenuto, *op. cit.*, p. 89–98 (« 76 Chiese servite da monaci, frati e preti regolari et orfanelli il numero dei quali ascende à più di 3^m ... più 27 monasterij di donne monache vergini il numero delle quali ascende a più di 3^m et si reggono sotto diverse regole ... la devozione et buona vita delle quali è molto giovevole et profittevole non solo alla città ma anco al Regno tutto ... 7 conservatori di donzelle et d'altre donne il numero delle quali passa a 3.500 le quali per conservar la loro pudicità sono ricevute in essi luoghi delle quali poi gran parte se ne maritano con limosine dell'istessi luoghi et l'altre monacandose di continuo servono al Signore. »).

dans lequel les politiques familiales et l'engagement pour financer et gérer les réseaux d'assistance représentaient les deux côtés de la même médaille. Après avoir analysé certaines initiatives que nous pourrions qualifier de bienfaisance, mais qui constituaient en réalité des programmes de tutelle corporatiste et de définition des appartenances sociales et politiques, nous essayerons de définir les stratégies mises en place pour garantir aux femmes l'accès à la vie conventuelle dans une logique de reconnaissance réciproque et de soin aux besoins définis par les identités d'état, de nationalité ou de milieux professionnels.

FEMMES AUX MARGES

À la pratique, généralisée dès le Moyen Âge, d'assurer aux groupes marginaux et « en danger » de l'univers féminin des retraites protégées s'ajoutait, à l'époque moderne, la fondation des lieux d'accueil pour les nobles dépourvus qui ne pouvaient plus financer les vœux des dames des maisons aristocratiques selon une logique de distinction sociale, mais aussi pour les veuves ou les orphelins liés à des groupes 'nationaux' ou bien à des catégories professionnelles.

Les couvents ont été l'un des pivots de la vie de toutes les communautés modernes. Ils ont surtout été étudiés comme des lieux où se développait la vie sociale et politique, mais également comme l'un des supports essentiels des dynamiques économiques, ou bien comme des centres de propagation culturelle. Ceux-ci, tout en conservant un rapport osmotique avec les milieux dans lesquels ils étaient intégrés, représentent une composante indispensable à la compréhension de l'histoire de l'Europe aux XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles. Dans ce cadre, la force de pénétration des directives tridentines peut sans doute être considérée comme un élément de base non seulement d'un sentiment commun, mais aussi de l'intégration progressive et plus profonde du comportement et de la mentalité qui ont marqué la construction de l'espace social de l'identité occidentale⁶.

Bien qu'un rôle de premier plan ait été, à juste titre, reconnu aux ordres religieux, le problème du recrutement et de la mince frontière entre les groupes sociaux et les structures monastiques doit également être abordé en étroite corrélation avec l'évolution des idéologies de classe qui dominaient. À ce titre, la question des institutions féminines en représente l'une des composantes essentielles et l'« entrée au couvent » constitue une pièce indispensable dans la planification des politiques

⁶ En ce qui concerne les couvents de femmes en Italie, voir, entre autres, *Donne e religione a Napoli. Secoli XVI-XVIII*, éd. par Giuseppe Galasso, Adriana Valerio, Milan, 2001 ; *I monasteri femminili come centri di cultura fra Rinascimento e Barocco*, éd. par Gianna Pomata, Gabriella Zarri, Rome, 2005. Pour Naples, voir Elisa Novi Chavarria, *Monache e gentildonne. Un labile confine. Poteri politici e identità religiose nei monasteri napoletani. Secoli XVI-XVII*, Milan, 2001. Pour la dimension unitaire de la mentalité catholique, qui dépasse l'historiographie de la discipline, voir Vittoria Fiorelli, *I sentieri dell'inquisitore. Sant'Uffizio, periferie ecclesiastiche e disciplinamento devozionale (1615-1678)*, Naples, 2009.

familiales des élites, ainsi qu'une action fondamentale de la mise en ordre de la discipline urbaine et de la protection sociale⁷.

C'est la raison pour laquelle, dans le cadre de cette recherche, nous avons choisi de ne pas nous concentrer sur les aspects directement liés à la sphère ecclésiastique, mais plutôt d'analyser l'incidence, dans les dynamiques publiques et privées, de la politique dotale des élites napolitaines, de la solidarité et de l'assistance. Pour ce faire, nous avons décidé d'utiliser la documentation de certaines institutions chargées de la charité, des œuvres et monts-de-piété, destinées à répondre aux besoins de certaines couches sociales par la thésaurisation des ressources personnelles provenant des héritages testamentaires ou bien par l'épargne résultant des contributions associatives⁸.

Sans nous attarder sur les questions du capital et des rentes, situées entre la charité et les activités financières, nous avons privilégié le côté lié principalement à la diffusion des pratiques d'affiliation de l'aristocratie et nous avons essayé d'en dégager les formes de garantie programmées pour permettre l'accès à la vie religieuse. Nous les avons mises en relation avec la position sociale et politique de ceux qui fournissaient le soutien financier avec les motivations religieuses ou idéologiques exprimées dans certains Statuts promulgués à Naples, une ville où l'État, encore au XVII^e siècle, ne prenait absolument pas en charge les besoins et les problèmes sociaux alarmants, entièrement laissés à l'initiative privée⁹. Ce thème n'est pas étranger à l'historiographie moderniste, qui l'a considéré comme faisant partie de ce qu'on a appelé un « jeu d'équipe des lignages » destiné à rééquilibrer leur système successoral et à éviter le risque latent de leur extinction dans la perspective de soigner l'image de leur maison.

Plusieurs chercheurs se sont occupés des monts-de-piété familiaux ou de ces fonds nés de l'association des lignages qui partageaient le souci de protéger, outre le patrimoine, l'éclat et le crédit de leur descendance. En effet, dans la Naples espagnole, l'exacerbation progressive de la primogéniture, qui avait eu pour conséquence le franchissement du réseau clanique horizontal en faveur d'un système de descendance masculine vertical, avait placé au centre de la politique parentale aristocratique le problème de l'avenir et du placement de l'excédent démographique féminin, problème aggravé par une constante crise de liquidités et par une augmentation incontrôlée des niveaux des dots. La tendance au renfermement corporatiste

⁷ Sur la politique dotale dans le royaume de Naples : Maria Antonietta Visceglia, *Il bisogno di eternità. I comportamenti aristocratici a Napoli in età moderna*, Naples, 1988.

⁸ Voir à ce propos Gérard Delille, *Un esempio di assistenza privata : i monti di maritaggio nel Regno di Napoli*, dans *Timore e carità. I poveri nell'Italia moderna*, éd. par Giorgio Politi, Mario Rosa, Franco Della Peruta, Cremona, 1982, p. 275–282, et les essais recueillis dans *Prestare ai poveri. Il credito su pegno e i monti di pietà in area mediterranea (secoli XV–XIX)*, éd. par Paola Avallone, Naples, 2007.

⁹ Giovanni Muto, *Forme e contenuti economici dell'assistenza nel Mezzogiorno moderno : il caso di Napoli*, dans *Timore e carità*, éd. par Giorgio Politi, Mario Rosa, Franco Della Peruta, p. 237–258 ; Daniele Casanova, *Le porte per il Paradiso. Le confraternite napoletane in età moderna*, Naples, 2016.

du patriciat urbain et la résistance au ralliement aux Sièges (*Seggi*) de la ville des familles du royaume de Naples (*regnicole*) et des classes émergentes qui avaient participé au processus de commercialisation des fiefs ne furent pas sans conséquence sur la population féminine des cloîtres, qui absorbait, dans l'enceinte des couvents, les dynamiques citadines du pouvoir. La présence laïque et nobiliaire massive dans la gestion de l'Église napolitaine constituait, en effet, un pilier fondamental du processus de négociation entre les vice-rois et les élites locales, processus qui caractérisait ce qu'on a appelé la *via napoletana*, menant à l'État moderne¹⁰.

MONTES ET CHARITÉ URBAINE

Les sources consultées se réfèrent aux activités des établissements de bienfaisance appelés *monts (monti)*¹¹. Même si elles sont partielles à la suite d'un grand rassemblement de sources, il n'est pas difficile de relever dans les *Capitolazioni* (*Capitulations*) d'origine et dans leur mise à jour la continuité de l'intervention des monts pour protéger les femmes à travers le finacement de la dot. Nous nous appuyons une fois de plus sur les dires du père Araldo et notamment sur la section consacrée aux *opere pie* (œuvres pieuses), où nous trouvons une longue liste du « grand nombre de dots faites à Naples pour de pauvres donzelles dans différentes églises et lieux grâce aux aumônes des Napolitains chaque année [...], lesquels s'élèvent à 647. Et les dots rapportent chaque année 12 436 ducats. »¹²

Si les statuts évoquaient toujours le finacement des « mariages », il s'agissait souvent d'un soutien générique apporté aux dots féminines censées leur faciliter l'entrée au monastère ou subventionner leur vie familiale. Parmi les monts nobiliaires créés entre la fin du XVI^e et le début du XVII^e siècle, le choix de privilégier l'entrée au couvent répondait à ce que nous pourrions qualifier de *culture sociale*, pratique renforcée par l'évaluation de la viabilité économique liée à la moindre incidence des coûts engagés pour la profession de foi. Chaque année, pendant toute leur vie, les nonnes recevaient une rente, mais elles devaient renoncer à tous les droits de succession. L'adhésion même à ces associations d'aide était considérée comme faisant partie du patrimoine familial, destiné à amortir la dotation de la descendance féminine¹³. La documentation dont nous disposons nous permet de suivre cette activité

¹⁰ Sur ces thèmes, voir encore G. Galasso, *Il Regno di Napoli*, en particulier le vol. VI, *Società e cultura nel Mezzogiorno moderno*, p. 729–856. Sur la féodalité à l'époque moderne, voir Baroni e vassalli. *Storie moderne*, éd. par Elisa Novi Chavarría, Vittoria Fiorelli, Milan, 2011.

¹¹ Une grande quantité de documents, en particulier les capitulations, se conserve à l'Archivio di Stato, Naples (ci-après : ASNa), Cappellano maggiore, Statuti delle congregazioni laicali.

¹² F. Divenuto, *op. cit.*, f^{os} 357r–358v (« gran numero de maritaggi che si fanno in Napoli di povere donzelle in diverse Chiese e luoghi con le limosine de Napolitani ogn'anno ... Li quali maritaggi ascendono al numero de 647. Et le doti importano ogn'anno 12 436 ducati. »).

¹³ Ainsi, par exemple, dans le statut du Grand-Mont-des-Mariages, dont nous allons parler plus loin, on lit « avoir à compter ces *monacaggi* et autres subventions entre les avantages qu'ils devaient recevoir » : *Capitoli dell'illustrissimo Monte Grande*, Naples, 1640, p. 16 (« dovendosi detti Monacaggi

d'assistance pendant de longues périodes. Cependant, nous avons affaire principalement à des dossiers judiciaires qui concernent les recours des religieuses qui revendiquaient la rente suspendue suite aux fréquentes crises de liquidités ayant entaché la vie des *opere pie* à l'époque moderne.

Comme nous l'avons déjà dit, au fondement de ces associations se trouvait la protection de la dignité et de l'appartenance aux milieux aristocratiques. Elles auraient pu constituer un facteur important d'homogénéisation des élites napolitaines et de dépassement des divisions internes liées à la progressive diminution de la centralité politique des Sièges. Parmi les associations consacrées à la protection de l'avenir des femmes, le Mont-de-l'Ange-Gardien (*Monte dell'Angelo Custode*), créé en 1601, ou le Grand-Mont-des-Mariages (*Monte Grande de Maritaggi*), fondé en 1638, ne distinguaient pas le mariage du cloître. Cette dernière institution avait été constituée par la signature des *Capitulations* devant le notaire Giovanni Battista di Bologna de la part d'un certain nombre de chevaliers napolitains qui avaient formé une association pour assurer la descendance féminine de la branche masculine de leur famille, en laissant le reste du capital au Mont-des-Hommes (*Monte dei Maschi*) destiné aux cadets : une véritable *welfare* de classe pour protéger l'identité d'état par la charité privée¹⁴. Bien plus, dans cette association, si les jeunes filles entrées au couvent décidaient de ne pas prononcer ses vœux pour des raisons de santé ou parce qu'elles voulaient se marier, elles pouvaient de toute façon bénéficier d'une dot de mariage de 10 000 ducats, bien évidemment après avoir déduit les 1 500 avancés lors de l'entrée au couvent. C'était une liberté de choix, ça va sans dire, attribuée à la volonté familiale et non pas à l'autodétermination des femmes.

Pas tout à fait homogènes, les instructions des *Capitulations* du Mont-des-Ajoutées (*Monte dei Giunti*) sanctionnent l'association fondée en 1585 par vingt-cinq gentilshommes pour protéger les femmes de leurs lignages qui préféraient le cloître au mariage. Le règlement renvoyait à la honte procurée aux familles par le destin individuel des femmes obligées d'entrer au couvent « sans être poussées par une fervente volonté de servir Dieu, mais ou bien séduites ou bien se voyant dans l'impossibilité de pouvoir "se caser" avec des personnes de leur rang » occasionnant un grand « préjudice à Notre Seigneur Dieu »¹⁵. Parmi les jeunes dames nobles qui

ed altri sussidj computare fra li paraggi che dagli stessi avrebbero dovuto ricevere »). De nombreux autres documents à l'ASNa, Caracciolo di Torella, b. 3.

¹⁴ ASNa, Caracciolo di Torella, b. 3. Chacun des gentilshommes avait payé 1 500 ducats à intérêt sur vingt-cinq ans. En effet, le début des paiements commençait seulement en 1703 : *Capitoli del Monte grande de'maritaggi*, Naples, 1746.

¹⁵ ASNa, Monte dei Giunti, b. 1, fasc. 1A, f° 1v (« La esperienta ha dimostrato quanto conviene tener pensiero delle figliole femine, poiché non provedendoseli di qualche subsidio di Maritaggio sono constrette le donne nobili entrare in religione ò monasterij non mosse da fervente spirito di servire Dio, ma ò sedotte ò vedendosi in necessità di non possersi casare con persone a loro pare, dal che ne nasce disservitio di Nostro Signore Dio e poco frutto di religione ed altre che han voluto casarsi sono state forzate pigliar mariti differenti da lor conditioni e per questo denigraro il proprio sangue et confonder la nobiltà. Per questo volendono gl'infrascritti cavalieri provider alle llozo figlie

attendaient une dot, les fondateurs du Monte dei Giunti exprimaient clairement leur préférence pour celles qui choisissaient la vie religieuse. Ils étaient au point de proclamer la déchéance des droits à la dot pour celles qui, après l'entrée au couvent, auraient décidé d'abandonner le cloître pour le mariage, même avant de prononcer leurs vœux: « et qu'elle soit préférée à toute autre qui prétendrait au mariage, étant donné qu'il est convenable que la religion et la vie religieuse soient préférées aux femmes mariées et qui se marieront ... déclarant expressément que les femmes qui entreront au Monastère comme religieuses ne peuvent jouir du bénéfice du mariage quelle que soit la raison entraînant leur sortie du Monastère même si elles n'ont pas encore prononcé leurs vœux, mais qu'elles en soient à jamais exclues. »¹⁶

Lors de leur quatorzième anniversaire, on reconnaissait aux filles des nobles *montisti* (membres de ces associations) le droit à une dote de 2 000 ducats, dont 200 prévus pour les dépenses liées à la profession de foi. En échange, seulement 1 000 ducats leur étaient accordés en cas d'entrée dans un conservatoire. C'était un choix qui indique la valeur familiale de la vie passée même dans des structures où la clôture n'était pas rigide.

L'introduction de ce changement dans les pratiques de classe est probablement liée au climat de tension qui s'était instauré à Naples après l'application du décret tridentin *De regularibus et de monialibus* et la restauration des normes de la clôture entre le Synode diocésain de 1565 et la rédaction définitive de la réglementation des couvents selon le Concile provincial de 1576¹⁷.

Si on peut qualifier de morales ces dernières indications, ce n'est pas la même chose pour le Statut du Mont-des-Vingt-neuf-Familles (*Monte delle Ventinove Famiglie*). Ce dernier prévoyait qu'en cas de demande d'une dot de mariage et d'entrée dans les ordres, la seconde était préférée, en attribuant la somme habituellement demandée par le monastère choisi par la jeune fille : « vous payez toute la charge habituelle au monastère où elle prononcera ses vœux pour sa dot et sa profession, et pour toute sa vie le 10 novembre [...] et si cela donne à choisir entre une femme qui souhaite prononcer ses vœux et une autre femme qui veut se marier, dans ce cas, la

femine nasciture da loro e dalli loro descendenti Mascoli imperpetuo hanno concluso d'erigere uno Monte a beneficio di dette figlie femine nasciture da loro e dalli loro descendenti Mascoli il quale Monte si chiamerà il Monte delli agionti, poichè non è di una famiglia ma di più unite et gionte per questo effetto et acciò detto monte moltiplichi in servizio di Nostro Signore Dio et in beneficio di dette figlie femine hanno scritto in un albarano del tenor seguente. »).

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, f^{os} 5v–6r (« et che sia preferita ad ogni altra che pretendesse maritaggio essendo conveniente che la religione et vita religiosa sia preferita alle donne maritate et che si mariteranno ... dichiarando espressamente che le donne che entreranno al Monasterio per Monache non possano godere il beneficio del maritaggio per qualsivoglia causa che uscissero dal Monasterio ancorchè non havessero fatta professione ma da quello restino perpetuamente escluse. »). Voir aussi *Capitolazioni del 25 febbraio 1585 innanti al notaio Aniello de Martino per la Erezione e Fondazione del Monte Familiare dei Giunti*, sur lequel voir Tommaso Astarita, *The Continuity of Feudal Power : The Caracciolo Di Brienza in Spanish Naples*, Cambridge, 1992, p. 159 et suiv.

¹⁷ Michele Miele, *Monache e monasteri del Cinque-Seicento tra riforme imposte e nuove esperienze*, dans *Donne e religione a Napoli*, éd. par G. Galasso, A. Valerio, p. 91–138.

femme qui veut prononcer ses vœux est préférable. »¹⁸ C'était une pratique qui, apparemment, ne suivait ni les orientations corporatistes pour le choix du couvent ou de l'ordre religieux, ni même les motivations économiques liées au coût financier élevé de la préférence exprimée.

Certaines associations familiales, pour lesquelles la réglementation des pratiques nuptiales et successorales était prioritaire, avaient été fondées par les Caracciolo, l'une des structures claniques du système nobiliaire napolitain les plus importantes et durables. Le Mont dit *Cascia Grande* (Grand-Coffre), fondé en 1578 par une famille faisant partie du Siège de Capuana (Seggio de Capuana), avait pour but principal de préserver l'éclat du lignage par le financement d'alliances matrimoniales appropriées. Son règlement (*Capitoli*), republié au milieu du XVII^e siècle, malgré la priorité donnée aux mariages, et indépendamment de l'âge des prétendantes, insistait pour qu'on garde « les jeunes filles nonnes dans les monastères satisfaites et tranquilles », faisant une distinction entre les vocations forcées et la liberté de choisir¹⁹.

Il n'y avait aucune référence à la clôture dans le testament de Scipione Caracciolo de Ciarletta, qui, en 1584, instituait un mont durable pour les dots de mariages, ouvert aux autres branches de la famille²⁰. En revanche, le testament de Camillo, prince d'Avellino, finançait le Mont Caracciolo pour les cadets et les femmes destinées aussi bien à la vie religieuse qu'au mariage, tout en protégeant la projection publique de la descendance²¹. Un *Breve* promulgué en 1635 étendait de la dot pour le mariage à celle monastique le financement institué par la volonté d'Alfonso Caracciolo de Brienza auprès de la Banque de l'Annunziata, qui fit un dépôt de 1 100 ducats, accompagnés d'autres 1 000 ducats destinés à être multipliés.

PROTECTION DE CLASSE ET CHARITÉ PUBLIQUE

Ce petit *excursus* sur la protection sociale de classe, enrichie de la confrontation avec les recherches menées par Gérard Delille et Maria Antonietta Visceglia, présente un panorama de la charité privée où la coexistence entre la solidarité et le

¹⁸ ASNa, Cappellano Maggiore, Statuti delle congregazioni laicali, 1196/59, *Capitolazioni*, f° 7r (« entrerà nel Monasterio essendo di questa età ordina il S.C. Tridentino se li paga tutto il solito pagarsi al Mon.rio dove se monecarà per sua dote et professione et de più sua vita durante per diece il mese novembre che non sia de anni deciotto poichè eligge vita religiosa et in caso che concorrerà donna da monacarse con altra donna da maritarse in tal caso sia preferita la donna se vorrà monacare. »).

¹⁹ *Capitoli del Monte de' Maritaggi dell'illustre famiglia Caracciolo detto Cascia Grande*, Naples, 1748, à l'ASNa, Caracciolo di Brienza, b. 7, fasc. 5 (« non è di minor sodisfazione il ritenere le figliole Monache con tenerle nelli Monasterj sodisfatte e quiete »).

²⁰ Le testament de Scipione Caracciolo di Ciarletta, du 3 avril 1584, est un exemple clair de protection du lignage, mais aussi de la centralité des Sièges, car il attribua son patrimoine à l'hôpital de l'Annunziata gouverné par un noble maître de Capuana, le même siège des Caracciolo : ASNa, Caracciolo di Brienza, b. 7, fasc. 7, f°s 15–22.

²¹ *Ibidem*, b. 38 (1 – f° 4v). Le *Breve* du 9 août 1635 se conserve *ibidem*, Cappellano Maggiore, Statuti delle congregazioni laicali, 1196/54. Voir Diomede Ivone, *Una « banca » napoletana della famiglia Caracciolo in età moderna*, Naples, 1992.

conflit était une constante des institutions charitables, qui, malgré les difficultés financières, accompagnèrent l'histoire de Naples à l'époque moderne²². Parmi les transformations imposées par les exigences économiques et le changement de mentalité et de styles de vie des classes dominantes, il persistait une importante continuité qui apparaît clairement dans les statuts. Leurs règles consolidaient l'enracinement identitaire des fondations projetées vers le futur par le mécanisme de la multiplication du capital, en tenant compte que les activités charitables commençaient longtemps après le premier dépôt patrimonial.

Même dans l'assistance publique au XVII^e siècle, dégagée des appartenances familiales ou des affiliations des grandes maisons, la protection de classe et l'aide à ceux qu'on appelait les « pauvres honteux » (*poveri vergognosi*) persistaient dans les institutions charitables. Comme les besoins se définissaient principalement par rapport à l'insécurité et à l'impossibilité de maintenir le niveau de vie propre à chaque position sociale, les initiatives destinées à l'assistance des catégories indistinctes de miséreux peuvent être considérées presque résiduelles dans un contexte où les logiques identitaires prennent le dessus dans la définition des priorités de la protection. Les secours se concentrent donc vers des groupes professionnels et nationaux (*nationes*), ainsi que vers des classes sociales spécifiques²³.

Dans la riche documentation du Mont-de-la-Miséricorde (*Pio Monte della Misericordia*), par exemple, il est impossible de suivre les parcours spécifiquement consacrés au financement des dots monastiques car elles faisaient partie des autres activités gérées par les gouverneurs selon une logique de classe.

On peut dire à peu près la même chose à propos du Mont-Manso, fondé en 1608 par le marquis de Villa sur le modèle du Pio Monte. Giovanni Battista Manso n'avait pas d'héritiers et de ce fait il fit un dépôt à intérêt de 25 000 ducats « pour des subsides et des dots pour la prononciation des vœux des nobles napolitains »²⁴.

²² G. Delille, *op. cit.*, p. 275–282 ; Maria Antonietta Visceglia, *Identità sociali. La nobiltà napoletana nella prima età moderna*, Milan, 1998, en particulier p. 141–172.

²³ Il est impossible de reproduire ici le complexe débat autour des catégories de la marginalité et du paupérisme à l'époque moderne. Pour l'appauvrissement des classes dominantes au royaume de Naples, voir au moins Silvana Musella, « *La nobiltà per li rispetti umani se ne resta il più delle volte nelle miserie.* » *L'opera dei poveri vergognosi*, dans *Il Pio Monte della Misericordia di Napoli nel quarto centenario*, éd. par Mario Pisani Massamormile, Naples, 2003, p. 275–291, mais aussi les autres essais qui y sont publiés. Dans une perspective comparative, voir Luigi Donvito, Mario Rosa, *Pauperismo, carità e assistenza pubblica in Francia e in Italia nell'età moderna*, dans « Quaderni storici », 27, 1974, p. 914–930, ou encore les études réunies dans *Il « privilegio » dei « proprietari di nulla »*. *Identificazione e risposta alla povertà medioevale e moderna*, éd. par Aurelio Cernigliaro, Naples, 2010, et en particulier G. Galasso, *Dalla fraternità alla solidarietà*, p. 219–231.

²⁴ Le titre original de la fondation signé par le notaire Giannantonio Montefusco en juillet 1608 est conservé à l'Archivio del Real Monte Manso di Scala, Naples (ci-après : Monte Manso), Fondo Antico, Atti costitutivi : donation du 1^{er} juillet 1608 (Ba/2) ; *Note pour l'application des familles du Mont* (*Nota per l'applicazione delle famiglie montiste*, Ba/4), *Breve* du 25 mai 1611 (Ba/5), concessions du vice-roi Ossuna extraites des dossiers (22 mai 1632 et 12 mai 1643) de la cour de S. Lorenzo (Ba/6), inventaire des biens hérités et copies du testament (Ba/10). Voir aussi ASNa, Cappellano Maggiore, Statuti delle congregazioni laicali, 1182/63. Nous passons sur les références au rôle culturel et littéraire

De nombreux chercheurs se sont occupés de ce personnage, dont la récente noblesse était légitimée grâce à la reconnaissance de sa stature politique et intellectuelle. Bienfaiteur actif, mécène cultivé et poète, il participait aux activités du Pio Monte et de l'Académie des Oisives (*Accademia degli Oziosi*).

Parmi les activités d'assistance du mont, ce qui a tout particulièrement attiré l'attention de l'historiographie a été la promotion et le financement du Collège des Nobles, issu vers 1630 d'une ancienne relation entre la mère du marquis, véritable gardienne du patrimoine, et les jésuites, dont elle avait été une des premières bienfaitrices²⁵. Le rôle central de l'activité de formation en faveur des nobles en difficulté était sans doute influencé par le placement public de Giovanni Battista. Attentif aux tournants de la culture politique à Naples au début du XVII^e siècle, il établit, quant aux familles destinataires de l'engagement caritatif, un rapport d'égalité entre les lignages membres des Sièges et ceux qui n'étaient pas agrégés aux institutions citadines (*fuori piazza*), selon une logique privilégiant la nécessaire cohésion des élites urbaines²⁶. Il ne faut cependant pas sous-estimer l'importance de la dispersion quasi-totale des archives du Mont-Manso et notamment des documents les plus anciens, en particulier des cartes patrimoniales. Seulement les documents conservés par les jésuites sont parvenus en partie jusqu'à nous, ainsi que la copieuse documentation du contentieux économique et juridictionnel qui opposait les gouverneurs et la Compagnie²⁷.

Les *Capitulations* du Mont-Manso, élaborées par le marquis, portaient une attention particulière à la « subvention des chevaliers étudiants et des vierges nobles qui devaient entrer au couvent de cette ville »²⁸. Le monastère constituait donc le

du marquis à Naples au début du XVII^e siècle en nous limitant au Mont : Carolina Belli, *La fondazione del collegio dei nobili a Napoli*, dans *Chiesa, assistenza e società nel Mezzogiorno moderno*, éd. par Carla Russo, Galatina, 1994, p. 183–280.

²⁵ Giovanni Battista *iunior* était fils de Giulio et de Vittoria Pugliese, qui fut sa tutrice avec Vincenzo Cuomo de la mort de son père jusqu'à l'âge adulte. Les dossiers des archives du Mont montrent qu'une grande partie de la richesse provenait de la famille maternelle : Monte Manso, Fondo Antico, Testamenti, donazioni, capitoli matrimoniali, transazioni, Ac/2–9 et 17–24. La convention entre Manso et les jésuites a été signée par le père Marcantonio Palumbo le 24 mars 1629. Les conventions matrimoniales entre Manso et Costanza Belprato, du 11 juin 1586, se trouvent dans les mêmes archives : Monte Manso, Fondo Antico, Ae/85.

²⁶ À propos des identités urbaines et du débat politique à Naples, voir Saverio di Franco, « *In Italia non c'è altro che fattioni e partialità*. » *Il Regno di Napoli e la civilizzazione statale nel Mediterraneo occidentale (sec. XV–XVII)*, dans *Culture del Mediterraneo. Radici, contatti, dinamiche*, éd. par Elisabetta Fazzini, Milan, 2014, p. 75–111.

²⁷ La querelle avait été soulevée par les gouverneurs du Mont, qui se plaignaient de l'auto-référentialité des jésuites dans les choix des bénéficiaires de l'aide et de l'augmentation insoutenable des dépenses destinées au séminaire ; voir ASNa, Cappellano Maggiore, b. 1182/63bis, fasc. 11–13.

²⁸ « J'ai jugé nécessaire de resserrer l'aide accordée par ce Mont aux nobles [...] pour la nécessité de la noblesse qui est beaucoup plus grande que celle des gens ordinaires, parce que, pour faire prononcer ses vœux à une dame et pour garder un monsieur aux études, il faut plus d'argent [...] aussi parce que, pour les besoins du peuple, il y a dans cette ville de nombreux conservatoires » : Monte Manso, Fondo Antico, Atti costitutivi, Ba/3 (« mi parve convenevole di restringere gli aiuti di questo Monte a' nobili [...] rispetto al bisogno della nobiltà, il quale è molto maggiore di quello delle genti più comunali, si

seul moyen de placer les jeunes filles dépourvues de patrimoine. Il est impossible de reconstituer l'activité de distribution des dots monastiques, mais nous savons tout de même que la subvention destinée aux moniales s'élevait à 1 500 ducats et à une rente annuelle de 40 ducats, sans enregistrer vraiment une prédilection pour les monastères ou pour les ordres réguliers. Certaines récurrences étaient liées, semble-t-il, plus aux attentes des familles d'origine qu'aux indications des gouverneurs.

Dans la section *Bienfaisance et assistance* de l'archive du Mont-Manso subsistent quelques dossiers qui se réfèrent aux nonnes ayant prononcé leurs vœux sur subvention entre 1680 et 1750. Trois jeunes filles entraient dans le monastère franciscain de la Trinità delle Monache, cinq dans le couvent dominicain du Divino Amore et une seule dans Sant'Andrea delle Dame, patronné par les théatins, trois fondations aristocratiques parmi les plus importantes de Naples²⁹. Les archives ne conservent les certificats de décès que pour quelques-unes d'entre ces filles en raison de l'arrêt des versements, mais nous savons qu'en 1722 il ne restait que quatre rentes pour l'ensemble des bénéficiaires figurant dans la liste précédente.

Ces notes peuvent donner un cadre général des initiatives d'assistance mutuelle instaurées par les classes dominantes de la capitale du royaume de Naples afin de faire face aux difficultés causées aux politiques familiales pour la progression du système des dots. Néanmoins, nous n'aborderons pas ici la question des réseaux de protection des femmes mis en place par les marchands, les artisans et d'autres corps de métiers.

Nous voudrions conclure avec un bref rappel de deux autres institutions qui, de façon différente, mais avec le même enracinement identitaire, ont proposé, sur une très longue période, de l'aide aux femmes en difficulté, en soutenant et en superposant public et privé, laïc et religieux.

Le Retrait de Santa Maria delle Grazie fut fondé par Elena Aldobrandini, veuve d'Antonio Carafa, duc de Mondragone, et mère de Donn'Anna, la vice-reine de Naples. La duchesse disposait par son testament de 1655³⁰ qu'on établisse un

perchè monacare una gentil donna et a mantenere a studio un cavaliere fa mestiere di maggior quantità di denari [...] si anco perch'a rimediare a bisogni del popolo sono in questa città molti conservatorij. »).

²⁹ Les premières indications concernent Ginevra et Maria Vittoria Mastrocucco, deux jeunes filles issues d'une famille sociétaire du Mont, mais pas du Siège, qui prirent le voile respectivement en 1681 et 1682 au monastère de la Trinità delle Monache (Trinité des sœurs). Elles ont été suivies en 1704 par Maria Giuseppa Sersale, qui ne reçut qu'une dot de 1 000 ducats, on ne sait pas si grâce à la contribution de son illustre famille originaire du Siège de Nido, et en 1741 par Laura et Anna Caterina di Gennaro. Au couvent du Divino Amore (Divin-Amour) seraient entrées Diana et Maria Emanuela Filangieri, qui prononcèrent leurs vœux en 1691 et en 1692, Vittoria Ruffo et Faustina Sanchez de Luna en 1703 et Maria Vittoria Mormile en 1718. Trois professions de foi sont enregistrées dans le monastère de S. Giuseppe à Pontecorvo au début du XVIII^e siècle, alors que ce n'est qu'en 1681 que Santa Patrizia fut choisie par Caterina Sanchez de Luna. Dix ans plus tard, Sant'Andrea delle Dame ouvrait ses portes pour Margherita d'Afflitto, M. Vittoria Mastrocucco, M. Emanuela Filangieri, Teresa d'Afflitto, Cristina Sanchez de Luna : Monte Manso, Fondo Antico, Beneficenza e assistenza, Dd/1 (1682–1752). Les rentes des mêmes religieuses sont conservées à l'ASNa, Cappellano Maggiore, b. 1182/63bis.

³⁰ Sur Donn'Anna, épouse du vice-roi Medina de las Torres, voir Vittoria Fiorelli, *Una vice-regina napoletana nella Napoli spagnola : Anna Carafa*, dans *Donne di potere nel Rinascimento*, éd.

lieu de retraite destiné à accueillir des dames et des jeunes nobles dans le besoin d'un abri. La maison, située près des jardins de sa résidence familiale, existait déjà et elle la gérait comme sa propriété exclusive. Elle y entraînait et sortait parfois même la nuit et laissa à ses petits-enfants la responsabilité d'en administrer le patrimoine après sa mort.

L'accueil des hôtes se faisait à l'entière discrétion de la fondatrice, qui manifestait la ferme intention d'offrir aux dames en difficulté un refuge correspondant à leurs origines, sans les obliger à prononcer leurs vœux. D'ailleurs, la testatrice décida que, si certaines nobles hébergées décidaient d'embrasser la vie religieuse, le collège qui les accueillait et les biens qui le finançaient devaient rester à la disposition de celles qui voulaient mener une vie laïque au service des pauvres et des nécessiteux. C'était une décision centrée sur l'interdiction absolue d'imposer les vœux solennelles aux habitantes du collège. Et si par hasard, disposait encore la duchesse, toutes les hôtes décidaient de prendre le voile, le patrimoine du Retrait de Santa Maria devait être transféré au Mont-de-la-Miséricorde, point de référence des activités bénéfiques au rang auquel appartenaient toutes ces dames. Cette intention séculière d'assistance ancrée dans les grandes institutions caritatives de la ville a été partiellement contrecarrée par la transformation de ce retrait dans un conservatoire au cours du XVIII^e siècle³¹.

En revanche, le Retrait institué par la Confradia de Nostra Señora de la Soledad (fondée en 1580 par un groupe d'Espagnols inspirés par Pedro Gonzales, frère du monastère du Spirito Santo) a survécu au réglage séculaire jusqu'à sa suppression ordonnée par les Français, qui en avaient mal compris la nature³². Lié à la colonie

par Letizia Arcangeli, Susanna Peyronel, Rome, 2008, p. 445–462. La copie certifiée du testament d'Elena Aldobrandini, rédigé le 8 décembre 1655, se trouve à l'Archivio della Fondazione Mondragone, Naples, IA1, fasc. 1, f^{os} 3r–5v, avec la copie du *Décret du nonce apostolique* du 10 avril 1664, qui établit les *Règles* du Retrait. Pour les lettres d'Aldobrandini, voir Gilda Corralbi, *Strategie matrimoniali e rivalità femminile. Il carteggio di Elena Aldobrandini (1624–1633)*, dans *Scritture di donne. La memoria restituita*, éd. par Marina Caffiero, Manola Ida Venzio, Rome, 2007, p. 185–199.

³¹ *Minuta per le case delle Mortelle*, Archivio della Fondazione Mondragone, IA1, fasc. 1, f^{os} 11r–13v (« dette congregate di libera volontà servano il Signor Iddio et in tale servitio si facci un core et un'anima. Perciò vuole espressamente che ciascuna di esse congregate non siano obbligati alli voti solenni ne in tale collegio introdurre vita claustrale ... anche se tutte overo la maggior parte di esse in ciò si convengono di maniera che se la minor parte volessero stare in questo stato libero prevagli alla maggior parte di quelle che volessero star soggette alli voti perciò possano uscirsene et andare dove vorranno e l'istessa minor parte resti in detto Collegio acciò liberamente servano Iddio. »).

³² *La Real casa della Solitaria fondata dalla Nazione Spagola per ricovero et educatione di donzelle povere orfane figlie di spagnoli onorati sino dall'anno 1589 sotto la protettione dell'Ecc.mo Conte di Miranda all'hora viceré in questo Regno*, Archivio Real Casa della Solitaria, Naples, Amministrazione B 2/5, f^o 1r. Voir ici aussi le *Libro de la Confradia de Nostra Senora de la Soledad la qual senpeso en el mese de marzo de 1580 la qual fundo el muy Reverendo padre fray Pedro Gonzales espanyol natural de la ciudad de [lacune d'une lettre]esogovia predicador del Monasterio de Sanctisspirito de ciudad de Napoles la qual confradia y ermandad sustente nostro Senor Jesucristo por interseccion de su gloriosa madre*, Amministrazione B 1/3. Sur l'institut, voir Maria Rosaria de Divittis, *Casa Santa de Nuestra Senora de la Soledad (Conservatorio della Solitaria)*, Naples, 2004. Sur l'assistance aux femmes marginalisées à Naples, voir Vittoria Fiorelli, *Stranieri e dominanti. Alcune iniziative di tutela e assistenza alle donne degli spagnoli a Napoli tra Cinque e Seicento*, dans « Mélanges de l'École française de Rome – Moyen Âge », 131, 2019, 2, p. 485–494.

ibérique de la capitale et financé par des militaires cantonnés en ville, l'institution offrait aux orphelines de famille espagnole un accueil temporaire et un parcours d'éducation. Le retrait leur donnait par la suite une dot aussi bien pour le mariage que pour les vœux. Même dans ce cas, la vie religieuse n'entraînait en jeu que dans un second temps et le principe qui inspirait l'institution était de venir en aide à ceux qui appartenaient clairement à la nation espagnole ; c'était la condition pour activer l'aide charitable.

CONCLUSIONS

En conclusion, on peut dire que les différentes formes de soutien au recrutement monastique fournissent à l'étude des activités charitables de l'époque moderne une clé de lecture permettant de définir l'élément de planification politique et institutionnelle placé à la base de la fondation des institutions charitables. Ces projets ne dérivait que rarement d'un acte spontané de la part de bienfaiteurs isolés, et presque jamais d'un réseau de solidarités qui n'était pas ancré dans des appartenances bien définies. La connotation religieuse qui caractérise les principes fondateurs et les règles de gestion des institutions charitables n'atténuaient nullement la matrice économique ni même le souci pour leur instabilité et l'attente d'une quiétude sociale qui constituaient, en effet, la raison la plus profonde de leur création.

CHARITY AND HONOR. DOWRY FINANCING IN NAPLES DURING THE *ANCIEN RÉGIME*

Abstract

In the present article, the author analyzes the effect, in the public and private spheres, of the dowry policy of the Neapolitan elites, on the basis of documents issued by charitable organizations and institutional pawnbrokers (*monti di pietà*). The study focuses on the dissemination of aristocratic affiliation practices and on identifying the methods used to guarantee the young women's access to religious life. These are correlated with an assessment of the social and political position of those who provided financial support and of the religious and ideological motivations expressed in certain statutes promulgated in Naples during that time.

Keywords: dowry; monastic life; elites; *monti di pietà*; Kingdom of Naples

(SE) SOIGNER À L'ÂGE DE L'ORALITÉ. QUELLES SOURCES POUR L'ÉTUDE DES PRATIQUES D'ASSISTANCE SOCIALE AUX PAYS DE VALACHIE ET DE MOLDAVIE DES XV^e–XVII^e SIÈCLES ?

LIDIA COTOVANU*

Le sujet de cet article est né d'une invitation à écrire sur les archives des hôpitaux et de l'assistance sociale plus généralement dans les Principautés de Valachie et de Moldavie à l'époque médiévale. L'étude sollicitée aurait dû paraître dans un volume collectif dédié à la mémoire de l'assistance sociale et plus précisément aux archives hospitalières et aux sources écrites de l'assistance en Italie et en Europe aux XII^e–XVI^e siècles. J'ai dû expliquer aux éditeurs que les spécialistes de l'histoire de l'assistance sociale dans les Principautés danubiennes – pays qui apparaissent sur la carte au milieu du XIV^e siècle¹ – ne peuvent même pas rêver de pareilles archives : à l'époque visée par le volume en question, il n'y avait en Valachie et en Moldavie ni hôpitaux, ni pratiques d'archivage institutionnalisées de la production documentaire. J'ai dû décliner l'invitation, mais depuis je n'ai cessé de songer à consacrer une étude à l'état de nos sources concernant les institutions et les pratiques d'assistance sociale.

Avant 1600, la production documentaire valaque et moldave dite *interne* (elle n'inclut pas les traités ou la correspondance diplomatique princière) – fort réduite quantitativement – provient principalement des chancelleries princières et rarement des hautes instances ecclésiastiques (la métropole, les évêchés)². Ce n'est que pendant les dernières décennies du XVI^e siècle que les actes privés commencent à se multiplier et ce n'est pas par hasard que c'est dans les milieux marchands des villes que ce type de document prend essor. D'un côté, le développement des marchés locaux et la monétarisation de l'économie font multiplier les échanges contractuels, la pénétration des marchands sur le marché patrimonial et la diffusion dans les transactions patrimoniales des logiques marchandes véhiculant le contrat écrit. C'est d'autant plus

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¹ La Valachie (*Țara Românească*) a été officiellement fondée en 1330 et la Moldavie (*Țara Moldovei*) en 1359.

² Pour la période d'avant 1625, l'on compte environ 5 800 actes de chancellerie valaques et environ 6 000 actes moldaves, conservés de nos jours dans les Archives d'État de Roumanie et à la Bibliothèque de l'Académie Roumaine (les chiffres évoqués n'incluent donc pas les actes de chancellerie émis dans les Principautés danubiennes mais conservés au Mont-Athos et dans les archives des Patriarcats orthodoxes d'Orient) : Matei Cazacu, *Les Chancelleries des Principautés valaque et moldave (XIV^e–XVIII^e siècles)*, dans idem, *Des Balkans à la Russie médiévale et moderne : hommes, images et réalités*, éd. par Emanuel C. Antoche, Lidia Cotovanu, Brăila, 2017, p. 251–252.

que les marchands sont majoritairement allogènes (*i.e.* nés ailleurs, au sens français du terme) et, pour mieux fixer leurs droits patrimoniaux, ils se dotent d'actes de propriété³. D'un autre côté, la multiplication des transactions patrimoniales – et des litiges en conséquence – a entraîné des changements importants dans les procédures administratives et judiciaires et imposé la preuve écrite en justice (pourtant, la probation écrite de la possession n'est généralisée que sous Constantin Mavrocordat, dans les années 1740⁴). La diffusion de l'écriture dans la société tout au long du XVII^e siècle est, sans surprise, accompagnée de l'imposition à l'usage écrit du roumain par rapport au slavon⁵.

Or, la quasi-totalité de la production documentaire *interne* valaque et moldave, publique et privée, depuis la fin du XIV^e et jusqu'au début du XVIII^e siècle, concerne des affaires patrimoniales : confirmations princières du droit de possession ou d'usage de terres et d'autres biens immobiliers, privilèges et autres dispositions fiscales, actes judiciaires (attestations sous serment, déclarations des jureurs, sentences), confiscations, ventes/achats, échanges, affrètements sur domaines, mises en gage, donations, testaments, etc. Le rapport à la terre est le principal facteur de production documentaire, ce qui indique un champ restreint d'utilisation de l'écriture. En effet, dans bien d'autres domaines juridico-administratifs, dont les affaires de droit canon, domine l'oralité : pas de registres d'état civil, ni de dossiers judiciaires, ni de registres de comptes publics et ecclésiastiques. Le degré faible de bureaucratization de l'État et de l'Église se reflète bien dans l'absence de lieux spécialisés dans la production documentaire (*scriptoria*, notariats, lieux d'authentification, tribunaux ecclésiastiques). On doit y ajouter l'absence de pratiques d'archivage, qui a mené à la perte d'une grande partie de la documentation, fût-elle au caractère patrimonial ou autre⁶.

Les pratiques d'assistance sociale font justement partie de la tranche d'activités déployées dans l'oralité. Aucun document, aucun traité officiel (« așezământ », dans le langage juridique roumain ancien) ne nous informe de la structure du système d'assistance dans les Principautés. C'est par analogie avec le système d'assistance

³ Lidia Cotovanu, *Migrations et mutations identitaires dans l'Europe du Sud-Est (vues de Valachie et de Moldavie, XIV^e–XVII^e siècles)*, thèse de doctorat, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (désormais : EHESS), Paris, 2014, inédite, p. 235–283.

⁴ Florin Constantiniu, « Ai carte, ai parte » : o reformă necunoscută a lui Constantin Mavrocordat, dans *In honorem Paul Cernovodeanu*, éd. par Violeta Barbu, Bucarest, 1998, p. 213–215.

⁵ M. Cazacu, *op. cit.*, p. 251 ; Violeta Barbu, *Practica scrisului în limba română (Țara Românească, 1601–1650)*, dans « Limba română », XLIX, 2000, 3, p. 415–424. La diffusion de l'écriture n'implique pas l'alphabétisation croissante de la population mais l'augmentation du nombre de 'spécialistes' en écriture (diacres, logothètes).

⁶ Les premiers registres de chancellerie (fragmentaires) enregistrant des copies d'actes princiers datent du règne de Constantin Brâncoveanu en Valachie (1688–1714) : voir *Condica Marii Logofetii (1692–1714)*, éd. par Melentina Bâzgan, Bucarest, 2009 ; M. Cazacu, *op. cit.*, p. 256. Depuis le même règne date le premier registre de comptes publics : Dinu C. Giurescu, *Anatefterul, condica de porunci a Vistieriei lui Constantin Brâncoveanu*, dans « Studii și materiale de istorie medie », V, 1962, p. 353–493.

sociale byzantin, qui repose, lui, sur toute une palette de décisions législatives impériales et conciliaires, et qui s'est diffusé dans tous les autres États orthodoxes, qu'on arrive à connaître les grands traits du système fonctionnel au nord du Danube. Dans ces conditions, comment détecter les pratiques d'assistance dans les Principautés ? Quelles sont les institutions impliquées et surtout comment exerçaient-elles leurs tâches dans le domaine ?

La réponse à la première question est simple : il faut faire avec les sources au caractère patrimonial dont on dispose. On les utilise comme sources de substitution⁷, faute d'archives spécialisées pour le thème qui nous préoccupe. La deuxième question est bien plus difficile à traiter, vu que ce type de sources n'offre que des informations sporadiques et tangentielles au but de leur émission. C'est notamment le but ici d'illustrer les pratiques d'assistance courantes dans les Principautés à partir des seules sources disponibles, qui attestent, sous diverses formes, de la mobilité patrimoniale locale. C'est pour montrer qu'en fin de compte, nos connaissances du sujet sont circonscrites et limitées aux témoignages autour des biens immobiliers et notamment des terres prises dans une multitude de transactions.

J'ai structuré mon récit autour d'une présentation synthétique du système d'assistance valaque et moldave – qui est le même dans ses traits généraux dans les deux Principautés –, en convoquant le peu d'exemples fournis par nos sources patrimoniales pour en illustrer le fonctionnement.

Comme je l'ai évoqué auparavant, en Valachie et en Moldavie, le système d'assistance sociale suit le modèle byzantin, qui parvint à s'y enraciner par la filière sud-slave. Depuis Byzance et jusque dans la lointaine Russie, et jusqu'à un certain point dans le monde occidental aussi, le système d'assistance sociale se caractérise à peu près par la même structure. Trois sont les piliers institutionnels et sociaux de l'assistance dans « le système-monde » (I. Wallerstein) chrétien : *la famille, l'Église et le corps des fidèles valides, le souverain en tête*.

FAMILLE, HÉRITIERS, PATRIMOINE

Pour la majorité de la population circonscrite à la juridiction des États-Prince⁸ valaque et moldave, la famille reste le principal agent d'assistance en cas de maladie, de vieillesse et d'autres accidents de la vie⁹. Les premiers *Codes de lois* compilés en roumain au milieu du XVII^e siècle, à partir de nomocanons byzantins, ont sanctionné les devoirs des époux à prendre soin l'un de l'autre, les devoirs des parents envers leurs enfants et l'obligation des enfants à porter secours à leurs parents en cas de faiblesse. L'époux était obligé d'assister son épouse en cas de maladie, en lui procurant

⁷ Pour les sources *substitutives*, sollicitées pour donner des réponses à des questions étrangères au champ de leur production initiale, voir V. Barbu, *Practica scrisului*, p. 419.

⁸ J'emprunte le concept à Radu Păun, *La circulation des pouvoirs dans les pays roumains au XVII^e siècle. Repères pour un modèle théorique*, dans « NEC Yearbook », 1998–1999, p. 263–311.

⁹ Ligia Livadă-Cadeschi, *De la milă la filantropie. Instituții de asistare a săracilor din Țara Românească și Moldova în secolul al XVIII-lea*, Bucarest, 2001, p. 168.

un médecin et des médicaments, sous peine, dans le cas contraire, de se voir écarter du droit d'usage de la dot de celle-ci et de son héritage patrimonial. Il était interdit à l'enfant d'envoyer son parent à l'asile, là où « reposent les invalides et les gens malades », sous peine d'être puni comme « assassin qui hâte la mort » ou d'être déshérité. À l'inverse, il était interdit au parent d'envoyer son enfant dans les maisons d'assistance des « pauvres », sous peine de perdre son autorité parentale¹⁰.

À l'état actuel de la documentation, il est difficile de dire si la famille accordait de l'assistance à ses membres tombés en difficulté sous la contrainte de la loi ou plutôt sous l'emprise de l'affection et du sentiment de responsabilité envers le conjoint, le parent, l'enfant. Les protagonistes de nos sources expriment rarement leurs sentiments par rapport à leurs proches. Très probablement, les deux facteurs participaient à orienter la compassion des gens envers les leurs. Les pratiques successorales coutumières viennent pourtant apporter un important supplément de motivation à l'acte d'assistance en famille¹¹.

Bien que datant du milieu du XVIII^e siècle, le testament du *clucer* Radu Goran, le petit-fils du logothète Goran Stancioviici d'Olănești, nous offre un bel exemple de l'amour et du sentiment de responsabilité qui guidaient les dispositions du testateur envers les siens, si ce n'était l'inverse qui arrivait, que les sentiments du testateur découlent des rapports intimes, cimentés par la filiation et le rapprochement quotidien, avec les membres de sa famille restreinte ou élargie¹². En effet, la qualité des attitudes des héritiers potentiels avait influé sur l'intensité des sentiments partagés par Radu Goran envers eux et sur la façon dont, à l'approche de sa mort, il leur distribua ses biens. Son regard se porta tout particulièrement sur son fils, issu de son second mariage avec Catrina, lequel fut pris d'épilepsie à l'âge de cinq ans et depuis il était resté muet et consumé par la terrible maladie. Le testateur a organisé la succession autour de cet enfant handicapé, qu'il nommait affectueusement « mon âme » ; il tenait l'avoir enterré auprès de lui, lorsque la mort de celui-ci allait advenir¹³. On en déduit que, dans les décisions du testateur, l'affection précéda les prescriptions juridiques.

¹⁰ Pour toutes ces prescriptions, voir *Carte românească de învățătură (1646)*, Bucarest, 1961, Glava 8, § 21, 28, 29, p. 91–92, Glava 9, § 15, 16, p. 93 ; *Îndreptarea legii (1652)*, Bucarest, 1962, Glava 244, Zac. 29 et 29, p. 239, Glava 284, p. 276, Glava 293, p. 280 ; commentaires : Anicuța Popescu, *Instituția căsătoriei și condiția juridică a femeii din Țara Românească și Moldova în secolul al XVII-lea*, dans « Studii. Revistă de istorie », XXIII, 1970, 1, p. 73–74, 77 ; L. Livadă-Cadeschi, *op. cit.*, p. 126, 168 ; Andreea-Roxana Iancu, *Binecuvântarea și blestemul părinților în discursul testamentar (București, sfârșit de secol XVIII – început de secol XIX)*, dans « Studii și materiale de istorie medie », XXI, 2003, p. 77.

¹¹ Pour Laurence Fontaine, *L'économie morale. Pauvreté, crédit et confiance dans l'Europe pré-moderne*, Paris, 2008, p. 35–37, « la solidarité familiale est tout sauf naturelle », sinon elle n'aurait pas eu besoin d'être imposée par la loi dans certains pays.

¹² Pour l'origine sociale des sentiments, qui se reflète dans la transmission des noms personnels et la mobilité des biens au sein des lignages, ou encore dans les relations de parenté spirituelle, il est utile de consulter Bernard Vernier, *La genèse sociale des sentiments. Aînés et cadets dans l'île grecque de Karpathos*, Paris, 1991.

¹³ Cas étudié par Gheorghe Lazăr, *Familie și sentiment în Vechiul Regim românesc. Note pe marginea testamentului lui Radu Goran Olănescu*, dans « Studii și materiale de istorie medie », XXI, 2003, p. 61, 63.

À sa fille Maria, issue du premier mariage, Radu Goran n'a laissé que les biens provenant de la dot de sa mère. Quant à l'ensemble des autres biens, acquis sa vie durant, il les laissa à son épouse Catrina, après 16 ans de vie commune. En échange, c'était à elle de prendre en charge les funérailles de Radu Goran, de lui assurer des « belles commémorations » et d'acquitter ses dettes. C'était à elle également d'assumer l'assistance de l'enfant malade. Le testateur justifie sa préférence pour l'épouse et non pour la fille par le fait que la première « eut de la peine avec lui, depuis qu'il est tombé malade, et l'a protégé du feu, de l'eau et de la fuite, pour qu'il ne soit pas dévoré par les bêtes sauvages », alors que l'autre « se montre méchante envers nous et l'enfant, en prétendant que l'enfant ne compte pas, puisqu'il est malade et muet ». C'est probablement cette attitude de la fille et du gendre qui a déterminé Radu Goran à investir sa confiance dans son neveu Preda Vlădescul et à le désigner curateur de sa « maison », pour qu'il aide les héritiers (épouse et fils malade) dans la gestion des biens, devant les tribunaux et en d'autres occasions¹⁴.

On remarque donc que le testateur Radu Goran nourrit de l'amour pour tous les membres de sa famille, mais le comportement de ces héritiers potentiels et la logique coutumière de la transmission des biens patrimoniaux, qui favorise la masculinité (en Valachie, du moins), font pencher la balance de sa confiance vers l'épouse et le consanguin latéral mâle, tuteurs (présent et futur) de son fils unique.

Le cas du *clucer* Radu Goran indique que les sentiments générés par les rapports de famille anticipaient les contraintes normatives, mais qu'ils étaient en même temps soutenus et orientés par le jeu des attentes, des droits, des obligations et des récompenses, jeu réglementé par le système de droit pluriel en vigueur. On peut supposer que c'était, à l'époque étudiée, une donnée valable pour l'ensemble de la société traditionnelle valaque/moldave : le/la conjoint(e) assistait son partenaire de vie¹⁵ ; les parents assistaient leurs enfants, on l'a vu dans le cas du boyard Olănescu¹⁶ ; les enfants assistaient leurs parents¹⁷.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 62–64.

¹⁵ À l'approche de sa mort, Limberi sellier (*șelar*) de Târgoviște laissa à son épouse Marina 2 bœufs, 2 vaches, 2 chevaux, 2 juments, 20 ruchers et 20 moutons, « parce qu'elle l'a soigné dans les moments de faiblesse et de maladie » : *Catalogul documentelor Țării Românești din Arhivele Statului*, vol. V, (1640–1644) (désormais : CDȚR), éd. par Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă *et al.*, Bucarest, 1985, n° 1324, p. 552 (6 mai 1644).

¹⁶ Voir aussi Violeta Barbu, *De bono coniugali. O istorie a familiei din Țara Românească în secolul al XVII-lea*, Bucarest, 2003, p. 97–98.

¹⁷ Dumitru vornic de Mogoșești, aveugle depuis 7 ans, a été soigné par son épouse Maria et par le fils adoptif Bunea logothète, auxquels il a laissé tous ses biens : *Documenta Romaniae historica* (désormais : DRH), série B, *Țara Românească*, vol. XXIII, (1630–1632), éd. par Damaschin Mioc, Bucarest, 1969, n° 351, p. 538–539 (12 avril 1632). De même procéda Tudosca, la veuve du grand chambellan de Moldavie Stamatie, en léguant ses biens, à l'approche de la mort, à sa fille Maria et au gendre Dumitrașco *clucer*, « qui l'ont soignée durant sa maladie » : *Catalogul documentelor moldovenesti din Arhiva Istorică Centrală a Statului*, vol. IV, (1676–1700), éd. par M. Regleanu *et al.*, Bucarest, 1970, n° 1003, p. 228 (20 avril 1686).

Pour ce qui est de l'assistance des parents, les pays roumains ont connu l'institution du *cadet* de la famille. Après avoir doté les filles et donné aux héritiers légitimes ce qui leur est dû conformément au droit successoral et à la volonté des parents, ces derniers réservent un surplus d'héritage pour le fils cadet (ou la fille cadette avec son mari, s'il n'y avait pas de fils), consistant, en règle générale, dans la maison parentale et, dans le cas des familles aisées, dans le domaine de résidence du lignage. Or le privilège du cadet est accompagné d'un set d'obligations, dont l'assistance des parents en cas de faiblesse, d'assumer les dépenses des funérailles et faire les donations nécessaires envers l'Église afin d'assurer la commémoration liturgique des parents défunts. Ivan « sârbul » (*le Serbe*) logothète de Bucarest reçoit tous les biens de ses beaux-parents, parce que son épouse « est restée fille cadette dans la maison » de ses parents ; ceux-ci, « étant vieux et affaiblis et sur les bras de leur gendre Ivan logothète, lui ont laissé tout ce qu'ils ont eu, pour les soins qu'ils ont eu de sa part pour le meilleur et pour le pire »¹⁸.

La diffusion de la pratique testamentaire dans les Principautés, accomplie dans l'oralité ou par écrit, a encore permis aux gens valides dotés d'un patrimoine de corriger ce que le non respect ou la non application de la loi écrite et la défaillance affective pouvaient entraîner en matière d'assistance. Le testateur avait ainsi la possibilité de privilégier certains de ses héritiers, en fonction de leurs attitudes préalables. Il reste rare tout de même qu'un parent déshérite ses enfants. Le testament sert plutôt à sanctionner les solutions adoptées en cas de déshérence, telle *l'adoption*, *la donation conditionnée* ou *la prise de l'habit monacal*, afin de s'offrir de l'assistance, de s'assurer la commémoration liturgique et terrestre, puis mettre son patrimoine à l'abri du retrait princier et/ou de la ruine¹⁹. On l'a vu, le *clucer* Radu Goran s'était tourné vers son épouse et vers l'un de ses neveux pour assurer le bien-être du fils invalide. Maria de Bucov, quant à elle, avait décidé d'écarter sa fille Frujina, déjà dotée, et son gendre Nedelco ancien grand *armaș* de l'héritage de sa part d'âme parce qu'ils « la maltraitent et l'offensent et ne lui montrent aucun respect au temps de sa vieillesse »²⁰. Elle avait tout laissé à l'autre fille, Elina, et au mari de celle-ci, Iane spathaire, vu qu'« ils sont les seuls à lui porter assistance, de sorte qu'elle reçoit de la compassion et du respect pendant sa vieillesse »²¹. Irina de Cuzlău, en Moldavie, a elle aussi déshérité sa fille Anisia, qui l'avait amenée dans le malheur, en confiant sa part d'âme au neveu Manea, à condition qu'il prenne soin d'elle durant le reste

¹⁸ V. Barbu, *De bono coniugali*, p. 88–89 et n. 19, p. 189 (20 novembre 1653).

¹⁹ Andreea-Roxana Iancu, *Le rêve de perpétuité. Transmission du patrimoine entre stratégie successorale et pratique dévotionnelle (Valachie, fin du XVIII^e siècle – début du XIX^e siècle)*, thèse de doctorat, EHESS, Paris, 2010, inédite, *passim*.

²⁰ DRH, B, vol. XXIV, éd. par Damaschin Mioc, Sașa Caracaș, Constantin Bălan, Bucarest, 1974, n° 401, p. 533 (1^{er} novembre 1634).

²¹ *Ibidem*. Elina elle-même, âgée et sans enfants, a été assistée pendant sa vieillesse par son neveu (du côté du cousin germain) Pană Filipescu grand spathaire, qui reçut en récompense une partie de village : CDȚR, vol. VIII, éd. par Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă *et al.*, Bucarest, 2006, n° 797, p. 363 (5 février 1656).

de sa vie et qu'il lui fasse des commémorations après la mort²². Quant à l'épouse de feu le grand *portar* de Valachie Jipa, bien qu'elle eût au moins un fils en vie, Stoian chambellan de Iamnic, elle dédia ses biens au monastère de Coșuna, dont les moines l'ont accueillie dans l'enceinte de leur édifice et lui ont accordé de l'assistance pendant neuf ans²³.

REMÈDES À LA DÉSHÉRENCE

À part l'adoption, qui permet au possesseur d'un patrimoine de corriger la défaillance survenue dans sa lignée successorale²⁴, celui-ci avait la possibilité de se tourner vers d'autres parents consanguins, vers des parents collatéraux ou de rechercher de l'assistance en dehors de la famille élargie, auprès des voisins, des amis ou des partenaires d'affaires, des compatriotes, dans le cas des migrants. Il pouvait choisir parmi ceux-là un héritier universel ou juste faire une donation conditionnée par le devoir du donataire de porter assistance au donateur en situation de faiblesse²⁵. Marin, le fils de Stan Stelea, ayant vieilli sans avoir eu d'enfants, a laissé son domaine de Mătești (Buzău) aux frères Vlădilă, Căciulat et Crivețu de Bucarest, « pour qu'ils m'honorent et me soignent durant ma faiblesse provoquée par la vieillesse »²⁶. Petru « sârbul » de Moldavie avait laissé son avoir à la nièce de sa femme, pour qu'elle lui porte assistance tant qu'il serait en vie et lui assure, à lui et à son épouse, des messes de commémoration de l'âme après la mort²⁷. Pană de Voinigești, « n'ayant pas eu de fils issus de son propre corps et étant arrivé à la vieillesse » – apparemment, son fils Bratul était déjà décédé –, a décidé de donner son domaine de Voinigești à un certain Voico, à condition que le bénéficiaire porte de l'assistance au donateur le restant de ses jours²⁸.

²² DRH, série A, *Moldova*, vol. XXVI, (1641–1642), éd. par Ioan Caproșu, Bucarest, 2003, p. 460, n° 557 (23 mars 1643).

²³ *Documente privind istoria României* (désormais : DIR), série B, *Țara Românească*, vol. XVII/2, (1611–1615), éd. par Ion Ionașcu et al., Bucarest, 1951, n° 82, p. 79–80 (23 mai 1612).

²⁴ A.-R. Iancu, *Le rêve de perpétuité*, p. 198–251 ; Elena Bedreag, « Să-mi fie ca un fciur de trupul meu ». *Strategii familiale în Moldova secolului al XVII-lea*, dans « Analele Științifice ale Universității "Al.I. Cuza" din Iași. Istorie », LIV–LV, 2008–2009, p. 61–68 ; eadem, *Enfants du corps, enfants de cœur. La pratique de l'adoption dans la Moldavie du XVII^e siècle*, dans *Le corps et ses hypostases en Europe et dans la société roumaine du Moyen Âge à l'époque contemporaine*, éd. par Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Alexandru-Florin Platon, Bucarest, 2010, p. 15–29 ; Violeta Barbu, « Punerea de feciori » : *practica socială a adopției în Țara Românească în secolul al XVII-lea*, dans « Studii și materiale de istorie medie », XXXI, 2013, p. 185–208.

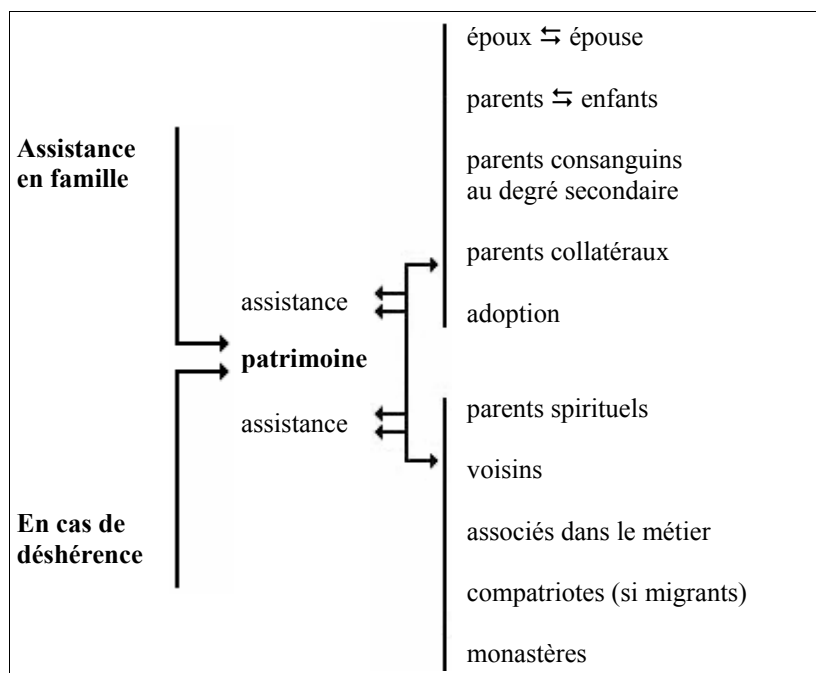
²⁵ L. Fontaine, *op. cit.*, p. 38 sq., sur le rôle des voisins et des amis dans l'assistance des pauvres.

²⁶ DRH, B, vol. XXII, éd. par Damaschin Mioc, Bucarest, 1969, n° 177, p. 357–358 (16 novembre 1628).

²⁷ *Documente privitoare la istoria orașului Iași* (désormais : *Documente – Iași*), vol. I, *Acte interne* (1408–1660), éd. par Ioan Caproșu, Petronel Zahariuc, Iași, 1999, n° 273, p. 354 (15 avril 1638) ; DRH, A, vol. XXIV, éd. par Constantin Cihodaru, Ioan Caproșu, Bucarest, 1998, n° 319, p. 310–311.

²⁸ DRH, B, vol. XI, éd. par Damaschin Mioc et al., Bucarest, 1975, n° 259, p. 341 (<1^{er} septembre 1597 – 31 août 1598>).

En cas d’extinction du lignage, la pratique la plus courante était de se tourner vers l’Église et tout particulièrement vers les monastères. Le monastère tenait dans ce cas la place de l’héritier de substitution²⁹.



Les possesseurs de moyens sur mesure procédaient à la fondation de leur propre monastère et, dans ce cas, en leur qualité de fondateurs et en vertu du droit de fondation (*ktitorikon dikaion*, d’origine byzantine), ils avaient droit, entre autres, à l’assistance de la part des moines³⁰. Le 30 mai 1604, le prince de Moldavie confirmait au monastère athonite de Vatopédi le droit de possession sur plusieurs domaines reçus en donation de la part de dame Anna Golăiasa. Or, autour de cette datte, la donatrice avait également dédié à Vatopedi à titre de métoque le monastère familial de Golia, à Iași. Il faut y entendre donc qu’en réalité, les villages donnés à Vatopédi allaient être affectés au monastère de Golia et administrés par les moines grecs avec

²⁹ V. Barbu, *De bono coniugali*, p. 119–133 ; Gheorghe Lazăr, *Les marchands en Valachie, XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles*, Bucarest, 2006, p. 339–344 ; A.-R. Iancu, *Le rêve de perpétuité*, p. 53 et, pour plus de détails, p. 52–54.

³⁰ Gheorghe Cronț, *Dreptul de ctitorie în Țara Românească și Moldova. Constituirea și natura juridică a fundațiilor în Evul Mediu*, dans « Studii și materiale de istorie medie », IV, 1960, p. 86 ; Voica Pușcașu, *Actul de ctitorire ca fenomen istoric în Țara Românească și Moldova până la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea*, Bucarest, 2001, p. 201–202. Cette obligation des moines envers les fondateurs des lieux de culte n’est pas prise en compte par Arcadie Bodale, *Semnificațiile actelor ctitoricești în Evul Mediu românesc*, dans « Anuarul Institutului de Istorie “A.D. Xenopol” », XLII, 2005, p. 17–56.

l'ensemble du patrimoine de Golia, comme c'était accoutumé pour tout autre lieu de culte valaque ou moldave dédié aux Lieux Saints de l'Orient orthodoxe³¹. L'acte princier précise que dame Anna s'était mise d'accord avec les moines grecs que s'il lui arrivait de tomber dans la pauvreté, de ne pas avoir d'enfants ou d'être frappée par la maladie, ceux-là avaient le devoir de lui porter assistance jusqu'à sa mort³². De même ont procédé les descendants collatéraux du métropolite de Valachie Luc le Cypriote en mars 1693. Après avoir refait le monastère d'Izvorani, la fondation de leur ancêtre, le métropolite Luc, et après avoir reconduit sa dédicace comme métoque au monastère athonite de Simonopetra, le capitaine Jipa de Vernești, à cette époque-là moine Manasie, et son frère Stanciul logothète exigent des moines grecs « qu'ils les tiennent en estime comme il se doit »³³. Pareille estime présupposait également des services d'assistance en cas de faiblesse.

Il y aussi les cas de ceux qui fondaient un monastère et y prenaient l'habit monacal, emmenant avec eux leur patrimoine, ce qui revient encore à ce que leurs frères dans la vie monacale prennent soin d'eux en cas de maladie, à la vieillesse et en fin de vie. D'autres sujets plus ou moins aisés prenaient l'habit monacal dans le monastère fondé par des ancêtres et d'autres membres du lignage – j'ai cité plus haut le cas de Jipa capitaine de Vernești – ou dans tout autre monastère dont la communauté était d'accord à les recevoir. Selon le droit canon, ils étaient obligés à y emporter leur patrimoine, quel qu'il fût, grand ou modeste³⁴. Iane chambellan de Câmpulung, « frappé par la faiblesse et le besoin et la pénurie, sans avoir grâce et soutien de nulle part, réfléchit et inclina sa tête devant le monastère, au père Melchisédech l'hégoumène, qui l'a nourri et l'a honoré avec le nécessaire et avec tout ce qu'il a désiré durant huit ans, jusqu'à ce que le moment est venu et il est décédé »³⁵. Il faut savoir que Iane chambellan, après avoir vécu 40 ans avec son épouse Maria, dont il fut l'héritier, prit l'habit monacal au monastère de Câmpulung pour y être soigné et assisté par les moines, puis y finir ses jours et y être enterré³⁶.

³¹ Pour la pratique de la dédicace, voir Mariana Lazăr, *Acte domnești reglementând statutul mănăstirilor închinat*, dans « Revista istorică », VII, 1996, 5–6, p. 427–436 ; eadem, *Considerații privind statutul mănăstirilor din Țara Românească închinat Sfințelor Locuri (secolele XVIII–XIX)*, dans *Contribuții privitoare la istoria relațiilor dintre țările române și bisericile răsăritene în secolele XIV–XIX*, éd. par Petronel Zahariuc, Iași, 2009, p. 9–33 ; eadem, « Spre folosul acestei sfinte case ». *Constituirea și evoluția domeniului Mănăstirii Cotroceni (secolele XVII–XIX)*, Brăila, 2012 ; Lidia Cotovanu, *Aux débuts de la dédicace des lieux de culte « roumains » envers le Mont-Athos (seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle) : entreprise publique ou privée ?*, dans *IX International Scientific Conference « Mount Athos : Spreading the Light to the Orthodox World : the Metochia »*. *Conference Proceedings. Thessaloniki, 21–23 November 2014*, Thessalonique, 2015, p. 191–215.

³² *Documente – Iași*, vol. I, n° 60, p. 87.

³³ *Documente românești din arhiva Mănăstirii Simonopetra de la Muntele Athos*, éd. par Petronel Zahariuc, collab. Florin Marinescu, Dumitru Nastase, Iași, 2016, n° 422, p. 382–384.

³⁴ V. Barbu, *De bono coniugali*, p. 122, avec bibliographie.

³⁵ DRH, B, vol. XXXIII, éd. par Gheorghe Lazăr, Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, Andreea-Roxana Iancu, Bucarest, 2006, n° 14, p. 17 (31 octobre 1647) ; cité par V. Barbu, *De bono coniugali*, p. 158.

³⁶ DRH, B, vol. XXXII, éd. par Violeta Barbu, Gheorghe Lazăr, Oana Rizescu, Bucarest, 2001, n° 286, p. 297–298 (31 octobre 1647).

Une pratique très courante était la donation conditionnée – réminiscence de l'*adelphaton* byzantin³⁷ –, la condition consistant à ce que les moines bénéficiaires portent secours et assistance au donateur sa vie durant. Duca ancien grand échanson de Moldavie et son épouse Zlata avaient remis leur sort dans les mains des moines du monastère de Solca, en juin 1625. N'ayant pas eu d'enfants, les époux décidèrent d'y dédier leurs biens, tout en gardant pour eux, tant qu'ils seraient en vie, un village et un lieu désert, mais qui, après leur mort, devaient revenir également au dit monastère³⁸.

Dans tous les cas évoqués, il s'agit de gens riches ou pauvres, qui possèdent des biens à mobiliser afin de s'offrir de l'assistance ; les pauvres, dans ce cas, correspondent à la catégorie occidentale des *pauperes*, s'agissant de gens qui possèdent un minimum de biens leur permettant de garder l'autonomie d'existence en société. Ainsi, là où la famille fait défaut, l'individu valide, apte à vivre de son propre travail et avoir, a la possibilité de se tourner vers ses communautés d'encadrement social immédiat (le voisinage, le village, la paroisse, etc.) ou, le plus souvent, vers les monastères, institutions dotées – de par l'une de leurs missions originaires (*infra*) – des moyens appropriés pour porter secours et assistance aux faibles. Son patrimoine, d'héritage ou accumulé sa vie durant, lui sert de monnaie d'échange pour se procurer des services d'assistance. C'est une caractéristique dominante des Principautés sur toute la période ici prise en compte.

L'ÉGLISE, LA PAUVRETÉ INVOLONTAIRE ET LA PAUVRETÉ ASSUMÉE

Qu'est-ce qu'il advient des personnes qui n'ont ni famille, ni communauté d'attachement, ni moyens physiques et matériels d'existence autonome ? C'est le cas des errants et des vagabonds mendiants, des invalides sans moyens, mais aussi des malades contagieux et des malades mentaux, susceptibles de perturber l'ordre et la santé publics. Ce sont *les pauvres qui n'ont rien*, des marginaux, désignés dans la littérature occidentale du nom d'*indigents* (en roumain *sărăci*). Il faut les distinguer donc des pauvres aptes à vivre de leur propre travail, possesseurs d'un minimum de biens. D'ordinaire, les marginaux sont concentrés dans les villes³⁹.

³⁷ Mirjana Zivojinović, *Adelfati u Vizantiji i srednjovekovnoj Srbiji*, dans « Zbornik Radova Vizantoloshkog Instituta », XI, 1968, p. 241–270 ; Paul Magdalino, *sub voce* « Adelphaton », dans *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. I, New York, Oxford, 1998, p. 19 sq. ; Ioannis Konidaris, *Νομική Θεώρηση των μοναστηριακών τοπικών*, Athènes, 2003², p. 223–226 ; Florentia Evangelatou-Notara, *Ἀδελφάτων. Ψυχικόν. Evidence from Notes on Manuscripts*, dans « Byzantion », 75, 2005, p. 165–170 ; E.S. Levshina, *Svedenija ob institute adelfata v serbskich aktach kontsa XIV – nachala XV v.*, dans « Vspomogatelnye istoricheskie distsipliny », XXXIV, 2014, 34, p. 254–164.

³⁸ DRH, A, vol. XVIII, éd. par Ioan Caproșu, Valentin Constantinov, Bucarest, 2012, n° 348, p. 421–422 (24 juin 1625).

³⁹ Pour la distinction entre *pauvres économiques* et *pauvres sociaux* à Byzance, et d'autres typologies de la pauvreté en Occident, voir Evelyne Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, IV^e–VII^e siècles*, Paris, La Haye, 1977 ; Michel Mollat, *Les pauvres au Moyen Âge*, Paris, 2006².

Le « système-monde » chrétien dispose de toute une palette de doctrines, de principes moraux et d'institutions – articulés de façon systémique – destinés à offrir de l'assistance aux marginaux. Au cœur du système se trouve la figure du Christ, les fidèles valides qui aspirent au salut de l'âme et les pauvres qui n'ont rien, associés à la figure du Christ, qui choisit la pauvreté et le sacrifice de sa vie pour l'amour des prochains. Les chrétiens valides doivent offrir une partie de leurs biens au Sauveur en signe de reconnaissance et ainsi racheter leurs péchés. Faute d'accès direct au destinataire divin, la donation est orientée vers les pauvres, qui incarnent Christ sur terre. Restés en marge du monde du travail, les pauvres sont censés passer leur temps à faire des prières pour l'âme des donateurs. Ils sont rendus indispensables au salut des mortels, alors que l'accumulation de biens est paradoxalement encouragée afin d'y puiser les ressources matérielles nécessaires à l'assistance des marginaux : plus les fidèles donnent, plus ils ont des chances d'atteindre le salut et plus l'assistance des indigents est assurée⁴⁰.

On ignore dans quelle proportion les chrétiens valides distribuaient des aumônes directement aux pauvres, durant les premiers siècles chrétiens⁴¹. On sait en échange que l'Église a assumé très tôt la grande œuvre de l'assistance de la pauvreté. Les évêques ont été les premiers grands bâtisseurs d'institutions d'assistance sociale : hôpitaux, asiles pour les personnes âgées, asiles pour les orphelins, léproseries, auberges pour les étrangers errants. Les laïcs aisés en ont suivi le comportement⁴².

En règle générale, les institutions d'assistance étaient érigées auprès des monastères, qui étaient dotés du personnel et des moyens matériels nécessaires à faire entretenir et perdurer le système d'assistance bâti aux premiers siècles chrétiens. Pour en garantir la durabilité, la législation byzantine a déclaré les biens monastiques inaliénables⁴³. Autorisés à accumuler des biens afin d'entretenir des institutions d'assistance et distribuer des aumônes, les monastères se comportaient en lieux de dépôt de terres par donation dont une partie des revenus annuels devait servir à commémorer les donateurs et à assister les pauvres. C'est de la sorte que les couvents sont devenus des véritables 'banques' de stockage de bien immobiliers⁴⁴ et les moines des intercesseurs entre, d'une part, les pécheurs et la divinité et, d'autre part, entre les fidèles valides et les pauvres⁴⁵.

⁴⁰ Sur l'« invention » de la figure chrétienne du *pauvre*, voir Paul Veyne, *Le pain et le cirque. Sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique*, Paris, 1976, p. 47–73.

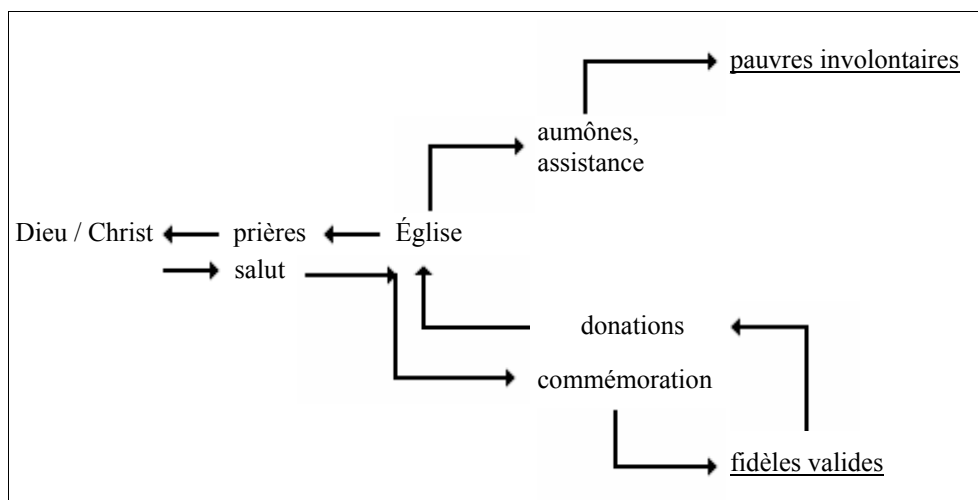
⁴¹ Selon Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*, Hanovre, Londres, 2002, p. 19–26, durant les premiers siècles chrétiens, les deux types de charité, *directe* et *indirecte*, ont coexisté.

⁴² Dimitris Konstantelos, *Βυζαντινή φιλανθρωπία και κοινωνική πρόνοια*, Athènes, 1986 ; Timothy Miller, *Η Γέννησις του Νοσοκομείου στην Βυζαντινή Αυτοκρατορία*, trad. par N. Kelermenos, Athènes, 1998 ; idem, *The Orphans of Byzantium : Child Welfare in the Christian Empire*, Washington, 2003.

⁴³ D. Konstantelos, *op. cit.*, p. 213, sur la législation réglementant la fondation d'institutions charitables.

⁴⁴ Aspect développé dans Lidia Cotovanu, *Orthodox Monasteries as Banks : A Comparison with Catholic Mounts of Piety*, dans *Does Monastic Economy Matter ? Religious Patterns of Economic Behavior*, éd. par Roumen Avramov, Hélias Kolovos, Phokion Kotzagiorgis, Leiden, Boston, 2020, sous presses.

⁴⁵ Eliana Magnani, *Du don aux églises au don pour le salut de l'âme en Occident (IV^e–XI^e siècle) : le paradigme eucharistique*, dans « Bulletin du Centre d'études médiévales d'Auxerre », hors série,



En donnant à l'Église, les fidèles donnaient sciemment ou non aux pauvres. Certains ktitors (fondateurs de lieux de culte) ne manquent pas de préciser dans les *typika* de leurs monastères que ceux-ci étaient censés non seulement servir d'enceintes et lieux de vie aux moines, mais aussi de lieux de secours aux pauvres et d'hébergement aux voyageurs, deux catégories sociales vulnérables. Comme à Byzance⁴⁶, cette représentation de l'acte philanthropique est attestée dans les Principautés danubiennes aussi, dans les *typika* des monastères locaux⁴⁷.

C'est de ce système, fait d'échanges, de circulation de biens et de services entre l'Église, les fidèles valides et les pauvres, qu'ont hérité les États orthodoxes bulgare et serbe et, à travers la filière sud-slave, les pays roumains aussi. Bien évidemment, la Valachie et la Moldavie n'ont pas connu l'opulence byzantine, les vrais hôpitaux byzantins, les *girocomeia*, les *orfanotropheia* et les *léproseries*, des institutions spécialisées dans l'assistance des personnes âgées, des orphelins, des invalides, des malades contagieux et mentaux. Pourtant, les institutions d'assistance n'y font pas totalement défaut, on le verra sous peu.

Dans les centaines d'actes de donation et de legs testamentaires adressés aux lieux de culte, au cours des XV^e–XVII^e siècles, les donateurs se montrent très rarement soucieux d'orienter une partie de leurs biens au profit des pauvres,

n° 2, 2008, mis en ligne le 19 janvier 2009 : <http://cem.revues.org/9932> ; DOI : 10.4000/cem.9932 ; *L'intercession du Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne. Autour d'une pratique sociale*, éd. par Jean-Marie Moeglin, Genève, 2004.

⁴⁶ Kostis Smyrlis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du X^e – milieu du XIV^e siècle)*, Paris, 2006, p. 238–239, 240.

⁴⁷ Voir le cas du monastère de Cotroceni (fin du XVII^e siècle) : M. Lazăr, « *Spre folosul acestei sfinte case* », p. 76, 348–349 ; représentation entièrement valable encore dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle : Adriana Camariano-Cioran, *Academiile domnești din București și Iași*, Bucarest, 1971, p. 77 ; L. Livadă-Cadeschi, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

comme le prince de Moldavie Istratie Dabija le fait lorsqu'en donnant un domaine au monastère de Bârnova, il exige que les moines supportent les frais de mariage de douze filles pauvres, qu'ils fassent construire douze fontaines publiques et construire six cellules pour les voyageurs⁴⁸. Le souci majeur des communs des mortels était d'avoir en contrepartie des prières de commémoration et atteindre le salut de l'âme. La redistribution d'aumônes par les institutions ecclésiastiques y était devenue coutume. Cela ne veut pas dire pour autant que les fidèles valides ignoraient totalement les pauvres situés en marge de leur communauté. À en juger d'après le fait qu'encore de nos jours, lors des enterrements, des messes de dimanche, aux fêtes des Pâques et le jour de la commémoration des morts, il est accoutumé de distribuer des aumônes aux plus pauvres du village, du voisinage, de la paroisse, parfois même de les mettre à table, en contrepartie des prières de commémoration, je concluais qu'il s'agit bien d'importantes réminiscences d'anciennes pratiques charitables. Bien que les sources n'en témoignent que très rarement, il faut bien admettre que lors des grandes fêtes chrétiennes, les prêtres et surtout les moines mettaient à table les pauvres ou leur distribuaient des aumônes aux portails des lieux de culte. Ce devait être la pratique la plus courante, mais diluée dans l'oralité et donc inaccessible à l'observation du chercheur⁴⁹.

Néanmoins, comme je l'ai évoqué plus haut, l'assistance des pauvres dans un cadre institutionnalisé ne faisait pas défaut non plus. Comme à Byzance, le rôle principal dans la distribution de l'assistance revint aux églises érigées en villes, où les « pauvres » avaient tendance à se concentrer, mais surtout aux monastères⁵⁰. Les monastères, en leur qualité de grands propriétaires terriens et de lieux de vie en communauté close, avaient tant les ressources humaines que l'espace nécessaire pour abriter des institutions d'assistance 'spécialisées', connues dans les Principautés du nom de « bolnițe » (sl. *bolnica*) et, au XVII^e siècle, aussi de celui de « șpitali » (it. *ospedale*), une sorte d'asiles (semblables aux *ptochotropheia* byzantins) plutôt que des hôpitaux au sens moderne du terme⁵¹.

En effet, à part les « bolnițe » destinées aux moines malades et âgés, certains monastères étaient dotés, par les princes régnants mais aussi par des particuliers,

⁴⁸ Mention tardive : *Uricarul sau colecțiune de diferite acte care pot servi la istoria românilor*, éd. par Th. Codrescu, vol. XXV, Iași, 1895, p. 302, cité par Nicolae Stoicescu, *Repertoriul bibliografic al localităților și monumentelor medievale din Moldova*, Bucarest, 1974, p. 510, n. 94.

⁴⁹ V. Pușcașu, *op. cit.*, p. 203. Voir quelques échos de ces pratiques dans le *typikon* du monastère bucarestois de Cotroceni : M. Lazăr, « *Spre folosul acestei sfinte case* », p. 38, 348–349, ou dans le registre de comptes du monastère de Râmnicu-Vâlcea : Gheorghe Lazăr, *Despre averile mănăstirești din Țara Românească (secolul al XVIII-lea)*. *Cazul mănăstirii de la Râmnicu Sărat*, dans *Orașul și Biserica : patrimoniu, oameni, activități (secolele XV–XIX)*, éd. par Laurențiu Rădvan, Iași, 2019, p. 150–151.

⁵⁰ Le prince de Valachie Michel le Brave (1593–1601) décida d'envoyer les invalides de guerre auprès des monastères, pour y recevoir de l'assistance : Nicolae Iorga, *Calicii lui Mihai Viteazul. O nouă orânduire a lui*, dans « *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile Secțiunii istorice* », III^e série, XXI, 1939, p. 25–28.

⁵¹ Nicolae Vătămanu, *De la începuturile medicinei românești*, Bucarest, 1966, *passim*.

d'asiles pour les « pauvres », subventionnés des revenus monastiques. Nous avons connaissance de quelques institutions de ce genre et cela grâce toujours à des *typika* ou des confirmations princières des domaines mobilisés pour servir de base matérielle à leur fonctionnement. Tel était l'asile « pour les pauvres invalides » construit en 1620 auprès du monastère de Golia de Iași (métoque du monastère athonite de Vatopédi) aux frais de dame Maria Kataratos, mariée Paléologue⁵². À la même époque, le métropolite de Moldavie Anastasie Crimca recevait de la part du prince Gaspar Grațiani la confirmation du droit de possession sur un terrain situé dans la ville de Suceava, avec la permission d'y construire « un asile pour les pauvres, les impuissants et les boiteux et les aveugles et d'autres invalides, pour qu'ils puissent reposer là-bas » ; la gestion de cette institution revenait au monastère de Dragomirna, fondé par le même métropolite Crimca⁵³. Il y a plusieurs traces de « bolnițe » en Valachie, mais les sources ne précisent pas toujours s'il s'agit d'institutions destinées à l'assistance des moines ou des « pauvres » laïcs⁵⁴. On sait tout de même que la princesse Bălașa, l'épouse de Constantin Șerban de Valachie (1654–1658), a fondé un asile auprès de l'église Sainte-Parascève de Târgoviște⁵⁵. Le grand palatin Radu Dudescu († ante 20 juin 1649) en a fondé un autre, devant le monastère de Stelea, toujours à Târgoviște⁵⁶, alors que le grand spathaire Mihaï Cantacuzène fit ériger à Bucarest un « asile et maison pour les étrangers, pour le repos [...] de nos frères pauvres, qui souffrent de maladies »⁵⁷.

La fondation de Mihaï Cantacuzène, connue du nom de *Colțea*, est considérée dans l'historiographie roumaine comme étant le premier vrai hôpital érigé dans les pays roumains. Certes, c'était un édifice bien plus grand que les autres asiles ; il était doté d'un minimum de personnel médical, mais il s'agit toujours d'un hôpital érigé auprès d'un monastère, dont le fonctionnement dépendait en grande partie des revenus tirés des domaines monastiques⁵⁸. Je dirais que la vraie nouveauté, dans le

⁵² *Documente – Iași*, vol. I, n° 139, p. 189 (12 avril 1620).

⁵³ DIR, A, vol. XVII/4, Bucarest, 1956, p. 462 (13 avril 1620). Pour cet hôpital, voir Alexandru Gonța, *Mitropolitul Anastasie Crimca, fondatorul celui dintâi spital din Moldova*, dans idem, *Studii de istorie medievală*, éd. par Ștefan S. Gorovei, Maria Magdalena Székely, Iași, 1998, p. 259–262 ; N. Vătămanu, *op. cit.*, p. 99–104.

⁵⁴ C'est le cas de l'asile de Simidreni, en Valachie, vocable Saint-Démétrius, et du « lieu abritant les voyageurs », situés en face du monastère d'Argeș, deux institutions d'assistance qui recevaient, en 1523, de la part du prince Vladislav, la « cășăria » (impôt princier sur le fromage) du département de Pădureț : DRH, B, vol. II, éd. par Ștefan Ștefănescu, Olimpia Diaconescu, Bucarest, 1972, n° 218, p. 418. Pour d'autres asiles monastiques, voir Al. Gonța, *Un spital de mănăstire la Putna în veacul al XV-lea*, dans idem, *Studii de istorie medievală*, p. 248–256 ; Luiza Zamora, *Biserici bolniță din Țara Românească în secolele XVI–XVIII*, București, Cluj-Napoca, 2007.

⁵⁵ N. Vătămanu, *op. cit.*, p. 125, n. 123.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁷ L'asile est connu du nom de *Colțea* : N. Vătămanu, *op. cit.*, p. 125–126 ; Nicolae Stoicescu, *Repertoriul bibliografic al monumentelor feudale din București*, Bucarest, 1961, p. 135–137 ; L. Livadă-Cadeschi, *op. cit.*, p. 168–172.

⁵⁸ I. Ionașcu, *Documente bucureștene privitoare la Mănăstirea Colțea*, Bucarest, 1941 ; I. Ionașcu, G. Barbu, *Le plus ancien hôpital de Bucarest : Colțea*, Montpellier, 1958.

cas de cette fondation charitable d'utilité publique, pourtant érigée par un particulier, fut le mode de son financement. À part les revenus monastiques qui y étaient affectés, le fondateur Cantacuzène avait déposé une importante somme d'argent à la Zecca de Venise, dont l'intérêt annuel était destiné, entre autres, au subventionnement de l'hôpital bucarestois⁵⁹. La sortie du cadre traditionnel de subventionnement de cet hôpital eut pour effet la diversification des sources qui en témoignent. Il s'agit de la correspondance entre les moines de Saint-Sabbas de Bucarest et les agents financiers des Cantacuzène à Venise, chargés de gérer l'intérêt annuel des dépôts du fondateur de Colțea à la Zecca vénitienne. Ce type de sources, datant du début du XVIII^e siècle, est rare dans les archives roumaines⁶⁰.

Bref, toutes ces institutions abritées et gérées par les monastères, dans leurs enceintes ou sur leurs domaines, répondent au commandement biblique du don et de l'amour pour son prochain. Les *pauvres*, à savoir ceux qui n'avaient ni famille, ni moyens matériels pour une existence autonome⁶¹, étaient, en principe, les seuls bénéficiaires de l'assistance gratuite, subventionnée par cet « impôt indirect » qu'était le don, versé (*in vivo* ou *per causam mortis*) par les fidèles valides, leur souverain en tête, envers les lieux de culte érigés en gestionnaires de l'économie du salut, de la mémoire liturgique et de l'assistance. C'est pour conclure qu'à l'époque étudiée, l'assistance publique était réservée aux individus privés de famille et d'indépendance physique et matérielle, en somme, à ceux qui étaient ou se retrouvaient exclus des réseaux sociaux locaux, qu'ils soient nés sur place ou arrivés d'ailleurs.

Malgré l'exaltation de la pauvreté par la morale chrétienne, nécessaire à la mise en marche du système d'assistance des marginaux, nul chrétien valide n'aspirait à en faire partie et à vivre d'aumônes. On l'a vu auparavant, la même morale justifiait l'accumulation de biens, car nécessaire à l'entretien de ceux qui se trouvaient tout en bas de l'échelle sociale. Or, du fait que tout chrétien qui vivait de son propre travail et de ses propres biens était incité à faire don d'une partie de son avoir, l'acte de donation envers les lieux de culte devint même, pour les plus aisés, aussi un moyen d'étaler la richesse et le rang social.

Selon une croyance populaire, qui puisait ses racines dans l'Ancien Testament, Dieu était le vrai propriétaire de la terre ; les hommes n'en avaient qu'un droit d'usage,

⁵⁹ Puisque le spathaire n'avait pas précisé par écrit la destinée du dépôt, les moines de Saint-Sabbas de Bucarest ont peiné à récupérer l'intérêt promis au fonctionnement de l'hôpital de Colțea : Lidia Cotovanu, Gheorghe Lazăr, *Un marchand banquier au service du prince Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688–1714) : l'Épirote Nica Papa saraf*, dans « Θεσσαρίσματα », XLVI, 2016, p. 42–43.

⁶⁰ Sources publiées *in extenso ibidem*, p. 47–66.

⁶¹ Les contagieux en faisaient partie ; le caractère dangereux de leur maladie imposait leur isolement, ce qui entraînait la perte des droits sur leurs biens : N. Vătămanu, *op. cit.*, p. 76. L'auteur cite le cas de Mogoș de Valachie qui, ayant attrapé la lèpre, a cédé sa terre au burgrave Mihnea, pour qu'il lui porte de l'assistance : DIR, B, vol. XVI/3, Bucarest, 1952, n° 14, p. 14 (9 mars 1552). On peut supposer que Mogoș s'était retiré dans un asile pour lépreux, mais que son assistance était assurée par le bénéficiaire de son domaine foncier. Son cas semble indiquer que les asiles étaient un dernier recours pour ceux qui n'avaient pas de famille, mais qui possédaient un minimum de ressources matérielles. On y reviendra avec d'autres exemples plus loin.

d'où leur obligation de donner à l'Église la dixième partie (la dîme) des biens comme impôt d'utilisation⁶². Le droit positif avait réglé de manière plus rigoureuse ce que l'on devait à l'Église, notamment au moment du règlement de la succession *ab intestat* : une quote-part, si le défunt avait des enfants héritiers, calculable en fonction du nombre d'enfants ; un tiers, si le défunt n'avait pas d'enfants mais d'autres héritiers consanguins (frères, cousins, oncles et tantes) ; un tiers, si le défunt était membre du clergé. En cas de déshérence, l'ensemble des biens revenait au souverain, qui les cédait, très souvent, aux lieux de culte du pays en charge d'assumer la commémoration du défunt⁶³. Le processus de 'privatisation' de la terre a mené au développement des pratiques successorales testamentaires, qui permettaient aux possesseurs de décider *in vivo* de leurs avoirs. Les testateurs accordaient une attention toute particulière aux donations religieuses, faites en contrepartie de l'assistance (en cas de déshérence), d'un lieu « honorable » d'enterrement et de la commémoration de l'âme sur des périodes le plus longues possible ; plus les dons étaient importants, plus longtemps la mémoire du donateur et des siens allait être entretenue par des prières de commémoration.

Les cas sont rares où les testateurs disposent que des aumônes soient distribuées directement aux « pauvres ». Le peu d'exemples qu'on peut évoquer indique quand même que la pratique existait. Irina, la fille d'Istratie Măciucă de Iași, qui avait désigné son époux Mihalcea *abăger* comme héritier de tous ses biens, demandait expressément à celui-ci de lui faire des commémorations « avec des prières de quarante jours et des aumônes envers les pauvres, envers les saintes églises, conformément à la coutume chrétienne »⁶⁴. Le marchand Stavru de Bucarest, de son côté, a laissé à l'asile du monastère de Colțea une importante somme d'argent « pour le soin des malades »⁶⁵.

En règle générale, les fidèles se contentaient de laisser une partie de leurs biens à l'Église, sans se soucier de la façon dont ils allaient être distribués envers les « pauvres » ; ce qui comptait véritablement pour eux c'était d'avoir la commémoration de leur âme et de celle de leurs parents. Par conséquent, c'était aux lieux de culte bénéficiaires des divers types de donations d'en assumer cette charge.

L'ÉTAT-PRINCE FACE À LA PAUVRETÉ

C'est, *grosso modo*, l'état du système d'assistance sociale dans les pays roumains autour de l'an 1700. Reste à dire quelques mots sur l'implication du souverain, qui se confond avec l'État, dans le fonctionnement de ce système.

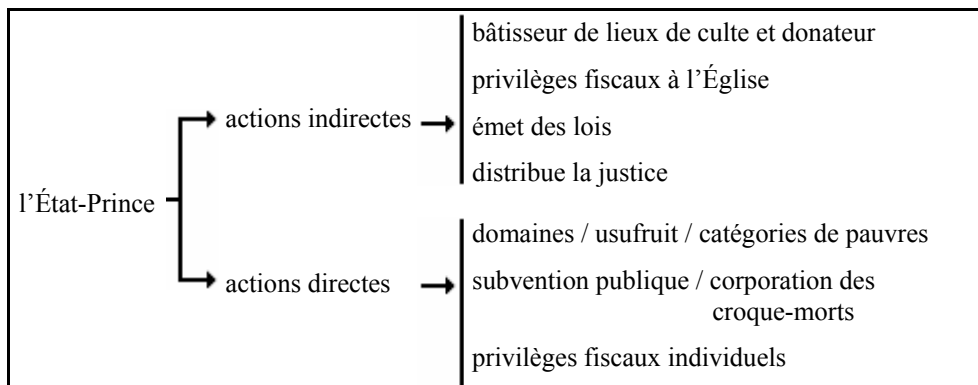
⁶² A.-R. Iancu, *Le rêve de perpétuité*, p. 49.

⁶³ *Instituții feudale din țările române. Dicționar*, éd. par Ovid Sachelarie, Nicolae Stoicescu, Bucarest, 1988, p. 307, lemme « moștenire », p. 375, lemme « prădalnică ».

⁶⁴ *Documente – Iași*, vol. II, *Acte interne (1661–1690)*, éd. par Ioan Caproșu, Iași, 2000, n° 661, p. 582 (29 novembre 1689).

⁶⁵ Gheorghe Lazăr, *Documente privitoare la negustorii Pepano și la ctitoria lor de la Codreni pe Mostiște (II)*, dans « Studii și materiale de istorie medie », XIX, 2001, n° 12, p. 269 (9 juillet 1713).

À l'instar du souverain byzantin, le prince régnant valaque/moldave se comporte en évergète, législateur et juge suprême. Il est le plus grand bâtisseur de lieux de culte mis au service commun de ses sujets. Il approuve le droit de possession de toute sorte de biens par les églises et les monastères, tout en les augmentant de ses propres donations et en les soutenant d'exemptions fiscales. Il légifère et administre la justice de façon à faire perdurer les institutions religieuses, desquelles dépendait l'entier système d'assistance sociale, d'enseignement et de production culturelle⁶⁶.



On a vu plus haut qu'en vertu de la tradition byzantine, le pouvoir public remet l'assistance des pauvres sur le compte de l'Église et que celle-ci n'offrait de l'assistance (gratuite) qu'à une frange très réduite du corps social. Dans cette distribution des tâches, les subventions princières à proprement parler, plus ou moins directes, restaient exceptionnelles. On les connaît toujours grâce aux implications patrimoniales des gestes charitables princiers.

Le village de Mățăul-de-Jos fut exempté d'impôts princiers depuis les temps reculés de la fondation du pays et jusqu'en 1761, à condition que les villageois accordent de l'assistance (nourriture, vêtements, travaux d'utilité domestique, etc.) aux « pauvres » (invalides et malades contagieux) demeurant dans un lieu isolé de la ville de Câmpulung, auprès d'une église⁶⁷. La seule différence entre ce cas et les fondations privées évoquées auparavant réside dans le fait que le village mobilisé à

⁶⁶ Conformément au droit « constitutionnel » byzantin (*Syntagma* de Blastarès, XIV^e siècle), le souverain, en sa qualité d' élu « par la grâce de Dieu » et patron de l'Église, avait pour obligation de protéger cette dernière par les armes, d'augmenter ses biens et, par là, de veiller au bien-être de ses sujets : Lidia Cotovanu, « *Qu'on prie pour moi là-bas et ici* ». *Donation religieuse et patriotisme local dans l'Orient orthodoxe (XVI^e–XVII^e siècles)*, dans *Histoire, mémoire et dévotion. Regards croisés sur la construction des identités dans le monde orthodoxe aux époques byzantine et post-byzantine*, éd. par Radu G. Păun, Seyssel, 2016, p. 207–213, avec bibliographie.

⁶⁷ En 1761, le prince Constantin Mavrocordat a transféré l'assistance des « pauvres » de Câmpulung sur le compte du Trésor public, dont les subventions allaient être distribuées et gérées par la métropole du pays : voir N. Vătămanu, *op. cit.*, p. 38–56 ; L. Livadă-Cadeschi, *op. cit.*, p. 142–146.

assurer l'entretien des pauvres de Câmpulung était tiré du domaine public. Sinon, c'était toujours un lieu de culte qui était chargé de gérer les services d'assistance.

Dans un autre cas, le prince de Moldavie Petru Rareș (1527–1538, 1541–1546) avait cédé aux lépreux (peut-être aux invalides plus généralement) de Iași un domaine public, situé en marge de la ville, pour qu'ils s'y installent et construisent des maisons, en leur accordant également douze travailleurs exemptés d'impôts (*poslušnici*) pour subvenir à leurs besoins quotidiens⁶⁸. C'est un cas rare d'assistance qui n'implique pas l'Église.

C'était toujours le pouvoir princier, en Valachie notamment, qui subventionnait les croque-morts (*ciocli*) chargés de l'enterrement des mendiants et des vagabonds décédés dans les espaces urbains – les funérailles, qui supposaient des coûts et des rituels accompagnant le passage de l'âme dans l'au-delà, nécessaires à tout sujet chrétien, s'encadraient dans les pratiques d'assistance⁶⁹.

Certaines personnes âgées qui n'avaient pas d'enfants, ni des moyens matériels pour assurer leurs dernières années de vie, recevaient le soutien du souverain sous forme d'exemption d'impôts. C'était en règle générale le cas des *pauvres honteux* (nobles appauvris), dont le rang social les empêchait de rechercher les aumônes de l'Église⁷⁰. Ainsi, Despa « greaca », la première épouse du trésorier Iane Psira, reçut de la part de Matei Basarab l'exemption de tous les impôts courants, « puisqu'elle est étrangère et sans époux et enfants et a été rattrapée par la vieillesse ici dans le pays ». Le prince lui permit d'habiter les maisons qu'elle avait de son époux, à condition qu'à sa mort elle les cède au monastère de Valea⁷¹.

Faute de sources spécialisées concernant le sujet, on ignore l'étendue de ce genre d'actions princières. De toute façon, elles devaient être isolées dans l'ensemble du système d'assistance sociale, dont la gestion revenait à l'Église, moyennant les fonds matériels acquis à travers les actes de fondation et de donation princiers et privés ou encore à travers les legs testamentaires des fidèles valides.

CONCLUSIONS

On constate que la base matérielle de l'assistance, qu'elle soit assurée en famille, en communauté extra-familiale, par les monastères ou par le souverain en

⁶⁸ N. Vătămanu, *op. cit.*, p. 70–71.

⁶⁹ En Moldavie, les croque-morts étaient organisés en corporations aux responsabilités fiscales collectives et diminuées, placées sous l'autorité de l'Église : *ibidem*, p. 71 sq. ; Constantin Cihodaru, Gheorghe Platon, *Istoria orașului Iași*, vol. I, Iași, 1980, p. 204–205 ; *Instituții feudale din țările române. Dicționar*, éd. par Ovid Sachelarie, Nicolae Stoicescu, p. 100–101, lemme « ciocli ».

⁷⁰ Pour cette catégorie de pauvres, voir Richard C. Trexler, *Charity and the Defense of Urban Elites in the Italian Communes*, dans *The Rich, the Well Born, and the Powerful : Elites and Upper Classes in History*, éd. par Fr. Cople Jaher, Urbana, 1973, p. 64–109 ; Giovanni Ricci, *Naissance du pauvre honteux : entre l'histoire des idées et l'histoire sociale*, « Annales. Économie, Société, Civilisation », XXXVIII, 1983, 1, p. 158–177.

⁷¹ CDȚR, vol. V, n° 1086, p. 459 (23 juillet 1643).

personne, reste la terre. Les possesseurs de plein droit s'en servent comme monnaie d'échange pour s'offrir de l'assistance auprès des héritiers biologiques, d'autres parents consanguins et spirituels ou des monastères en cas de déshérence. Le fait que les personnes sans enfants recourent le plus souvent aux monastères renvoie à la charge d'intérêt public d'assister les indigents qui incombait depuis les temps reculés de Byzance aux couvents.

En effet, dans l'économie du salut mise au point par les Pères grecs de l'Église et les empereurs byzantins, les monastères sont les lieux de gestion à la fois de la mémoire liturgique des fidèles valides et de l'assistance de ceux qui n'ont rien, ni moyens physiques, ni moyens matériels pour une vie autonome. En somme, les couvents fonctionnent comme des lieux de dépôt de terres par donation, l'obligation leur incombant d'entretenir en échange diverses œuvres d'intérêt public, dont l'assistance des pauvres.

Enfin, la faible centralisation de l'État et la faible monétarisation des services publics (et privés) comportent deux conséquences pour ce qui tient de l'assistance sociale. D'une part, l'État ne répond que de manière ponctuelle et sporadique aux besoins d'assistance de la pauvreté. D'autre part, les gestes philanthropiques de la seigneurie reposent – comme dans le cas de la rémunération de tout service rendu au pays – sur la mobilisation de ses ressources foncières.

Ces trois caractéristiques du système d'assistance sociale valaque et moldave font restreindre la production documentaire concernant le sujet au seul champ de la mobilité patrimoniale. En même temps, elles ont contribué à ce que le système d'assistance sociale des deux pays ne sombre pas complètement dans l'oralité. Grâce à la base patrimoniale de subvention des œuvres d'assistance, nous disposons d'un minimum d'informations au sujet des remèdes sociaux et institutionnels contre les accidents de la vie et l'indigence.

HEALING IN THE AGE OF ORALITY. WHAT ARE THE SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PRACTICES IN WALLACHIA AND MOLDAVIA IN THE FIFTEENTH–SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES?

Abstract

Nearly all of the Wallachian and Moldavian *internal* documents, as historians call them, were issued for reasons of patrimonial transactions: the mobility of the land was the main source for producing written documents. Cases under the canon law were resolved orally as late as the eighteenth century; therefore, in the absence of ecclesiastical archives, the study of social assistance offered privately or publicly to those in need is hindered by this documentary void. To gather a minimum of information on this topic, *internal* documents are the only resource. They reveal that in the Danubian Principalities there were three main providers of social assistance:

the families/the close communities, the monasteries and the prince, all three using land (real estate) as means for exchange. The weak bureaucratisation of the state and the church thus reduced the range of documentary production to the mobility of patrimony. However, owing to the fact that all three welfare providers, *i.e.* private assistance, monasteries and the prince, resorted to land as currency and means of sustenance, the primary sources become valuable, and the researcher can recover, indirectly, the practices of social assistance which would have otherwise been lost due to the predominance of orality.

Keywords: social assistance; orality; paupers; poor; donations; patrimony; church; Wallachia; Moldavia

BROTHERHOOD OR GUILD? SOLIDARITY, MUTUALITY AND REPRESENTATION AMONG CONFRATERNITIES, ASSISTANCE AND COMMUNITIES IN MODERN AGE NAPLES

GIOVANNI LOMBARDI*

COMPLEXITY VS. STEREOTYPE

A site: Naples. A place: the Mediterranean. A religious climate: the Catholic Reform, that would exert its effects until the twentieth century. A role: capital of the kingdom, business-place and military stronghold. These alone suggest the main social traits of one of the most populated cities of Europe, with the largest population in the sixteenth century – except for Istanbul –, on a par with Paris and London until the middle of the seventeenth century, when pestilence wiped out a large part of its inhabitants and turned the city into an ‘endless hospital.’¹ A harbor-city projected onto the sea with its famous hills and coasts, Naples had a closely woven network of brotherhoods, shelters, guilds and similar foundations with ambiguous features such as the *estaurite* – from the Greek *stauros* (i.e. cross) – and many so-called ‘pious places’ led by laymen, usually found inside churches/chapels or identified with the churches/chapels themselves.²

Some fraternities were overtly guilds, while others were marked *de facto* by the craftsmen’s presence. As an example, the St. Trinity of the Pilgrims’ Hospital was co-founded by artist masters around 1578. This arch-confraternity had already enjoyed the favor of the elites and fame in the early seventeenth century, when, just before the 1647–1648 revolt, its governing body changed the terms of membership, curbing the number of artisans, and laying off ‘public’ merchants and gold-fabric dealers. To remind of its origins, the artist guardian office and bourgeois mutuality were preserved: thus, the artisan legacy faded but nevertheless remained in place. In other cases, there were arts and crafts guilds which co-led institutions that were anything but corporative. The silk merchants’ heads of guilds were members of the Annunziata Hospital’s council during the seventeenth century, while the traders were delegates

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¹ Carlo Francesco Riaco, *Il giudizio di Napoli. Discorso del passato contagio, rassomigliato al giudizio universale. In cui si specificano le qualità, e numeri de’ morti, con tutti gl’ accidenti intervenuti*, Perugia, 1658, p. 57; Idamaria Fusco, *Peste, demografia e fiscalità nel Regno di Napoli del XVII secolo*, Milan, 2007.

² Giovanni Lombardi, *Societas, mestieri e assistenza a Napoli in età moderna*, in *Assistenza, previdenza e mutualità nel Mezzogiorno moderno e contemporaneo*, ed. by Ennio de Simone, Vittoria Ferrandino, vol. I, Milan, 2006, pp. 111–128.

of the St. Nicholas Hospital's board. Practically, masters and businessmen governed charitable institutions observing their statutes and mission; sometimes they were Flemish, Venetian, or Genoese, not rarely consuls of the foreign states. Broadly speaking, corporative subjects acted to improve non-corporative organizations, joining city life through ordinary and public practice. There are many examples in this regard.

In fact, several foundations worked toward largely shared goals, such as: ransoming captives and slaves, taking care of debtors jailed and sentenced to death, sick people and pilgrims, girls and widows. As a whole, similar purposes meant collaborative institutions. Jealously preserving their own setup, these foundations nevertheless involved others in their mission as well: religious orders, secular companionships, credit institutions, and volunteers. Influential institutions such as the above-mentioned *St. Trinity of the Pilgrims*, the *Redemption of the Captives*, and the *Company of the Whites of Justice*³ worked involving other organizations in their charitable activities. Along this path, the *monti di pietà* and conservatories acted beyond the original mission of the "mother house," joining external supporters and helping outsiders. Thus, the marriage of daughters of the guild members could become a wedding of "the daughters of the neighborhood" (*figlie dell'ottina*) instead, just as the hospitality and the targeted assistance could be broadened to general needy cases. Naturally, while there was no lack of brotherhoods with a prevalent corporative or aiding scope in Naples, there were also exclusively devotional fraternities. In 1600, there were around 80 confraternities, and the number more than doubled in 1623, reaching 180. In 1788, there were 147 confraternities in Naples and the suburbs not counting those of royal patronage.⁴

A shift in the historiographic perspective can stress other aspects. For example, on the formal level, there were brotherhoods started under the auspices of religious orders but subject to royal patronage; but there were also laymen and laywomen's oratories fundamentally under ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and even fraternities that contested the churchly claims, bringing into play the secular powers, and a lot of controversial situations.⁵

³ Giovanni Lombardi, *Hosting in Naples: Mediterranean and Pilgrims between Medieval Heritage and Modern Care*, in *The City, the Travel, the Tourism Perception, Production and Processing*, ed. by Gemma Belli, Francesca Capano, Maria Ines Pascariello, Naples, 2017, pp. 107–112, http://www.iconografia.cittaeuropea.unina.it/catalogo/pdf/attiAISU/89_Viaggi%20assistenza%20pellegrini%20e%20viaggiatori.pdf; Giuliana Boccadamo, *La redenzione dei captivi*, in *Il Pio Monte della Misericordia di Napoli nel quarto centenario*, ed. by Mario Pisani Massamormile, Naples, 2003, pp. 101–121; Antonella Orefice, *Giustiziati a Napoli dal 1556 al 1862 nella documentazione dei bianchi della giustizia*, Naples, 2015.

⁴ *Mestieri e devozione*, ed. by Daniele Casanova, Naples, 2005, pp. 24–25; for the eighteenth century and onwards, see idem, *Le porte del Paradiso. Le confraternite napoletane in età moderna*, Naples, 2014. We prefer to use the Neapolitan-Italian term *monti* because the word indicated a wide range of institutions, although united by the same basic principles. There were long lasting or ephemeral, stable in the centuries or really provisory, stand-alone otherwise branches of fraternities, oratories, families, or guilds: *monte di pietà*, *monte dei pegni*, *monte della tassa*, *monte dell'arte dei* ..., etc. The terms *art/arts* (*arte/arti*) were prevalent to indicate the work associations or the more structured guilds.

⁵ Jurisdictional debate was pivotal (control over associations was crucial), producing high theoretical thought and political consequences. The rich historiography is linked to the peculiar Italian attention given to the relation between state and Church and to the feudal rights claimed by Rome

However, the Naples of the Spanish viceroys (1503–1707) was multiethnic: a crowded crossroads made up by a proverbial immigration. Therefore, into the *mélange* of nations (*nationes*) and cultures, the associations generated social amalgam. Communities embraced symbols and referees, *i.e.* chapels, shrines and confraternities under the patronage of St. George of the Genoese, St. Anne of the Lombard people, St. John of the Florentines, St. James of the Spaniards – which included the existing chapel of the Catalans –, the church and Greek confraternity of Saints Peter and Paul. Subjects of Dubrovnik (Ragusa), Amalfi, and Venice had their own associations.⁶ In short, these were a Genoa outside Genoa, a Spain outside Spain and so on. These nations showed their contribution for the greater good (*interesse del publico*), working through fraternities, hospitals, conservatories, and credit initiatives. By doing so, with a careful use of symbolic languages at every public event, they affirmed an identity deeply rooted in the Neapolitan life without having to wield an ‘otherness’ towards the city. They functioned as poles rather than as locked organizations. It should be added that a nation could encompass the affiliation to fraternities, guilds, and oratories: for instance, the Spanish community created an impressive network of charitable/devotional initiatives, but it was the *natio* that aggregated this manifold constellation of Catalan, Castilian, and Portuguese people coming from various backgrounds and activities.⁷ In the same manner, Venetian weavers came together in a national craftsmen’s society, although tied as members of the silk guild.

Conventional and real boundaries of *societas*, *arte*, *universitas*, *maestria*, *compagnia*, *fraternità*, and *sodalizio* were entangled. It was not accidental that these terms were often used as all-embracing synonyms: well-known groups were evoked

over Naples (the ceremonial medieval tribute – *chinea* – was paid to the Roman Church until 1776, but its complete abolition came in the nineteenth century).

⁶ A chronicle of 1595–1596 recorded eleven chapels/churches erected/governed by foreign nations and thirty-one by guilds. To simplify see G. Lombardi, *Societas, mestieri e assistenza*, p. 119 and *passim*.

⁷ Antonio Stopani, *Processi di appartenenza, etnicità e istituzioni. Confraternita e chiesa dei Santi Pietro e Paolo di Napoli (1530–1620)*, in “Quaderni Storici,” year LII, 2017, no. 1 (154), pp. 41–72; Ida Mauro, *Espacios y ceremonias de representación de las corporaciones nacionales en la Nápoles española*, in *Las corporaciones de nación en la monarquía hispánica (1580–1750). Identidad, patronazgo y redes de sociabilidad*, ed. by B.J. García García, Ó. Recio Morales, Madrid, 2014, pp. 451–478; Raffaella Salvemini, *La difficile combinazione tra assistenza e credito in età moderna. L’esperienza della Casa Santa e Banco di San Giacomo degli Spagnoli di Napoli*, in “Rivista Storica Salernitana,” 29, 1998, pp. 29–67; eadem, *Il San Giacomo degli Spagnoli di Napoli: storia di una holding economico-assistenziale tra integrazione e isolamento (XVI–XVII secolo) / The Pious Institution of San Giacomo of the Spaniards of Naples: History of an Economic-Welfare Holding between Integration and Isolation (Sixteenth–Seventeenth Centuries)*, in *La Città altra. Storia e immagine della diversità urbana: luoghi e paesaggi dei privilegi e del benessere, dell’isolamento, del disagio, della multiculturalità / The Other City. History and Image of Urban Diversity: Places and Landscapes of Privilege and Well-being, of Isolation, of Poverty, and of Multiculturalism*, ed. by Francesca Capano, Maria Ines Pascariello, Massimo Visone, Naples, 2018, pp. 281–289, <http://www.fedoa.unina.it/11993/1/la%20citt%C3%A0%20altra.pdf>, accessed 15 March 2019.

as stand-ins.⁸ Nevertheless, this does not entail a lack of formalization. *Hospital* was a hospital, *brotherhood* was a brotherhood. Avoiding historiographic simplifications, their status did not just end in a founding act, but it stayed in the real life of these organizations, in the general law which regulated their activities.

Guilds and confraternities had rules and roles, assemblies for evaluating and boards for judging. They rethought themselves with the passage of time and the change of context, in a sort of constant self-understanding, always responding to external arbiters, authorities, patrons and supporters. Important institutions were well organized from inside and overseen from outside. The *Art of the Silk* (*Arte della seta*, the silk guild) and the goldsmiths were notorious in this respect. Members of the silk guild and goldsmiths both handled high value materials, working for the international scene, all in a gold market perilously linked to monetary policies and foreign exchange. Examples could go on with the *Art of the Wool* (*Arte della lana*, the wool weavers' guild), that represented a rich economy throughout the kingdom and beyond. And still, in an unstable world obsessed with starvation and threatened by revolt – Naples was a powder keg in this sense –, similar issues concerned several food supplies guilds. Leaving aside the pure corporative aspects related to the control of work and of the access to the profession, even the most structured guild was then translated at the social level through its fraternity, conservatory, chapel, *monte*, referral shelters and hospitals.

Not rarely chapels and fraternities had minimal statutes with standard language and recurring themes. This conformism shows how these societies accepted a common way of life, sharing social codes and symbolic languages. But it also reveals how control over these communities happened through repetitive procedures: founders and reformers of a sodality had to “be in line” to get both the royal and the ecclesiastical approval. Hence, many organizations began with standardized formulas, but they were not bound by changeless rules: in the long term, habits usually

⁸ The polysemy of the glossary is an old issue, but it is ignored here for reasons of brevity. *Maestria*/*maestria* is a good example of this slippery lexicon. It could indicate a guild/fraternity or craftsmen masters that led an oratory, sometime lobbies under companion cloths. In the *liber visitationis* (1542–1543) of Archbishop Francesco Carafa, the churches of St. Blaise of the Librarians (*San Biagio dei librai*) and of *San Gennarello all'Olmo* and the fraternities inside appeared just as one because they shared place and ownership; in 1598, Cardinal Archbishop Alfonso Gesualdo fixed that the *maestria dei librai* (booksellers, typographers and similar) and the local companionship of SS. *Sacramento* were one thing; but in the seventeenth century, the “St. Blaise Community” indicated place and groups; furthermore, wavering terms were used in the nineteenth-century studies about Neapolitan “guilds.” See also Giovanni Lombardi, *Tra le pagine di San Biagio. Economia della stampa a Napoli in età moderna*, Naples, 2000. Such 127 *maestrie* are noted in a late sixteenth-century manuscript [Archivio Storico Diocesano di Napoli (hereafter: ASDN), *Status Ecclesiae Neapolitanae*, vol. I, fols. 74–76v]; among these were the blacksmiths of St. Eligius the Minor, the butchers of St. Eligius the Major, the poulterers of St. Mauro and of St. Matthew, the greengrocers of St. Peter, the silk guild of St. Philip and James, the bakers of St. James, the barbers of St. Cosmas and Damian, the boatmen, goldsmith, greengrocers, shopkeepers, plumbers and well-sinkers, the musicians and dancers, the cobblers, painters, shipbuilders, weavers, armourers and halberdiers of the viceroy, as well as several national chapels.

overcame the early deed. From this perspective, simplifications in the statutes more than to state ephemeral experiences draw the focus on their practices, especially for the craft guilds and for their brotherhoods: acting “according to the customs of the art” is a recurrent topic in the manuscripts.

Sodalities and their extensions worked as a connective tissue made of mutual recognitions. The diffusion and longevity of these organizations were a result precisely of their attitude to live in their time, to remain within the social conventions rather than within the formulas created years or centuries earlier. Cases, trials, episodes show how these associations were calibrated by real life, by the historical context, by the economy and the mentality of that time. Indeed, despite the usual rivalries – or perhaps because of them –, they played a role of social mediation in a project-oriented perspective: here we have to take into account insurance, marriages, burials, pastoral and medical care. So, by renewing themselves, some chapels succeeded to survive a long time, while rigid institutions vanished. Not rarely, changing the name did not change the reference groups. There was, by and large, a continuous re-definition of this macrocosm. The system was controlled by the chaplain of Royal Jurisdiction that checked the statutes; the Royal Chamber of *Sommaria*; the Great Court of *Vicaria*, by the consulates, the episcopal and the papal establishment, by the political government, the finance authorities, by a myriad of delegates and small courts, through secular laws (*prammatiche*)⁹ as well as habits and pastoral guidelines. All these constantly clarified what these sodality organizations were: they established what to do or what not to do, duties and roles to play.

The boundaries of these organizations were porous: there was not an in-out to one dimension. Many brotherhoods had reference areas, but many more fraternities transcended such restrictions. Several companies selected members according to class and activity, imposing cultural hegemony; others were fairly permissive. Some congregations were open about the accepted gender, others were exclusive. Besides – certainly, it is clear from the sixteenth century – it was not rare that one person could belong to several organizations at the same time; officially or not, prohibited or not, that happened and often was negotiated. An example can illustrate this situation. On 12 March 1577, a new fraternity received a chapel in St. James church in the *Sellaria* (Saddlery) district. This was the Company of the Whites of Justice under the patronage of St. Mary *Succurre Miseris*, which had recently been founded by influential persons and well-off artists. Nonetheless, St. James already had its own government of consuls – of the *ars sellariorum* –, notables and masters, representing the district and its activities. Then, they altogether banned reciprocal interferences

⁹ The *Regia Camera della Sommaria* was the supreme fiscal courthouse (1444–1808), one of most powerful tribunals of the kingdom; to understand this backbone of the realm see Roberto Delle Donne, *Burocrazia e fisco a Napoli tra XV e XVI secolo. La Camera della Sommaria e il Repertorium alphabeticum solutionum fiscalium Regni Siciliae Cisleptanae*, Florence, 2012. The *Gran Corte della Vicaria* was the main judiciary tribunal, of Angevin origin (fifteenth century – 1808). The *Regio Cappellano Maggiore* was a royal office with episcopal rights and its curia. It could be considered quite a mixed tribunal. Its origin was in the Middle Ages, but it changed with time and closed in 1808.

and established the range of activities for the Company of the Whites of Justice, its allocation in St. James and what it required. Once the mutual independence was established, they ruled how an individual could take part in both congregations: without prejudice to hierarchies, the enrolment and way to act were delineated. The archbishop gave his blessing to what was agreed. The details are interesting, but the whole is much more important in this case. The collective compromise was the corollary of a social negotiation. From the captain of the *Sellaria* to the leaders of the circumscription, people were called to the *erigenda* brotherhood, observing ritual and schemes: “hominibus complateariis dictae plateae in unum congregati, et coadunati in dicta ecclesia ad sonum campanellae artis sellariorum ac dicta platea.”¹⁰ In a broader view, these dynamics nurtured a social trust made by involvement, self-discipline and reciprocal control. In this view, the solidarity system worked as a grammar of the sociability. Joining a parish made it easier to be a member (*complatearo*) of the circumscription (*ottina*) or fellow of brotherhoods and oratories, and vice versa. A round of testimonials, oaths, and certifications acted as glue for every citizenship, every job, every financial activity. In turn, there remained the migratory practices rooted in Italy: the mobility in the capital imposed coexistences, remixing social memory and landmarks.¹¹ Mutualism and solidarity were at the core of this amalgam.

Hence, this associative world was not an enumeration of disjointed cases, but rather a network of disparate experiences interlaced as a pulsing social tissue. For this complexity, it is important to study case by case, keeping in mind that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

SOLELY CHARITABLE ACTS OR SOCIAL VISION?

Assistance and mutuality were largely supported by liberal arts and *noblesse de robe*, by devotional groups and by credit institutions, with donations and subscriptions, alms, annuities and legacies.¹² Surely, spending strategies went hand in hand with the social orders, the interests and the ideological trends. Fellows were helped to maintain reputation and status, with guarantees and loans, medical and pastoral

¹⁰ ASDN, Sante Visite, Card. Annibale di Capua, 1584, vol. VI, fols. 208–211, *Visitatio confraternitatis vulgo nuncupatem de li bianchi sub invocatione Beata Mariae Succurre miseris in predecta cappella sancti Jacobi. Plateae sellariae*. The pastoral visit recorded the concession of 12 March 1577 (fol. 209).

¹¹ Beatrice Del Bo, *Cittadinanza e mestieri. Radicamento urbano e integrazione nelle città basso-medioevali (secc. XIII–XVI)*, Rome, 2017; Giacomo Todeschini, *Intentio et dominium come caratteri di cittadinanza. Sulla complessità della rappresentazione dell’estraneo fra medioevo e modernità*, in *Dinamiche di appartenenza a un corpo comunitario*, ed. by Sara Menzinger, Rome, 2017, pp. 229–245. The role of fraternities in the social integration is also recalled in Piero Ventura, *La capitale dei privilegi. Governo spagnolo, burocrazia e cittadinanza a Napoli nel Cinquecento*, Naples, 2018, <http://www.fedoabooks.unina.it/index.php/fedoapress/catalog/book/74>, accessed 15 March 2019.

¹² The matter of the *legati* – from Latin *legatum* –, i.e. the testamentary dispositions with a philanthropic or religious purpose, in favor of others than the heirs, fuelled the contrasts between the Church and the secular powers. The issue was finally settled by the Concordat of 1741.

care, legal aid, and food, obviously if they were not jailed with “infamy” or imprisoned for “disobedience and frivolous lawsuit,” but found themselves in trouble for an “honored cause.”¹³ For these reasons, many congregations put down roots where labor mutuality and loans occurred, preventing people from sliding into poverty. These social codes were so cherished and so shared that the associations frequently supported people not enrolled, and the shelters provided for exceptions as well. That meant paying attention far beyond the prerogatives of membership, stressing the collective meaning of these experiences.

It is worth grasping the osmosis between the assistance forms and what such forms expressed: what kind of society did they propose and improve as a project? And who did that? These key issues help us figure out this reality; the scholarship on these topics has been fragmented from time to time into the paradigms of economic history, religious history, sociology and so forth. Erected in 1625, the *monte* of the gold, silver and silk weavers personified a social body, or to put this even better, a link of a professional chain: lacework and trimming production. These weavers were referred to as the powerful *Noble Art of the Silk*. Nevertheless, beyond the charitable reasons, they interpreted the *monte* to influence the inner corporative equilibrium and the intra-guild rivalries on labor access. This is only one example of how simplistic it can be to reduce these institutions only to their function of spiritual and material “providers”: they were political actors in a broad sense, without being institutionally part of the urban government. They aggregated or divided people. They mediated among groups and created cohabitation, fielding measures and strategies. However, solidarity as a tool of social planning emerged far beyond the groups’ and guilds’ guarantees. The *Monte Manso*, founded in 1608 by the marquis of Villa, Giovan Battista Manso, is exemplary. Leaving aside the fascinating story of this nobleman – he patronized the birth of the famous *Monte della Misericordia* (1601) and of the *Accademia degli Oziosi* (1611) – the foundation’s core goal was clear: helping noble houses to perpetuate their seed and their role, and, of course, bringing prestige to the Manso family, fated to become extinct with the death of the marquis. In this case a purpose of conservation of the social order emerged, too. And again, the mediation for the urban patriciate passed through the Oratory of SS. *Crocifisso dei Cavalieri dei Nobili in San Paolo Maggiore*, erected around 1590. Hence, the *monti* were versatile tools to extend protections through class, age and gender, with a variety of missions, beneficiaries and affiliates. They could accept outsiders to the founding rank and cooperate on convergence points. They handled barriers to entry, guarantees and deposits set to rise. Some originated

¹³ The silk and wool guilds had jails with infirmaries. Generally, infringement and reputation were a discriminating factor in reaching the decision to help a companion (about the moral judgment, the use of religious/supernatural categories was common in the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries, diminishing in the eighteenth century). Naturally, the notion of poverty was slippery: needs, instability and risks changed from class to class, guild to guild, brotherhood to brotherhood, institution to institution. About the quoted moral requirements – for example stipulated by butchers – see G. Lombardi, *Societas, mestieri e assistenza*, pp. 125–126.

credit institutions and banks, others remained limited provisions available only to some congregation. The *monti* secured child protection, devotional practices, burials, pledges and conservatories until the creation of the astonishingly flourishing Neapolitan musical institutions. Just to give an idea, at the end of the sixteenth century, around 3,500 girls and women lived in the conservatories, eleven female conservatories hosted around 1,500 maidens and with the help of the *monti*, marriages amounted to about 650; the four conservatories – of sixteenth-century origin – of *Santa Maria di Loreto*, of *Sant’Onofrio a Capuana*, of the *Pietà dei Turchini*, and of the *Poveri di Gesù Cristo* worked as famous musical schools until their transformation in the eighteenth century.¹⁴

Hence, solidarity institutions provided tools and ways to act in the urban context and beyond, sponsoring values and classes, ideologies and social visions. As a whole, they were able to improve change as well as enforce conservatism. Moreover, their political and social weight was also emphasized by the concern of the viceroys. The latter always paid attention to the elections of the heads of these organizations, and decreed the closure of some of these last ones.¹⁵

ASSISTANCE AND SOCIAL ASSETS

Contingency and forms of the assistance associations were closely tied to each other. St. John and St. Rose Conservatory for the Poor Daughters of the Art of the Wool is such an example. From the beginning, voluntary taxation on wool items supported aids and marriages; the latter provision was set in 1508 by will. Established in 1598, the conservatory changed residence in 1616 and the consuls revised the rules and income, granting access to the daughters of wealthy members in exchange for a fee. The conservatory went on, adapting the hosting and funding guidelines to the changing times; this meant that many girls could remain as oblates. With the famine of 1764 and the rising food prices, the number of women who were housed dropped to fifteen and the dowries were questioned. The shelter lost its tax income: outdated solidarity tariffs on the woolen market – wearily claimed by the craftsmen – were anachronisms by now. Society was changing and the old guilds kept disappearing: the conservatory was no longer a mirror of working sectors, but rather a historical legacy. At the end of the eighteenth century, the ancient woolen industry disappeared, and the institution was fixed in the nineteenth century general charity reforms.¹⁶

The connection between social assets and form of assistance is strong, and that is more evident when crisis and reforms upset the bases of the charitable

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 124; Rosella Del Prete, *La trasformazione di un istituto benefico-assistenziale in Scuola di Musica: una lettura dei libri contabili del Conservatorio di S. Maria di Loreto in Napoli (1586–1703)*, in *Francesco Florimo e l’Ottocento musicale*, ed. by Rosa Cafiero, Marina Marino, Reggio Calabria, 1999, pp. 671–715.

¹⁵ P. Ventura, *op. cit.*, pp. 149–151.

¹⁶ Anna Dell’Orefice, *The Decline of the Silk and Wool Guilds in Naples in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, in *Guilds, Markets and Work Regulations in Italy, 16th–19th Centuries*, ed. by Alberto Guenzi, Paola Massa, Fausto Piola Caselli, Farnham, 1998, pp. 117–131.

network. It is enough to remember that many brotherhoods, *monti* and guilds were wiped out by the plague of 1656. The case of the confraternity and *monte* of the *mastrodatti*¹⁷ was one of them: “in the year 1604 were granted to that [*monte/*fraternity] many capitulations by the late earl of Benavente, viceroy of this reign in that time, which *monte* continued for a long time and ultimately it was dismissed due to the past contagion.”¹⁸ The pestilence caused a demographic shock, and even deconstructed the structures of the reign, as usual during major crises. Assistance was both a pillar and a mirror of these structures.

From the late seventeenth century onwards, the rising representative gap between the craftsmen fraternities and their original sponsors was evident. However, these societies continued to receive a vivid demand for aggregation and solidarity. This resilience was formed time after time. The recurrent adjustment of the statutes – checked by the chaplain of Royal Jurisdiction – reflected the legalization of the changes in their practice.¹⁹ In a nutshell, such institutions rendered devotional mood, mentalities, and gender issues, crossing political-institutional fractures, pestilence, famine and the physiological social shifts. To do this, they had to be able to adapt. Expertise in securing and managing funding was a pivot of this adaptability. Thus, accounting makes clear the link between the solidarity system and the financial structures of the general economy. Brotherhood, shelters, confraternities had to deal with public administration and politics, banking and businesses, micro-credits, loans, almsgiving,²⁰ rents and annuities.²¹ So, they promoted offices, professionals and skills which worked well beyond any events or contingency they had to deal with.²²

¹⁷ They held functions such as that of notaries in the Royal Court, from Latin *magister actorum*; also called *attuari*.

¹⁸ See sources and quote in G. Lombardi, *Societas, mestieri e assistenza*, p. 115.

¹⁹ The assistance changed, the cliché survived. In 1802, the barbers of St. Cosmas and Damian begged for old masters in “well known poverty” racked with aches and pain, while in 1816, the butchers, close to the abolition, continued to receive old-style requests for poor people, widows, funerals, dowries, and alms.

²⁰ Mixing sacred and profane, “forced/obligatory almsgiving” (*elemosina imposta*) was a widespread praxis. Butchers had such imposition on cattle, the meat of sheep and goats, sausages, etc. in order to collect money for poor members and marriages; finally there was a consumption tax that corroborated the participation of the guilds of salters, sausage makers, meat-cutters to the brotherhood of the butchers, but that ended up burdening all the consumers. The statutes of the butchers of St. Cyriac chapel in St. Eligius the Major church were codified by Neapolitan notary Francesco Crisconio in 1525; new chapters were added in 1671 and 1695. See also G. Lombardi, *Societas, mestieri e assistenza*, *passim*.

²¹ About hospital assistance, micro-credit and social interaction, see Gemma Teresa Colesanti, Salvatore Marino, *L'economia dell'assistenza a Napoli nel tardo medioevo*, in *L'ospedale, il denaro e altre ricchezze. Scritture e pratiche economiche dell'assistenza in Italia nel tardo medioevo*, ed. by Marina Gazzini, Antonio Olivieri, in “Reti Medievali Rivista,” 17, 2016, no. 1, pp. 309–344, DOI: 10.6092/1593-2214/503.

²² For the exchange crisis of 1598, the Royal Court cut the interest rate on public debt's shares from 13% to 6%; amongst the affected investors, a lot were hospitals, congregations, conservatories, brotherhoods, etc. Soon after the revolt of Masaniello (Tommaso Aniello), in 1649 some taxes were abolished and 44 indirect taxes were sold off (*datio in solutum*): for better or worse, once again many bond underwriters were *monti*, shelters, brotherhoods and other assistance/mutual associations. Many institutions remained underfunded.

This changed the medieval practices and converted the common fraternal figure of the *camerlengo* into a chief accountant, deputy and solicitor in relationship with the banks, the credit institutions and sometimes the fiscal courts.

This osmosis with the economic and governmental system of the kingdom clearly emerged in times of crisis when the institutions paid the collapse of their incomes joined to the public debt securities. Furthermore, these connections also enhanced the presence of elites, private investors, notaries, merchant-bankers at the helm of the major hospitals, craft guilds, fraternities or devotional oratories, a situation with medieval roots, common in many forms to many countries. The evolution in this sense was part of the passage from medieval to modern. As it is known, the post-Tridentine period brought about a broad reorganization of assistance, questioning poverty and charity, promoting an outstanding literature on loan, credit and usury, money use, as well as an incisive series of legislative and canonical actions in this respect. Social assistance was closely tied to the Neapolitan public bank system – perhaps the most organized setting of its kind of the early modern age – to the point that hospitals and fraternities promoted credit institutions and *monti*. It was in this climate of confidence that circulation of currency, of bills of exchange and of deposit/credit certificates increased²³; indeed, some hospitals kept an osmotic relation with the banks which they themselves had created.²⁴ The fact is that these mutual connections supported assistance institutions, generating offices, roles and specializations. The phenomena concerned main chapels, guilds, hospitals, arch-confraternities with treasurers and accounting personnel, but over time enveloped the whole charitable and corporative world, especially during the seventeenth century. Examining a famous ledger of the *Monte delle Sette Opere della Misericordia*, research studies rightly paid attention to the commission Caravaggio received from Nicolò Radulovich – certainly, art patronage through these Neapolitan institutions had huge international importance –, but economic historians cannot fail to note, on the same folios, capitals, rents and income revenues coming from public debt and tax investments.²⁵

Practically, as social actors, guilds, brotherhoods, and shelters were part of the financial and material ecosystem of the city. Jointly with the financial framework,

²³ Francesco Balletta, *La circolazione della moneta fiduciaria a Napoli nel Seicento e nel Settecento (1587–1805)*, Naples, 2008. About the assistance institutions and their first credit operation, Balletta reports (p. 19): *Monte della Pietà*, 1539; *Casa Santa dell'Annunziata*, 1463; *Casa Santa degli Incurabili*, 1560; *Confraternita Illuminati dello Spirito Santo*, 1590; *Casa Santa di S. Eligio*, 1570; *Casa Santa e Chiesa S.S. Giacomo e Vittoria*, 1589; *Monte dei Poveri*, 1585.

²⁴ Paola Avallone, Raffaella Salvemini, *Between Charity and Credit: The Evolution of the Neapolitan Banking System (Sixteenth–Seventeenth Century)*, in *Financial Innovation and Resilience. A Comparative Perspective on the Public Banks of Naples (1462–1808)*, ed. by Lilia Costabile, Larry Neal, London, 2018, pp. 71–93.

²⁵ Archivio Storico del Pio Monte della Misericordia, Naples, dat. L, Fondo Antico, rubr. D, registri di contabilità del Pio Monte, 4 (February 1604 – 31 August 1605, *Libro Maggiore segnato B del Monte dell'Opere della Misericordia cominciato a febbraio 1604 nel principio del semestre del signor Don Alfonso Gaetani d'Aragona tesoriere et governatore del patrimonio di detto monte e tutto sia ad onore e gloria d'Iddio e di sua Santissima Madre*, especially fols. 54–55).

it was pervasive and resilient and it went along with the solidarity system. This mutual improving took place during the sixteenth century, and grew in the following century. Modernization of the solidarity practices went on with the general change of their basic values.²⁶ A late sixteenth-century statute of a renowned fraternity called for “diligence within charity” (*in carità diligenza*): moving away from the simplicity of the beginning, “when gently and orderly shape to speak were not required in the scriptures,” it was time for an accurate recording of the activities, and meaningfully in a register called “mirror” (*Specchio*).²⁷

PLACE AND MEANING: BEYOND A PHYSICAL MAP

Social groups shaped city life, giving meaning and name to the places of the capital. That passed through the social esteem and the prestige of their brotherhoods, chapels, guilds and, in general, the charitable action and the mutualities of their organizations. This way they created and re-created the urban toponyms and the popular sites.

The social perception of the phenomena ensured a sense of historical continuity, forged the collective imaginaries and an emotional/votive map, defining streets, squares, gates, corners, and districts. The connection between place and groups was clear for the organ builders of *Santa Maria della Scala*, the painters of Saints Anne and Luke near the port district that housed shipwrights and sea-workers too, the master carpenters and woodcutters of St. Joseph church, the weavers between *Santa Maria la Nova* and *Banchi Nuovi* – where the barbers and surgeons of St. Cosmas and Damian were also located –, the merchants of the *Gesù Vecchio* church, the guild of the horse breeders and grooms of St. Mary of Piedigrotta, the musicians of St. George and of St. Nicholas at wharf and so many others. In this scenery, several guild foundations required settlements to have under control the work sector, the logistics and supply chain, miasmas and filth: goldsmiths and jewelers lived very close; booksellers preferred to stay near typographers and paper makers; black silk dyers were based near the swamps and the Sebeto river; tanneries, ceramic and soap factories were located in the suburbs to preserve public health. Therefore, many oratories and chapels tended to follow the settlements of their social referees. However the greatest part of such organizations, especially those related to food and fungible goods, were scattered in this populated Mediterranean city. Grocers, apothecaries, butchers, shoemakers, carpenters, rope makers, tailors endowed Naples with institutes, chapels, tabernacles, and devotional

²⁶ For a general view on how the Italians renewed this field and on the women’s role in that innovation see Nicholas Terpstra, *Cultures of Charity Women, Politics, and the Reform of Poor Relief in Renaissance Italy*, Harvard, 2013.

²⁷ Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, ms XV E5, *Regole della compagnia de’ Bianchi sotto il titolo di S. Maria Succurre Miseris Riformate nell’anno MDXCII*, fols. 3, 51. In the early sixteenth century, this brotherhood, known as the “Whites of Justice,” was founded by the Genoese gentleman Ettore Vernaccia in Naples and was dedicated to those sentenced to death.

signs in the streets. Their ancient presence marked, and often still marks, the places: *Rua Francesca*, *Rua Catalana*, the lodges of Pisa and Lucca, Provence street, St. Peter and Paul of the Greek and more. Likewise the burials in the hypogea of craftsmen's chapels, congregations, and hospitals anchored the entrenchment of the communities, often testifying to old migrations.

The settlements of these organizations were stable and rooted, but not necessarily definitive. The blacksmiths in St. Eligius, the knife sharpeners and makers at the market square, the glovers, the locksmiths, the swordsmiths, the potters at St. Mary of Loreto, the dressmakers, the makers of cords or spurs, and the dealers changed sites or shared sites over time. However, beyond zoning, these associations participated in the urban life by way of processional rites and parades, flaunting their social commitment; public displays were so common in Naples to be anecdotal. This collective language had religious, artistic, political and ideological implications. People occupied ritual positions, spatial sequences, displaying flags and banners. Religious *entourage*, place and onlookers were frames of meaning. Sacralization was a *passe-partout* in this play of presentation-recognition and endorsed urban flow lines as well as settlements.²⁸ Therefore, these organizations combined stable and dynamic features as assimilation strategies, building the urban identity.²⁹

As we mentioned above, although craft guilds and similar brotherhoods can be defined by activity, class, lineage and sometimes by their catchment area, it is not surprising that solidarity practices got groups closer in a tentacular mediation, even forcing the formal rules.³⁰ For example, the traditional site of booksellers and typographers was the San Gennarello all'Olmo parish. A gaunt seventeenth-century statute prescribed a residence requirement, but many houses were outside the catchment area of the church-congregation-*mastria* of St. Blaise of the Librarians. Real life overwhelmed their reference to San Gennarello all'Olmo and St. Blaise,

²⁸ Lately, the link between these associations and the sacralization/semantization of the places has gained new attention. See Alessandro Serra, *Spazi sacri e sacralizzazione degli spazi nelle confraternite romane d'età moderna*, in *Brotherhood and Boundaries / Fraternità e barriere*, ed. by Stefania Pastore, Adriano Prosperi, Nicholas Terpstra, Pisa, 2011, pp. 133–155. For a wider methodological vision, see Renata Salvarani, *The Body, the Liturgy and the City. Shaping and Transforming Public Urban Spaces in Medieval Christianity (Eighth–Fourteenth Centuries)*, Venice, 2019, <https://edizionica.foscari.unive.it/it/edizioni4/libri/978-88-6969-365-6/>. Some suggestions can be found in Giovanni Lombardi, *Una città 'verticale': luoghi fisici e concettuali in una capitale d'età moderna. Una riflessione su Napoli attraverso associazioni, arti e nazioni / A "Vertical" City: Conceptual and Physical Places in a Capital of Modern Age. A Reflection about Naples through Associations, Guilds and Nations*, in *The Other City*, ed. by Francesca Capano, Maria Ines Pascariello, Massimo Visone, pp. 379–385.

²⁹ On these languages and for the methodology of the subject a fundamental book is that of Gabriele Guarino, *Representing the King's Splendour. Communication and Reception of Symbolic Forms of Power in Viceregal Naples*, Manchester, New York, 2010, pp. 68–74.

³⁰ It is the case of the cobblers and of their conservatory of St. Crispin and Crispinian – founded in 1587 and opened to the masters of the whole reign – or the already cited *monte* of the *mastrodatti*, whose mission was the safeguard of the fellows and of their relatives and siblings, even if not resident in the capital. For the cobblers see Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Cappellano Maggiore, *Statuti di Congregazione*, 1196/53 (1591), 1204/55 (1619), 1204/57 (1619), with references to the *monte* of the guild as well.

to the close Conservatory of the Art of the Silk, to the printers gathered around the San Ludovico Re di Francia church. Vice versa, many of them and of their families referred to Oratorio dell'Assunta del Collegio Maggiore of the Jesuits, in the congregation of SS. Rosario of San Domenico Maggiore, the one of Assunta and of the artists in the ecclesiastical complex of the Gerolamini and in some *estaurite*. In these different companionships recurred the same families, companies, houses that came by and large from the silk textile environment to the librarian groups.

In a nutshell, the system was a social glue able to define the groups and their actions, but also keen to foster an osmosis amongst belongings, to build a bridge among *nationes*.

CRAFT GUILDS AND THEIR BROTHERHOOD

In the mid-seventeenth century, corporative control on labor was weakened. *Lex mercatoria*, new work chains and mobility were eroding obsolete schemes, when the great revolt of 1647–1648 and the harsh pestilence of 1656 upset the whole system and disrupted the social fabric. These events rushed social change. Immigration followed demographic shock. The survival of many guilds was at stake, new economic assets and social upheavals went together. So, they tried a new path of auto-regulation. From 1693 to 1802, the hundreds of statutes submitted or adjusted came from these adapting efforts. Through their confraternities, *monti* and chapels, guilds extended enrolling into and outside the capital, seizing upon contiguity amongst trades, by leveraging relatedness and discussing standing mutuality. Representative patterns changed: the *monti* and chapels rose and died, often depending on intra-guild rivalry for securing aids. Outdated restrictions faded away while reluctant anachronisms remained. In a more secularized context, philanthropic thinking opened to forced labor/apprenticeship, to proper pension forms, facing structural poverty rather than ancient sectorial mutualities.³¹ The same internal bonds within brotherhoods changed, becoming more administrative and associated to the levels of contributions. The relationship between the individual and its reference groups was in turn renegotiated through these association. But, above all, guilds continued to epitomize the assistance demand through the languages of devotion. This resilience was crucial for their long survival, until the suppression of the 1800s – late compared to the abolition of the guild system in France by Turgot in 1776.³² It is precisely for

³¹ Raffaella Salvemini, *Formazione e avviamento al lavoro nei reclusori del Regno di Napoli alla fine del Settecento*, in *Il lavoro come fattore produttivo e come risorsa nella storia economica*, ed. by Mario Taccolini, Sergio Zaninelli, Milan, 2002, pp. 187–195. As a whole, in the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries, apprenticeship and recruitment were procurement of services (*locatio servitiis*), ensured by the sponsor of the boy and by the master. Arrangements for board, couch, straw bed, clothes, sickness, injury, and corporate privileges were part of the caring network. Public confidence, sacred and profane, ensured everything, leading to the social inclusion of the apprentice.

³² After multiple restrictions and political-institutional changes, on 23 October 1821, the guilds were finally suppressed by King Ferdinand I; see Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, *Il sistema delle arti. Corporazioni annonarie e di mestiere a Napoli nel Settecento*, Naples, 1992, *passim*.

this social environment that comes out as chapel, brotherhood, oratory, that the guilds fit our discourse, as already suggested, without getting into the specific professional/corporative field. However, very briefly, it can be useful to add some considerations.

At the end of the nineteenth century, scholars collected Neapolitan documents depicting *tout court* many charitable brotherhoods as guilds.³³ Former communal bonds such as those of brotherhood/guild, fraternity/*monte* tended to lose sense in the trend of the time, keen to materialize the corporative attitude as corporative institutions. This was the case of the *monte*/brotherhood of the *attuari* and the scribes of the *Regia Camera della Sommaria*, dedicated to the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, in the *monte* in Capuano Castle (Great Court of Vicaria) that were meant to help royal officials and their kinship in the event of poverty, imprisoning, death, illness, marriage and novitiate. Similarly, the *monte* of the Guardian Angel of the Gold Beaters, the attendants at Court of St. John the Baptist, and many brotherhoods or *monti* arose as offshoots of associations.³⁴ Very roughly, the late 1800s were a struggle for labor rights, socialism and new Catholic social teaching about the so-called “worker question,” as public debate and the Italian conflict between Church and state have influenced the historiography of this subject. Afterwards, the juridical tradition and the exalting of corporatism by the fascist corporate state harnessed historical reconstruction. In the second half of the 1900s, religious studies focused on devotion, poverty and the role of the Church in popular sociability; in this respect, the atmosphere of the Second Vatican Council played a crucial role. Furthermore, the *Nouvelle Histoire* shed light on the social control in the *Ancien Régime*, the *longue durée*, the mentalities and so on. Following this trend, scholars re-discovered the Neapolitan charity framework, making public a lot of documents, focusing on the sociological and political aspects; the echoes of the economic history debate on guilds remained in the background. In this regard, a general negative interpretation of the guild system circulated almost from the time of the industrial revolution. Considering guilds an obstacle to innovation, many historians concurred that these structures were responsible for the Italian “backwardness” in the early modern age. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the economy of Naples has been reassessed in historical guild studies, but from a more holistic perspective and paying more attention to facets.³⁵ This generated new studies on Neapolitan guilds

³³ In the just born Kingdom of Italy (1861), deputations of homeland history (*storia patria*) promoted studies on the former Italian states. Socialism and the workers’ movements were spreading. The Catholic Church – downsized and without its domains – was elaborating its social doctrine looking at the working classes (in 1891, this endeavor was defined in the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*). In other words, many instances converged to reinterpret ancient solidarity and labor mutualism.

³⁴ On the goldsmiths’ network of assistance, see Diego Davide, *Tra assistenza e solidarietà. La Nobile Arte degli Orefici*, in *Mestieri e devozione*, ed. by Daniele Casanova, pp. 79–121.

³⁵ See the masterful study by Francesca Trivellato, *Guild, Technology and Economic Change in Early Modern Venice*, in *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy, 1400–1800*, ed. by Stephan R. Epstein, Maarten Prak, Cambridge, 2008, pp. 199–231. However, the debate on the presumed Italian “backwardness” is still open. I would just like to add that women played a crucial role in solidarity associations, but the female involvement in Neapolitan guilds is not explored to its fullest; even female business owners and women merchants existed, as it appears in trials, notarial acts and accounts.

and, more or less directly, on the brotherhoods and on a “welfare” system impossible to conceive without the contribution of the guilds.³⁶ Rethinking of the subject is underway but, perhaps, it is too early to define it as a new historiographic trend.

CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to draw conclusions on such broad historical matters. Brotherhoods or guilds? This is clearly a rhetorical question, a light *escamotage* to focus on some trans-corporative future outcomes of the urban sodalities. What emerges is the composite dimension of these organizations. It is clear the need to investigate fully the cases in a diachronic and comparative way, also resorting to a holistic vision which can draw from religion sociology to anthropology, cultural studies, and economic history: after all, different components went hand in hand. It is hardly necessary to underscore that perusing the facets of the system does not mean slipping into erudition, but being open to micro-history as well as to an overall view. This way, the intrinsic correlation between guild, brotherhood, confraternity, oratory, hospital and similar institutions overcomes the outdated narrative. Thus, the historical and social *continuum* of this archipelago of institutions emerges, unraveling its adaptability and its rootedness. Hence, the forms of solidarity appear as core and expression at once of a pervasive associationism, more or less secular, but always dipped in a religious time and always expressed through sacred moods. This associationism was cohesive as a whole, and literally capable of innervating the societies of modern age.³⁷

A second point of focus is that assistance was not a social surrogate. Charity institutions were not just spiritual and material “providers.” In the broad sense, the world of assistance was a way in which a society thought itself, took care of itself, restated its founding values. It was a way to project its future in a fold of continuity with the past. From marriages and pensions, to the symbolic *monumenta*, from the street tabernacles to the great churches, the hospitals, and the art patronage, in all these cases, the tradition made sense in relation to an imagined future. Oratory and confraternity interpreted intimate needs of the society. Nevertheless, they reflected social antagonisms. That meant affirming some values over other interests, favoring

³⁶ “Welfare” is a slippery word. Its semantic roots originate in the twentieth century and in a lay context of state building, capitalist economy and social rights. Somehow, it is quite a stretch to project this keyword into the past. Nevertheless, its adoption is recurrent among modern historians. In this case, we simply indicate the multifaceted assistance and solidarity system.

³⁷ In recent years, the need emerged for a comparative analysis in a larger sense – one could say of global history –, opened to visual culture too. See *Locating Confraternities in the Late Medieval and Early Modern City*, ed. by Diana Bullen Presciutti, Leiden, 2017; more oriented towards the penetration capacity of the confraternities: *A Companion to Medieval and Early Modern Confraternities*, ed. by Konrad Eisenbichler, Leiden, 2019. I would just like to point out that the international attention about our discourse is still focused on Northern and Central Italy. In some ways, it is quite an anomaly with respect to the demographic weight of Naples, its richness of associative experiences, and its high number of institutions with a long tradition.

some groups over others, shaping and re-shaping the collective identity, putting forward social hierarchy or challenging the *status quo*. In other words, we are dealing with spaces for social recomposition. For example, brotherhoods such as those linked to guilds played a great role as a medium, among workers, merchants, foreigners, or simply urban migrants of this great capital of the Mediterranean. I tried to offer an overall view in broad brushstrokes, hoping not to lose the sense of complexity. As mentioned previously, it is important to examine this pulsing social tissue case by case, but keeping in mind that the sum of single cases does not equate with an overall perspective on a community.

BROTHERHOOD OR GUILD? SOLIDARITY, MUTUALITY AND
REPRESENTATION AMONG CONFRATERNITIES, ASSISTANCE
AND COMMUNITIES IN MODERN AGE NAPLES

Abstract

Brotherhoods and guilds formed a pervasive social system, while religious practices, associations and ‘shrines’ embodied national or devotional communities. The terminology referring to these sodalities could be polysemous. However, that did not mean that the world it described lacked distinctness. Rather, it showed these organizations’ capacity to adapt to real life in a changing society, rethinking themselves, joining groups and converting purposes. In fact, the goals of these institutions could overlap, pursuing synergies or conflicts. Therefore, mutualism, devotions and solidarity gave shape to social control, a form of control which could be harsh or not, but was always pervasive. Thus, brotherhoods, guilds, shelters and nations (*nationes*) aggregating around the cult of a patron saint shaped Neapolitan life, sealing classes, powers and behaviors. *De facto*, these experiences became poles of identity, pursuing social projects in the name of public welfare and of shared visions.

Keywords: brotherhood; confraternity; guild; the Mediterranean; Naples; assistance; mutuality

MONTI FRUMENTARI IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES (SEVENTEENTH–EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES)

PAOLA AVALLONE*

I. THE COMPLEX SYSTEM OF “GIVING” IN THE MODERN AGE

Since the very first pages of their study on charity and assistance, drawing on non-Italian as well as Italian historiography, Luciano Maffi and Marco Rochini show that it is an intricate subject, whose boundaries are not always easy to define. The indistinct use of words such as “charity,” “relief,” “solidarity,” “support,” “assistance,” “giving,” and “offering” generates confusion and shows how hard it is to circumscribe the dynamics of an issue whose complexity is already apparent from the diversity of the terms used to describe it.¹ Lately, this subject has been again attracting much interest, in the light of the failure of the welfare state – or at least of what have proved to be its shortcomings – and the consequent return to forms of relief entrusted to private initiative.

In Christianity, the term “charity” designates disinterested love of God and, hence, of one’s neighbor. It implies willingness to act to help the needy, free from any intent to gain a personal benefit from it. The term “charity,” however, can be understood either in an all-encompassing sense, including all actions implying any form of support or aid to one’s neighbor, or in a more restrictive sense, not comprising disinterested actions and incorporating those with other objectives, such as, for example, social harmony or personal utility. Catholic historians have obviously devoted more attention than others to this subject. They have often used the term “charity” in an extended sense, encompassing every social activity involving giving to others in some form.² Other words have been employed alongside “charity,” such as “concord,” “mutual assistance,” “solidarity,” and “relief,” to designate all reciprocal actions, not only disinterested ones, but also those driven by other kinds of interest – political, economic, social, or family related – *i.e.*, all those actions that do not have a purely charitable intent, but are also meant to enhance the prestige of individuals, of their families, their professional category, or their community, or, more generally, to preserve the sociopolitical order.

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¹ Luciano Maffi, Marco Rochini, *Poor Relief Systems in Rural Italy: The Territory of the Diocese of Tortona in the Eighteenth Century*, in “Continuity and Change,” 31, 2016, no. 2, pp. 211–213.

² *Storia d’Italia. Annali*, vol. 9, *La Chiesa e il potere politico dal medioevo all’età contemporanea*, ed. by Giorgio Chittolini, Giovanni Miccoli, Turin, 1986; *Fonti ecclesiastiche per la storia sociale e religiosa d’Europa, XV–XVIII secolo*, ed. by Cecilia Nubola, Angelo Turchini, Bologna, 1999.

Starting from this last consideration, we can look at the meaning of “giving,” “donating” and similar terms from a different perspective. In his latest book on banks and the ghetto, Giacomo Todeschini seeks to explain the rise of *monti comuni* (statal debt) by postulating a close link between these institutions and loans on pledge offered by Jews. Todeschini retraces the history of the first *monti di pietà* (lent money at interest on pledge) and *monti frumentari* (lent grain at interest on personal guarantee), then the disappearance of Jewish moneylenders and the foundation of new *monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari*, until the rise of public banks and the ghettoization of the Jews. In doing so, he shows how the concept of “gift” became a pretext for both temporal and religious authorities whereby they justified an economic behavior actually intended to maintain a certain oligarchy in power. Terms such as “common good” and “poor man’s patrimony” seem to imply that the purpose of the actions they refer to is the well-being and health of the population; however, the former was used to justify the creation of the *monti comuni* and their lending at interest, the latter by the Church to keep certain stocks of wealth from being depleted by other powerful actors and thus preserve its power. The concept of gift was central in the choice of policies aimed at economic and social disciplining. Its purpose was to keep conjunctural poverty in check and try to bring back into the productive system parts of the population that were momentarily going through hard times. In this new perspective, poverty is seen as economic hardship and systematic indebtedness caused by an organization of credit eluding the control of institutional powers.³

Putting this articulate interpretation aside, it is evident that the issue is much more complex, and that the categories used to analyze it often tend to be confused or superimposed. At any rate, all studies on charitable institutions in various regional contexts – where the term “charity” or its synonyms are implicit – show that the dual explanation is always based on the fact that someone is more in need than others, because they have lapsed into economic hardship due to personal circumstances, or the circumstances of a professional group, a local community, or the nation at large.

In substance, all the actions performed by different subjects for a variety of reasons gave rise to a complex social organization typical of *Ancien Régime* societies, where the actors were individuals or religious or secular institutions. These actions all shared the same objectives, namely the well-being of the community and the meeting of people’s needs.⁴

II. CHARITY OR CREDIT? THE CASE OF *MONTI DI PIETÀ* AND *MONTI FRUMENTARI* AS AN *ANTE LITTERAM* FORM OF MICROCREDIT

This system becomes even more complex if we include in our consideration the institutions which, in offering specific forms of relief to others, invited them to pay a price for it in order to give other people the opportunity to benefit from the

³ Giacomo Todeschini, *La banca e il ghetto. Una storia italiana*, Rome, Bari, 2016.

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 103–128.

same service. Such is the case for *monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari*. Were they charitable institutions or credit institutions? On the morrow of the unity of Italy, the compilers of statistics on pious institutions in the newly constituted kingdom had difficulties in defining their nature. Since they had been established to “aid” and “support” local communities by lending money or grain, they continued to be included among pious institutions. This, however, complicated their administrative management. It was one thing to apply the laws on pious institutions to hospitals and orphanages, another to apply it to institutions which exacted payment for their services by charging an interest, albeit a very small one.

Recent studies tend to agree that between the late Middle Ages and the early contemporary age Italian towns witnessed intense credit activity, at all levels of the social scale. Consumer credit, aimed at offering temporary relief to the less well-to-do classes, gained particular economic and social importance. Early on, the towns of the Italian peninsula developed a dense web of institutions – *monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari* – specializing in small loans in money or kind at a moderate interest. *Monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari* had been established to give out consumer credit and production credit, respectively. Both, however, often ended up “giving” money or grain merely for the survival of the poorer classes when they were hit by conjunctural crises.⁵

These institutions can be regarded as the forerunners of present-day microcredit institutions, or “poor man’s banks,” as M. Yunus called those active in Bangladesh.⁶ They offered credit to allow people to start productive activities and get over unfavorable conjunctures. If we look at microcredit institutions today, we will find they have much in common with the *monti di pietà* of yore. The target of microcredit today is constituted by micro-businessmen engaged in productive activities, even very small and limited ones. The target of the old credit institutions was different only insofar as that of *monti frumentari* differed from that of the regular *monti di pietà*. The former serviced smallholders with cultivable land, regardless of the form of possession. The latter, instead, serviced individuals who could leave a pledge, whatever its value. Present-day microcredit services both urban and rural areas. The same was true of the old credit institutions, although *monti frumentari* mostly serviced rural areas and *monti di pietà* mostly serviced urban areas. Today, beneficiaries of microcredit as a rule must belong to the same community or group – designated as a “peer lending solidarity group” – to increase the debtor’s sense of obligation, since failure to repay his or her loan would undermine the eligibility of other members of the community to receive loans. However, a simpler system also exists, called “individual lending,” where the beneficiary is responsible only individually for repaying the loan within the terms of the contract. Early *monti di pietà*

⁵ Paola Avallone, *I monti frumentari nel Regno di Napoli (secc. XVI–XIX)*, in *I monti frumentari e le forme di credito non monetarie tra Medioevo e età contemporanea*, ed. by Ippolita Checcoli, Bologna, 2015, pp. 318–323.

⁶ Muhammad Yunus, *Il banchiere dei poveri*, Milan, 1998.

and *monti frumentari* adopted mixed formulas. A prerequisite for accessing credit from either of these institutions was to be a member of the community where the institution was located, although this actually applied more to *monti frumentari* than to *monti di pietà*, which could also lend to outsiders. This rule arose both from the idea of a town as a solidary enclosure and from a wish to prevent currency, which was already so scarce, from circulating beyond the limits of a community's territory. Finally, another feature shared by today's microcredit institutions and yesterday's *monti* is that neither the sums lent nor the interest rates on them are or were particularly high.⁷

III. MONTI FRUMENTARI IN THE ITALIAN SOUTH

In modern Southern Italy, *monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari* were incorporated in an elaborate network of social assistance. Of course, the features of this network differed in Naples and in smaller towns, and particularly in rural areas. This social relief system was mainly constituted by many so-called "intermediate civic bodies," which complemented, and were often confused with, religious charitable institutions. These "civic bodies" included hospitals, conservatories, *case sante* (holy houses), dowry funds, corporation funds, and the hardest of all to classify, namely *monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari*.

The objective of these *ante litteram* credit institutions was to use collective savings to support the poor, and thereby keep wealth within the areas they serviced and prevent locally produced commodities from circulating outside of local boundaries. They were funded by local communities, families and individuals, dioceses, parishes, religious orders, and confraternities.

The spread of *monti frumentari* in continental Southern Italy was a consequence of the structure and mentality of the southern agrarian world, both in the earlier feudal estates and in the bourgeois latifundium established since the abolition law (*legge eversiva*) of 1806. *Monti frumentari*, as well as *monti di pietà*, were certainly useful to small farmers, but not to large landowners, who needed funding on a whole other scale.⁸

Several factors contributed to the rise of these institutions all over the Italian South, especially from the second half of the eighteenth century onward. These factors include a chronic scarcity of capital in the provinces, landowner absenteeism, the existence of the latifundium, and the prevalence of extensive over intensive cultivation.⁹

⁷ Paola Avallone, *Alle origini del microcredito nel Mediterraneo. Monti di pietà e monti frumentari nel Mezzogiorno preunitario*, in *Crocevia mediterranei*, ed. by Grazia Biorci, Pierangelo Castagneto, Cagliari, 2010, pp. 45–76; Donatella Strangio, *Sviluppo economico e micro-prestiti. Il modello dei monti frumentari per la Gramen Bank*, in *I monti frumentari*, ed. by I. Checcoli, pp. 427–457.

⁸ Domenico Demarco, *Il crollo del Regno delle due Sicilie*, Naples, 1966, pp. 27–31.

⁹ Diomede Ivone, "Banca del grano" e monte dei pegni in un comune del Mezzogiorno nella seconda metà dell'800, in "Revue internationale d'histoire de la banque," 18, 1979, p. 95.

In the South, as elsewhere in Italy, *monti frumentari* were mainly run by parishes. Some, however, were established by confraternities or individuals. The initial capital was constituted by a fund, in money or in kind (grain), from a donation or bequeath. The grain was lent out to anyone who might need it for sowing.¹⁰ The guarantee of the loan was generally of a personal nature, surety. Some *monti frumentari*, however, required a physical pledge, instead. The grain received could only be used to sow one's own field, or to feed one's family, but not to be sold at a profit. At harvest time, what had been received was supposed to be given back. While grain loans were issued in "struck" (leveled) measures, they were paid back in "heaped" measures, where the top heap constituted the interest on the loan. The good intentions of the founders did not always coincide with the actual needs of the localities where a *monte frumentario* had been established. Such was the case for the *monte frumentario* founded in 1767 in Bracigliano, a town in Principato Citeriore, under provisions contained in the will of the prince of Castellaneta, Alessandro Mattia Miroballo d'Aragona, marquis of Bracigliano, who had left 100 *tomoli* "of *saragolla* grain, to be lent out to poor farmers at an interest of a full half-measure for each *tomolo*."¹¹ During the first few years of this *monte*'s life, local farmers had very limited recourse to it. This is because farmers in that area only grew maize. Since the new *monte frumentario* only lent wheat, it did not meet local needs and was thus threatened with bankruptcy. The obvious decision was therefore taken, for the benefit of the local farmers and for the sake of rational use of this important institution, namely to trade its wheat stock for maize.¹²

One of the features that distinguished *monti frumentari* from *monti di pietà* was the nature of the loan, which was in grain for the former, and in money for the latter. Some institutions, however, gave out loans in either form, according to the needs of the applicant, e.g., the *Monte di Pietà* of Pietransieri, which lent corn as well as money on pledge. In the words of a contemporary source: "Since the area of Pietransieri stands among the tallest and most alpine mountains in Abruzzo, for most of the year it is surrounded by snow and sparsely frequented, and during the summer everyone needs to make timely preparations; instead of lending money to buy the grain they cannot buy because winter is coming, they lend grain on pledges whose value must be equal to the value of the grain."¹³ Another reason for mixed lending by *monti frumentari* was that farmers did not need only seeds to sow, but also money to buy or rent sowing or harvesting tools, hence the rise and spread of *monti di pietà* alongside *monti frumentari*. The son of the founder of the *monte*

¹⁰ Giuseppe Garrani, *Gli antichi istituti di credito agrario. I monti frumentari*, in "Economia e Credito," 1966, 1, p. 568.

¹¹ The *tomolo* is equivalent to 40 kilograms of wheat or 55.55 liters.

¹² Donato Cosimato, *La crisi dei monti frumentari nella seconda metà del '700. Un monte frumentario del Principato Citeriore*, in "Il Picentino," year XIII, 1969, nos. 3–4, pp. 14–15.

¹³ Archivio di Stato di Napoli (hereafter: ASN), Cappellano Maggiore (hereafter: CM), Statuti di Congregazioni, fascio (hereafter: fs.) 1205, incartamento (hereafter: inc.) 107.

frumentario of San Giovanni Rotondo (1679), Carlo Onero Cavaniglia, forty years after the opening of this institution by will of his father, realized that farmers, “when their crops ripen[ed], needing ready money to reap and harvest, [found] themselves forced to turn to the merchants of Foggia and other nearby places for money, selling them the grain they needed for the harvest on harsh conditions.”¹⁴ He thus decided that part of the grain held by the bank should be converted into money to be lent to farmers at an interest. In 1733, partly in the wake of the success of the *monte* of San Giovanni Rotondo, and partly because “the gathering of crops [was] the only industry whereby the natives ma[de] their livelihood,” Cavaniglia opened a similar institution – a mixed *monte frumentario* and *monte di pietà* – at San Marco dei Cavoti. He endowed this new “relief fund for the poor” with a capital of 360 *tomoli* of corn and 50 ducats.¹⁵ There were other such cases in the 1700s, e.g., a mixed *monte di pietà* and *monte frumentario* at Cirò in Calabria Ultra, opened in 1760 at the behest of Monsignor Peronaci, bishop of Umbriatico, for two purposes: lending sums to farmers on pledge at a small interest at sowing time, and giving them directly seed for sowing, to be repaid at harvest time at an interest of one sixteenth of a *tomolo*.¹⁶

The loans were issued in October, before sowing time. To give relief to the poor at other times of the year, the statute envisaged exceptions, namely that loans could be granted at Christmas or Easter time, or on the feast day of the patron saint; disastrous events, such as drought, also constituted such an exception. Repayment, instead, was scheduled at harvest time, between August and September. As to the quantity that could be lent, it was specified in the statutes; as a rule, it did not exceed 4–5 *tomoli* of grain per request. This quantity was measured in *staio*, i.e., cylindrical containers that held about 5 kg of grain, leveled when the seed was granted, heaped when it was repaid. The difference amounted to a moderate interest rate of about half a *stoppello* (2.08 kg) per *tomolo*.

The organization of these institutions was very simple. Unlike some *monti di pietà*, whose range of business was such that they required quite a composite staff, *monti frumentari* relied on the – usually unpaid – work of individuals designated by the founder. Two administrators were appointed by the founder himself. One had to be a clergyman. The other could be picked among the members of a local noble family, or among eminent personalities of the area, or else could be one of the administrators of the local *Universitas* (local town). If the load of work was excessive, a cashier, a storekeeper and an appraiser could be added to the staff. The money was deposited in a coffer with two or three keys, which were kept by the administrators and the cashier, respectively. The grain was stored in a room in the apartment of one of the two administrators, or in an apartment provided for this use

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, fs. 1189, inc. 52.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, inc. 62.

¹⁶ Antonio Terminelli, *Il monte frumentario e pecuniario in Cirò*, in “Studi Meridionali,” year VIII, 1975, fasc. III–IV, pp. 470–479.

by the *Universitas* or the founder. The bookkeeping method reflected the simplicity of the institution's organization. The cashier kept a book of loans in money, recording how much had been lent to whom, repayments, and the interest due. The storekeeper kept a book of outgoing and incoming grain, where he recorded the name of the beneficiary of the loan, how much had been granted, and how much given back. In some cases, the administrators kept a book recording the patrimony of the bank, *i.e.*, its initial capital and all donations, bequests, loans, or alms received, if any, in order to be able to draw up an inventory.¹⁷

IV. THE DECLINE OF *MONTI FRUMENTARI*

The Concordat of 1741 ruled that the administrators of *monti frumentari* were no longer to be picked among clergymen. Even before this date, it had been some founders' firm intent to keep the clergy out of these institutions, as in the case of the *monti* of San Giovanni Rotondo and San Marco dei Cavoti, whose statutes specified that the clergy should not interfere in their management.¹⁸ On the contrary, the presence of a clergyman as an administrator was specifically requested for some *monti* opened after the publication of the Concordat. Among these was a *monte frumentario* established at Albi, a hamlet of Taverna in Calabria Ultra. This institution was to be opened in 1770, entrusting its administration to three parsons and three local well-to-do individuals. However, controversies arose, which lasted 24 years, regarding the inclusion of the three parsons, precisely because it conflicted with the provisions of the Concordat. Only in 1794 was the opening of the institution finally authorized, on condition that its management be entrusted only to the three laymen.¹⁹

The *monti frumentari* continued to effectively play their role of issuing production credit as long as they were left free to operate on the basis of the statutes they had given themselves, and as long as they were locally managed by individuals nominated by the parson and reporting to the bishop, as had been prescribed by Pope Benedict XIII. They prospered as long as they succeeded in adapting to the needs of local communities, on the dual basis of charity and consensus. The uniform regulations issued by Cardinal Orsini, which aimed to give the *monti* order, stability, and expansive strength, gave rise to a whole new phase in their lives, during which many new ones were opened. The *monti* expanded so much that they eventually came to play a major role in relief and cooperation in rural areas. It is precisely this autonomy, however, that is believed to have triggered the greed of a host of profiteers, who thenceforward started hovering around the *monti*. Orsini's plan had failed to provide for efficient control organisms. This shortcoming caused many of the *monti* to start on a long path of decline.²⁰

¹⁷ ASN, CM, Statuti di congregazioni, fs. 1205, inc. 107.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, fs. 1189, incc. 52, 62.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, fs. 1209, inc. 99.

²⁰ Giovanni Masi, *I monti frumentari e pecuniari in provincia di Bari*, in *Studi in onore di Amintore Fanfani*, Milan, 1962, p. 343.

In the Kingdom of Naples, the application of the rules of the 1741 Concordat involved additional aggravation for these institutions. They were placed under the rigid, centralized, and leveling authority of the *Tribunale Misto*.²¹ This caused them to lose the spirit of public beneficence they had been founded in.²² The process of laicization, instead of reinvigorating them, made their crisis even worse.

Some contemporary observers were of the same opinion. On the occasion of a trip to Capitanata, the report on which was published in 1790, Abbot Longano observed: "Since time immemorial, for the public relief of the people in every province of the Kingdom there are a multitude of *monti di pietà* [meaning *monti frumentari*], or pious places. They used to be so much under the bishops' control, and their administration used to be so meticulous, that they had prospered in the extreme. Their revenues mostly consisted of grain, but they also had cattle, sheep, and revenues in money. In a very short time, an excess of control by yearly administrators has overtaxed them, preyed on them, impoverished them [...]."²³ Thus, the Tribunale Misto had been the agent of the decadence of the *monti*. The greed and ignorance of the administrators appointed by the Tribunale Misto, who introduced thieving methods, turned the *monti* into institutions existing only on paper.²⁴ Instead of the sharecroppers, who were usually chosen among or by the clergy, for the first time representatives of the well-to-do class, the *galantuomini*, were called to manage credit institutions. These individuals, "by lending the assistance of their technicalities at a handsome price, now to feudal lords, now to the subject populations, precisely during that time kept strengthening their positions to the detriment of both."²⁵ Part of the problem was that, as long as those institutions were managed by clergymen, the assets they held were regarded as sacrosanct and hence untouchable (the poor man's patrimony). From the moment the *monti* were laicized, no one had any

²¹ The tasks of the Tribunale Misto consisted in the inspection of all secular and mixed pious places; its specific powers mainly concerned disciplinary disputes, accounts and balance sheets. This court also judged local immunities and took care of the execution of pious legacies. It was directed by a president elected by the pope out of three ecclesiastics proposed by the king, by two other ecclesiastical advisors, southern by birth and chosen by the pope, and by two other lay advisors appointed by the king from among Togolese people, and a secretary. It was abolished in 1806 (Giuseppe Maria Galanti, *Della descrizione geografica e politica delle Sicilie*, Naples, 1789–1798; here we used the edition of Franca Assante, Domenico Demarco, Naples, 1969, vol. I, p. 222).

²² Giustino Fortunato, *I monti frumentari nelle province napoletane*, in "La Rassegna settimanale di politica, scienze, lettere ed arti," 21 March 1880, p. 116; here we used the edition: idem, *Il Mezzogiorno e lo stato italiano. Discorsi politici (1880–1910)*, Rome, Bari, 1911, vol. I, p. 40.

²³ Francesco Longano, *Viaggi dell'Abate Longano per lo Regno di Napoli*, vol. II, *Capitanata*, Naples, 1790, pp. 188–189.

²⁴ Aldo Di Biasio, *Il finanziamento dell'azienda agraria nel Regno di Napoli: i monti frumentari agli inizi dell'Ottocento*, s.a., s.l., p. 144. Not all authors agree that these institutions had completely keeled over. On the eve of the reform of the sector in 1781, there existed some fairly prosperous and very active *monti frumentari*, such as the one at Brindisi, which was wealthy enough to grant loans to the town government for a project to reclaim the marshes surrounding the town (G. Masi, *op. cit.*, p. 345).

²⁵ Antonio Saladino, *I monti frumentari e l'istituzione dei monti pecuniari nel Principato Citeriore*, in "Rassegna storica salernitana," year XII, 1951, nos. 1–4, p. 223.

scruple in pillaging their assets without restraint. And since “these *monti* deal[t] out food and seed to the poor farmers, and widows, orphans and the indigent receive[d] relief and continued assistance from them, [...] it is immediately apparent that they should be restored by declaring them ecclesiastic property again, subject to the *Direzione Vescovile*.”²⁶ After the drought of the 1760s, the state took more extensive action to improve the performance of these institutions. Its action came in the wake of explicit requests and complaints coming from the communities where the *monti* operated, in the hope that their poor performance could be remedied. The most frequent case of misconduct was the mere renewal of farmers’ credit policies by dishonest administrators, without the issuing of a new loan in kind. The administrators then demanded restitution, as if there actually had been a loan. To counter this practice, the law of 14 June 1766 expressly forbade the renewing of policies unless there had been an actual loan; in case the need arose for the granting of reprieves or discounts, a request for authorization to do so had to be submitted to the Tribunale Misto. Civil and criminal sanctions were imposed in case of failure to respect these norms.²⁷

Other problems encountered by the *monti frumentari* were relative to the interest on grain loans. It was a very common practice to demand one *stoppello* per *tomolo* of grain as interest. This was regarded as a grievously high rate by farmers. The king was repeatedly forced to intervene, imposing a reduction to half a *stoppello*.²⁸ This reduction was universally applied only following the act of 20 July 1776, whereby all the *monti frumentari* were placed under the obligation to exact no more than half a *stoppello* per *tomolo*. The act also specified that payback of grain should take place at harvest time, and that in case of negligence by the administrators they would answer for it personally.²⁹ But the crisis that had hit the *monti frumentari* in the second half of the eighteenth century was actually part of a broader crisis affecting the whole public relief system of the kingdom.

It is well known that, in the Kingdom of Naples, public relief had always been charitable in character, even in the exceptional case of public calamities. It had always been entrusted, on the one hand, to the clergy (convents, monasteries, parishes, and bishoprics), on the other, to a plethora of lay charities, such as pious institutions, congregations, conservatories, hospitals, etc. It is also well known that – as we have seen – early Bourbon reformists had tried to restore the state’s authority in spheres until then dominated by the Church, in the name of the anti-clerical and jurisdictional principles of Enlightenment philosophers and thinkers.³⁰ In the field of public welfare, however, as in that of education, the clergy, although by then

²⁶ F. Longano, *op. cit.*, pp. 259–260.

²⁷ Diego Gatta, *Regali dispacci*, vol. II, part I, Naples, 1776, title XXXVIII–VII.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, vol. II, part I, title XXXVIII–VII; vol. IV, part I, title XXXVII–II; Alessio De Saris, *Codice delle leggi del Regno di Napoli*, Naples, 1792, book I, p. 122.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ D. Cosimato, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–7.

obsolete in its approach, was the only one people in need could turn to. The state had never offered a valid alternative, since there had been no immediate translation from the theoretical to the practical plane of the ideological principles underpinning Bourbon reformism. The reformers were confronted with a socioeconomic reality that was impossible to change within a few years. As a consequence, the precarious conditions many *monti frumentari* in the kingdom were already in became even worse. As we have already discussed, the Concordat of 1741 had, among other things, prohibited interference of the clergy in these institutions, and ruled that their managers had to be laymen. The justification for this was that managers named by the clergy or who were clergymen themselves did not represent the real interests of poor farmers, because they took advantage of their position and were easily corrupted. As we have seen, the cure was worse than the disease. On the one hand, many lay managers became an instrument in the hands of local barons, who used them to infiltrate the management of the banks, and, on the other, the managers themselves stole from the banks.³¹

The situation was made worse by the fact that hardly any money circulated in some of the areas further removed from the larger markets. Besides, agriculture was faring badly due to frequent bad harvests, and epidemics had depopulated the countryside in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the second half of the eighteenth century, there were more than five droughts, with a consequent more than eightfold increase in the price of grain. Merchants, and all those who used *contratti alla voce* (voice contracts),³² made large profits.³³ All this reflected negatively on the *monti frumentari*, and hence on the poor.

V. THE REFORM OF 1781

In the 1780s, a phase of more considerate economic policy measures began. This was the time of the “second generation” of reformers, who, by exerting pressure and giving practical advice for action, fostered policies taking more careful stock of the economic reality of the South.³⁴

Those were the years when the government showed more dynamism, under the spur of increasing economic imbalances and strong social unrest. Through investigations, political debates, and edicts or dispatches, the most important problems of the kingdom were addressed, first and foremost the agrarian reform. The measures taken included the institution of a *Monte Frumentario del Regno* in 1781; new rules for the price system used in the *contratti alla voce* in 1783; edicts regarding

³¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 10–11.

³² A contract of anticipatory purchase and sale, specific to Southern Italy.

³³ Paolo Macry, *Ceto mercantile e azienda agricola nel Regno di Napoli: il contratto alla voce nel XVIII secolo*, in “Quaderni storici,” 21, 1972.

³⁴ *Idem*, *Mercato e società nel Regno di Napoli. Commercio del grano e politica economica nel '700*, Naples, 1974, p. 458.

tilling and the promotion of orchard crops in 1787; edicts abolishing the general grain distribution system and placing restrictions on coastal sea trade in 1788; an edict on commons in 1789; the abolition of internal passports and a dispatch ordering a new census of the fiscal districts of the Tavoliere in 1792; and, finally, the decision to liberalize the delivery of flour to, and bread-making in Naples, which did away with the monopoly of the capital's grain authority once and for all.³⁵

These acts show their debt to physiocratic theories, which by this time were holding sway in economic policy decisions. The neo-mercantilism of the time of Charles I and the stabilization that followed the economic crisis of the 1760s had displayed serious shortcomings. It is evident that the policy measures regarding agriculture were meant to address, on the one hand, a demographic growth that had become unstoppable, and, on the other, the continuing increase in prices and in revenues, as well as the change in crops that had followed the drought of the years 1759–1764.

Furthermore, at the end of the 1770s, the accusations against sharecroppers and the concerned reports of local authorities, as well as the collapse of production in 1779, called for radical action by the government. Although there were several differences from one Neapolitan province to the other, a common complaint was the “scarcity of seed” and the worsening of the economic situation of smallholders, especially those who lacked financial autonomy and were hence more vulnerable to fluctuations in the seasonal price cycle.³⁶ The instrument used by merchants to bind the farmers hand and foot was the *contratto alla voce*, whereby mercantile capital managed to establish a monopolistic regime and thus appropriate much of the produce. Exploiting the financial weakness of large and small farmers, the merchants diverted the grain from local consumption, taking the lion's share – with locally low prices as a consequence – to trade it in the capital and some large peripheral towns, or export it to Venice, Genoa, Marseilles, or London.³⁷

At the end of the 1770s, the situation had deteriorated so much that the local authorities, the central government, and the legislators felt they needed to address the problem. The news coming in from the provinces gave cause for concern.³⁸ An investigation on the state of Southern Italian cereal growing, started by the government in 1781, clearly showed that the provinces of the kingdom that had been most impacted by the above-described phenomena were the central ones. From 1764 to the year of the investigation, grain prices had no longer decreased to pre-drought levels. During the same period, rent on land had doubled, so that to be able to pay it farmers had doubled the prices of their produce. In those flatlands, which mainly depended on trade with Naples and the mountainous regions, middle-small farms continued to be inexorably subjected to the “usury of merchants.”³⁹ The situation

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 459.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 461.

³⁷ *Idem*, *Ceto mercantile e azienda agricola*, p. 857.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 859.

³⁹ *Idem*, *Mercato e società nel Regno di Napoli*, p. 462.

was different in areas where large landowners held sway. Their reaction to the crisis was immediate and based on the logic of profit. Instead of following the example of the farmers of Abruzzo, converting pastureland to farmland, the large landowners of Puglia shifted their interests to livestock farming, which was much more profitable at that time. Some “private storage pits” were created, to the detriment of public ones, where the grain stored was reduced to a third compared to the years before 1764. Smuggling was rampant. The conditions of small and middle farmers worsened. They were increasingly forced to turn to grain-hoarding merchants to ask for an advance for sowing, especially since many of the 526 *monti frumentari* scattered across the kingdom – as reported by local authorities – were no longer operative, or functioned poorly, and at any rate were incapable of coping with the problem.⁴⁰

The first governmental action to address the farmers’ problems sought, as mentioned above, to solve the core issue, namely the lack of credit for agriculture. The solution proposed was to create a state *monte frumentario* to lead the myriad of already existing *monti frumentari*, after putting the latter back on their feet. This was a first timid attempt to regulate the capital circulating in the private sector. It was then followed by a more specific action on fixed capital, addressing the problem of land ownership. This action took the form of an edict, issued in 1792, ordering a census of land in the Kingdom of Naples, a precursor of the 1806 act abolishing feudality.⁴¹ The legislators sought to come up with a formula that would help farmers financially, but at the same time leave the food market free. To this end, the *Monte Frumentario del Regno* was established in 1781. It is evident that behind this project, besides the barons’ and the mercantile bourgeoisie’s interest in not losing their primacy, there was the government’s concern for making sure that Naples – which by this time had a population of more than 400,000 people – was not deprived of its most important food source, namely the grain-growing countryside.

A proposal to create a *monte frumentario* of the kingdom was not a novelty for the royal chamber. In the several projects presented by private citizens for the general reform of the grain distribution system, and in various discussions in the Chamber of Santa Chiara about how to best employ some ecclesiastic revenues, the arguments put forth to advocate support for farmers had always been the same in every debate preceding the foundation of the *Monte Frumentario del Regno*.⁴² In many parts of the kingdom, farmers were encountering serious difficulties in sowing their fields due to the greed of those who lent them money under *contratti alla voce*, which were not fully legal but were tolerated by the authorities. In the debate on this issue, one perceives a remarkable influence of physiocratic ideas, and especially of

⁴⁰ ASN, Ministero degli esteri, fs. 4614, fol. 108.

⁴¹ Gabriella Corona, *Demani ed individualismo agrario nel Regno di Napoli (1780–1806)*, Naples, 1995.

⁴² Paola Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario. I monti frumentari nel Regno di Napoli e le riforme di fine ‘700*, Naples, 2014, pp. 35–54.

the notion that there existed a positive correlation between increased agricultural production and economic development: “[...] in the lack of agriculture, recognized as the permanent source of the wealth of states, there will be a consequential lack of the primary good, which will need to be purchased elsewhere at altered prices; and the alteration of this primary good brings with it the alteration [of the price] of the other foodstuffs, and also of manufactured products, since the price of grain is the measure of the price of all other items.”⁴³ Should the government fail to intervene, the repercussions on the commercial balance would be harsh, with a decrease in exports and, consequently, in the inflow of foreign currency. The most disastrous effect would be the increase of beggars, of the idle and, proportionally, of delinquents as well. The creation of a *monte frumentario* of the kingdom could avert this catastrophe.

Furthermore, the king had been informed of the existence of more than 500 *monti frumentari* in every corner of the realm; of these institutions, established to support agriculture, “many [were] totally gone, a great many had declined, and almost all were poorly managed.” The *ad hoc* acts of law issued in 1766 had done nothing to improve this situation. Behind the proposal to create a *monte frumentario* of the kingdom, there was the government’s determination to reform the smaller *monti frumentari*. The basic idea was that if individual *monti frumentari* operated efficiently, so would the state *monte frumentario*, which would provide free storage for the collected grain to be lent. Furthermore, an honest administration of the *monti frumentari* would have allowed a higher number of people to benefit from loans in kind. The state *monte frumentario* was to be like “a tree, having its roots in the capital, immediately under the eyes of the king, that could extend its fruit-bearing boughs to all places in the Realm.”⁴⁴

VI. THE DISTRIBUTION OF *MONTI FRUMENTARI* IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES

The exact number of *monti frumentari* in the Kingdom of Naples as of 1781 is recorded in a document attached to the minutes of the debate on the manner of establishing the *Monte Frumentario del Regno*. It is a list of *monti frumentari* arranged by location and divided into sections, one for each of the twelve provinces of the Kingdom of Naples.⁴⁵ The value of this document lies in the fact that scholars had always written about the existence of “five hundred and more” *monti* in the kingdom in that period; a precise number could be deduced first and foremost from the law instituting the *Monte Frumentario del Regno*; what was not known until then, however, was the geographical distribution of these *monti frumentari* across the continental Italian South, which is precisely what this source informs us about. Furthermore, by comparing this distribution with other data, such as the number of *monti frumentari*

⁴³ ASN, Ministero degli esteri, fs. 4614, fol. 24v.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, fol. 30v.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, fols. 70–91v, *apud* P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, pp. 114–151.

in other regions of the Italian peninsula, population, square surface, types of locality, etc., the following observations can be made.

In the first place, the continental South of the kingdom had the highest number of *monti frumentari* in Italy, followed by the Venetian Republic with 114, Piedmont with 54, Umbria with 51, etc. (Table 1). Incidentally, in the Venetian Republic the *monti* were replaced, a century later, by the *casse rurali* ("rural funds") promoted by Leone Wollemborg.⁴⁶

Table 1
Number of *monti frumentari* at the End of the 1700s in the Italian Peninsula

Region	Number
Continental Southern Italy	526
Veneto	114
Piedmont	54
Umbria	51
Marche	42
Lazio	26
Lombardy	7
Emilia Romagna	4
Liguria	4

Source: ASN, Ministero degli esteri, fs. 4614, fols. 70–91v; *Monti di pietà e presenza ebraica in Italia (secoli XV–XVIII)*, ed. by Daniele Montanari, Rome, 1999, pp. 33, 66–68, 94, 116–120, 157–158, 212–214, 240–242.

The fact that there was such a huge number of *monti frumentari* in the Kingdom of Naples is indicative of a great hunger for cash, which, as I mentioned above, was especially scarce in areas where the economy was not very dynamic. In the Kingdom of Naples, the cost of money was hence higher than in other regions of the Italian peninsula. Furthermore, there was a difference between cities and smaller towns. In cities, interest rates were of course lower, while in smaller towns credit was left in the hands of a variety of individuals who charged usury rates.

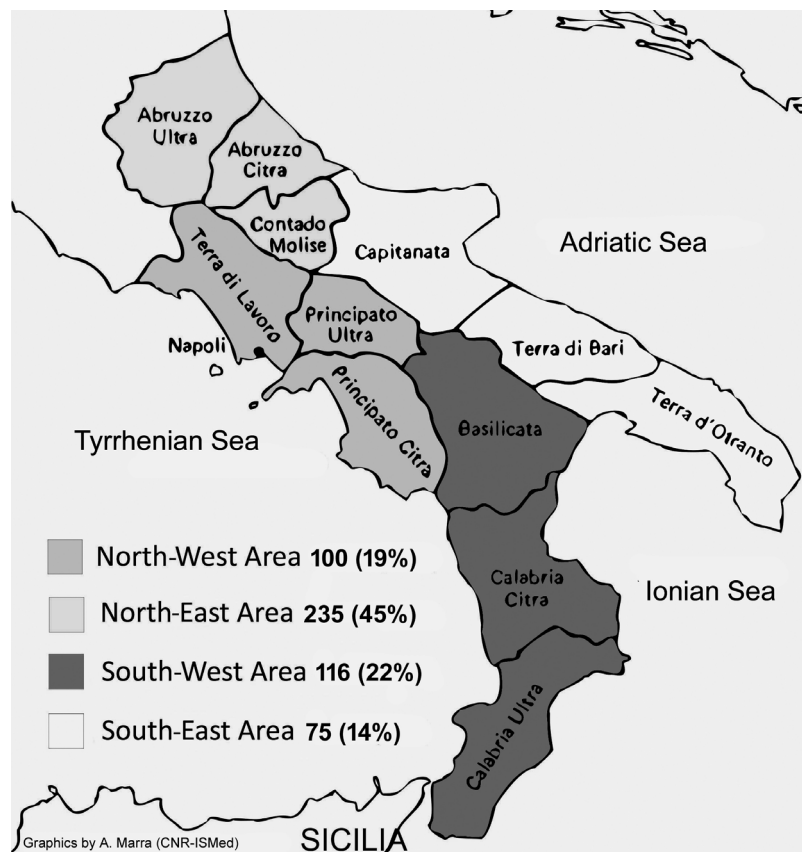
It is thus hardly surprising that the northeast sector of the kingdom had the highest number of *monti frumentari*, with 45% of the total just in the three provinces of Contado di Molise and the two Abruzzi. Next came the southwest sector, with Basilicata and the two Calabrias, and the southeast sector, with Terra di Bari, Terra d'Otranto and Capitanata, totaling 36%. Finally, the northwest sector, comprising Terra di Lavoro and the two Principati, had 19% (Figure 1).

The *monti frumentari* were more numerous in areas where geographic and climatic difficulties hindered contact with the economically more dynamic centers.

⁴⁶ Luigi De Rosa, *Orientamenti e problemi in storia economica*, Turin, 1990, p. 221.

If we break down the data by individual provinces, Molise had the highest number of *monti frumentari*, followed by Abruzzo Ultra, Basilicata, and Capitanata. Principato Ultra, Abruzzo Citra, Principato Citra and Calabria Citra were in an intermediate position. Finally, the *monti frumentari* were scarcer in the provinces of Terra di Lavoro, Terra d'Otranto, Calabria Ultra, and Terra di Bari, which had a livelier economy and where other more affordable forms of credit were available, such as those provided by the *monti di pietà* (Figure 2).⁴⁷

Figure 1
Percentage Distribution of *monti frumentari* by Geographical Area
in the Kingdom of Naples at the End of the Eighteenth Century



Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, pp. 86–87.

⁴⁷ Paola Avallone, *Una banca al servizio del "povero bisognoso." I monti di pietà nel Regno di Napoli (secc. XV–XVIII)*, in *Il "povero" va in banca. I monti di pietà negli antichi stati italiani (secc. XV–XVIII)*, ed. by Paola Avallone, Naples, 2001, pp. 90–94.

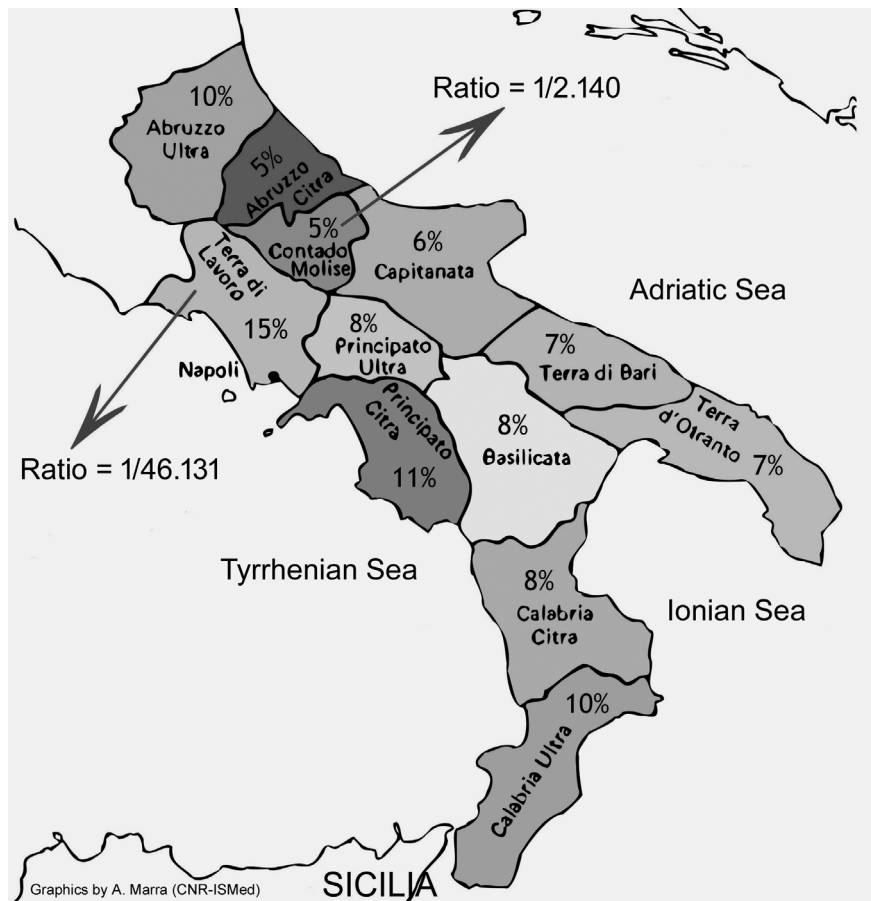
Figure 2
Distribution (Number and Percentage) of *monti frumentari* by Province
in the Kingdom of Naples in 1781



Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, pp. 87–88.

If we compare the number of *monti frumentari* with the population in 1793 (Galanti's figures), we can observe that Molise, which housed only 5% of the whole population of the kingdom, had at least one *monte frumentario* for every 2,139 inhabitants, while in Terra di Lavoro, the most populous province in the kingdom, housing 15% of its total population, there was only one *monte frumentario* for every 46,131 inhabitants. The lowest ratio was in Calabria Ultra, which, although it housed 10% of the total population of the realm (at the third place, together with Abruzzo Ultra, after Terra di Lavoro and Principato Citra), had only one *monte frumentario* for every 61,988 inhabitants (Figure 3).

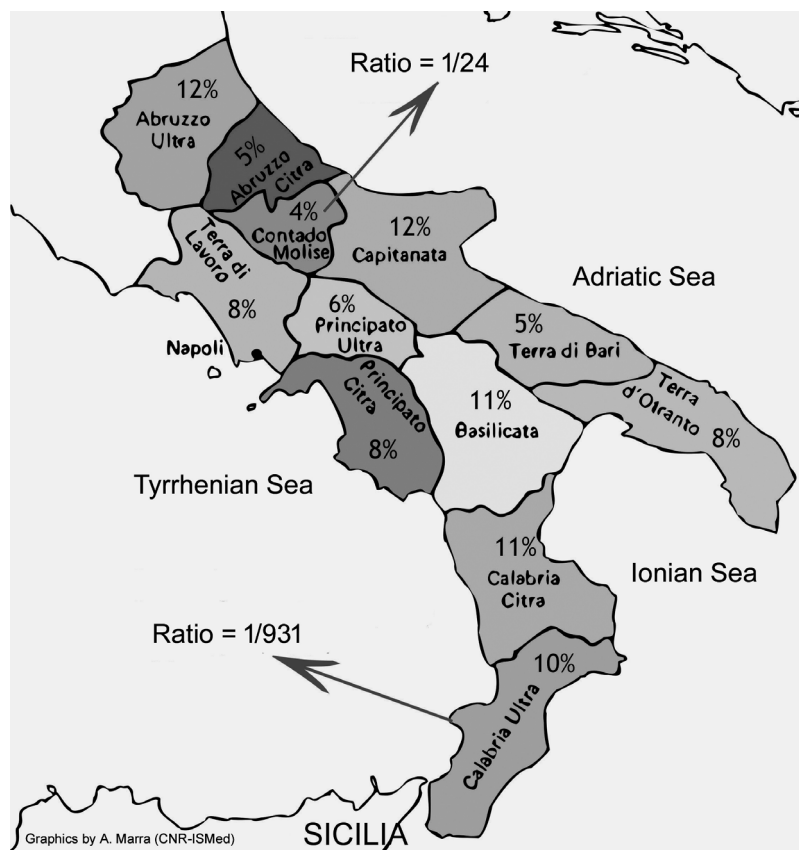
Figure 3
Ratio of *monti frumentari* to Population Size by Province in the Kingdom of Naples at the End of the Eighteenth Century



Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, p. 93.

As to the corn-banks-to-surface ratio, in Contado di Molise it was, again, very high. This province, which covered only 4% of the total area of the realm, had one *monte frumentario* for every 24 sq. km. The ratio was lower – one *monte frumentario* for every 87 sq. km – in the province of Abruzzo Ultra, which covered 12% of the total surface of the kingdom. Capitanata, which also encompassed 12% of the total area of the realm – and was thus, with Abruzzo Ultra, the largest province in the kingdom – had a *monte frumentario* for every 117 sq. km. Calabria Ultra, covering 10% of the total surface of the realm, had the lowest ratio, with one *monte frumentario* for every 931 sq. km (Figure 4).

Figure 4
Ratio of *monti frumentari* to Area by Province in the Kingdom of Naples
at the End of the Eighteenth Century



Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, p. 93.

In the light of these data, it is evident that if these institutions had functioned at full capacity, the history of agriculture in the Kingdom of Naples would have been different. Unfortunately, the fact that after the reform of the 1880s there were still complaints about the scarcity of money shows that the system continued to be dysfunctional, being weighed down by earlier interests and a feudal regime that was starting to dissolve, with all the well-known contradictions that this involved.

These data are also useful for comparing the types of localities where the *monti frumentari* were located. The literature on *monti frumentari* has always regarded them as a prevalently rural phenomenon. Unlike the *monti di pietà*, which mainly flourished in urban contexts, these institutions were typical of areas with a strictly agricultural economy. A quantitative assessment of the distribution of *monti frumentari*, however, has never been attempted so far. This can be done today for the

Kingdom of Naples by cross-correlating the data on *monti frumentari* with data contained in the manuscript *Topografia politica del Regno di Napoli* by Pasquale Di Simone, concerning the years 1794–1796. Di Simone compiled this work between 1798 and 1800. He drew the data from a census based on the personal registers compiled annually by parish priests, which was the main source for authors of statistic and geographical works at the end of that century,⁴⁸ and was eventually published in 1803.⁴⁹

The following statistics draw on Di Simone's subdivision of localities into *città* (towns), hamlets, *terre* (large villages) and villages, his distinction by types of property (common, feudal, or ecclesiastic), and his data on the population of each of the localities with at least one *monte frumentario*.

As is known, settlements in the provinces of the Italian South were divided into towns, *terre*, hamlets, and villages. While hamlets and villages were farming villages surrounding the more important towns and *terre*, the distinction between towns and *terre* was not as clear-cut. Towns had walls and castles, and forms of government granting citizens a certain autonomy. The crafts were quite developed in towns, and merchants residing in them had established relations with faraway localities. But *terre*, too, could have walls and castles, could be densely inhabited, and had often established some kind of social and economic hegemony over the surrounding countryside. While qualifying as a town implied a hierarchic distinction, in reality a settlement designated as such could be less populous, less wealthy and less powerful than a *terra*. Other hierarchically distinctive elements included being the seat of a bishop or a cultural center. The presence of rich and renowned churches or monasteries also contributed to the wealth and prestige of a locality. In feudal towns or *terre*, the local baron could also add to the wealth and prestige of the place. Furthermore, unlike in the rest of Europe, in Southern Italy the borders between town and country were clearly marked only in the intentions of their citizens and of intellectuals expressing local aspirations.⁵⁰

Out of 333 localities housing – in some cases more than one – *monti frumentari*, slightly more than 60% were *terre*. The remaining 40% consisted, in decreasing order, of towns (14%), villages (12%), hamlets (10%), and localities whose status is not specified (4%) (Graph 1). This confirms what was said above about *monti frumentari* being institutions prevalently located in rural areas.

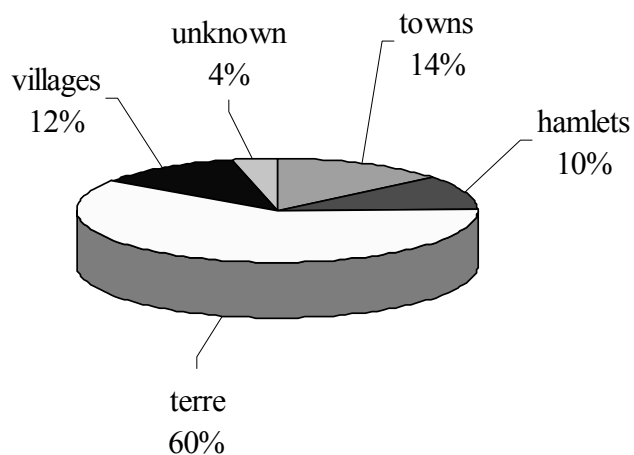
If we further distinguish the aforementioned localities by form of property – feudal, common, or church – it is interesting to note that most *monti frumentari* were located in baronial *terre* (176), in royal villages (38), and in royal towns (23) (Graph 2).

⁴⁸ Lorenzo Giustiniani, *Dizionario geografico-ragionato del Regno di Napoli*, Naples, 1797 (anastatic edition published in 1969); Francesco Sacco, *Dizionario geografico-istorico-fisico del Regno di Napoli*, Naples, 1795–1796.

⁴⁹ *Quadro alfabetico delle popolazioni del Regno di Napoli con lo stato dell'amministrazione e sua carta geografica*, Naples, 1803.

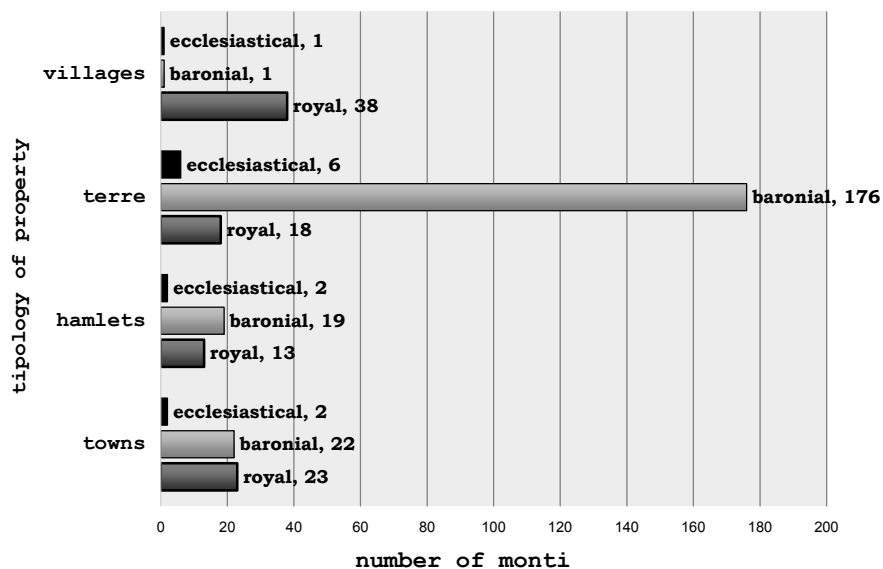
⁵⁰ Aurelio Lepre, *Terra di Lavoro*, in *Storia del Mezzogiorno*, vol. V, Rome, 1986, p. 122.

Graph 1
Percentage Distribution of *monti frumentari* by the Type of Locality



Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, p. 97.

Graph 2
Distribution of *monti frumentari* by Form of Property

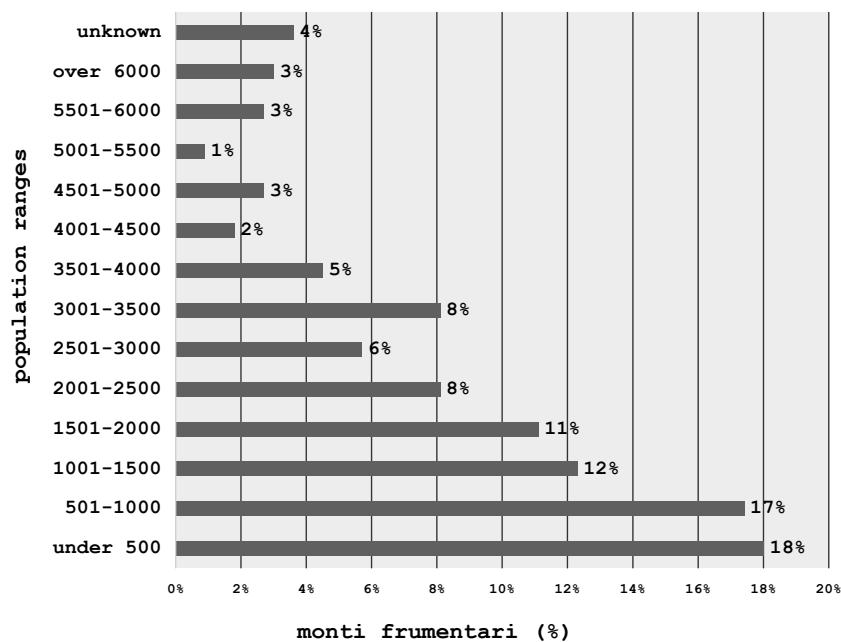


Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, p. 97.

This prevalence of baronial forms of land ownership should not be interpreted as evidence that institutions assisting the conjunctural poor were more needed where local government was strong and authoritarian. On the contrary, it was often the local nobility who promoted the creation of *monti frumentari*. The high percentage of baronial *terre* or towns simply depends on the fact that towns, hamlets, *terre* and villages were mostly under feudal jurisdiction.

The correlation between population and *monti frumentari* is also interesting. One notices straight away that the number of localities where *monti frumentari* were present tends to decrease with the increase of the population. The result comes close to a descending curve (Graph 3).

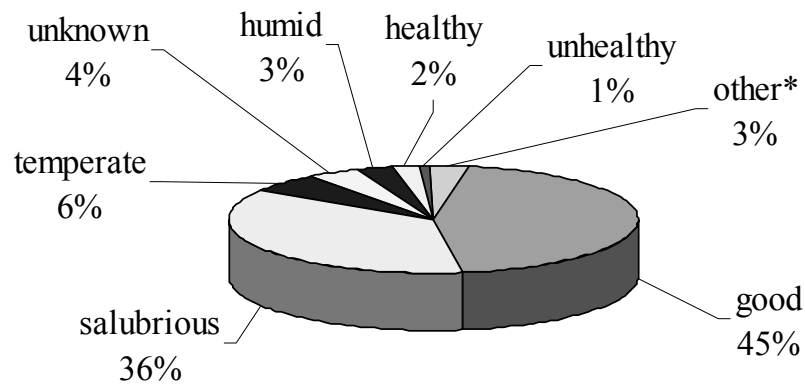
Graph 3
Correlation between Population Size and *monti frumentari*



Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, p. 99.

Finally, turning to the data regarding the quality of air, one observes that 45% (150) of all the *monti frumentari* were located in localities where the air was “good” and 36% (121) in localities where the air was “salubrious.” This is further evidence that the *monti frumentari* were situated in areas where the local economy was prevalently based on agriculture (Graph 4).

Graph 4
Quality of Air of Localities Where There Was a *monte frumentario*



* other = not good, not salubrious, hot, cold, poor, perfect, not very good, rigid, airy, severe, low.

Source: P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, p. 100.

VII. THE PROGRAM FAILS

In the debate on the implementation of the program at government level, the need was pointed out for a reorganization of the existing *monti frumentari*. Another matter for debate was what importance to assign to the *Monte Frumentario del Regno*. The promoters of the programs wanted to avoid at all costs: 1) the spread of poverty in the countryside; 2) the desperation of the poor and the consequent abandonment of farmland; 3) the concentration of produce in the hands of a few; 4) the alteration of the price of a food staple that was also the measure for the prices of other commodities; 5) a general increase of the number of the poor, vagrants, and crooks.

However, the impression one gets from reading the documents advocating for the creation of a state *monte frumentario* is that the aid offered to the provinces was essentially meant to facilitate the supplying of Naples with grain. The real aim was to bring the price of grain down to support the ever increasing population of the capital. Significantly, in the introduction to the final plan for the *Monte Frumentario del Regno* – which was later published as a law on 17 October 1781 – one reads that “with the *Monte Frumentario*, whereby one meets the needs of the capital and the kingdom, the source of the evil [was suppressed],” *i.e.*, the fact that farmers could no longer sow because they could not obtain seed.⁵¹

⁵¹ ASN, Ministero degli esteri, fs. 4614, fol. 12.

No more than 18 ducats could be lent for each farming cycle. These 18 ducats were to be paid out in three installments, issued 1) at sowing time, provided the smallholder or tenant had proved that they had prepared their land for sowing, 2) at cultivation time, and 3) right after the harvest. The economic capacity of the *Monte Frumentario* was to be precisely estimated, to make sure that the subsequent installments could always be paid out to those who had been granted the first. The second and third installment would be paid subject to presentation of two certificates signed by the local governor, the representative of the church, and the administrators of the *Universitas*, certifying that the fields had been seeded and cultivated, respectively.

In lieu of the above certificates, farmers could also apply for a loan simply by leaving a pledge in gold or silver. A jeweler would estimate whether this pledge covered the loaned sum plus two years of interest. Obviously, the borrower would be under the obligation to employ the money in the cultivation of his land.⁵²

When the farmer settled his debt, he was to pay an interest of 6%. This interest would have gone to the banks, which would have lent 60,000 ducats to the state *Monte Frumentario* (called in the proposal *Monte Frumentario Generale*). The payment of a 6% interest would have allowed the capital of the *Monte Frumentario Generale* to be replenished, once all expenses had been covered. It could thus be used to make up for any losses, or for public utility purposes. This interest should not be regarded as onerous, when compared with the minimum interest farmers usually paid in the *contratti alla voce* system, which was no less than 30%.⁵³ The debt was to be settled in two installments, one in September, the other no later than March. Settlement would entitle the farmer to a new loan for the subsequent sowing and harvest. Sometimes the whole year's crop was lost. In this case, subject to certification by the local governor, the church representative, and the town administrators, repayment could be postponed by one year. If the harvest had simply been scarce, the debt had to be settled anyway.⁵⁴

The *Monte Frumentario Generale* was to be established in the Puglia, in the province of Capitanata, and more precisely in the town of Foggia, clearly with the aim to increment grain production in an area traditionally regarded as suitable for this purpose. The government was also accused of having as its sole objective the elimination of ecclesiastic benefits through this new institution. At any rate, the reformist intent got bogged down in the muddy waters of litigation.

In spite of the good intentions of the first year of activity, the prospects of economic and social improvement opened up by the *Monte Frumentario del Regno* were unfortunately never realized. Some balances indicate that the initial capital of the *Monte Frumentario* was spent for completely different purposes. The coffers of the *Monte* were overburdened with assignees and various taxable institutions.⁵⁵ It thus

⁵² *Ibidem*.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, fols. 36v–37.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁵ G. Masi, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

appears that the institution was having trouble taking off. Indeed, ten years later petitions kept coming in from Puglia, sharecroppers requesting royal intervention to rescue them from the dire economic straits they found themselves in. In a nutshell, they could no longer work because they had no money. They put this down to the fact that they had been forced to market their products at very low prices due to competition from foreign products. Necessity had compelled them to ask for loans from the usual merchants at steep prices, since the lack of currency had caused a hike in the cost of money. These loans were needed to cover the increased cost of salaries and of all that was necessary for farming. The sum they were eventually lent, however, did not come from the *Monte Frumentario*, as one would expect, but directly from the state's coffers.⁵⁶

As this episode shows, while the *Monte Frumentario del Regno* had been created specifically to oppose the *contratti alla voce* and allow the trade of produce to be liberalized, the *contratti alla voce* continued to be the only means for farmers to have access to credit. Liberalization had actually thrown farmers into a state of even worse dejection, since foreign produce was now traded in the realm, forcing them to sell at extremely low prices or watch their crops rot.

Furthermore, the 1798 balance of the *Monte Frumentario* shows that, although its capital was supposed to be constituted by revenues coming from wealth the clergy had no right to, in the end this wealth actually returned to the clergy in the form of loans without interest, pensions, and various grants. Besides, the weakness of the kingdom's finances is well known. Alternative sources of income were constantly being sought, since the Treasury was incapable of meeting annual expenses only with tax money, hence the need to resort to other temporary or longer-term sources, as in the case of the use of the funds of the *Monte Frumentario*. And there was always some institution beset by financial problems that asked for a loan from the *Monte Frumentario*. The balance does not list any entry intended for the revival of small and middle farming, and this is a sign of the project's complete failure.

The war and the revolution made the disastrous situation of the *Monte Frumentario* even worse, as well as destabilized all the other *monti frumentari*, which had somehow survived after the foundering of the reformist project. The failed harvests of 1799/1800 in many localities in the kingdom, the exactions of foreign soldiers, thieving local administrators, and plundering by the peasant masses soon overwhelmed the *monti frumentari*.

The French administration did not have much interest in reviving them. Murat's government had an agrarian policy of its own, which could hardly encourage the survival of institutions with their roots in the rural world of the *Ancien Régime*.

Once the Tribunale Misto had been abolished, starting from 1806 the fund of the *Monte Frumentario Generale* was appropriated by the state. The plethora of *monti frumentari* scattered across the provinces of the kingdom had a better fate. In 1809, those that were still operative were placed under the supervision of the *Consiglio*

⁵⁶ P. Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario*, p. 80.

Generale degli Ospizi, which was charged with overseeing all the lay and mixed pious institutions. The *Consiglio*, in its turn, was under the direct authority of the Ministry of the Interior. Only in 1811, on the initiative of Minister Zurlo, was the issue of finance for agriculture raised again. The ministry advocated for rational solutions to improve the finances and organization of the *monti frumentari*, as well as those of the *monti di pietà*. In that same year, it was ruled that interest on small loans to farmers, in cash or kind, could be no higher than 6%.

In practice, however, during the French decade there was no real will to restore the *monti frumentari*. Although in 1812 they were entrusted to special town commissions, they were actually placed under the control of subjects who, having benefited or being about to benefit from the law on the abolition of feudality, had no interest in the survival of institutions still closely linked to the old feudal regime.⁵⁷

The revival of the *monti frumentari* only came about with the return of the Bourbons. After the Restoration, a royal decree containing norms regarding welfare was promulgated on 1 February 1816, followed by a Concordat in 1818. They were succeeded by ministerial instructions issued on 20 March 1820. Article 2 of these instructions mentioned *monti frumentari* among the charitable institutions and lay pious institutions placed under the jurisdiction of the *Consiglio Generale degli Ospizi* in their respective provinces. The patrimony and functions of the *monti frumentari* were thus restored. From 1819 onward, norms were issued regulating the administration of the *monti frumentari* in Abruzzo Ultra I, and the same was subsequently done for each province of the kingdom. Common regulations for all the *monti frumentari* of the kingdom were issued on 29 December 1826. The office of administrator became triennial and was declared a public position, financed by the state. The responsibility for the proper functioning of the *monti frumentari* was borne by the individual members of the Decurional Councils. It was further ruled that the balances or statutes discussed should be ratified by the *Intendenze* and their accounts audited and approved by the *Consiglio Generale degli Ospizi*.⁵⁸

The *monti frumentari* survived until the mid-nineteenth century, as long as backward conditions prevailed in agriculture. The return of the Bourbons and the restoration of the *monti frumentari* opened a new chapter in the history of credit to farmers. As regards the usefulness of these institutions, I refer the reader to the several authors who have addressed this question.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The importance of the *monti frumentari* as a means to provide relief to poor farmers certainly cannot be overlooked, in spite of all the criticism that was leveled at them, especially concerning the lack of scruples of their administrators and their

⁵⁷ A. Saladino, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 225.

conflicts of interest – because they were themselves landowners or moneylenders – and the contradiction between the persistence of these institutions and the existence of what had eventually become an advanced agricultural system, particularly in terms of land ownership. This criticism did not do away with the *monti frumentari*, which remained the single source of credit for agriculture in the Italian South on the morrow of unification. The lack of capital, wrote Giustino Fortunato in the 1880s, affected everybody in Southern Italy: landowners, proletarians, bourgeois, farmers, gentlemen, and peasants.⁵⁹ Dissenting with the movement for the abolition of the *monti frumentari*, Fortunato showed that they were still much needed in some backward areas. Indeed, some people's banks, founded for different purposes, were compelled to extend their function by lending seed to needy farmers.⁶⁰

Although he was influenced by the agricultural crisis that was sweeping through the country, in an important Parliament address, Fortunato argued that “the *monte frumentario* [was] nothing but the embryonic form of agrarian credit; but one need[ed] to remember that in much of the kingdom they [were] also the only institutions working for the benefit of the most unknown and ignored class of our country, very poor people, for whom the State, for whom Italy itself [has] not [been], at least so far, anything but military service, flour, and duties on consumption.”⁶¹

MONTI FRUMENTARI IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES (SEVENTEENTH–EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES)

Abstract

In modern Southern Italy, the *monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari* were incorporated in an elaborate network of social assistance. Of course, the features of this network differed in Naples and in smaller towns, and particularly in rural areas. This social relief system consisted mainly of many so-called “intermediate civic bodies,” which complemented, and were often confused with, religious charitable institutions. These “civic bodies” included hospitals, conservatories, *case sante* (holy houses), dowry funds, corporation funds, and – the hardest of all to classify – *monti di pietà* and *monti frumentari*. The goal of this essay is to explain the functions of these *ante litteram* credit institutions, whose main task was to use collective savings to support the poor, and thereby keep wealth within the areas they serviced and prevent locally produced commodities from circulating outside of local boundaries.

Keywords: rural credit; Southern Italy; the poor; social assistance

⁵⁹ G. Fortunato, *Il Mezzogiorno e lo stato italiano*, p. 56.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 61.

⁶¹ The quote is taken from the speech given in the Chamber of Deputies on the occasion of the discussion of the budget of the Ministry of the Interior for the year 1880 (*ibidem*, p. 34).

THE NETWORK OF HOSPITALS IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES AT THE TIME OF THE BOURBONS

RAFFAELLA SALVEMINI*

Social and demographic studies on hospitals in the Italian South in the modern age mainly describe an urban healthcare model included within a broader network of social support.¹ Similar to other charitable institutions, the large Southern Italian hospitals, which historians have characterized as multifunctional centers of power, were called upon to provide healthcare and aid, as well as finance public and private credit, participating actively both in the social life and in the economic, political and financial life of the towns of the Kingdom of Naples.²

They did not play this role, however, only within the urban healthcare model.³ Actually, an underexplored aspect of the hospitals' role in the modern age is how this network functioned in peripheral areas, where scholars have mainly highlighted the presence of cult places and brotherhoods, remarking on the role and importance of hospitals and hospices only in passing.⁴

The reasons for this should probably be sought not so much in the fact that the number of hospitals is exiguous compared with the overall number of lay pious institutions, but rather in a scarcity of sources. The present essay aims to retrace – at least in spatial terms – healthcare and aid provided to local communities and the rural world – or rather, the “non-urban” world – by small hospitals, which have been forgotten and overlooked by the broader historiography of welfare in the centuries when gifts, charity, aid, and alms of grain or money were crucial to the survival of a rapidly growing population. Confronted with demographic growth and an economic emergency, the Bourbon government (1734–1806) decided to engage in welfare policies and, above all, to take action regarding the assets of charitable institutions.

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¹ For a more general analysis, see *Assistenza e solidarietà in Europa, secc. XIII–XVIII*, ed. by Francesco Ammannati, Florence, 2013, n. 44. For the Italian South, *Città e modelli assistenziali nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, ed. by Giovanna Da Molin, Bari, 2013.

² Raffaella Salvemini, *Armut und Armenfürsorge 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, in *Neapel. Kulturschichten einer Stadt*, ed. by Salvatore Pisani, Berlin, 2009, pp. 116–123.

³ Paula Avallone, *Alle origini del credito agrario. I monti frumentari nel regno di Napoli e le riforme dei fine '700*, Naples, 2014.

⁴ On the subject of confraternities, see Nicholas Terpstra, *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*, Cambridge, 2007; for the Neapolitan model, see Daniele Casanova, *Le porte per il paradiso. Le confraternite napoletane in età moderna*, Naples, 2014.

The *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*, drawn up in 1788 for the eleven provinces of the kingdom, illustrates this network of lay and mixed lay-religious charitable institutions located in the countryside in the dioceses of the kingdom. These institutions were dispersed and marginal compared to purely ecclesiastic ones.⁵ They include pawnshops, churches, confraternities, and hospitals not placed under the *jus* of royal patronage and required to contribute to maintaining the Tribunale Misto; this new organism, created following the 1741 Concordat between the Bourbons and the Church, was entrusted with reorganizing and overseeing pious works managed by laymen.⁶

From these long lists I extracted data on the hospitals of the kingdom, except for those of the capital that were already under royal patronage, and those of Calabria Ultra and Calabria Citra, which had been hit by an earthquake in 1783. The *Nota* was drawn up for tax-collecting purposes and was hence not exhaustive. In spite of its limitations, however, it is the only official document of its kind before the one on *opere pie* drawn up after the unification of Italy (1861).⁷

I. EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HOSPITALS BETWEEN CENTER AND PERIPHERY IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES

Before reflecting on the results of my research and on the spatial distribution of peripheral hospitals in the time of the Bourbons, it is worth remarking that hospitals were lay organisms, largely run by confraternities. There is still much that historians do not know about these institutions, and especially about those of Southern Italy, as Christopher Black stressed as early as the 1990s.⁸ Research has so far mainly focused on hospitals in north-central Italy, with brief digressions into the history of assistance in the Italian South. For the 1500s, Black laments the non-existence of a map recording the confraternities and the lay institutions associated with them. For these institutions, an integrated study was called for, a study not only of statutes, but also of the minutes of assemblies, account books, bequeaths of dowries, and notaries' acts with last wills, in order to shed light on the limitations of rules that merely provided guidelines for actions undertaken within and outside each institution.

⁵ *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della città di Napoli i quali secondo la riforma fatta nel corrente anno 1788, debbono corrispondere la prestazione*, s.l., 1788. The following *Note* were published: 1) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Capitanata*; 2) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Teramo*; 3) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Lecce*; 4) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Terra di Lavoro*; 5) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Principato Ultra*; 6) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Principato Citra*; 7) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Chieti*; 8) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Molise*; 9) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Bari*; 10) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia dell'Aquila*; 11) *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti della Provincia di Cosenza*.

⁶ D. Casanova, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–85.

⁷ Raffaella Salvemini, *L'assistenza*, in *Il Mezzogiorno prima dell'Unità. Fonti, dati, storiografia*, ed. by Paola Malanima, Nicola Ostuni, Soveria Mannelli, 2013, pp. 311–338.

⁸ Christopher Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1989.

Finally, *Visite* are an especially important source. These solidarity networks were an expression of the interests of families, local communities, town authorities, and kings. Their social and economic significance attracted many benefactors striving to save their souls through bequeaths and donations, and also seeking thereby to gain access to urban associative structures.⁹ These bequeaths and donations, together with the installments paid by the consociates, went into a fund, the so called *patrimonio del povero* (poor man's assets), established to meet the needs of the poor, but actually also drawn upon to pay for benefactors' funerals and masses in their memory. Charitable works could be occasional and indiscriminate, or be regulated by well-defined criteria set out in statutes or in the foundation or donation acts of charitable institutions.¹⁰ The large hospitals of Naples carved out a significant role for themselves within this system. On the one hand, they served as social safety nets, whose purpose was "gathering, housing, caring for and assisting the sick poor," but also "diligent and assiduous caring for the soul."¹¹ On the other hand, they were economic operators and financial go-betweens, which carefully monitored the opportunities offered by the productive, commercial, financial and credit circuit, and managed immense real estate and land assets.¹²

As regards the service supply and the users, hospitals continued to prefer non-discriminative admission. The ten hospitals of Naples, although abiding by the admission criteria set by the founding members – based on citizenship, gender, and nature of illness –, admitted and fed the sick, the poor, and pilgrims.

With the advent of Charles of Bourbon (1734–1759), the rules whereby charitable institutions and foundations such as hospitals, conservatories, and hospices – generically labeled *luoghi pii laicali* – had managed the "poor man's assets"¹³ were placed under close scrutiny. Foreign observers were critical of this system. The Venetian ambassador Gasparo Soderini stated: "Hospitals and charitable institutions are managed – usually poorly, due to the negligence of those in charge of them – by congregations either composed only of nobles or mixed; the former seem more inclined to throw the destitute out and send them to their graves, whereas the latter usually educate very crudely the homeless, the orphans, or the children of human weakness."¹⁴

⁹ An example of the relationship between charity and power is provided by pawnshops, where the citizens invested – and thus financed the dominating oligarchy – not for charitable ends but out of greed; see Giacomo Todeschini, *La banca e il ghetto: una storia italiana (secoli XIV–XVI)*, Bari, 2016, p. 112.

¹⁰ Marcella Campanella, *Chiesa ed assistenza a Napoli nel Cinquecento*, in *Gli inizi della circolazione della carta moneta e i banchi pubblici napoletani nella società del loro tempo (1540–1650)*, ed. by L. De Rosa, Naples, 2002, p. 148.

¹¹ Aurora Scotti, *Malati e strutture ospedaliere dall'età dei lumi all'Unità*, in *Storia d'Italia, Annali*, vol. 7, *Malattia e medicina*, ed. by Franco Della Peruta, Turin, 1984, p. 238.

¹² In the pious institutions of all the Italian states, a concern with economic management went hand in hand with charitable intent; Giuliana Albini, *Città e ospedali nella Lombardia Medievale*, Bologna, 1993.

¹³ G.M. Galanti, *Della descrizione geografica e politica delle Sicilie*, Naples, 1794; for citations, I used the reprint edited by Franca Assante and Domenico Demarco, Naples, 1969, vol. II, p. 65.

¹⁴ *Corrispondenze diplomatiche veneziane da Napoli. Relazioni*, ed. by Michele Fassina, Rome, 1992; the report is by the visitor Gasparo Soderini, p. 215.

As in other states in the Italian peninsula in the same period, such as Tuscany, ruled by Peter Leopold of Habsburg-Lorraine,¹⁵ and Lombardy, ruled by Maria Theresa and Joseph II – much information was gathered in the Kingdom of Naples about the state of charitable institutions. Giuseppe Maria Galanti was an important economist in the Kingdom of Naples. Commissioned as *visitatore generale del Regno*, he surveyed the state of the kingdom, and proposed a reform against the waste of resources allocated for the poor, both in the capital and in the provinces. He was particularly critical of the administration of hospitals in general, especially with regard to those of the province of Naples, which received a total annual allowance of 90,000 ducats without contributing significantly to the provision of charity and aid. Similarly to several other authors of his time, he took a stance against prisons and hospitals, which demeaned human beings and their rights.¹⁶

Galanti pressed for a revitalization of the province of the kingdom, which was cleaner, more salubrious compared to Naples and other towns, which were unsafe, unhealthy, and overpopulated. But the province – or rather, the provinces – of the kingdom were not all equal. In many areas, the conditions were such that the poor could not be sheltered and their problems could not be addressed. The strong demographic growth of cities had affected the productive structure of suburban areas, which retained – both in Northern and in Southern Italy – “the features of a prevalently agrarian, commercial, artisanal and protoindustrial economy, far-removed from industrialization processes.”¹⁷

Galanti also made a survey of the hospitals in towns, starting from the capital. He estimated the revenue of the Casa Santa degli Incurabili (founded in 1520), the Casa Santa dell’Annunziata (founded in 1318), the Casa Santa di San Giacomo degli Spagnoli (founded in 1540), the Casa Santa di Sant’Eligio (founded in 1270), and the Ospedale dei Pellegrini (founded in 1587), observing that the burden of their debts seriously undermined their utility (Table 1). He was especially critical of the Casa Santa degli Incurabili, which in 1783 declared a debt of 13,690 ducats due to an increase in the price of food and to the repairs required by the building due to fires and collapses. In 1797, the institution’s condition had not changed at all. Its deficit had increased by almost 90%, to 25,910.72 ducats.

His assessment of the Casa Santa dell’Annunziata from Naples was equally negative: it was overcrowded, the mortality rate was high, and it was poorly managed.¹⁸

¹⁵ Corey Tazzara, Paula Findlen, Jacob Soll, *Florence after the Medici: Tuscan Enlightenment, 1737–1790*, New York, 2019.

¹⁶ G.M. Galanti, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 65.

¹⁷ On the relationship between town and country, on the demographic balance, and on the gaps between North and South, see Guido Pescosolido, *Unità nazionale e sviluppo economico in Italia 1750–1913*, Rome, 2015, p. 13–25; Angelo Massafra, *Campagne e territorio nel Mezzogiorno fra Settecento e Ottocento*, Bari, 1984. On urban growth, see Paolo Malanima, *Italian Cities 1300–1800. A Quantitative Approach*, in “Rivista di Storia Economica,” year XIV, 1998, no. 2, p. 91–126.

¹⁸ Recent studies have reconstructed the network of medieval hospitals dedicated to the Annunziata in the kingdom, a theme that has been only partly investigated: Salvatore Marino, *Ospedale e città nel*

Table 1
State of the Main Hospitals and Hospices of Naples
according to G.M. Galanti (1788)

Name of the charitable institution ¹⁹	Specialization	Number of patients	Revenue (ducats)
Casa Santa degli Incurabili (1520)	Hospital for men and women suffering from serious and contagious diseases (syphilis, consumption, etc.); hospital for pregnant women	1,165	100,000
Casa Santa dell'Annunziata (1318)	Hospital for feverish men suffering from common illnesses; hospital for the wounded; home for girl foundlings	2,500	63,000
Casa Santa di Sant'Eligio (1270)	Hospital for sick poor women	150	14,000
San Giacomo degli Spagnoli (1540)	Hospital for Spanish soldiers and for the poor suffering from common illnesses	150	40,000
San Gennaro extra-moenia (1667)	Home for the elderly or invalid poor	233	17,000
Trinità dei Pellegrini (1579)	Hospital for the poor and for pilgrims	4,129	16,400
	Hospital for convalescents from common illnesses	4,160	

Source: G.M. Galanti, *op. cit.*, pp. 89–96.

The hospital of the Annunziata in Naples was part of a network set up to assist waifs, which were “the state’s main concern.”²⁰ Galanti had taken this project to heart. He left the capital to visit twenty-six institutions founded as hospitals and orphanages. Unfortunately, most of the hospitals were plagued by management problems, budget deficits, and shabby rooms, and their wet nurses were diseased and scarcely inclined to love and self-sacrifice. With the exceptions of the Terre di Giugliano, Valle di Maddaloni, Arienzo, Morrone, Latina, Castel di Schiavi and

Regno di Napoli. Le Annunziate: istituzioni, archivi e fonti (secc. XIV–XIX), Florence, 2014; Giovanni Vitolo, Rosalba Di Meglio, *Napoli angioino-aragonese. Confraternite, ospedali, dinamiche politico-sociali*, Salerno, 2003.

¹⁹ There were three more hospitals not on this list, namely: San Angelo a Nido, Cesarea, and the Ospedale della Pace; about these, Galanti only makes observations regarding their cleanliness.

²⁰ On this subject, see Giovanna Da Molin, *I figli della Madonna: gli esposti all'Annunziata di Napoli (secc. XVII–XIX)*, Bari, 2001; G.M. Galanti, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 96.

Castello a Mare del Volturno, these institutions were mainly located in towns. All seventeen of them were in Terra di Lavoro. Outside the province of Naples, Galanti visited Salerno (Principato Citra), Latina, Cosenza (Calabria Citra), Venafro (Molise), Lecce and San Pietro in Galatina (Terra d'Otranto), Sulmona (Abruzzo Citra), and L'Aquila (Abruzzo Ultra).

Galanti provides information about the conditions of the hospitals there. A high infant mortality rate was registered at the hospital of the royal town of L'Aquila. The institution was a subsidiary of the Santo Spirito di Roma.²¹ The situation of the Annunziata in Sulmona – another royal town – was no better. Its rent of 8,000 ducats was “poorly managed.” It took in 130 foundlings a year, but their total number, including those entrusted to external wet nurses, was 400. The hospital also housed 55 ill people, 15 of whom were women. About the management, Galanti found it unseemly that the hospital drew most of its revenue from sheep farming in Puglia. This charitable institution managed one of the most prosperous sheep farms in the Tavoliere di Puglia, and was hence one of the top wool sellers at the Foggia fair.²² Galanti's censure of this involvement apparently implies that he disapproved of charitable institutions engaged in business or financial pursuits, including loans to private individuals or *Università*. It was indeed not easy to harmonize poor relief with the management of large assets. In the case of the Annunziata in Aversa, the connections of the governors of the institution with the town administration had caused quite a few management problems. For this reason, in 1738 the royal delegate Baldassarre Cito proposed: 1) that their accounts of the last ten years be audited; 2) that a monthly account of income and expenses be kept, to be submitted to the royal delegate and an accountant of his trust. The institution was placed under control, and this reduced its managerial autonomy. Its crisis nevertheless persisted. By the end of the eighteenth century, the number of its waifs had considerably decreased; it housed only ten at a time. The majority were sent to the homonymous home in Naples.²³ As to the Annunziata of the royal town of Capua, Galanti complained of its lack of rules and discipline. On the one hand, the institution was granted 12,000 ducats a year for the upkeep of a hospital, that preferred to assist

²¹ On foundlings in L'Aquila, see Marcello Natale, *Condizioni di vita e caratteristiche demografiche della città dell'Aquila nel XIX secolo*, L'Aquila, 2004.

²² Paola Nardone, *L'assistenza nel Mezzogiorno: la Casa Santa dell'Annunziata di Sulmona nel XVIII secolo*, in *Assistenza e solidarietà in Europa*, ed. by F. Ammannati, p. 254; Paola Pierucci, *L'Ospedale della SS. Annunziata di Chieti. Patrimonio e gestione delle risorse*, in *Assistenza, previdenza e mutualità nel Mezzogiorno moderno e contemporaneo: atti del Convegno di studi in onore di Domenico Demarco*, ed. by Ennio De Simone, Vittoria Ferrandino, vol. I, Milan, 2006; Alberto Tanturri, *Tipologie dell'assistenza nel Mezzogiorno: la SS. Annunziata di Sulmona (1320–1861)*, Chieti, 2006. On this question, see Giovambattista De Bellis, *Memoria per la regal chiesa ed ospedale dell'Annunziata di Sulmona contro del signor Carlo Jazeolla*, Naples, 1809.

²³ Raffaella Salvemini, *A caccia di bambini. Gli istituti dell'Annunziata nel Regno di Napoli*, in *Assistenza, previdenza e mutualità nel Mezzogiorno*, ed. by Ennio De Simone, Vittoria Ferrandino, vol. I, pp. 19–34.

the ill at home, and left abandoned children to their fate; on the other, debts incurred for the renovation of the building had risen to about 60,000 ducats.

The same neglect and sloppiness characterized the Annunziata in Marcianise. Although it housed only a few sick people, it had a revenue of 10,000 ducats, which would have been twice that amount had its incompetent managers not been incapable of recovering all its credits. Gaeta and Salerno, too, had devoted themselves entirely to the sick. The former had a good reputation as a hospital for both sexes. The latter, however, spent 1,200 ducats, out of its total revenue of 1,800, for the upkeep of the priests.²⁴

Among smaller centers, Galanti visited the hospital of Giugliano, in the diocese of Aversa.²⁵ He found that it lacked a foundation act, and that its revenue of about 6,000 ducats largely went for the upkeep of the priests. It no longer took in foundlings, which were relocated to the capital at an expense of 10 ducats a year. Galanti provides no information about the number of in-patients. From other sources, we know that alms were given out daily in churches to *vergognosi* citizens, as well as to the poor who were passing through or were foreigners.²⁶ For the Annunziata in Sessa, which had an annual revenue of 4,000 ducats, foundlings were also no longer a priority. The institution still had a hospital (in a lamentable state), a conservatory, and a pawnshop with a revenue of about 1,000 ducats. Its poor administration depended on its lack of a turnover of managers and of bookkeepers.²⁷ The Annunziata in Maddaloni – a *terra* (a large village) with just 799 inhabitants and bad air – had no hospital anymore, and its revenues had been spent to build a monastery. The institution continued its work for the poor through a church, which distributed about 100 ducats a year and managed a fund for 35 dowries of 30 ducats each. The very old Annunziata in Arienzo had a hospital with a revenue of 3,000 ducats,²⁸ abolished in 1640 and rebuilt in 1742.

The Annunziata in Guardia di Cerreto (Benevento), founded in 1428, did not take in the sick any longer. Its revenue had been spent on work on the church building and on the chaplains' wages. The Annunziata in Venafro had spent its revenue of 2,300 ducats for the church and for alms. The Annunziata in Limatola lacked a foundation charter. In 1764, it had closed its hospital and its orphanage. It was very poorly managed. The Annunziata in Valle, with its revenue of 1,700 ducats, no longer had a foundation charter, and the only purpose of its hospital was to provide

²⁴ D. Mirra, *Per la città di Gaeta e per la sua S. Casa A.G.P. contro al sig. d. Domenico Lagni, ed al magn. d. Pompeo Galluppo*, Naples, 1755.

²⁵ On the history of the hamlet of Giugliano, whose agricultural structure was influenced by the nearby capital, see Giovanni Montroni, *Distribuzione e coltivazione della terra in un comune meridionale, nella prima metà del Settecento*, in *Studi sulla società meridionale*, Naples, 1978, pp. 124–125.

²⁶ Agostino Basile, *Memorie storiche della terra di Giugliano*, Naples, 1800, p. 333.

²⁷ Giovanni Maria Diamare, *Memorie critico-storiche della Chiesa di Sessa Aurunca*, Naples, 1906.

²⁸ On Arienzo, see Marcella Campanelli, *Centralismo romano e "policentrismo" periferico: chiesa e religiosità nella diocesi di Sant'Alfonso Maria de Liguori: secoli XVI–XVIII*, Turin, 2004. On the church, see *Per gli cappellani corali della chiesa della SS. Nunziata di Arienzo*, s.l., 1766.

the upkeep of the 13 chaplains (1,200 ducats). At the Annunziata in Teano, the 1,500-ducat revenue was insufficient for the upkeep of the hospital and the conservatory. The Monte di Pietà, which housed a confraternity, and the Monte dei Pegni, with its revenue of 1,600 ducats, were also in a very bad state. The Annunziata of Morrone, whose revenue was of 1,200 ducats, had closed its hospital and foundlings were being sent off to Capua. The Annunziata in Caiazzo was in similar straits. According to its statute, its mission was to give relief to the poor, lodge pilgrims, take care of the ill, and educate foundlings. Its revenue was being spent for masses and the chaplains, and medication was distributed door-to-door. No accounts were kept at the Annunziata in Castello a Mare del Volturno, and none of its 1,300-ducat revenue was being spent for foundlings, who were left in the streets or sent to Capua or Naples. The Annunziata in Piedimonte d'Alife was in a similarly disastrous situation, with its revenue of 650 ducats being employed to maintain a rundown hospital. Its managers preferred to erect six canonries instead of assisting foundlings.²⁹ The Annunziata of Latina had spent its 700-ducat annual revenue to erect marble altars and give loans to the town. The Annunziatas in Castel di Schiavi and in Baia lacked a foundation charter, a hospital, and an orphanage.

The condition of hospitals outside Terra di Lavoro, such as those of Cosenza, Lecce, and San Pietro in Galatina, was decidedly better.

Galanti mentions them in his account of his journey through Capitanata, Molise and Japigia. His basic impression was no different from the one he had had from his visit to the Annunziatas. In the province of San Severo in Capitanata, he had encountered only one hospital, with a revenue of 6,000 ducats. At Vico, he had found another one, with a revenue of just 500 ducats. In the other places, there were some small hospitals, but they were largely useless. In Japigia – the area in Puglia where Lecce and Taranto are – Galanti found many beggars, and the hospitals, except for a large one in Lecce, mostly housed no patients. In the summer, there were more inpatients in hospitals, but the locals had always been somewhat reluctant to be hospitalized.³⁰

II. NEW ROUTES FOR A MAP OF RURAL HOSPITALS IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The relief network, Giuseppe Maria Galanti wrote, was in serious difficulty, consisting of useless institutions, poorly managed and funded. Based on his report, there were about 300 charitable institutions in Naples and about 13,000 in the kingdom as a whole, not counting those of Southern Calabria. In addition to these, there were 500 grain pawnshops.³¹ Galanti does not give accurate information about

²⁹ *Per la Regale Chiesa insigne Collegiata sotto il titolo di A.G.P. di Vallata città di Piedimonte d'Alife*, [s.l.], 1785.

³⁰ G.M. Galanti, *op. cit.*, p. 553.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 405.

the distribution of these institutions across the vast territory of the kingdom. This is why, in spite of his harsh criticism of the system as a whole and of the disastrous conditions of many of these hospitals, I decided to undertake this investigation.

Where should we look for hospitals? Even the *Dizionario geografico-ragionato del Regno di Napoli*, of 1802, and the *Statistica murattiana*, drawn up in 1811, under the French rule, contain only vague information regarding the location and conditions of hospitals in the Kingdom of Naples. The only statistical investigation on hospitals to date is that on the Opere Pie of 1861, which listed 140 hospitals in the five provinces. These sources do not include the hospitals abolished during French rule (1806–1815), while they do include newly founded hospitals from 1835 onward.³² To locate these hospitals, I decided to use a fiscal source, the aforementioned *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*, drawn up in 1788 for the eleven provinces of the kingdom. As previously stated, this source is closely linked to the work carried out by the Tribunale Misto, created after the Concordat of 1741. It includes all institutions charged with the upkeep of the Tribunale Misto, *i.e.* all lay and mixed pious institutions not founded or funded by the Crown, including chapels, congregations, pawnshops, hospitals, and hospices. The Tribunale Misto, established by will of the government of Charles of Bourbon, supervised the management of pious institutions, limiting wasteful expenditure to ensure a more efficient redistribution of resources in favor of the poor. To this end, the chief chaplain had the obligation to apply for royal approval (*exequatur*) for the foundation and statute of each institution, as well as to keep the books in the form of annual balances, cost estimates, and final balances of charitable works.³³

To find out how many pious institutions there were and where they were located, as early as 1777, by order of the marquis of Sambuca, Giuseppe Beccadelli, first secretary of state, a first *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti* was drawn up. This report gathered information about the juridical nature of ecclesiastic charitable institutions and their revenue situation.³⁴

The 1783 earthquake called for new rules and a downsizing of the project. In 1788, the Apostolic Chamber withdrew its contribution to the upkeep of the Tribunale Misto. As a consequence, a minimum contribution was imposed on the registered pious institutions. This contribution was eventually raised from one ducat to a ducat and a half. The collection of these contributions fell upon the treasurers and collectors of the provinces of the kingdom. The institutions under royal patronage, as well as those of Calabria Ultra and part of Calabria Citra, which had been devastated by the earthquake of 1783, were exempted from the contribution.³⁵

³² R. Salvemini, *L'assistenza*, p. 315.

³³ D. Casanova, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–85.

³⁴ Antonio Cestaro, *Studi e ricerche di storia sociale e religiosa (dal XVI al XX secolo)*, Venosa, 1996, p. 59.

³⁵ On the Cassa Sacra and the effects of the earthquake in Calabria, see Augusto Placanica, *Storia della Calabria: dall'antichità ai giorni nostri*, Rome, 1999; Luca Covino, *Governare il feudo. Quadri territoriali, amministrazione, giustizia. Calabria Citra (1650–1800)*, Turin, 2013.

From the *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*, with its long list of paid contributions, I extracted data on the hospitals, which sometimes were annexed to chapels, churches, pawnshops, or other pious institutions. The mere mention of the area in which each institution operated was not enough for a classification. I therefore decided to cross-correlate these data with those provided in the *Topografia politica del Regno di Napoli*, of the years 1794–1796, which many historians have already used in the past for various kinds of analyses.³⁶ In this publication, the localities of the kingdom are distinguished into cities, *terre*, castles, villages, and hamlets, and classified as baronial, royal, or monastic. By cross-correlating the data in these two sources, the former fiscal, the latter geopolitical, I produced a database with a table containing information on hospitals, starting from the province and township in whose territory they were located, the type of settlement where they were built, and the name of the institution they were attached to. Next come data about the population and the quality of air in the area.

A first item of information on which it is worth dwelling is the total number of hospitals in the kingdom, which turned out to be much lower than that of other charitable and cult institutions. This fact confirms what historians of solidarity and associations in modern times in the urban areas of the kingdom have already stressed, namely, that it was the confraternities' task to meet the demand for relief by providing goods and services door-to-door to the poor and the ill. In the following, I present the main findings of my analysis.

The total number of institutions in the eleven provinces of the kingdom, excluding those of the capital and Calabria Ultra, is 292 (Table 2, Figure 1).

Table 2
The Provinces of the Kingdom of Naples in Which
There Was a Hospital (1788)

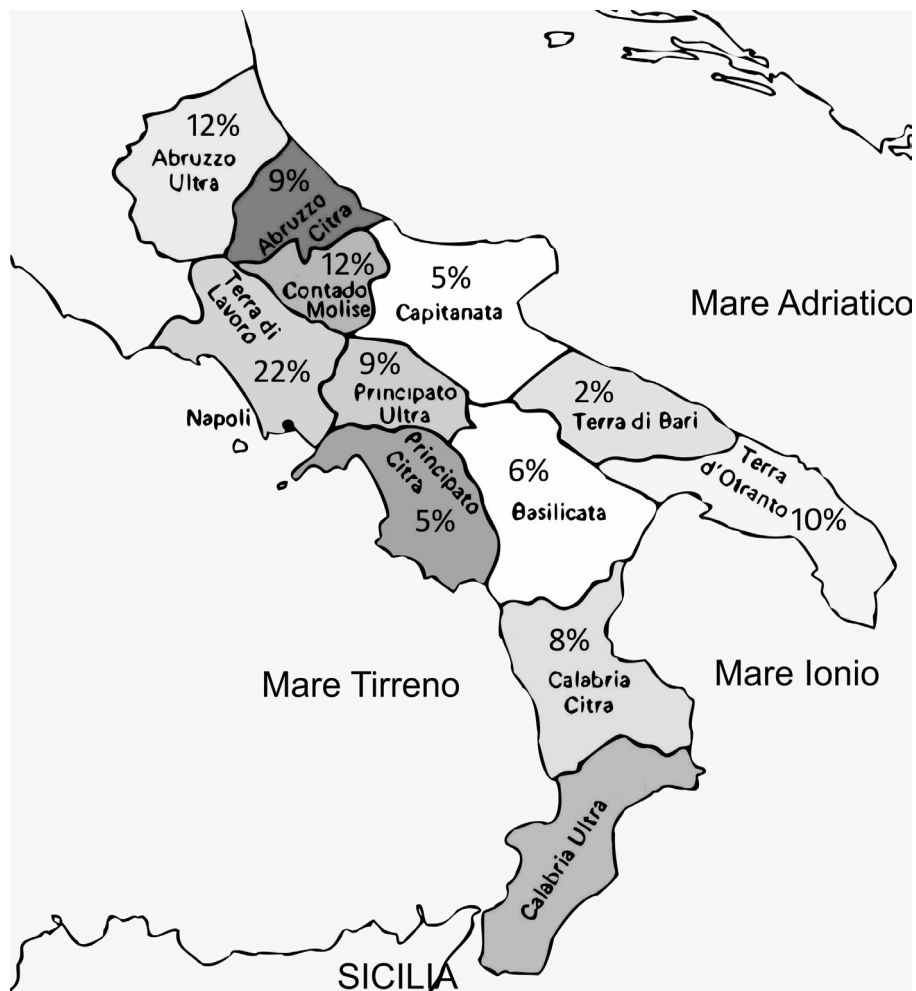
Provinces	Number of hospitals	%
Abruzzo Citra	27	9.25
Abruzzo Ultra	35	11.99
Terra di Lavoro	63	21.58
Molise	36	12.33
Terra d'Otranto	28	9.59
Principato Ulteriore	26	8.90
Calabria Citra	23	7.88
Basilicata	18	6.16
Principato Citeriore	16	5.48

³⁶ Pasquale Di Simone, *Topografia politica del Regno di Napoli*, 2 vols., Naples, 1798–1800, preserved at Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, ms. tome I X-C-36 and ms. tome II XII-D-59. I drew valuable hints and information from P. Avallone, *op. cit.*

Capitanata	14	4.79
Terra di Bari	6	2.05
Total	292	100.00

Source: The data is extracted from *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*.

Figure 1
The Provinces of the Kingdom of Naples in Which
There Was a Hospital (1788)



Source: The map is based on information from *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*.

The hospitals were located in 80 towns, 198 *terre*, eleven hamlets, two castles, and one village (Table 3). Based on the data contained in the *Nota*, the most populous town was Cava dei Tirreni, in Principato Citra, with a population of 23,630 inhabitants. Here stood the hospitals of the SS.mo Nome di Dio and Santa Maria Coronata dell'Olmo. Next in size came the royal towns of Bari (population 18,747), with a hospital for the infirm,³⁷ and Lecce with its two hospitals.

As Graph 1 shows, many of the 80 hospitals in towns were in Terra di Lavoro, while Molise was lagging behind.

The above data on the distribution of hospitals in cities match the information available in previous studies. However, this finding does not hold true for the distribution of hospitals across non-urban localities classified as *terre*, hamlets, castles, and villages, which housed 212 hospitals. Terra di Lavoro retains its first place, while the respective importance of the provinces of Molise, Abruzzo Citra, and Abruzzo Ultra changes (Graph 2). As regards the demographics, the 80 hospitals in towns serviced a population amounting to twice that residing in smaller settlements. At one extreme there was the hospital of Monticchio di Sant'Eufemia, which served an area where only 217 people lived, in the fief of Barberini in the diocese of L'Aquila in Abruzzo Ultra. At the opposite extreme was the hospital of the poor at Arienzo, for a population of 11,167 inhabitants in Terra di Lavoro.

Table 3

Cities, *terre*, Hamlets, Villages, and Castles in the Provinces of the Kingdom of Naples in Which There Was a Hospital (1788)

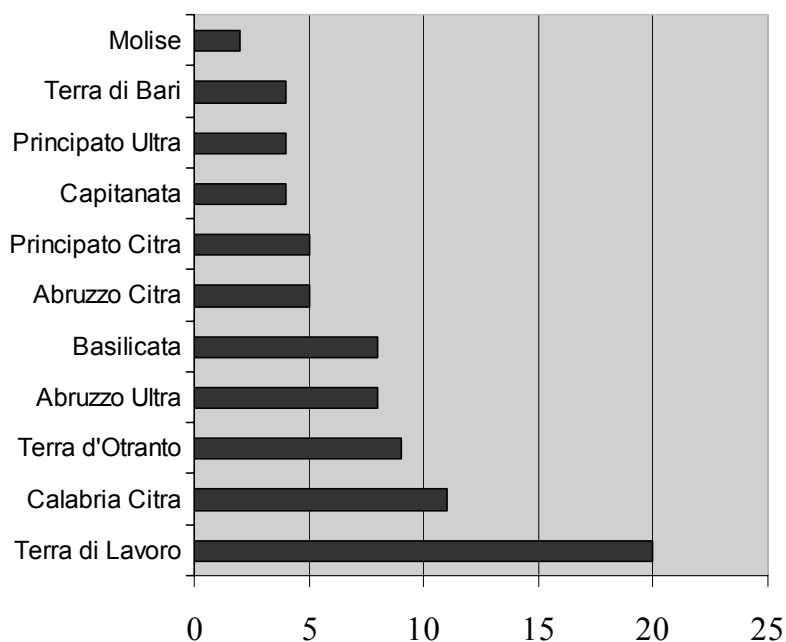
Provinces	Towns	<i>Terre</i>	Hamlets	Villages	Castles	Total
Abruzzo Citra	5	22		1		27
Abruzzo Ultra	8	24	1		1	35
Basilicata	8	11				19
Calabria Citra	11	12				23
Capitanata	4	10				14
Molise	2	32	2			36
Principato Citra	5	10	1			16
Principato Ultra	4	21			1	26
Terra di Bari	4	2				6
Terra di Lavoro	20	36	7			63
Terra d'Otranto	9	18				27
Total	80	198	11	1	2	292

Source: The data is extracted from *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*. On the distinction between estates in towns and in *terre*, see P. Di Simone, *op. cit.*

³⁷ On the condition of the infirm in the hospital of Bari, see Saverio Russo, *Pellegrini e "casalini" a Bari in età moderna*, Bari, 1996.

Graph 1

The Number of Hospitals in the Towns of the Provinces of the Kingdom (1788)

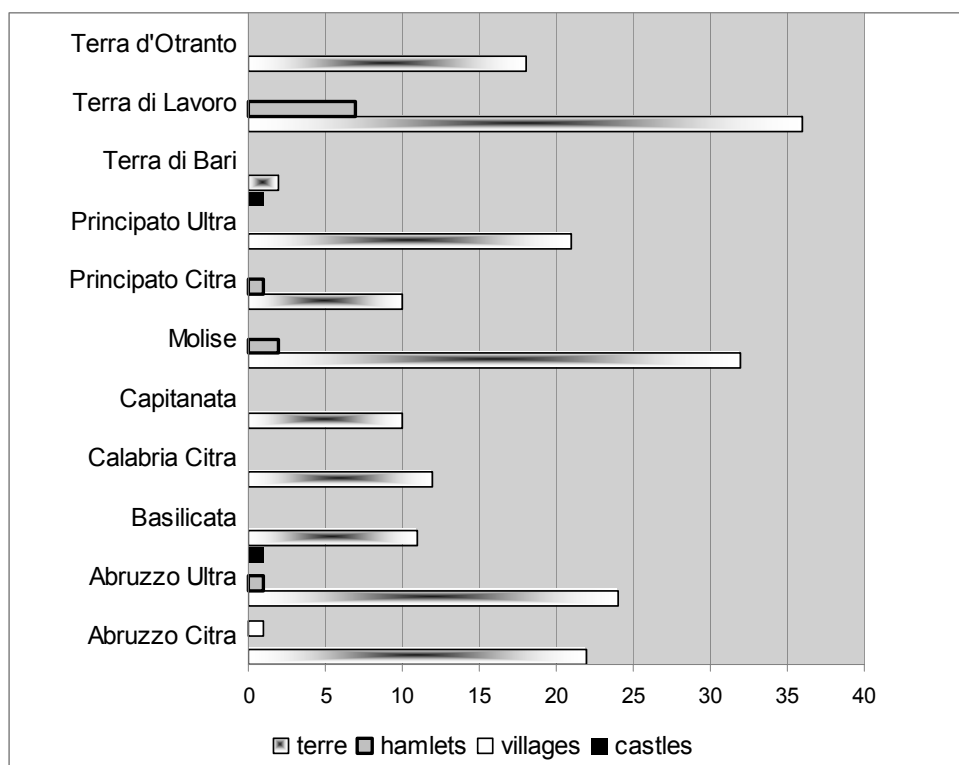
Source: The data is extracted from *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*.

Based on the *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*, several considerations can be made. To begin with, 52 hospitals are not mentioned in this document; all we know of these is their location. Although hospitals were concrete expressions of solidarity and voluntary commitment by ecclesiastics or laypeople, as ruled in their statutes, only in a few cases does our source mention a chapel (52), a church (47), a confraternity (8), or a pawnshop (20, 5 of which were grain pawnshops). Sometimes reference is made to the beneficiaries and their needs connected to travel, illness, or social class (23). They included the poor, pilgrims, convalescents, the infirm, the ill, clergymen, citizens, and *forastieri* (foreigners).

Only rarely are founding members mentioned, as in the case of the hospital for pilgrims and the infirm, and the grain pawnshop, established by Guido Amodei at San Marco in the province of Cosenza, or the hospital of Erchie, in connection with which the name of Pietro Mero is remembered.

As regards the ownership of the lands where they were built, most of the hospitals are reported to be in areas under the control of feudal lords. Only ten were established in areas under the control of ecclesiastic institutions, such as the Abbey of Montecassino.

Graph 2
Hospitals in *terre*, Hamlets, Castles, and Villages (1788)



Source: The data is extracted from *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*.

Out of the total population of the kingdom – not counting that of the capital and of Calabria Citra –, about 25% lived in areas served by a hospital. This percentage decreases to 12% if we consider only the residents of *terre*, castles, hamlets and villages.

Additionally, from the data we learn that in Basilicata there were nineteen hospitals, eleven of which in completely baronial lands. The smallest was in Pietrafesa, an area with a population of 2,000 inhabitants, where there was also a pawnshop belonging to the hospital. At Viggiano, in the same province, there were three hospitals for a population of 5,700 inhabitants.³⁸

In Calabria Citra, there were twenty-three hospitals: ten in the city, three in *terre*, mostly baronial, with the exception of Cetraro – which was under the ecclesiastic and political jurisdiction of the Benedictine fathers of Montecassino – and

³⁸ On Viggiano, see Franca Assante, *Il santuario, il pellegrinaggio, il miracolo*, in *Religione e devozione. Epoche e forme del pellegrinaggio*, ed. by Claudia Damari, Turin, 2016, pp. 108–124.

Mormanno, a royal domain. The data confirm that the hospitals of the Annunziata were an urban phenomenon, as in the case of Bisignano, Calvisi di Scigliano, and Cosenza. Mottafollone was a small center with a population of only 752.³⁹

Table 4
Distribution of Hospitals in Royal, Baronial,
and Ecclesiastic Possessions (1788)

	Baronial	Royal	Ecclesiastic	Total
Castles	1	1		2
Hamlets	8	3		11
Cities	48	31	1	80
<i>Terre</i>	171	18	9	198
Villages	1			1
Total	229	53	10	292

Source: The data is extracted from *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*.

Table 5
Distribution of Hospitals in the Kingdom of Naples
in Relation to Population and Area

Provinces	Population in 1793		Area in km ²		Number of hospitals		a/c	b/c
	a	%	b	%	c	%		
Abruzzo Citra	222,773	5	3,297.07	5	27	9	8,250.85	122.11
Abruzzo Ultra	407,313	10	7,627.55	12	35	12	11,637.51	217.93
Basilicata	359,439	8	6,793.57	11	19	7	18,917.84	357.56
Calabria Citra	345,532	8	6,925.66	11	23	8	15,023.13	301.12
Capitanata	251,828	6	7,259.77	12	14	5	17,987.71	518.56
Molise	209,675	5	2,377.62	4	36	12	5,824.31	66.05
Principato Citra	458,523	11	5,117.84	8	16	5	28,657.69	319.87
Principato Ultra	362,361	8	3,682.98	6	26	9	13,936.96	141.65
Terra di Bari	281,873	7	3,343.69	5	6	2	46,978.83	557.28

³⁹ On charitable institutions, see Domenico Cerbelli, *Opuscoletti varii, ovvero Monografia di Mottafollone: Storia della sacra cinta e Raccolta di massime morali*, Naples, 1857, p. 15. For more general information on hospitals and lay and religious hospitals and pious institutions in the Kingdom of Naples, see Vincenzo D'Avino, *Cenni storici sulle chiese arcivescovili, vescovili, e prelatizie (nullius) del Regno delle Due Sicilie*, Naples, 1848. On Bisignano as well as other localities, see Giustiniani Di Lorenzo, *Dizionario geografico-ragionato del Regno di Napoli*, vol. 2, Naples, 1797, p. 285.

Terra di Lavoro	645,837	15	4,804.45	8	63	22	10,251.38	76.26
Terra d'Otranto	288,793	7	5,216.26	8	27	9	10,696.04	193.19
Calabria Ultra	433,917	10	6,521.62	10				
Total	4,267,864	100	62,968.08	100	292	100	188,162.26	2,871.57

Source: This table is based on data on population and area drawn from G.M. Galanti, *op. cit.*

In Molise, out of thirty-six hospitals, thirty-two were on *terre*, only two of which were royal, namely Toro with 2,363 inhabitants, and San Giovanni in Galdo with 2,400. The smallest locality was the hamlet of Roccaspromonte, with 320 inhabitants. Its mother church housed a chapel of the pious hospital.

Of the fourteen hospitals in Capitanata, four were in towns. The other ten served areas with populations ranging from 1,500 to 7,000. The smallest settlement was San Martino in Pendino. The larger ones included San Giovanni Rotondo and San Nicandro, with 7,000 inhabitants.⁴⁰

From assessing the ratio of hospitals to area and to the population (Table 5), it results that Molise and Abruzzo Citra were the most densely populated provinces of the kingdom (5%), as well as the smallest. They nevertheless had many hospitals. In Molise there was one hospital every 66 km² and every 5,824.31 inhabitants. In Abruzzo Citra there was one hospital every 122.11 km² and every 8,250 inhabitants. In Terra di Bari there were six hospitals, about one every 557.28 km², and 47,000 residents. Instead, Terra di Lavoro had sixty-three, or one every 76.26 km², and 10,251 residents. What do these data tell us? There were provinces, such as Abruzzo and Molise, that seem to have relied more on hospitals. The small number of hospitals in Terra di Bari, instead, may indicate, on the one hand, that a more diverse relief system was in place, and, on the other, that these prevalently urban hospitals were financed well enough to meet the needs of a population amounting to a mere 7% of the total.

III. CONCLUSIONS

For many of these institutions, we lack indications as to when they were founded, their geographical scope of operation, the services they offered, their governance, their assets, and their relationships with local finance and production. Although studies on landed property include pious institutions among landowners, we know little about hospitals as investors.⁴¹ What is clear, in any case, is that a broad range of aid and care was provided to the poor, but hospitals played a rather minor role in this regard compared to confraternities and parishes.

⁴⁰ *Confraternite, arte e devozione in Puglia: dal Quattrocento al Settecento*, ed. by Clara Gelao, Bari, 1994.

⁴¹ *Il Mezzogiorno pre-unitario: economia, società, istituzioni*, ed. by Angelo Massafra, Bari, 1988.

We are currently unable to estimate the impact of the mid-eighteenth century crisis on the poverty relief system in the *terre*, hamlets, and villages, which were controlled by barons. We do know that towns, in spite of their difficulties in managing charity, continued to grow in population and drain human capital. In conclusion, the road is still long. There is still much we do not know about welfare in peripheral areas, the relationship between assistance, population, and the economy, and the income of pious institutions. In the future, a new series of studies on the assets of large feudal lords will hopefully help us gain a clearer understanding of the role of pious institutions in charity, credit, and production.

THE NETWORK OF HOSPITALS IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES AT THE TIME OF THE BOURBONS

Abstract

Social, economic and demographic studies on hospitals in the Italian South in the modern age mainly describe an urban healthcare model included within a broader network of social support. Similarly to other charitable institutions, the large Southern Italian hospitals, which historians have characterized as multifunctional centers of power, were called upon to provide healthcare and aid, and finance public and private credit, participating actively both in the social life and in the economic, political and financial life of the towns of the Kingdom of Naples. They did not play this role, however, only within the urban healthcare model. In fact, an underexplored aspect of the hospitals' role in the modern age is how this network functioned in peripheral areas. To locate these hospitals, I have used a fiscal source, the *Nota de' luoghi pii laicali e misti*, drawn up in 1788 for the eleven provinces of the Kingdom of Naples. This source is closely linked to the work carried out by the Tribunale Misto, created after the Concordat of 1741. It includes all the institutions charged with the upkeep of the Tribunale Misto, *i.e.* all lay and mixed pious institutions not founded or funded by the Crown, including chapels, congregations, pawnshops, hospitals, and hospices.

Keywords: hospitals; social support; charity; Kingdom of Naples; modern age

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN BUCHAREST (1830s–1860s)*

NICOLETA ROMAN**

Analyzing children's history, childhood, and the public policies aimed at this particular social category, prior to the formation of the nation state, is not an easy feat, and even more so when discussing Southeastern Europe. In this part of the continent, provinces belonging to three empires (Russian, Austrian, and Ottoman) shared borders and, at the same time, despite differences in their political and legal status, made possible a continued flow of ideas and people, a process which only deepened at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Therefore, it was here that ideas about children's health, education, and wellbeing penetrated at a time when children were increasingly viewed as a distinct social group as well as a future progress-enabling generation.

Health is one of the fields mirroring holistically the relationship between state and society, with the doctor becoming the foremost disseminator of social change. One needs thus to pay special attention to the ways in which doctors' actions influenced and even shaped newly created medical institutions as well as the onset of public policies.

The present study analyzes the founding of the first children's hospital in Wallachia during the first half of the nineteenth century and, at the same time, investigates the territory's cultural and historic background as well as the relationship among public authorities, community, and doctors.

I. A EUROPEAN AND A ROMANIAN CONTEXT

Wallachia was an autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire until its Union with the neighboring Principality of Moldavia (1859), a political act recognized internationally (1861) and which would eventually pave the way for its independence (1878) under a foreign ruler from the princely House of Hohenzollern.¹ Situated in

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¹ Between 1859 and 1866, the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were ruled by Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza (1820–1873). After his abdication, Carol of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen

today's southeastern Romania, the region was also known, towards the end of the nineteenth century, as an integral part of the so-called Old Kingdom (as of 1881). This study focuses on Wallachia during the first part of the nineteenth century, more precisely until its Union with Moldavia and especially after the introduction of the first constitutional-like law, the Organic Regulation (*Regulamentul organic*) (1831). With the signing of the Treaty of Adrianople (1829), the Romanian Principalities were granted, in addition to Ottoman suzerainty, Russian protection, with occupation troops sent to the region together with an appointed governor. The Russian count and general Pavel Kiseleff (1788–1872) would run the Russian military administration in Wallachia until 1834, during which period the Organic Regulation was drafted in collaboration with the local boyars and Church representatives. This innovative piece of legislation included provisions regarding the creation of a health, educational, and social welfare system especially focused on urban areas. The first public programs for children began or were developed precisely starting from the provisions of this law and its additional documents (directives, orders, etc.). The implementation of reforms during the so-called Organic Regulation period revealed the problems, shortages, and need for adaptation to local reality. At the same time, it sparked an interest in children irrespective of the social class to which they belonged. The ideational convergence of Romanian territories with nineteenth-century European practices was getting underway.

Interest in children's health and in children as a social group emerged during the Enlightenment when Swedish physician Nils P. Rosen de Rosenstein (1707–1773) first referenced childhood pathology and childcare. Although he wrote an anatomy treatise, one for home medicine, and a discourse on the duties of the doctor, his work *Traité des maladies des enfants* (1764) is the one that remains fundamental. Its purpose was to “destroy the prejudices of the people” and to smooth the way of science towards the population, discussing not only children's illnesses, but also how they should be cared for (breastfeeding, nurse choice, etc.). By the end of the eighteenth century, there were 3,215 texts in the German lands only that referred to the “science of police” in relation to health and cleanliness,² and some dealt with children's well-being as well. The main theorist of the state control of contagious diseases, including among children, was Johann Peter Frank (1745–1821), a German physician and hygienist with experience on both sides of Europe, the West (Vienna, Pavia) and East (Russia).³ His concern was to improve children's quality of life

(1839–1914) would become prince (1866–1881) and then king (1881–1914) of Romania, achieving the country's independence in the aftermath of the Russian-Turkish war of 1877–1878 and the Peace Congress of Berlin (1878).

² Nikolas Rose, *Medicine, History and the Present*, in *Reassessing Foucault. Power Medicine and the Body*, ed. by Colin Jones, Roy Porter, London, 2001, p. 54.

³ Valeriu Lucian Bologa, Benone Duțescu, Iuliu Ghelerter, *Istoria medicinei*, Bucharest, 1963, p. 92. His medical treatise was entitled *A System of Complete Medical Police* and was first published in 1779, reaching nine volumes. For a critical edition see *A System of Complete Medical Police: Selections from Johann Peter Frank*, ed. by Erna Lesky, trans. by E. Vilim, Baltimore, 1976.

through the well-established medical principle that is better to prevent than treat; for him, childhood ended at the age of seven years.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, people began to plead more and more for the differentiated treatment of children and adults, a demand simultaneous with the emergence of specializations among doctors, the combating of charlatanism and fraud as well as growing solicitude for the poor and, in general, for the whole population.⁴ Statistics became a tool for discussing public health and the spread of diseases, but it "was never a neutral enquiry."⁵ It was used together with administration as an axis of intervention.⁶ Hospitals for sick children were built and developed at the national level one century later,⁷ a fact facilitated by the congruence of certain scientific, political, and socio-economic factors.⁸

Each country in Europe had its own socio-political context, which also explains the different dynamics in the setting up of these institutions during periods of public health reform.⁹ This is one of the reasons why a brief excursion through the medical literature on childcare and the respective programs existing at the beginning of the nineteenth century in Wallachia is necessary.

II. CHILDREN, DISEASES, AND MORTALITY IN WALLACHIA

For the Romanian space, this discussion came almost half a century later with the writings of some Romanian physicians such as Constantin Caracăș (1773–1828), Ștefan Episcopescu (1777–1850), Anastasie Fătu (1816–1886) or Jacob Felix (1832–1905). Their interest was to highlight the importance of educating parents and the medical personnel (midwives, country doctors) about children's health. Constantin Caracăș wrote that: "The physical growth of children is the most important of all the issues concerning the policies of our society, as it holds the life and the future happiness or total corruption of its future members."¹⁰

This is how the idea of children as a social group emerges in Wallachia, discussed from the perspective of a future civil society. Parents had to be guided, and the state had to acknowledge what happened in real life in order to impose appropriate rules to correct the bad habits affecting the child's body. The medical

⁴ Mary Lindemann, *Health and Science*, in *A Cultural History of Childhood and Family in the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. by Elizabeth Foyster, James Marten, London, New York, 2014, p. 182.

⁵ Dorothy Porter, *Health, Civilization and the State. A History of Public Health from Ancient to Modern Times*, London, New York, 1999, p. 51.

⁶ Nikolas Rose, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 183; Felix S. Bassier, *Hospitals for Sick Children*, in "British Medical Journal," 1979, p. 1421.

⁸ Debórah Dwork, *Childhood*, in *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*, coord. by W.F. Bynum, Roy Porter, Abingdon, p. 1073.

⁹ Dorothy Porter, *Public Health*, in *Encyclopedia of European Social History*, coord. by Peter Stearns, New York, 2001, pp. 521–522.

¹⁰ Pompei P. Samarian, "Topografia Țarei Românești": o veche monografie sanitară a Munteniei de Constantin Caracăș, Bucharest, 1937, p. 86.

discourses were a plea for the child, with two main targets: the population and the authorities. Unlike Frank, Romanian doctor Caracaș pushed the age of childhood up to twelve years, making a clear distinction between the boyar child and the poor child, between the peasant and the urban child. Regardless of this, for a healthy and harmonious body, he recommended: 1. maternal breastfeeding; 2. the cleaning of diapers, clothes, and dwellings; 3. continuous supervision and care for the child's body, still unaccustomed with the weather, which could cause intermittent colds, ophthalmia, fevers, etc. 4. attention to clothing, which had to be in accordance with age and season; 5. cleanliness of the child's body.¹¹

All these recommendations came as an acknowledgement of the high mortality rate, especially in the rural areas of Wallachia: "from a family of 10 or 12 children, barely three or four survive. Three quarters are the victims of poor growth, which is due to the ignorance and prejudices of the parents, but also to the total lack of medical aid."¹² "Therefore, blessed would be that government which looks more closely at this very important issue and puts an end to these evils of ignorance and neglect, that cause great prejudice to the increase of our population."¹³

The connection to Western Europe came later, including studies dedicated to children's illnesses, which appeared especially after the second half of the nineteenth century. Meanwhile, in the eighteenth century, smallpox was a danger that joined the plague and cholera to form a triad of horror among the population. Ion Ghica (1816–1897), the former bey of Samos, wrote in a letter to poet Vasile Alecsandri (1821–1890): "Pestilence, like all the deadly and contagious diseases such as smallpox, typhus or enteric fever, while very dangerous at first, it becomes less violent afterwards for those who have been already hit by it."¹⁴

Starting from the way epidemics were dealt with, awareness was raised and measures were taken to be well and easily accepted in a future functional sanitary system.¹⁵ They triggered a change with reference to the poor population, which became considered a risk factor.¹⁶ Thus, for the first time, thanks to the Organic

¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 86–100.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 85.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 94.

¹⁴ Ion Ghica, *Opere*, vol. I, ed. by Ion Roman, Bucharest, 1967, p. 142. For more details on the subject of epidemics see Gheorghe Brătescu, Paul Cernovodeanu, *Biciul holerei pe pământ românesc: o calamitate a vremurilor moderne*, Bucharest, 2002 and more recently Sorin Grigoruță, *Boli, epidemii și asistență medicală în Moldova (1700–1831)*, Iași, 2015.

¹⁵ According to Gh. Brătescu, Paul Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 47–81, 105–116, 149–172, the first cholera epidemic (1831) in Wallachia had a mortality rate of 60.2%. The percentage decreased during the second (1836) and the third epidemic (1848). For Moldavia, see Sorin Grigoruță, *Măsuri de prevenire a apariției și răspândirii epidemiilor de ciumă în orașele Moldovei la începutul veacului al XIX-lea*, in *Orașe vechi, orașe noi în spațiul românesc. Societate, economie și civilizație urbană în prag de modernitate (secolul al XVI-lea – jumătatea secolului al XIX-lea)*, coord. by Laurențiu Rădvan, Iași, 2014, pp. 175–192.

¹⁶ Georges Vigarello, *Histoire des pratiques de santé. Le sain et le malsain depuis le Moyen Âge*, Paris, 1999, p. 197.

Regulation, quarantines,¹⁷ official county and city doctors,¹⁸ and veterinarians appeared as matters of public policy.

The institutional and informal network built around the child, as a subject of public policy, included all those officials with whom the latter might have interacted: doctors, local authorities (policemen, priests, teachers and village officials) and reached all the way to the principality's local government (*ocârmuire*), the Quarantine Committee (*Comitetul Carantinelor*) and, eventually, the Ministry of the Interior (*Vornicia Dinlăuntru*). To a certain extent, individuals and institutions were all working for and towards the establishment of child welfare. The Committee for Quarantine was in a subordinate relationship to the Ministry of the Interior and, through their inter-institutional communication, aimed at ensuring supervision of public health for the population both in urban and in rural areas. The same doctors who had fought against cholera and the plague were now appointed on a permanent basis and through rotation from one county to another or, during quarantine, in order to assist with their knowledge and contribute to the strengthening of the health system.

At the same time, the state was fighting a sustained battle against charlatanism and those who practiced medicine without having a diploma or a medical certificate. The intention was to establish medicine as a science and to acknowledge its positive role in keeping the population healthy. In all of Wallachia's cities and towns, empirical practices became systematically marginalized. In 1832, the pharmacist Kraus from Ploiești, who claimed to be a doctor, was called upon by an urban dweller, Panait Mărunțeanu, to cure his child, who had a weak knee. Mărunțeanu gave the pharmacist 75 lei with the promise that in twenty days after the visit the child would be cured. However, the child continued to be sick even after the promised period of time had passed.

Called upon in his turn by the child's father, the county doctor, Hristari, explained to Mărunțeanu that the pharmacist Kraus had given the patient medication against syphilis, asking the latter "not to dare anymore to practice medicine as one who was not in possession of a diploma."¹⁹ The Quarantine Committee, as a higher ranked administrative organ, was notified of the problem and issued the same opinion as doctor Hristari; nevertheless, relying on the good will of the inhabitants of Ploiești, pharmacist Kraus challenged this decision. Because everyone in town knew him, and he had also done some good deeds before the incident, supplying people with the medication they needed, the locals testified on his behalf and petitioned the authorities to allow Kraus to continue living in Ploiești as a pharmacist and to practice medicine. Even though the Quarantine Committee approved the locals' request, they only made it under the condition that they should assume responsibility

¹⁷ *Regulamentul organic: întrupat cu legiurile din anii 1831, 1832 și 1833 și adăugat la sfârșit cu legiurile din anul 1834 până acum*, Bucharest, 1847, chapter VI, section I, art. 180.

¹⁸ In Wallachia there were seven public health regions called *ocroguri*.

¹⁹ Pompei Gh. Samarian, *Medicina și farmacia în trecutul românesc*, vol. II, 1775–1834, Bucharest, 1938, p. 335.

for any unfortunate event that may occur in the future: “The inhabitants of the town of Ploiești are above four thousand, out of which only one thousand have some means; if the latter decided to donate only ten lei per year, that could amount to a hefty sum of money which would then pay for the services of a licensed doctor. But because, for the moment, such means are not available and, on the other hand, the inhabitants of Ploiești seem to be happy with the services of Kraus, the pharmacist, the latter should be allowed to stay and look after these people, with this warning, however, that any complaint they might make in the future, in case of a mistake made by him, will no longer be admissible.”²⁰

This example is significant for several reasons. First of all, it shows the low number of doctors at the urban level and the competition with those who practiced fraudulent medicine, even from a related field such as pharmacy. Second, it underlines the state’s wish to eradicate all non-scientific practices, a wish which runs counter however to the long entrenched customs of the local population. People were used to resort to what was familiar and accessible, a practice supporting empiricism. The state had to find a sort of compromise between the two, its aim, and the reality on the ground.²¹ Thirdly, the state tried to instill a sense of responsibility into the population and, at the same time, encourage well-to-do townspeople to be philanthropic and support science. It was however much too early for something like this to happen without an example coming from the higher echelons of government, or from the side of the boyars and the Romanian princely families. Still, the state, through its ministers, would continue to work towards this goal. A first step in this direction was the creation of a register of diseases for the whole population and, additionally, of those afflicting children. The network of doctors, medical, and social welfare institutions would gradually grow, depending on circumstantial factors, while the ruling prince would claim for himself the role of protector of the masses.

Typical diseases in this period, as mentioned and listed in the medical reports, were: cold, enteric fever, dysentery, rheumatism, smallpox, measles, etc. It is therefore worth mentioning the situation, centralized at the beginning of the Organic Regulation period.

Table 1
Diseases and Mortality Rates in Wallachia, in 1833

Diseases	Total number of deaths	Percentage
Enteric fever (<i>lingoare</i>)	19,855	41.38%
Smallpox and measles (<i>vărsat i pojar</i>)	6,655	13.87%

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 337.

²¹ For a similar situation see Daniel Panzac, *Population et santé dans l’Empire Ottoman (XVII–XX siècle)*, Istanbul, 1996, pp. 89–90.

Pleurisy (<i>peripleutoniie cu plereziie</i>)	5,522	11.51%
Fevers (<i>friguri</i>)	6,090	12.69%
Head cold (<i>guturai</i>)	7,001	14.59%
Quincy (<i>gâlci</i>)	1,635	3.41%
Syphilis (<i>sfrinție</i>)	1,225	2.55%
Total	47,983	100%

Source: Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Bucharest,²² Ministerul de Interne. Serviciul Sanitar, 1/1834, fol. 57.

Mihail Ghica (1794–1850), the minister of Interior, was very confident in what the future might bring, and he and his team started the vaccination program.²³ By 1837, the official figures show the results of the medical process, and they are related to the annual number of births.

Table 2
Correlation between Vaccinated Children and Birth
Rates in Wallachia (1837–1838)

Year	Vaccinated children	Births
1837	25,310	45,254
1838	30,940	46,396
1839	25,071	47,613
Total	81,321	139,263

Source: “Analele parlamentare ale României,” IX, 1839–1840, part I, p. 1145.

Some negative signals became visible and the state wanted to increase its staff. For this reason, in 1842 the *Law for the increase in number and regularization of the county doctors* was issued. Thus, there were added eleven doctors to the initial seven, having (in theory) at their disposal horses and carriages, and not being allowed to “upset the inhabitants for both transport and food.” Medical procedures were also partly changed. If until then children were gathered together in one place to be immunized, from 1842 doctors had to go from village to village to do so. Nonetheless, they realized that it was almost impossible to get the job done and

²² Hereafter: ANIC.

²³ *Relația dumnealui marelui dvornic dinlăuntru Mihalache Ghica, către Obșteasca Adunare*, in *Almanahu statului din Prințipatul a toată Țara Românească pe anul 1837*, Buda, 1837, p. 143. On the vaccination programme in Wallachia see Nicoleta Roman, *Pentru sănătatea celor mici: vaccinarea, un proces medical din Țara Românească (1831–1856). Deziderate, obstacole, practici*, in *Copilăria românească între familie și societate în secolele XVII–XX*, coord. by Nicoleta Roman, Bucharest, 2015, pp. 241–282.

that is why, through this law, the doctor was allowed to show to the village teacher the method of immunization. However, resistance to the process persisted, and the improvements came slowly. In the meantime, the state worked in parallel to educate the population, either through press or brochures. But how many mothers and families were able to read the articles in question in the countryside? Let us not forget that illiteracy in rural areas was an undeniable presence. In addition to mistrust, a cultural barrier manifested between locals and foreign doctors of Greek, German, or other origins.

In urban areas, the presence of doctors led to the appearance of a medical literature specifically addressing children's diseases. In his *Practică a doctorului de casă. Cunoștința apărării și a tămăduirii boalelor bărbătești, femeiești și copilărești* (*The practice of the house doctor. The knowledge of preventing and curing men's, women's and children's ailments*) (1846), Ștefan V. Episcopescu not only differentiated between adult and child care, but also proposed a panacea recipe for nearly all children's ailments, which he called "the making of cleansing sherbet for children, till the age of ten" and which consisted of: "Take rhubarb syrup, lichen (*mană*) syrup, fennel water, an ounce for each of the three. [...] The mix will be administered one full spoon every two hours, until the body will be purified two or three times; it can also be used for fever or tooth ache, stomach ache, head ache and constipation."²⁴

Doctor Episcopescu admitted the existence of specific illnesses such as smallpox, colic or "crippled children," but the treatment he proposed to wealthy and educated urban classes was mostly based on plants and not so much on chemical substances. For him, health represented both a balance and a harmony with nature to whom the individual actively belongs,²⁵ especially during a time when the urbanites were easily duped by charlatans and were still using "folk medicine." Therefore such a prescription was meant to be accessible and to reach as many patients as possible.

The vast majority of children were poor and for orphans and abandoned individuals there was already available the Pauper Institute,²⁶ recently established under the authority of the Organic Regulation. Close by, to provide assistance if needed, there was the Institute of Births, a maternity ward and midwives' school established in 1839. Small children were treated there, together with young poor mothers. Interior Minister Mihail Ghica's family financially supported this institute, while Ghica himself, the founder of the establishment, was a fervent promoter of

²⁴ Ștefan Episcopescu, *Practica doctorului de casă. Cunoștința apărării și a tămăduirii boalelor bărbătești, femeiești și copilărești*, Bucharest, 1846, pp. 479–480. For a biography and a discussion on his medical career see Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, *Evgheniți, ciocoi, mojiți. Despre obrazele primei modernități românești, 1750–1860*, Bucharest, 2013, pp. 273–296; Ligia Livadă-Cadeschi, *Discursul medico-social al igieniștilor români. Abordarea specificităților locale din perspectiva experiențelor occidentale europene, secolele XIX–XX*, Bucharest, 2013, pp. 86–91.

²⁵ Roy Porter, Georges Vigarello, *Corpul, sănătatea și bolile*, in *Istoria corpului*, coord. by Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, Georges Vigarello, trans. by Simona Manolache, Gina Puică, Muguraș Constantinescu, Giuliano Sfichi, vol. I, Bucharest, 2008, p. 412.

²⁶ On this institution, see the works of Ligia Livadă-Cadeschi and Nicoleta Roman.

foreign assistance models and procedures. In fact, taking care of poor children's health in orphanages is such a model, with examples everywhere in Europe. The new trend in child welfare, however, which made it to Bucharest with some delay, was leaning towards providing specialized care in children's hospitals. And to persuade state officials to get behind such projects, doctors, as "advocates" for the poor, brought forth discussions of rising mortality rates within the population.

III. CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS IN WESTERN EUROPE

In the urban environment of the early nineteenth century, where illnesses were easily transmissible, infant mortality was on the rise. A higher number of cases was found especially in poorer neighborhoods, and maternity wards in cities such as Dublin recorded the mortality rate of children under six at around "one-half, which is a typical rate for England and Ireland until the end of the nineteenth century."²⁷ For elite and bourgeois parents, the situation was completely different since they had the necessary means to raise their children at home and to call a doctor whenever their children were sick.²⁸ It became obvious, therefore, that children's health and their survival in a hostile environment, filled with poverty, disease, and inadequate nutrition, were conditioned by social status and wealth, and state public medical policies began to take this into account.

In the West, healthcare for the poor was regulated as early as the seventeenth century, and the first children's hospital was established in 1802 in Paris (*Hôpital des Enfants Malades*), while a local medical doctor established London's Hospital for Sick Children no sooner than 1852. The reason for this delay between the two Western capitals is that the English system was based on *voluntary hospitals*,²⁹ general hospitals that cared for both children and adults, but which were maintained by and relied on private funds and donations.³⁰ Child care was also carried out according to age differences: only patients between 2 and 10 years old were being treated in children's hospitals, while infants under 2 years old stayed with their mothers, and children over 10 years old were being admitted to adult hospitals.³¹ Therefore, state medical care was conditioned by age, with children between 2 and 10 years of age

²⁷ Thomas E. Jordan, *Quality of Life and Mortality among Children. Historical Perspectives*, Dordrecht, 2012, p. 68 using the analysis of Cormac Ó Gráda, *The Rotunda Hospital and the People of Dublin: Glimpses from the Hospital's Archives*, in *Masters, Midwives and Ladies-in-Waiting: The Rotunda Hospital, 1745–1995*, ed. by Alan Browne, Dublin, 1995.

²⁸ Mary Hatfield, *Growing Up in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: A Cultural History of Middle-Class Childhood and Gender*, Oxford, 2019, pp. 44–45.

²⁹ A.E. Clark-Kennedy, *The London: A Study in the Voluntary Hospital System*, London, 1962; Sheila M. Collins, *The Royal London Hospital: A Brief History*, London, 1990.

³⁰ Samuel X. Radbill, *Hospitals and Pediatrics, 1776–1976*, in "Bulletin of the History of Medicine," 1979, no. 2, p. 288.

³¹ Jenny Hockey, Allison James, *Health and the Embodiment of the Life Course*, Basingstoke, New York, p. 279.

being considered the most vulnerable to disease. Children were prone to age-related illnesses, while poor diet and lack of constant parental care (most parents being busy at work) affected their growth. In addition, in the poor neighborhoods serviced by such hospitals, children started working around the ages of 10 or 12. They did light housework or entered as apprentices for various crafts, which allowed them to get closer to the adult category. In a global expansion of this new model of hospital, after only three years, in 1855, the first children's hospital was established in Philadelphia. Many more children's hospitals were soon established in other cities on the American continent.³²

After this mapping of initiatives establishing the first children's hospitals in the West, one might ask how Wallachia fared in this matter. Despite the clear French influence in modernizing the Romanian society, the first efforts to establish a children's hospital appear during the 1850s and were made by doctor Iulius Barasch. To better understand the doctor's intentions, one first needs to account for some biographical elements.

IV. THE BUCHAREST HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN

IV.1. THE MAN BEHIND THE INITIATIVE: DOCTOR IULIUS BARASCH (1815–1863)

Hailing from Galicia, a province of the Austrian Empire, of Jewish origin, Iulius Barasch married at 16 and started training to become a rabbi³³; nonetheless, his life changed course and he decided to study for a medical degree in Berlin. In 1841, when he finished his medical degree, even though he planned to go to Belgium or the Netherlands, his relatives advised him to go to Moldavia instead, where a medical doctor from Brody, his hometown, chaired the health commission.³⁴ But this plan of securing a job taking into account an informal network of personal connections was not successful, even though it is true that there were many Austrian physicians in the Romanian Principalities.³⁵ When his application to join the Moldavian Health Commission chaired by doctor Emanuel Frankel was denied in 1841, Iulius Barasch moved to Bucharest, the capital of the neighboring Wallachia. As he did not know anyone there, he tried to make a name for himself as an ophthalmologist. That is why in 1842 he placed an announcement in the newspaper "Cantor de avis shi comers," in which he presented himself as a "fully educated doctor and surgeon" ready to serve the society at large. Although the newspaper's

³² David Sloane, 'Not Designed Merely to Heal': *Women Reformers and the Emergence of Children's Hospitals*, in "The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era," IV, 2005, no. 4, p. 332.

³³ "Buletinul Societății Române de Științe," year XXII, 1913, nos. 2–3, pp. 151–152.

³⁴ Angela Petrescu, Iorgu Petrescu, *Dr. Iuliu Barasch (1815–1863), primul profesor de științele naturii în Țara Românească?*, in "Studii și comunicări / DIS," VIII, 2015, pp. 252–253.

³⁵ Lidia Trăușan-Matu argues that 62% of the foreign physicians that came to the Romanian Principalities were Jews from Galicia; see *De la leac la rețetă. Medicalizarea societății românești în secolul al XIX-lea*, Bucharest, 2011, p. 75. However, this remains debatable as many biographical data remain unknown or partially available.

readership was limited to the emergent bourgeoisie³⁶ and to the noble elites (local boyars), Iulius Barasch made it clear in his ad that he could cure both people who “could not see and who could not walk.”³⁷ Although he was not a general practitioner, his knowledge in treating these types of ailments, often times affecting poor people injured at work, recommended him to work for medical institutions tending to the poor. He then asked for an audience with Prince Barbu Dimitrie Știrbei (1799–1869), on which occasion he met doctor Ignatz Mayer (1800–1870), the Jewish personal physician of the prince. He quickly gained their trust and in 1843 entered the quarantine system as a doctor for the city of Călărași.³⁸ This was a job that turned him from a practitioner like any other, with a private clientele, into a state official and a public health agent. From this city on the Danube, close to the border with present-day Bulgaria, which had barely overcome the danger of the plague (1828–1830) and cholera (1831), epidemics caused by the migration triggered by the Russo-Turkish wars, Iulius Barasch moved even deeper into the heartland of Wallachia. In 1845, he was appointed doctor of the Dolj County and his responsibilities only grew from there because he had oversight of cities and villages, he had to ensure the implementation of the vaccination program described above and, at the same time, he had to coordinate the activity of the other doctors, midwives, veterinarians and pharmacists in the county. Up until that moment, his professional career was well thought out: the doctor climbed up the social ladder at a fast pace and became more and more familiar with the territory in which he had settled.³⁹ Unlike many other fellow licensed doctors, who came to Wallachia and Moldavia,³⁹ but also to Bulgaria and other parts of the Ottoman Empire,⁴⁰ Barasch became a public servant of the state and, using his medical and linguistic knowledge, quickly advanced from a border town doctor to the medical head of a county. In Dolj County, he intimately congregated with the locals, the so-called *pământeni*, and got to know their needs and their customs. Finally, he took the last step in his professional affirmation and integration into the medical elite of Wallachia in 1851, when he became a doctor in Bucharest. Here, he would work closely with the French doctor Carol Davila (1828–1884), invited by Wallachian Prince Barbu Dimitrie Știrbei in 1853 to help reform the healthcare system.

Doctor Iulius Barasch's first scientific popular work, *Minunile naturii* (*The Wonders of Nature*), was published during his tenure as county doctor and was dedicated to this very prince, pointing out that: “During these times, princes had been

³⁶ For a more comprehensive perspective for this time period see Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture: Literacy and the Development of National Identity*, London, 2005.

³⁷ “Cantor de avis shi comers,” VI, 1842, p. 4.

³⁸ Pompei Gh. Samarian, *Istoria orașului Călărași (Ialomița): de la origini până la anul 1852*, Bucharest, 1931, p. 142. He was called Varavaș and in 1845 he was replaced by Georgie Megi.

³⁹ Ligia Livadă-Cadeschi, *Discursul medico-social al igieniștilor români*, pp. 74–75.

⁴⁰ Stoyanka Kenderova, *Construire une nation saine et vigoureuse: les médecins bulgares au XIX^e siècle*, in *Médecins et ingénieurs ottomans à l'âge des nationalismes*, coord. by Méropi Anastassiadou-Dumont, Paris, 2003, pp. 185–186.

the guardians of sciences, of arts, and of literature in their countries.”⁴¹ He thus emphasized the importance that the patronage of the prince and/or of the members of his family had for the development of culture and science.

In addition to his practice, the managing positions held in the public healthcare system,⁴² and the teaching positions he had at the St. Sava College in Bucharest and later on at the national medical school (1857), Iulius Barasch would also play an active role in the popularization of medicine and related sciences. He launched the “Isis sau Natura” (“Isis or Nature”) magazine (1856), lectured widely on various popular topics,⁴³ wrote about traditional folk hygiene (1857), translated from French a book by Guillaume Belèze (1803–1878) dedicated to children (1858) and took it upon himself to disseminate reliable information regarding infant and child inoculation and vaccination (1859). Furthermore, he was able to accomplish all of these without giving up his involvement in the life of the Jewish community in Wallachia, which he analyzed in a historical study he published in 1854 and for which he launched the first Jewish periodical “Israelitul român” (“The Romanian Israelite”) (1857). For the purposes of the present study, from the wealth of all his activities, we will focus on those actions that shed light on the foundation of the first children’s hospital in Bucharest in 1858. Ideas regarding this institution can be found in a publication which was arguably written specifically for the local elites of the time in 1853 and titled *Despre unele din instituttele filantropice din Europa* (*Of Some Charitable Institutions in Europe*). The book reflects his knowledge, but also the experience gained from traveling and visiting medical and charitable institutions in Germany, France, Switzerland and England.⁴⁴ Equally significant, the book opens with a motto by the German writer and doctor Cristoph Wilhelm Friedrich Hufeland (1762–1836): “If what we do is not of (public) value, our glory is worthless!”⁴⁵

Hufeland was the personal physician of the king of Prussia, professor and a personality of his time,⁴⁶ whose work had been translated into several foreign

⁴¹ *Minunile naturei. Conversațiuni asupra deosebitelor obiecte interesante din științele naturale, fizică, chimie și astronomie compuse de Iulius Barasch, doctor în medicină și chirurgie, profesor de istoria naturală în gimnaziul național din București*, vol. I, Craiova, 1850.

⁴² His moves as a physician from one district of Bucharest to another could be easily traced in the official newspaper, “Buletinul oficial,” 1855, p. 221 and 1858, p. 425.

⁴³ Newspapers mention courses about folk astronomy, see “Naționalul,” I, 1858, p. 395 and “Românul,” II, 1858, no. 96, p. 282; but also public lessons about comets, see “Anunțatorul român,” IV, 1857, no. 3, p. 4 and “Isis,” II, 1857, p. 40.

⁴⁴ Iuliu Barasch, *Despre unele din instituttele filantropice din Europa*, Bucharest, 1853, p. 6. On his European journeys see the travel account in *Itinerar în Cracovia, Galiția, Bucovina, Moldova și Muntenia în 1841–1842*, trans. by E. Schwarzfeld, Bucharest, 1894.

⁴⁵ Iuliu Barasch, *Despre unele din instituttele filantropice*, a motto that can be found in the opening of the work of the German author *Ueber die Natur, Erkenntniß, und Heilart der Skrofelkrankheit: eine im Jahr 1796 von der Kaiserlinchen Leopoldinischen Akademie der Naturforscher gekrönte Preisschrift*, Berlin, 1819.

⁴⁶ Among his famous patients were Goethe, Schiller and Herder. After a professorship in Jena (1793–1801), he moved to Berlin where he was the personal physician of King Frederick William III, the manager director of the College of Medicine and Surgery and the physicians’ supervisor at the

languages and whose principles are reflected in Barasch's work, especially in the pages of the "Isis sau Natura" magazine. The main idea he retains is that *the progress of science has risen to a triumphant power over the most rebellious elements of his will*.⁴⁷ Hufeland together with other German doctors, such as August Friedrich Hecker, believed that a doctor should pay attention to the particular ways in which individual patients coped with disease. According to them, there were a number of causes (age, sex, body constitution, temperament, living conditions, occupation, etc.) that had a substantial impact on how a disease progressed and dictated the treatment that could be prescribed.⁴⁸ In addition to his focus on treating the patient and not the disease, Hufeland had also founded in Berlin a clinic for children's immunization (1802) and promoted the development of pediatrics as a science.⁴⁹ In a book about charitable institutions in Western Europe, Iulius Barasch pleaded for the foundations of three institutions in Wallachia: the children's asylum (nursery school), the children's hospital, and the asylum for the insane. In the latter case, the hospital from Mărcuța had already been in operation since 1838, but no action had been taken regarding the first two institutions. Apart from bridging the gap between East and West, which was given as a role model,⁵⁰ Barasch points out the need to differentiate patients according to their ailments and to tailor treatment according to the specifics of each age, thus denouncing the mistake of treating adults and children together and consequently following the line of the new German theoretical current represented by Hufeland: "Childhood is a special period of emotions, wishes, pleasures and pains [...] Now let's imagine a poor sick child thrown in a room full of adult patients! The first feeling taking over the little patient would be fear, followed by fright, boredom and a complete heaviness of the soul."⁵¹

In a paper that is intended to be rather a brochure meant to raise awareness among the Romanian elite, Iulius Barasch does not complicate his argument with scientific intricacies that would have appealed specifically to doctors, but shows the importance of aspects that everyone can resonate with. For instance, he draws attention to the fact that convalescence is a stage in the healing process and must be treated with care. Having adults and children in such a state and with different diseases stay together might trigger the children's emotional discomfort. Furthermore,

Charité. Cristoph Wilhelm Friedrich Hufeland became member of the German Academy of Natural Sciences Leopoldina (1790) and the Prussian Academy of Sciences (1800) in Berlin, as well as knight of the Order of the Red Eagle, third class (1809), see Heiner F. Klemme, Manfred Kuehn, *The Bloomsbury Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century German Philosophers*, London, 2016, pp. 362–365.

⁴⁷ Iuliu Barasch, *Despre unele din instituttele filantropice*, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Thomas H. Browman, *The Transformation of German Academic Medicine, 1750–1820*, Cambridge, 2002, p. 117.

⁴⁹ Heiner F. Klemme, Manfred Kuehn, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

⁵⁰ Iuliu Barasch, *Despre unele din instituttele filantropice*, p. 6, in which he shows that "in all the capitals of civilized European countries we find hospitals, asylums, and other similar establishments dedicated to relieving pain, alleviating the suffering and helping the people we are living with."

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

there are other things to consider: “Then we need to understand that on the one hand there is no period in a human’s life more prone to complicated and dangerous diseases as childhood is and that on the other hand there are only a handful of parents from the lower classes of society (not necessarily poor) who know how to care for sick children (one needs more knowledge to care for a sick child than for a sick adult).”⁵²

Here, Iulius Barasch argues for the possibility of parents not knowing and not interpreting correctly the symptoms of their children. During those times, parents were the ones who informed the doctors about their children’s ailments, but this mediation could jeopardize initial treatment since doctors were not seeing their patients in person until later.⁵³ Therefore, a public children’s hospital, with specialist doctors covering a wide spectrum of diseases who could communicate easily with their patients, without scaring them or using technical language, was very much needed and wished for. However, Wallachia did not have the same political and legal status as Western countries, taken as a role model, did and the bourgeoisie was not yet a strong class in society. Furthermore, in 1853, when the book was published, the Crimean War was still going on and the Russian occupation could put on hold any initiative of this kind. Nonetheless, Barasch’s work laid the foundations of a possible future project: a children’s hospital which could very well be established during peace times. Financing such an institution, which might be very difficult in a principality whose budget had been depleted by multiple consecutive wars, would largely be made via charity. In fact, as Iulius Barasch argued, funding such a project would rely heavily on female and elite patronage: “These establishments are everywhere under the supervision of a noblewomen’s society and are presided over by a lady with a high social position in the role of benefactor and protector.”⁵⁴ “What about the means? They could easily be found. Charitable goodwill brings along the means. They have been shown everywhere as well as in our country. For instance, women’s societies protectors of children’s hospitals occasionally auction off luxury objects made by themselves; high society individuals often times make recurrent donations to these establishments, having both the means and a charitable inclination, thus being people who love society and believers in God.”⁵⁵

The correlation with his view of the prince as the patron of science is an indication of what Dr. Barasch was actually pursuing. For him, the patronage of the princess of the country was the best recommendation and the guarantor of stability for the expected children’s hospital. At the same time, he remains within the framework of a humanitarian enlightenment which “emphasized the role of philanthropy

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 9.

⁵³ Jonathan Gillis, *The History of the Patient History since 1850*, in “Bulletin of the History of Medicine,” vol. 80, 2006, no. 3, p. 508.

⁵⁴ Iuliu Barasch, *Despre unele din instituttele filantropice*, p. 9.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 10.

in encouraging self-help and civic improvement.”⁵⁶ In Wallachia, there was already a precedent: Elisabeta Știrbei (1805–1874), who established and patronized, as the princess of the country, *Așezământul pentru fete sărmene* (*The Establishment for poor young ladies*),⁵⁷ funded by donations and by sweepstakes. Other women from the great nobility had been involved in actions of the same type, the most well-known name being Safta Brâncoveanu, who patronized, financed, and managed the activity of the Brâncovenesti Establishments. To a lesser extent, women of the merchant class or of the emerging bourgeoisie tried to imitate these charitable models in their community or in provincial towns. In this respect, Iulius Barasch's expectations were not in vain.

IV.2. THE BUCHAREST HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN: FOUNDATION AND INAUGURATION

Iulius Barasch rekindled the idea of setting up a children's hospital after the end of the Crimean War. Wallachia had escaped the occupation, with all that it had entailed: mainly the encampment and maintenance of soldiers and troops on the one hand, and the supply of the capital and the provision of healthcare services to its inhabitants on the other. In 1857, Barasch was a physician in the black color district⁵⁸ of Bucharest and his responsibilities included the oversight and the status of orphaned and abandoned children⁵⁹ who were in foster care with wet nurses in his district or belonged to poorer families. He kept detailed records of the situation of these children. Should similar records have been kept by doctors in other districts, by comparison, they could have shown the extent to which data collected by doctor Barasch pertained or not to the whole capital city. Unfortunately, of the capital's five districts, complete and reliable data exist only for the commission of the black color district. And this is due to the fact that the person in charge was precisely doctor Iulius Barasch, who had a special interest in the health and mortality rates of children. Although comparing data based on individual districts is not possible, Barasch's records are a treasure trove of information regarding not only his district but also, by extrapolation, the importance they played in the establishment of a children's hospital in Bucharest. For the period of time between 1857 and 1858, doctor Barasch kept monthly records with the situation of orphaned and poor children in foster care whom he treated himself in the district's health commission:

⁵⁶ Dorothy Porter, *Health, Civilization and the State*, p. 53.

⁵⁷ On this institution see Nicoleta Roman, “Deznădăjduită muiere n-au fost ca mine.” *Femei, respectabilitate și păcat în Valahia secolului al XIX-lea*, Bucharest, 2016, pp. 108–110.

⁵⁸ Colors were administrative territorial units of Bucharest; there were five in total: red, green, yellow, black and blue.

⁵⁹ On the Paupers Institute, founded by the state to care for the orphan and abandoned children see Ligia Livadă-Cadeschi, *Eforia caselor făcătoare de bine. Casa copiilor sărmăni din Țara Românească în prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea*, in *In memoriam profesor Radu Manolescu*, coord. by Stelian Brezeanu, Bucharest, 2006, pp. 317–330; Nicoleta Roman, *The Child Abandonment in Bucharest in Early 19th Century (1830–1840)*, in “Revista Arhivelor,” LXXXIV, 2007, nos. 3–4, pp. 163–178.

how many of them were still alive; how many of them got recently ill; the total number of sick children; the number of recovered patients and the number of deaths. The doctor's monthly recordings were later used as stats both to argue for and to pressure the state into laying the foundation of a children's hospital. In his reports to the city hall and the minister, Barasch showed that the children's survival rate was directly correlated to hygiene and the level of care provided by wet nurses; especially, keeping a child longer in the care of the same nurse would ensure he or she was well nourished and developed well.⁶⁰ And if we compare the data for the years 1857 (July–December, the six months covered by the surviving documents) and 1858 we notice that, for the most part, things remained unchanged and the number of children in the commission's care was more or less the same: around 90⁶¹ (see Tables 3 and 4).

In the same year, 1858, in the black color district of Bucharest, doctor Iulius Barasch registered 994 deaths, of which 648 were infants, and only 309 births. Full of consternation, he wrote in his gazette that: "A foreigner might be dismayed and say there won't be any person living in Bucharest since there are three deaths to every birth. But the real cause of this is that there is no efficient regulation asking individuals and, especially, midwives to report to political authorities as soon as children are born to a particular class of people."⁶²

This means that, irrespective of numbers, reports on the number of births were unreliable, a fact the authorities seemed to be aware of. This is why it would be mistaken to believe that each district of Bucharest had similar numbers of abandoned, poor, or sick children. Ultimately, it all depended on multiple factors: the size of the district; the number of inhabitants; how central/peripheral the district was. Furthermore, in his public courses on hygiene held at the National College in Bucharest, Barasch insisted on the importance of statistics. These courses, published in 1857⁶³ – during the same year that he initiated the project of the children's hospital –, argue that the improvements made in the healthcare system had a good impact on the population.⁶⁴ As in 1854, in his work on Western European philanthropic institutions seen as a model, Iulius Barasch pleaded for the foundation of public establishments dedicated to poor children. Therefore, statistics became for him an important instrument in convincing not only public authorities but also the urban audience at large of the significance of his projects.

⁶⁰ "Isis sau Natura. Jurnal pentru răspândirea științelor naturale și esacte, în toate clasele," Bucharest, 8 March 1858, no. 9, p. 68; M. Schwarzfeld, *Dr. Iuliu Barasch. Omul. Opera. Bucăți alese din operele sale*, Bucharest, 1919, pp. 38–39.

⁶¹ This helps us make a comparison with the situation in 1837–1838, twenty years earlier, which we have already described. At that time, data could not be centralized in each district commission and there was no clear statistical specification of the child's situation. The monthly data may be compared, however, and an estimate can be made.

⁶² "Isis sau Natura," year III, 15 December 1858, no. 46, p. 368.

⁶³ Iulius Barasch, *Cursul de igienă populară dat în lecțiuni publice de duminică în anii 1854 și 1855 în Colegiul Național*, Bucharest, 1857, pp. 108–109.

⁶⁴ Gheorghe Brătescu, *Preocupări demografice ale medicilor români în secolul al XIX-lea*, in "Igiena," XXXIV, 1985, no. 2, p. 150.

Table 3 The Health Situation and Mortality Rates for the Children in the Black Color District of Bucharest in July–December 1857								
Month	The number of children who were alive on the 1 st of each month	The already sick children	Children who had become ill recently	All the sick children	Those who did not survive	Children who recovered from their illness	Children who remained alive at the end of the month	The number of children at the end of the month
July	109	14	16	30	4	-	-	89
August	101	-	12	12	9	-	3	92
September	92	3	10	13	4	5	4	88
October	88	4	8	12	2	3	7	86
November	90	7	3	10	3	7	-	87
December	87	-	18	18	7	3	8	80
Source: ANIC, Direcția Municipiului București, Comisia Culoarii de Negru, 10/1857, fol. 81.								

Table 4 The Health Situation and Mortality Rates for the Children in the Black Color District of Bucharest in 1858								
Month	The number of children who were alive on the 1 st of each month	The already sick children	Children who had become ill recently	All the sick children	Children who did not survive	Children who recovered from their illness	Children who remained alive at the end of the month	The number of children at the end of the month
January	91	8	5	13	4	5	4	93
February	93	4	10	14	1	10	3	92
March	92	3	5	8	4	4	-	88
April	95	-	7	7	1	2	4	94
May	100	4	6	10	1	3	6	99
June	99	6	7	13	6	7	-	93
July	93	-	10	10	8	2	-	85
August	85	-	11	11	5	6	-	80
September	83	-	10	10	3	2	5	80
October	80	5	9	14	3	5	6	77
November	94	6	5	11	1	7	3	93
December	93	3	6	9	3	6	-	90
Source: ANIC, Direcția Municipiului București, Comisia Culoii de Negru, 22/1858, fol. 75.								

During the time when Iulius Barasch had been working for the black color district of Bucharest, he collaborated with local authorities in several public health projects: the foundation of the medical and pharmacy school (1856), of the veterinary school and of the Bucharest Scientific Medical Society (1857), while also being appointed as a professor at the National Medical School (1857). He thus became part of the local, regional, and European academic medical elite. Between 1830 and 1860, the process by which specialist doctors became a recognized category began in Paris, moved to Vienna, and gradually reached all corners of the continent.⁶⁵ This process relied on the existence of a network of interconnected institutions,⁶⁶ made out of licensed physicians and students, who, in part at least, could also become civil servants. Barasch had already been a doctor in Bucharest, a professor, author and translator of works dedicated to children and to wider audiences and, last but not least, a magazine editor. The rise of physicians as a professional group in the nineteenth century is closely linked to their specialization and their efforts to distinguish themselves in society and among their peers on the medical market.⁶⁷ The public healthcare system incorporated those who had the potential to become actively involved in the welfare of the population and had given proof thereof, even through their personal example.

That is why, by the time he made the proposal of founding a children's hospital in the capital (1857), the doctor had already gained the reputation of a professional who carried out scientific research, who specialized in and promoted pediatrics and, above all, who was entirely dedicated to his projects. The first draft of his project was not accepted by the ruling prince, but it was forwarded for discussion to the Health Committee and the Administrative Council for further adjustments. The main observation was that the establishment was thought rather as a private endeavor than as an institution aimed to the general child population.⁶⁸ Still, the actions of doctor Iulius Barasch were very much appreciated by the local authorities and consequently these responded favorably to his proposal "considering the significant use that such an establishment could bring to diminish human suffering and therefore applauding the idea put forth by Mr. Baraş."⁶⁹ Moreover, given the precarity of the public budget, they looked for funding solutions so that the hospital could be established and benefit from state funds, however small they might have been. In this respect, in order to secure annual state subsidies, they would elicit help from either the Eforia Spitalelor Civile (Civilian Hospitals' Trusteeship) or from the medical

⁶⁵ George Weisz, *The Emergence of Medical Specialization in the Nineteenth Century*, in "Bulletin of the History of Medicine," 77, 2003, no. 3, p. 541.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 548.

⁶⁷ Ruth Schilling, Kay Peter Jankrift, *Medical Practice in Context: Religion, Family, Politics and Scientific Networks*, in *Medical Practice, 1600–1900. Physicians and Their Patients*, coord. by Martin Dinges, Kay Peter Jankrift, Sabine Schlegelwitch, Michael Stilberg, trans. by Margot Saar, Leiden, 2016, pp. 132–133.

⁶⁸ Al. Gălăşescu, *Eforia Spitalelor Civile din Bucureşti*, Bucharest, 1900, p. 736.

⁶⁹ See the Documentary Annex, document no. 3.

council so that they could obtain the much anticipated green light “for such a charitable project.” An annual budget was discussed for a minimum of expenses (Table 5).

Table 5
Expenses for the Children’s Hospital in Bucharest. Estimated Annual Budget

Expenses	Currency (lei)
Rent for the house, where the hospital will be	9,450
Food for 40 children (25 <i>parale</i> for one/day)	9,125
Food for 10 servants (30 <i>parale</i> for one/day)	2,738
Medication	9,125
Wood for heating	5,000
Candles and soap	1,600
Unexpected expenses	2,000
The director (800 <i>lei</i> /month)	9,600
Surgeon (300 <i>lei</i> /month)	3,600
Treasurer (250 <i>lei</i> /month)	3,000
The treasurer’s adjutant (200 <i>lei</i> /month)	2,400
The cook (100 <i>lei</i> /month)	1,200
Two laundrywomen (60 <i>lei</i> /month)	1,440
Two wet nurses (1,000 <i>lei</i> /year)	2,000
Three servants (50 <i>lei</i> /month)	1,800
A doorman, who will also transport the children to the hospital (100 <i>lei</i> /month)	1,200
Expenses for the carriage	6,300
A priest	1,200
The subvention for the first year in order to prepare all that the hospital needs	16,000
TOTAL	88,778

Source: Al. Gălășescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 749–750.

With regards to the building, the state proposed renting a private house close to the Hospital for Births founded in 1839. Thus, if need be, the newborn babies could be easily transferred to the children’s hospital. The inauguration of the new institution was mentioned in official newspapers, and Iulius Barasch publicized the event in his own magazine, “Isis sau Natura,” which suggestively had printed on the masthead “journal for the dissemination of natural and exact sciences, for all the classes.” However, despite its stated mission, the magazine’s audience was restricted exclusively to the literate members of the elite and urban bourgeoisie. Nonetheless, in order to promote a better understanding of child welfare and to keep up with the latest European trends, doctor Barasch had to start somewhere and was happy enough to know that the recommendations he made in his magazine were reaching select urban populations. After all, urban dwellers were not only the subjects of the doctor’s research and of his reports to authorities but also the ones benefiting the most from

his actions. The state funded hospital at the doctor's initiative was from the start dedicated to poor children *irrespective of nationality or religion*.⁷⁰ The children to be admitted were supposed to be between 3 days old and 10 years old, with newborn babies in the care of a wet nurse paid by the state. There was also a timetable set in place by which a coach was sent throughout the city districts to pick up the little patients.⁷¹ Children coming from wealthy families who needed hospital treatment were called *pensionari* (pensioners), their parents or tutors paid 8 *lei* a day, and could be residents of Bucharest or could come from all counties of the principality. Even though the hospital was funded by the state, its budget was limited and any private donation was put to good use. Charitable donations were encouraged and generosity was compensated and on display since "whoever gave the children's hospital an annual subsidy of 1,000 lei or a once-in-a-lifetime gift of 10,000 lei would have their name written on a bed in golden letters and would be allowed to dispose of said bed according to their wishes."

The children's hospital was inaugurated and operated in the house of doctor Iulius Barasch on Calea Dudești, almost during the same time when another foreign doctor who had come to practice in Wallachia, the Frenchman Carol Davila, decided to house and offer treatment to 40 of the orphaned children in the capital. He himself treated his patients in his own house in Cotroceni and soon afterwards contributed to the establishment of the first orphanage under the patronage of the prince, the "Elena Doamna" Asylum. The asylum did indeed benefit from the high patronage of the prince's wife, Elena Cuza (1825–1909), a backing Barasch himself wished for the children's hospital. Furthermore, in 1862, Elena Cuza gathered around all the important women in the newly United Principalities and organized a charitable campaign in the whole territory.⁷² With regards to the children's hospital, the state (the Hospitals' Trusteeship) considered the Calea Dudești location as being provisional until the opening of a new and better equipped building, because "children's beds and other necessary things to welcome the patients inside are not yet ready."⁷³ This temporary accommodation was meant to bring momentum behind the project and to prevent the delay of its opening due to financial reasons. Therefore, the partnership between Elena Cuza and doctor Davila was a good precedent and blueprint for other charitable enterprises. In his newspaper, liberal C.A. Rosetti pointed out that the establishment of the children's hospital, despite all difficulties, had to be seen as a step forward taken by the Romanian Principalities on the path of cultural European integration: "The most important sign of civilization and progress for a nation is given when it starts to take care of its children. 'Let the children come to me,' Jesus said. Let us purposefully tend to our children, let us open for them the

⁷⁰ "Isis sau Natura," III, 1858, 30 August 1858, no. 32; "Buletinul Societății Române de Științe," year XXII, 1913, no. 2, p. 168.

⁷¹ See the Documentary Annex, document no. 4.

⁷² Nicoleta Roman, *Les orphelins de la Princesse Régente, les enfants de la nation. Le côté féminin du sentiment philanthropique dans la société roumaine au milieu du XIX^{ème} siècle*, in *160 de ani de la Unirea Principatelor. Oameni, fapte și idei din domnia lui Alexandru Ioan Cuza*, ed. by Petronel Zahariuc, Adrian-Bogdan Ceobanu, Iași, 2020 (forthcoming).

⁷³ "Buletin oficial," 19 May 1858, no. 39.

large gates of the temple of health, of morality, and of science and the future of our nation will be bright.”⁷⁴

Doctor Iulius Barasch managed the children’s hospital just for a short period of time because he died in 1863 at the young age of 48.⁷⁵ During his short professional life, he advanced the development of a new medical specialization, helped the establishment of the first children’s hospital, contributed to the popularization of the scientific knowledge of medicine and promoted the Israelite-Romanian cultural collaboration.⁷⁶

CONCLUSIONS

The first half of the nineteenth century proves to be essential in the emergence of child healthcare in Wallachia, still a province of the Ottoman Empire at that time. Here, the Enlightenment ideas had a tardive impact on the development of pediatrics and the establishment of the first public hospital for poor children. They were adopted due to the fortunate combination of several political and social factors, and especially because of the presence of foreign physicians. In an increasing large medical market, specialization became an instrument for physicians to distinguish themselves in society, respond to the state’s needs and become public health officials. Iulius Barasch, a Jewish-born physician established in Wallachia, is such an example. His role in the creation of the first children’s hospital in Romania (Bucharest) testifies to the circulation and adoption of the Enlightenment ideas (through a German model), but also to the cooperation among the state, the community, and the physician. Statistics on infantile mortality, diseases and birth rates among poor populations were used as a tool to convince both the state and the urban society of the necessity to address children’s health. A social and financial compromise was reached among the state, the community, and the physician in order to surpass the pecuniary issues and inaugurate the hospital.

APPENDIX

1.

23 October 1857. The official letter of Wallachia’s caimacam,⁷⁷ Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica,⁷⁸ asking the Administrative Council to analyze dr. Iulius Barasch’s project to build a children’s hospital in the capital city of Bucharest.

⁷⁴ “Românul,” year II, 23 May/4 June 1858, no. 40, p. 157.

⁷⁵ Until the end of the nineteenth century, the other physicians in charge of the hospital were: G. Atanasovici (1863–1867), Mihail (Gheorghiad) Obedenaru (1867–1875), Sergiu (1870–1891), and Gr. Romniceanu (1874–1913).

⁷⁶ He was the founder of an elementary school and of a Jewish-Romanian cultural society.

⁷⁷ Term that refers to a temporary replacement for the ruling prince.

⁷⁸ Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica (1795–1862), ruling prince of Wallachia (1834–1842) and *caimacam* of the same territory (1856–1858).

4767, no. 2770

received, Oct(ober) 23

We,
The Prince Alecsandru Dimitrie Ghica
Caimacam of Wallachia
To the Extraordinary Administrative Council,

We refer to the appreciation of the Extraordinary Administrative Council the adjoining state project for the foundation of a children's hospital, which was submitted to us by Dr. Baraș.

The great gains that would result from the creation of such an establishment, whose lack is so felt, impose a duty on the government to come to the aid of the generosity of private individuals who would like to contribute to this charity; we invite, therefore, our Extraordinary Council to give us its opinion both on the statutes of this establishment and on its funding with the government ensuring an annual aid toward its prosperity.

(signature)
Alecsandru Dimitrie Ghica

To the State Secretary Gheorghe M. Ghica
No. 1592
1857, Oct(ober) 23

Source: ANIC, Ministerul de Interne. Diviziunea Rural-Comunală, 31/1857, fol. 1, original.

2.

20 November 1857. The letter of Health Committee director, Nicolae Gusi, showing the need for a children's hospital in the capital.

No. 5337
No. 3240

Health Committee of the Principality of Wallachia
No. 6604
Year 1857, month of Nov(ember) 20
Bucharest

Taking into close consideration the contents of memo no. 4162 from the honorable Ministry and a copy of memo no. 1592 from the High Office of His Highness Prince *Caimacam*, together with the original copy of Dr. Baraș's project to establish a children's hospital in the capital, and analyzing both its usefulness and the request made to the Committee by the honorable Extraordinary Administrative Council to offer its opinion regarding the creation and the funding of this charitable establishment, the committee immediately convened

a meeting of the Honorable Medical Council in order to assess the matter with all maturity, which led to the creation of a special supplement comprising observations and changes necessary to be made to the above-mentioned project regarding the functioning of the prior mentioned establishment as mentioned in memo no. 491 of the Honorable Council, therefore here are both the project and the supplement. Thereby, the Committee with honor quickly forwards these documents to the Honorable Ministry for due process, adding that the maintaining of said establishment does not fall within the competence of the Committee, but that it is upon the better judgment of the Hon(orable) Administrative Council to decide under which conditions such a much-needed establishment for the use and treatment of poor sick children should be founded in our Principality, similar to other institutions from the large cities of Europe.

The head of the committee, N. Gusi

The head of office, (illegible signature)

Source: ANIC, Ministerul de Interne. Diviziunea Rural-Comunală, 31/1857, fol. 2r-v, original.

3.

[1]5 December 1857. The record of the Extraordinary Administrative Council showing the approval of Iulius Barasch's project to establish a children's hospital in the capital and, at the same time, explaining the operating conditions.

Record

The Extraordinary Administrative Council in a meeting held on the 5th of last month, taking into consideration the important memo no. 1592 of his Highness Prince *Caimacam*, by which we are asked to analyze the project of establishing a children's hospital and we are called upon to not only evaluate the project but to also consider the annual funds with which the state could contribute to the hospital, the council, before considering the funding (...),⁷⁹ requested an opinion from the Health Committee regarding the support of the establishment proposed by the above-mentioned project. Therefore, we invited the Interior Minister to analyze the matter and during a meeting on the 14th of this month the Council was presented with the observations made by the Medical Council regarding d(r.) Barasch's proposal for the foundation of this hospital. At the same time, the Health Committee's address no. 6604 was shown, which stipulated said changes and reinforced the benefits of establishing such an institution. Pursuant to all these, the Council carefully analyzed all documents needed to found an establishment to ease human suffering and concluded that Dr. Barasch's idea must be applauded. However, on the other hand, the council suggests that the founding of this establishment should be exclusively left to private enterprise and since such an institution is much needed, all efforts should be taken to make it happen. Nonetheless, the financing means proposed in Mr. Barasch's project are difficult to implement in the short run. In addition to

⁷⁹ Illegible in the text.

funds from the government, the Council asks for private financial aid as well, and after mature enough deliberation we propose the following plan for a government founded institution.

The Hon(orable) Minister of Cults should invite the Hospitals' Trusteeship to analyze both Mr. Baraș's proposal and the Health Council's observations and to compile a new project. Therefore, they should propose how it is going to be founded, what the annual operating costs should be and if they consider the costs to be beyond their means they should then put the Treasury (*Casa Centrală*) in charge, whose primary purpose since its inception had been precisely the support of charitable projects of this kind; they should also draft a plan for a building to house this establishment. Furthermore, in order not to delay the foundation of this charitable institution, the Hospitals' Management should rent a private house fully amenable to the needs of the project in close proximity, if possible, to the Institute of Births until they could build up the much need children's hospital's headquarters. Here the location is beneficial both to healthcare and to the purpose of this endeavor. It will all be worth it, for the simple reason that poor newborns from the Institute of Births in need of medical care could be easily transferred to this establishment. At the same time, since Doctor Baraș had been the first to take the initiative to put forth the project for such an establishment, the Council considers preferable his appointment as its managing director, with adequate pay, while the Hospitals' Board should carry out the hospital's operations and maintenance.

The Hon(orable) Minister of Interior will forward this document to His Highness *Caimacam* Prince for approval.

(signatures)

Constantin Cantacuzino, C. Grigore Ghica, N. Kretzulescu, C. Bălăceanu, G.M. Ghica, B. Vlădoianu, N. Borănescu

Source: ANIC, Ministerul de Interne. Diviziunea Rural-Comunală, 31/1857, fols. 9r-v, 11, original.

4.

30 August 1858. Report of the magazine "Isis sau Natura" on the recent opening and operation of the first children's hospital, founded in the capital of Wallachia.

The opening of the children's hospital in Bucharest

A while ago we announced the opening of a new charitable establishment in our capital city; more precisely, a children's hospital. Now that this establishment has begun to do its beneficent work, we can share with our public the following about the operations of this establishment:

The children's hospital from our capital (founded by the government following the project drafted by Doctor Baraș) receives sick children of poor parents, regardless of nationality or religion. Here, the children are treated, given medicine and food etc. until they are healthy again. Their parents do not have to pay a dime.

Children from the age of 3 days to 10 years are admitted to this hospital; for breast-feeding infants there are permanent wet nurses in the establishment.

When the mother of a poor child wants to stay with the child in the hospital to take care of him or her, she will be able to stay in the hospital herself as long as she covers her expenses.

To facilitate the arrival of the children to the hospital, there is a special covered carriage with a coachman on the hospital payroll. The carriage passes daily by all the health commissions (districts) of the capital following the next schedule:

- It arrives at the green commission at 9:30 in the morning.
- It arrives at the yellow commission at 10:30.
- It arrives at the blue commission at 12.
- It arrives at the red commission at 1, and
- It arrives at the black commission at 1:30 in the afternoon.

The coachman picks up all the sick children from the commissions at the above-mentioned hours and he transports them to the hospital. Similarly, he takes the healthy children from the hospital and drops them off to the commissions from which he picked them up.

However, if there are vacant beds, the hospital can take in ill children brought by their parents. Child patients with referrals from any of the medical doctors from the capital have precedence over other patients.

In this children's hospital there is a special section for patients who pay for their stay; that is, there are parents of means in other districts and in the capital who lack proper amenities to care for their chronically ill children at home; more specifically, there are many parents from other districts who want their children to be looked after by medical doctors from the capital city; many of them, till now, could not afford to take their sick child, travel to Bucharest and stay there until their child's health improved, not only because it was way too expensive but also because caring for and feeding a sick patient staying in a public hotel was practically impossible. However, in the special section of this new establishment the children and, if need be, their guardian will be treated and fed for only 8 *lei* per day. Whenever the parents of paying children would want another doctor from the capital to consult their children, they could definitely do so as long as they have the approval of the manager of the hospital and they pay the visiting doctor's fees.

When one of the capital's surgeons needs to perform a major operation on a child of poor parents treated at their private practice, the hospital management will gladly put a bed at their disposal, giving them permission to perform surgery in the establishment.

Even though this establishment is supported by the generosity of the government with the state covering operating costs, private generosity is also encouraged to help support such a philanthropic establishment; consequently, whoever gives the children's hospital an annual subsidy of 1,000 *lei* or a once-in-a-lifetime gift of 10,000 *lei* will have their name written on a bed in golden letters and will be able to dispose of said bed according to their wishes.

This hospital is housed in the large new building on *Ulița Dudești* (Crucea de Peatră district) no. 42 and it is under the supervision of Doctor Baraș.

There is no need to add how helpful and welcome this new hospital will be for our capital, where infant mortality (on the rise everywhere) has become frighteningly high, especially in the slums of the city. Without a doubt, this new philanthropic establishment is a new adornment in the crown of charitable institutions which embellish our capital.

The Editors

Source: "Isis sau Natura," III, 30 August 1858, no. 32, p. 256.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN BUCHAREST (1830s–1860s)

Abstract

This study explores a major theme in childhood studies, *i.e.* the state policies for children's health in the nineteenth century. It follows the situation in Wallachia, a principality in nowadays Romania, analyzing the challenges in the creation of the first hospital for children in the capital of Bucharest. The author integrates the institution at the European level and argues that the founder (doctor Iulius Barasch) made use of his knowledge, position and child mortality rates to advocate in favor of the establishment. The study also highlights the cooperation between state, community, and doctors in finding a common ground for the foundation of such a hospital, surpassing financial difficulties and opening it.

Keywords: Europe; Wallachia; nineteenth century; childhood studies; children's health; mortality rates; children's hospitals

THE ROMANIAN VERSION OF THE MOUNT OF PIETY. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REALITIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

MIOARA ANTON*

This study reflects the results of preliminary research into a little known institution, entirely overlooked by the older and newer scholarship: the Mount of Piety in the modern Romanian state. I will discuss the political and economic context of its creation, followed by an overview of the legislation dealing with pawn-brokering. To date, I could not locate the archives produced by the Mount of Piety in Bucharest, thus my research relies on different sources: laws and decrees, as well as the special journal of the Mount of Piety.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, in Romania there was no tradition of the Mount of Piety. While in the Western world (especially in Italy and France) such institutions had been operating for centuries, in the Romanian area historical legacies – Byzantine, Ottoman, Russian – led to a different relationship between charity and poverty.¹ In Romanian historiography, there are relatively few studies dealing with the poor/poverty, charity/philanthropy due to both the absence of documents and the predominance of politics over the social aspect as the main field of research. For the pre-modern Romanian world, the political events were more important in their development than the evolutions within the society.

Until the making of the modern Romanian state, charity and philanthropy focused on three pillars: the Church, the lord/prince and individual generosity. It was mainly the monasteries and churches that were concerned with helping certain disadvantaged groups (invalids, wounded veterans, old people, orphaned children, sick people).² Charity work was fuelled by religious motivations, both in the case of the institution of the kingdom and in that of individuals, and was justified by the belief in salvation and the desire to secure a “passport to the world beyond,” to use Jacques Le Goff’s formula.

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¹ For a comparison with Western developments see Laurence Fontaine, *L'économie morale. Pauvreté, crédit et confiance dans l'Europe préindustrielle*, Paris, 2008; Thierry Halay, *Le Mont-de-Piété. Des origines à nos jours*, Paris, 1994; an analysis of charity and philanthropy in the Romanian area in Ligia Livadă-Cadeschi, *Financing Social Care in the Romanian Principalities in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, in “Analele Universității București. Științe politice,” 15, 2013, no. 1, pp. 37–50.

² See Lidia Cotovanu’s contribution (*Se*) *soigner à l'âge de l'oralité. Quelles sources pour l'étude des pratiques d'assistance sociale aux pays de Valachie et de Moldavie des XV^e–XVII^e siècles?* in this issue.

At the beginning of modernity, various forms of aid for the poor were put into practice such as *breslele de calici* and a monastic hospital for the beggars, sick people and foreigners. The most known were the Alms Box and the institutions for orphans and the impoverished: *Orfanotropia* and *Epitropia Sărmanilor Evgheniți*. During the Russian administration of the Romanian Principalities, social assistance and philanthropy were radically changed through the establishing of the Department of Social Care for the Poor (*Eforia caselor făcătoare de bine și de folos obștesc*). These institutions were designated to take care of all kind of poor people both with the assistance of the state and the association of the Church.³ Beyond the charitable aspect, the creation of these departments had the main goal to end the phenomena of vagrancy and begging.⁴ The Department of Common Administration (*Obșteasca Epitropie*) and the Alms Box were financed by the state, being a way of helping poor families and other disadvantaged groups.

The political changes taking place during the second half of the nineteenth century – namely the unification of the Romanian Principalities in January 1859, the accession to the throne of Romania of a foreign prince in the person of Carol I of Hohenzollern (1866), the recognition by the Great Powers of Romania's independence from the Ottoman Empire (1877) – imprinted a new course of development on Romanian society, oriented towards the Western model. The German origins of Carol I influenced in a decisive manner the decisions concerning the development directions of the Romanian state, in what regards both foreign and internal policies. It was the king's desire to connect Romania to the Central-European development model, which explains the predominance of German and Austrian companies in the Romanian economy at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁵ The establishment of the National Bank in 1880 stimulated the emergence of similar institutions throughout the country, and increased the presence of foreign capital in Romania. By 1900, 24 banks had already been established, and their number increased significantly, to 210, by 1914.

³ 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, pp. 236–239. When we refer to the term of social assistance we consider all charitable actions alongside institutional and legislative initiatives regarding the regulation of the problems of the poor. Eadem, *Sărării din țările române la începuturile timpurilor moderne, în Sărăcie și asistență socială în spațiul românesc (sec. XVIII–XX)*, Bucharest, 1998, p. 11.

⁴ In the nineteenth century, in the Romanian Principalities there were 184 institutions of social assistance, their numbers increasing in the first half of the twentieth century by another 76. Mihaela Lambru, *Asistența socială în România. Două secole de evoluție instituțională, în Sărăcie și asistență socială în spațiul românesc*, p. 62.

⁵ Before World War I, there were nine large banks in Romania, four of which had Romanian capital (the Agriculture Bank, the Discount Bank, the Romanian Bank and the Trade Bank from Craiova), four had foreign capital: German (the Romanian General Bank), Austrian (the Romanian Credit Bank, the Romanian Commercial Bank), English (the Bank of Romania), French (the Romanian Commercial Bank), and Belgian (Romanian Commercial Bank), and a Romanian bank, Marmorosch Bank, with foreign capital (Hungarian, German, and French). See the evolution of the banking system in *Enciclopedia României*, vol. IV, Bucharest, 1940, p. 541.

The development of infrastructure, demographic growth, the unequal development of the industry, and the advancement of urban life were part of a general European phenomenon. It was in the context of financial stability and economic progress that the idea of setting up the Mount of Piety appeared as a means to establish a connection between the poor, or those who became poor by economic circumstances, and the bank. It should be emphasized that private pawnshops existed in the Romanian Kingdom, but they were in fact usury offices, which addressed a small circle of customers and most often contributed to the impoverishment of those who were forced to use their services.

A first project was initiated in 1864 by the acting minister of Finance, Nicolae Rosetti-Bălănescu, but due to the tense political situation in the Romanian Principalities, it was not implemented.⁶ A second initiative belonged to Menelas Ghermani, minister of Finance between 1888 and 1895. An Aromanian born in Belgrade in 1834, he studied trade and finance in Vienna and was familiar with the Western banking system. After completing his studies, he came to Romania and set up his own bank with his brother. The young economist made himself known in conservative political circles, and he held the position of minister of Finance several times. Menelas Ghermani stood out by two major projects: the first, implemented in 1892, was the introduction of the monometallic system (gold became the only standard metal) and the second, implemented in 1893, was the establishment of the Mount of Piety. He had initiated negotiations with bankers from France, Belgium and Germany, but the attempt to put Romanian finances in order by imposing the monometallic system caused a real public scandal, which discredited him in the eyes of his foreign partners, who refused to support his project and invest in Romania because they saw it as an uncertain market.

However, this viewpoint was not shared by the bankers from Transylvania, who started to see the Romanian capital market as very attractive. With a much richer experience in banking because of their inclusion in an area ruled by the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Transylvanian bankers were receptive to King Carol I's openness to the movement of capital and the expansion of Austro-Hungarian commercial interests towards South-Eastern Europe. The expansion of the banking business beyond the Carpathians was an opportunity, and the Mount of Piety could be a profitable operation.

The project for setting up the new bank belonged to the economist Corneliu Diaconovici, who coordinated the network of Romanian banks in Transylvania. Educated in Vienna as well, the Transylvanian economist had acquired a wealth of experience in the field of capital markets over the years and was trusted by the political circles in Romania, especially by the overt supporters of King Carol I.⁷

⁶ See the bill in "Muntele de Pietate," year I, 1 January 1907, no. 1, pp. 8–11.

⁷ He was deputy director of the "Albina" Bank from Sibiu and founder of the Association of Romanian Banks in Ardeal (Solidarity) established in 1907. In 1910, he also founded "The Carpathians" Bank in Bucharest.

The project was approved with no reservations by the Conservative minister of Finances, Take Ionescu. This time, the capital belonged entirely to the Romanian financiers. The version adopted on 21 February 1906 specified that the Ministry of Finance had granted a 30-year concession for the establishment of a Pawnbroker House to a union made up of Romanian capitalists; half of the net profit made by the new entity was to be donated to the Red Cross: "The concessionary union has now set up a joint-stock company made up exclusively of Romanians from the Kingdom, Hungary (referring to Transylvania) and Bukovina that will start operating the concession from the current year." It was not by chance that the establishment of the new bank was also related to the special anniversary of King Carol I, who celebrated 40 years of ruling in 1906. However, beyond this festive undertone, these legally established pawnshops were meant to limit and possibly even exclude the phenomenon of usury, to offer accessible interest rates and to protect the interests of those who found themselves in a precarious situation.⁸

In conformity with the law, the first Loan and Pawnbroking House was established in Bucharest, with branches in the country's main cities (Iași, Galați, Brăila, and Craiova). According to the regulation, three categories of goods could be given as security for the loans granted by the pawnbroking houses: movable assets and objects (clothes, linen, cutlery, furniture); precious objects (gold and silver jewelry, precious metals and precious stones); goods (industrial products and non-commercial items). The sums paid for pawned items were set at 1/3 for effects and goods and 1/2 for jewelry and precious stones. It was not possible to pawn religious objects, military insignia and equipment, company sign boards, large or easily disposable objects, or stolen goods. Food, drinks and preserved foodstuffs could not be pawned, but exceptions were allowed in the case of old wine, cognac, liqueur and champagne. The costs for registration, storage and safekeeping were also calculated depending on the value of the pawned items. Moreover, the goods were evaluated to establish both their market and loan value. Loans were granted for a period of three months, with the possibility of extending the contract. The Mount of Piety experts were advised not to give loans to people whose appearance was questionable (inappropriate clothing) or who seemed suspicious. Bicycles and jewelry were the goods that were the easiest to steal and then take to pawnshops. If the items were not redeemed for 30 days after the loan reached its maturity they were put up for sale by public auction. The Mount of Piety liberalized the loan market by expanding the number and type of items that could be pawned.⁹

The pawnshops were required by law to keep a strict record of all operations, which were subsequently reported to the central office. Special files were supposed to include the correspondence with pawnshop customers (descriptions of objects,

⁸ "Revista economică," Sibiu, 25 March 1906, no. 12, p. 1.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 134. See also *The Mount of Piety. Instruction for the Interior Service of the Privileged Romanian Pawnbroker Houses*, Bucharest, 1910. Fur, clothes and fabrics were accepted by pawnshops only if they were stored in special cloth bags to avoid infestation with moths.

evolution of the contracts), as well as the correspondence with the central office, which dealt with the evolution of prices, customs procedures, legislative changes, public announcements, etc. It was also specified that special files were to be created in order to include the transcriptions of the board of directors' meetings, the general shareholders' meetings, and the decisions of the Mount of Piety Central Office.¹⁰

In order to inform its potential customers about the services it provided, the bank began to publish a monthly newsletter, "Muntele de Pietate," distributed free of charge. The first issue appeared in January 1907 and it said that the newspaper was meant to inform the public about the bank's goals, the advantages it presented, and its services.¹¹

The readers were informed that the Mount of Piety had a humanitarian dimension through "the way it functions and the significant advantages it offers to individuals who, at some point, will be forced to obtain the money they need by pawning a part of their property that they can spare for some time with no great difficulties."¹² Moreover, the Mount of Piety was to reorganize public auctions by making use of advertising in major newspapers or in its own publication. The Mount of Piety attracted criticism quite soon, as numerous voices contested both the bank's monopoly over the pawnbroker market and its interest rates, which were seen as too high in relation to the people's economic conditions. However, the administrators replied that the bank's existence responded to a "pressing need," and for the "poorer classes in the capital it is not only an institution of public service, but a true charitable establishment."¹³ The interest rate charged on loans, of 8% per year, was much lower than that imposed by usury brokers (60–120% per year) and than the interest rates of 12–15% charged for discount operations.¹⁴

Despite the reservations and the criticism leveled by skeptics, the new bank established itself relatively quickly on the Romanian pawnbroker market. A first list of precious objects published in February–March 1907 shows how attractive the new bank's services were for the population. Over just a few months people had pawned gold ladies' watches, simple or decorated with precious stones and pearls; gold or platinum rings furnished with diamonds, diamonds, gold chains, necklaces, buttons, brooches, medallions, cigarette cases, silver cups, earrings, etc. Overall, there were almost 2,000 precious objects supplemented by 531 effects (different objects, violins, carpets and rugs, sewing machines, paintings; "a stick with a cracked bone handle"; "a frock coat with a vest, a jacket with a vest"). For example, in December 1907, the bank announced the public auctioning of several objects that had not been redeemed. Among them, there were paintings, watches, jewelry, bicycles, sewing machines, and various clothing items.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 36–37. Strict rules were established for the clerks working at the Mount of Piety; they were trained to maintain discretion over the loan business, not to initiate private business, not to attend the auction meetings, not to broker loans or to organize themselves in cartels.

¹¹ "Muntele de Pietate," year I, 1 January 1907, no. 1.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 1.

¹³ *Ibidem*, February–March 1907, no. 2, p. 4.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

Behind the lists published every month in the review of the bank laid the stories of the people who were forced to abandon their possessions in the pawnshops. It was obvious that the precious things belonged to people who had had at some point a certain social status, lost either in a difficult economic context, or as a result of their own action: betting, gambling or a reckless lifestyle. Also, the lists told the stories of those towards whom the fate had not been too generous and who were forced to turn to the Mount of Piety to pawn objects of little value: suitcases, clothing, small furniture, plates and dishes, etc.

The outbreak of World War I did not increase the operations of the Mount of Piety. The activity of the Mount of Piety was affected directly by the political decisions made against the background of the war. The Romanian society was quickly engulfed by the turmoil of the war dilemma. The 'Germanophiles' and 'Entantophiles' quarreled for two years over the path that Romania was supposed to follow in the Great War. In this context, the founder of the Mount of Piety, Corneliu Diaconovici, was on the side of King Carol I and the Germanophile camp. They supported Romania's involvement in the war alongside the Central Powers. Later, this decision marked his professional destiny; after the war he was accused of philo-Germanism and forced to withdraw from public life. All the assets of the bank he had set up disappeared in Soviet Russia, along with the country's entire gold treasure, which was sent to Moscow by the Bucharest authorities in the winter of 1916, when the capital was occupied by German troops.

The absence of documents does not allow us to find out how the Mount of Piety worked during the German occupation. Moreover, surprisingly, so far we have not been able to identify where exactly the archive of the Mount of Piety is, if such an archive still exists at all. The National Bank or the National Archives do not have any fund or documentation referring to the bank's activity. The existing pieces of information come from the legal archives and the magazine edited by the bank to announce its public actions for the objects that had not been redeemed by their owners. The collection of the Mount of Piety magazine can be found today in the Library of the Romanian Academy and includes the numbers published between 1907 and 1918.

The Mount of Piety continued to function during the interwar period; in 1936, it was reorganized by a new law, which allowed the bank to set up branches in all the cities in the country.¹⁵ There are very few details known, and the bank's magazine seems to have gone out of print. From the press of that time we find out that the bank continued to operate in the centre of Bucharest, being an attraction for those in need. N. Kirişescu remarked ironically that "the Mount of Piety has a building which corresponds more to the notion of mount than to that of piety."¹⁶ He also

¹⁵ See the decree at [http://www.lege-online.ro/Ir-DECRET-LEGE-2561-1936-\(22\).html](http://www.lege-online.ro/Ir-DECRET-LEGE-2561-1936-(22).html), accessed 15 November 2019.

¹⁶ *Tainele Muntelui de Pietate*, <https://deieri-deazi.blogspot.com/2014/06/din-tainele-muntelui-de-pietate.html>, accessed 15 November 2019.

noted in a bitter tone that the Mount of Piety had betrayed its mission to help the poor and to contribute to charitable work, becoming a regular bank that sought only to gain profit. In his opinion, the bank had not only failed to deal with the phenomenon of usury, but, on the contrary, in the 1930s, even seemed to feed it. Exchange Offices and Loan Offices used to buy the receipts issued by the Mount of Piety at very low prices, and afterwards they bought the object and sold it without giving the owner the difference.

The Romanian version of the Mount of Piety appeared against the backdrop of the modernization of the Romanian society and its integration into the social and economic orbit of the Western world. Secularization, urbanization and industrialization, accompanied by the diversification of the people's needs, produced profound changes in the Romanian society, even if its development pace was different from that of the Western states. An archive of the Mount of Piety would bring us much closer to a history of the transformations the Romanian society went through in the first half of the twentieth century: from the disappearance of the great aristocratic families and their impoverishment to the bankruptcy of the great bourgeoisie during the economic crisis in the early 1930s. Rich and poor people alike are certainly to be found in the records, so far lost, of the Mount of Piety.

THE ROMANIAN VERSION OF THE MOUNT OF PIETY. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC REALITIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Abstract

In contrast with the tradition of Western Europe, where the Mount of Piety has a long history, in Romania this institution designed to help poor people was created only at the beginning of the twentieth century. The first initiatives came from Transylvanian economists who were connected to the Western financial practices and traditions. Many of them were educated in Vienna, Budapest or Berlin. The first bank was founded in 1905 in Sibiu by Corneliu Diaconovici, one of the best known economists of the time. Two years later, he came to Bucharest and founded a new branch. The mission of the bank was to help those who were in an economic precarious situation, half of its profit being donated to the Red Cross. The bank operated until December 1916, when the Romanian government was forced to leave the capital as the result of the German occupation.

The breaking of diplomatic relations between Romania and Russia led to the seizure of all Romanian assets and those of the Mount of Piety were not excepted. All the possessions of the Mount of Piety were transported to Russia, along with

the entire Romanian treasury. Despite the loss of its capital, the Mount of Piety did not disappear and after the war resumed its activity until the end of the Second World War.

Keywords: Romania; Mount of Piety; pawnbroker societies; social assistance policies

“NOWADAYS MANY MOTHERS ONLY WANT TO BE CHIRPING SKYLARKS, LIKE IBSEN’S NORA.” THE DEBATES CONCERNING THE LEGALIZATION OF ABORTION IN INTERWAR ROMANIA

CAMELIA ZAVARACHE*

Most books and studies concerning the abortive techniques and their condemnation in Romania focus on the Communist period and the anti-abortion law implemented by Ceaușescu’s regime since 1966, part of the pronatalist policies¹ promoted by the state.² Although this was by far the most dramatic measure, due to its overwhelming number of victims, this was just a stage in a long series of interactions that defined the relationship between the modern Romanian state and its citizens and the manner in which the former tried to influence and – eventually – to control the behaviours and intimacy of the latter. The present study investigates the controversies generated in 1930 Romania by the revision of the Penal Code, for the unification of criminal law within the country, and more specifically the public reaction to the articles concerning abortion, respectively men’s voice, represented by clergymen, lawyers and physicians, and women’s voice, represented by the leaders of the women’s emancipation movement.

The debate concerning abortion was generated by a series of socio-cultural changes experienced by the Romanian society after World War I. In discussing abortion, the reproductive behaviour became a subject of debate, since maternity was a long-established socially validated characteristic of femininity, at the border between public life and intimacy. This change was joined by a series of factors such as infant mortality, a certain liberalization of sexuality and the emergence of women in public life.³

Defined as the termination of a human pregnancy by the expulsion of the foetus from the uterine cavity before it is fully developed, abortion can be spontaneous, when it happens naturally, due to anatomical or physiological causes, or induced.

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¹ Luciana M. Jinga, Florin S. Soare (coord.), Corina Doboș, Cristina Roman, *Politica pronatalistă a regimului Ceaușescu*, vol. II, *Instituții și practici*, Iași, 2011.

² Concerning the importance of women as “bearers of the collective” ethnicity and nationality in the construction of nationalist discourses, see Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gen și națiune*, trans. by Cristina Cobliș, Bucharest, 2003, Chapter II, *Femeile și reproducerea biologică a națiunii*, pp. 42–58.

³ Stephen Brooke, *A New World for Women. Abortion Law Reform in Britain during the 1930s*, in “The American Historical Review,” 106, 2001, no. 2, pp. 434–435.

The latter can also be seen as a form of contraception,⁴ being achieved either through surgery or by empirical means.⁵ Induced or elective abortion was the cause of moral debates in modern societies, due to the opposition between the right of the pregnant woman over her own body and the right to life of the unborn child.⁶

In the Romanian Principalities, the first laws against abortion were enacted during the seventeenth century, by Voivode Matei Basarab, in his *Pravila* (1640), sentencing the woman who terminated her pregnancy to ten years' imprisonment; this punishment was maintained in the *Condica criminalicească* (1850) of Barbu Știrbey.⁷ The Penal Code that came into force in 1864 detailed these provisions and imposed punishments not only for the woman who willingly consented to the abortive techniques, but also for those who performed these procedures. Abortion was to be coded in Section 2 – *Răniri, loviri și alte crime și delictă comise cu voință* (*Injuries, beatings and other premeditated crimes and felonies*), where Article 246 sentenced to reclusion those who induced the expulsion of the foetus through nourishments, beverages, medicine or other means, and to imprisonment from six months to two years the woman who willingly subjected herself to such techniques or applied them on her own, if these resulted in the foetus being expelled. Also, all medical staff – physicians, surgeons, health officers, druggists or midwives – was held accountable for performing abortions, being sentenced to reclusion when the woman's unwanted pregnancy was terminated. However, in the quasi-liberal interwar society, such a provision was unable to discourage the induced terminations of pregnancy, which continued clandestinely, without being noticed by the authorities. But things were different when such a procedure affected the woman's health or led to her death – then, the law maker instituted severe penalties.⁸

ABORTION, A FACT OF EVERYDAY LIFE DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

The judicial statistics published during the interwar period present a detailed image of how abortion cases were judged and punished by various courts, being

⁴ French demographers talk about a first contraceptive revolution, during the eighteenth century, represented by *coitus interruptus* and abortion, and a second one, during the twentieth century, triggered by the introduction of the birth control pill; *Dictionnaire des sexualités*, coord. by Janine Mossuz-Lavau, Paris, 2014, pp. 203–204. See also the definition of abortion, in *Le Dictionnaire du corps en sciences humaines et sociales*, coord. by Bernard Andrieu, Paris, 2006, pp. 44–45.

⁵ Otilia Dragomir, Mihaela Miroiu, *Lexicon feminist*, Iași, 2002, pp. 41–43.

⁶ The Church was the main institution that promoted a new vision on the sanctity of life through the ages. In 1930, in response to the general modifications of the abortion laws, Pope Pius XI issued the encyclical *Casti Connubii*, which made use of sociology and eugenics to condemn abortion; Machteld Nijsten, *Abortion and Constitutional Law. A Comparative European-American Study*, Florence, 1990, pp. 10–11.

⁷ Sanda Al. Ionescu, *Avortul și asistența femeii muncitoare*, Bucharest, 1935, pp. 19–20.

⁸ *Codul penal*, in Constantin Hamangiu, *Codul general al României cuprinzând, adnotate cu numeroase note explicative și colecționate după textele oficiale, toate codurile și legile uzuale cele mai importante aflate azi în vigoare*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1900, pp. 1056–1057.

classified as crimes against life and body, alongside homicides, assassinations, blows that caused death and infanticides; however, they only recorded the cases followed by final verdicts, *i.e.* situations when death had occurred, classified as abortions or abortion inductions.

Between 1931 and 1935, their number was at its lowest, which indicates that the vast majority of these procedures were not subject to prosecutorial investigations, and when they finally came to the attention of a court, they were not charged. Therefore, in 1931, only 219 persons in Romania were sentenced to prison for undergoing or performing an abortion; this number grew to 227 in 1932 and 232 in 1933, slightly decreasing in 1934, to 227, and coming back to 286 in 1935. The explanation for this state of affairs was provided by the minister of Justice himself, Victor Diamandi, in the introduction to the volume of judicial statistics published in 1938, who stated that the juries convened to render a verdict in such cases were usually lenient in the first instance, and therefore many of those who were prosecuted were subsequently acquitted.⁹

Physicians were the only ones who realized the true scale of this phenomenon, which eluded the authorities, but even they were unwilling to provide accurate estimates of the frequency of these procedures concerning women's bodies and intimacy and preferred to present the situation of France, where approximately 500,000 abortions were registered annually in the late 1920s.¹⁰

AN UNACHIEVABLE GOAL: CONTRACEPTION AND FAMILY PLANNING BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

At that time, abortive techniques were the only means to get rid of an unwanted pregnancy, both for the upper and lower classes. Although medical science and knowledge about asepsis had made remarkable progress after the war, abortion was still seen as the sole existing method of contraception, due to multiple causes. First, we must consider the guiding principles of formal education, *i.e.* the structure of biology didactics and the human anatomy courses in secondary school education. While the parts of the human body, including the digestive, respiratory, circulatory and excretory systems, as well as the sensory organs, were included in the high school first grade programme, the bashfulness of the authors of this programme and of the textbooks made them deliberately exclude the reproductive system and its hygiene. It was only in the seventh grade of high school that students were taught some notions of biology concerning cells and mammalian reproduction, such as the ovule, spermatozoon, fertilization, the resemblance between the cell and the ovule, the main divisions of the latter and the layers of the blastoderm; the high school

⁹ *Statistica judiciară a României (1931–1935) cu câteva considerații generale asupra rezultatelor datelor statistice de d-l Victor Diamandi, Ministrul Justiției, și o dare de seamă de d-l E.C. Decuseară, directorul Statisticii judiciare*, Bucharest, 1938, pp. VI, XII.

¹⁰ Petru Râmneanțu, Gheorghe Oprea, *Micșorarea natalității în Banat prin avorturile criminale*, Cluj, 1928, pp. 30–31.

seventh grade programme also included lessons about the embryo, foetal membranes, uterus, Placentalia and aplacental mammals, as well as the variability of sperm.¹¹ But these were meticulously included by the authors within a wider discourse about mammals, in order to dissociate them from human anatomy, and therefore it was very difficult for a seventeen-year old student to understand how the human reproductive system functioned and especially how reproduction took place.

The classes on *hygiene* had the same structure: the students were instructed about body care and how to prevent the most common diseases, as well as about germs, their transmission and treatment. In the case of boys' schools, the last lesson was about the "danger of venereal maladies," providing the necessary information for the prevention of such diseases, which were common at the time. In the case of girls' schools, the programme included hygiene during and after the pregnancy, as well as how to groom a new-born, alongside notions of childcare, baby feeding or common digestive disorders.¹² However, there was no mention of how babies were conceived, since this could have aroused "morbid curiosities" or offend public morals.

Given the content structure of these lessons and keeping in mind that high school graduates were a minority,¹³ we cannot be surprised by the observations of the physicians regarding the extremely vague and mostly erroneous notions of human anatomy which their patients possessed. Thus, in a women's handbook of health and medicine, the author, a gynaecologist, provided some examples of gross ignorance concerning the physiology of one's own body, witnessed during her career. She mentioned that most women, even those with higher education, did not differentiate between the vagina and the uterus, believing that urine was eliminated through the vagina and that introducing a bandage there could make it "fall into their bellies." Moreover, she confessed that many women – even those who had given birth several times – were too bashful to undergo a gynaecological examination, even though they presented serious disorders of the reproductive system.¹⁴ In these conditions, it was very unlikely for an adult woman who was ignorant of the functioning of her own reproductive system to use whatever contraceptive means were available at the time.

Likewise, even if medical literature concerning prevention of sexually transmitted diseases proliferated during the interwar period and mentioned the use of condoms by men, these were not seen as an option for married couples,¹⁵ being used solely

¹¹ *Programele analitice ale învățământului secundar (licee, gimnazii și clasele I–III a școlilor normale) întocmite în conformitate cu legea învățământului secundar din 1928*, Bucharest, 1929, pp. 159–175.

¹² Iosif I. Gabrea, *Programa școlii complementare*, Bucharest, 1935, pp. 31–33; Constantin Cazan, *Cartea unică clasa a VI-a*, vol. II, *Partea științifică*, Bucharest, 1946, pp. 87–104; *Programa școlilor și cursurilor țărănești*, Bucharest, 1943, p. 45–55.

¹³ *Anuarul statistic al României* 1922, Bucharest, 1923, pp. 287–288.

¹⁴ Coca Odeseanu, *Cartea femeii moderne. Ce trebuie să știe o femeie și chiar o fată*, Bucharest, 1934, pp. 19–21.

¹⁵ Aurel Voina, *Combaterea bolilor venerice*, excerpt from "Sănătatea publică. Buletinul oficial al Ministerului Muncii, Sănătății și Ocrotirilor Sociale," 1931, nos. 1–3, pp. 119–120.

for affairs with people who presented high risks of contacting and transmitting venereal diseases.¹⁶ An analysis of the popularization brochures proves that the physicians' goal was not to provide the readers with new means to reduce the number of children, and – aside from their efforts to instruct the men in the prevention of venereal diseases – they even encouraged couples to procreate.

Unlike his colleagues, a physician from Bucharest, Constantin Colonaş, published the fourth edition of the clinical handbook for married couples two years after the end of the Second World War, and listed there the main contraceptive means available at the time. His endeavour provides us with an understanding of what was known and accepted, at least by a fraction of Romanian society, given the increased birth rate of that period.¹⁷ Perhaps this is why the physician listed the chemical and mechanical processes which prevented pregnancy, although he did specify that these were recommended in case of hereditary diseases.

In the first category he listed vaginal irrigations with lemon juice or vinegar, before or after intercourse, since these acidic substances could destroy the seminal fluid; however, he had to admit that the efficiency of this method was limited. The second category included the rubber condom, whose use was quite common after its popularization during the war. It was still an expensive item, unaffordable for some couples, and therefore the physician recommended reuse.

Another item was the contraceptive sponge, which was inserted into the woman's vagina and prevented the seminal fluid from entering the uterus, being removed for disinfection with the help of a string. He also mentioned the "occlusive pessary," described as "a ring wrapped in a rubber membrane," which was inserted into the vagina before intercourse; similar to this was "a sort of silver or aluminium cap, that must be inserted by a physician" – probably an early form of an intra-uterine device. These had to be removed before menstruation, and this perpetual replacement was seen as barbaric and uncomfortable; moreover, there was the risk of cervical lesions, which could lead to cancer. Last were the traditional methods: *coitus interruptus* and abstinence during the fertile periods of the month.¹⁸

Constantin F. Nicolescu, Grigore Ernescu, *Manual pentru bacalaureat conform noului program analitic al Ministerului Culturii Naţionale*, 7th edition, Bucharest, 1943, pp. 455–499.

¹⁶ Dominic Stanca, Aurel Voina, *Istoria prostituţiei şi bolile venerice*, in *Prostituţia între cuceritori şi plătitori*, coord. by Adrian Majuru, Piteşti, 2007, p. 103.

¹⁷ The researchers who analyzed the evolution of fertility rates in twentieth-century Romania listed the period between 1946 and 1966 as a natural baby-boom, influenced by the high fertility of the generations born before 1936, who reached their sexual maturity during this time span. See also Raluca Căplescu's doctoral thesis, *Fertility in Romania. Evolution, Determinants and Consequences*, Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest, Economic Cybernetics and Statistics Doctoral School, Bucharest, 2013, p. 69.

¹⁸ Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, *Corp şi sexualitate în Europa Vechiului Regim*, in *Istoria corpului*, vol. I, *De la Renaştere la Secolul Luminilor*, ed. by Alain Corbin, Jean-Jaques Courtine, Georges Vigarello (coord.), trans. by Simona Manolache, Gina Puică, Muguraş Constantinescu, Giuliano Sfichi, Bucharest, 2008, pp. 233–234.

Although the author's willingness to list contraceptive methods in his book apparently contrasted with other medical works of the time, the reader could easily see that these were viewed with outright disapproval. Actually, Colonaș had listed them only to have them rebuffed, accepting only abstinence for married couples as the sole "scientific, elegant and moral" contraceptive method, in accordance both with the moral commandments and physiological necessities. As a physician, the author felt compelled to promote a pronatalist discourse, and his list of contraceptive methods was addressed only to couples who, due to hereditary diseases, had the obligation to restrain themselves from procreation.¹⁹ The reticence manifested by Colonaș towards these birth control methods is a clear proof that, according to him, they were not for the use of healthy partners, who had the obligation to have children.

However, perhaps the most important aspect we have to consider in order to understand the problem of contraception during the interwar period is the opinion of the Romanian intellectual elite, including not only physicians, but also members of other professional categories, such as civil servants, professors or even the high clergy. The proliferation of eugenic principles at the time is well known; due to research studies conducted by Marius Turda²⁰ and Maria Bucur,²¹ the physicians' interest in promoting a state policy that would ensure "the preservation of normal and superior biological, physical, intellectual and moral qualities" among youngsters and the social elite has been widely demonstrated.²² The theories developed by British scholar Francis Galton at the end of the nineteenth century, concerning the possibility of a perpetual improvement of the race by controlling the biological qualities of those who got married and had children²³ were already the subject of numerous publications, being assimilated by the upper and middle social classes. These ideas enjoyed widespread popularity, and even journals with a high circulation published articles about the means of individual protection against social and venereal diseases, prophylaxis being an integral part of eugenics.

The Malthusian ideas were less popular; the theory of Thomas Robert Malthus, formulated at the beginning of the nineteenth century in his work, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, concerned the ratio between global population and the available resources. According to Malthus's formula, the growth rate of the population was geometrical, while that of the necessary resources was arithmetical. The two were incongruent, leading to an acute food shortage, caused by sheer population growth. However, these predictions were violently rebuffed by the physicians of

¹⁹ Constantin Colonaș, *Cartea căsătoriei*, 4th edition, Bucharest, 1947, pp. 477–481.

²⁰ Marius Turda, *Eugenism și modernitate. Națiune, rasă și biopolitică în Europa (1870–1950)*, trans. by Răzvan Pârâianu, Iași, 2014, pp. 61–66.

²¹ Maria Bucur, *Eugenie și modernizare în România interbelică*, Iași, 2005.

²² M. Zolog, O. Comșia, *Igiena și igiena socială a vieții studențești*, excerpt from "Îndrumări universitare," Cluj, 1936, p. 2.

²³ Angelique Richardson, *Love and Eugenics in the Late XIXth Century. Rational Reproduction and the New Women*, Oxford, 2003, pp. 2–3.

twentieth-century Romania, who considered that the country's rich resources not only could sustain, but actually required more inhabitants for their exploitation.

Neo-Malthusian theories were perceived as being even more dangerous by the interwar Romanian elite, due to their support for the use of contraception and their advocacy for human population planning. Such ideas were seen as opposed to eugenics, since they preached birth control to the couples from the upper classes. Eugenics used birth control against individuals with defective genes, while encouraging healthy descendants to procreate.²⁴ Therefore physicians, as representatives of the state, advocated increased birth rates among the middle and upper classes, since the rural population already had an astonishing rate of natural increase.

The rejection of the Malthusian theory and of the Neo-Malthusian ideas by the Romanian medical elite comes as no surprise. Things could not have been different, since Romania had a large number of minorities, who enjoyed a good social, economic and professional status in the recently annexed provinces; also, the increased birth rates of the Jews²⁵ and other minorities frightened the state, which supported natality among the Romanian population. Any kind of propaganda or education for the use of contraceptives by couples was doomed from the start,²⁶ and abortion remained the only method for limiting the number of family members or freeing women from an unwanted pregnancy. Thus, during the first half of the twentieth century, uterus scraping was seen by most as being the safest option for terminating a pregnancy, as long as it was performed by a trained physician; however, even in this case there was a risk of infections or haemorrhages.

THE NEW PENAL CODE AND THE DEBATES CONCERNING THE LEGALIZATION OF ABORTION

A significant number of studies and brochures concerning abortion as a social, demographical and economic phenomenon were published during the years preceding the introduction of the unified Penal Code; as expected, they reflected the views of their authors, whose vision was shaped by their professional background.

A distinguishable voice was that of the representatives of the emancipation movement of the Romanian women; in the pages of their newspapers, they recounted the difficulties faced by women and tried to pressure the men in power in

²⁴ Petru Râmneanu, Gheorghe Oprea, *op. cit.*, pp. 11–14.

²⁵ See the work of Constantin Bărbulescu, *România medicilor. Medici, țărani și igienă rurală în România de la 1860 la 1910*, Bucharest, 2015.

²⁶ Specialty literature provides a series of explanations concerning how women tried to prevent the development of an unwanted pregnancy during the modern age. Empirical procedures, which often led to serious infections, or brutal executions were common among the poorer classes, who could not afford the help of a trained professional. For an inventory of the common abortive procedures, see the work of coroner George Bogdan, *Curs de medicină legală predat la Facultatea de Medicină din Iași*, vol. III, *Sarcina – nașterea, avortul – pruncuciderea și deontologia medicală din punctul de vedere juridic și medico-legal*, Iași, 1924.

order to obtain an improvement of their status.²⁷ Both the feminist press²⁸ and the daily newspapers of wide circulation hosted social surveys sections, presenting numerous cases of infanticide or infant mortality caused by the mothers' carelessness.²⁹ Based on these, the representatives of the feminist movement demanded the legalization of abortion on a social criterion and made a worthy contribution to the contextualization of some phenomena which, judged independently, seemed to indicate the utter moral depravation of their authors. More than any other professional category, they managed to point out the direct connection between the economic constraints which plagued various classes and the actions of women, classified as crimes.

Thus, since 1933, the importance of the legalization of abortion, as a means to decrease the number of deaths in the ranks of impoverished women, who could not afford the support of trained health care professionals, became a subject of debate.³⁰ This helped the collaboration between the feminist leaders and the physicians working in women's clinics, the observations of the latter being published in the pages of the former's newspapers. Obviously, the opinions of the selected professionals supported the social program of the feminist movement; however, we must remark the very modern view of some clinicians, who understood that, beyond the reproductive role ascribed to women by their own anatomical structure, they also had the right to be informed about the available contraceptive means. Moreover, women were presented as autonomous individuals, free to ask for a hygienic pregnancy termination procedure when they decided that they did not want a child.³¹ But this vision was not shared by the whole medical community of interwar Romania, given that the opinion of most physicians was that the main role of the woman was to procreate.³²

²⁷ The unjust provisions of the Civil Code, inspired from the Napoleonic Code, such as those which forbade the establishment of paternity and exempted the man from supporting the woman and children born from an illegitimate relationship, were the keystones of the critical discourse developed by the leaders of the movement for the civil and political emancipation of women. Calypso Botez, *Condiția juridică a copilului natural în legislația română. Propuneri în vederea reformei Codului civil*, in "Curierul judiciar. Doctrină – Jurisprudență – Legislație – Economie politică – Finanțe – Sociologie," XXXIII, 14 December 1924, no. 42, pp. 661–664.

²⁸ Two of the most important feminist periodicals were "Gazeta femeilor. Ziar săptămânal independent pentru susținerea dreptelor revendicări ale femeilor" and "Gazeta femeii. Organ independent de informație și apărare a intereselor feminine," both printed in Bucharest.

²⁹ The situation was similar in France, where, at the beginning of the twentieth century, daily newspapers of wide circulation hosted sections that listed cases of infanticide; Laure Adler, *Secrete de alcov: Istoria cuplului între 1830–1930*, trans. by Narcisa Șerbănescu, Bucharest, 2003, pp. 110–113.

³⁰ Sarina Cassvan, *Problema avortului*, in "Gazeta femeilor. Ziar săptămânal independent pentru susținerea dreptelor revendicări ale femeilor," II, November 1933, no. 36, p. 4.

³¹ S. Cohl, *Femeia nu e fabrică de copii. Maternitatea conștientă*, in "Femeia muncitoare. Buletinul Uniunii Femeilor Muncitoare din România," II, December 1932, no. 16, *apud* Ștefania Mihăilescu, *Din istoria feminismului românesc. Studiu și antologie de texte (1929–1948)*, Iași, 2006, pp. 162–164.

³² The correlation between the "future of the nation" and the women's reproductive capabilities represents a constant of nationalist ideology; Nira Yuval-Davis, *op. cit.*, pp. 46–47.

A year before the public debate concerning the new Penal Code, a strong anti-abortion movement was started by some scholars in Banat; this can be explained by the region's low birth rate,³³ a consequence of the high degree of literacy,³⁴ improved welfare, better opportunities for young people to find a job and the young couples' desire to give their children a head start in life. Since the previous decade, the demographics of Banat were the subject of a small-scale enquiry, revealing the declining birth rate. This was included in a book published in 1928 by physicians Petru Râmneanțu³⁵ and Gheorghe Oprea, who argued that the practice of abortion, which they considered to be widespread in the province, was the main cause for the declining birth rate. This study offers insight into the perception and public presentation of women who had had an abortion. The authors noted that the most frequent cases were among unmarried women, girls who had been seduced or industrial women workers, who wanted to avoid the embarrassment of an out-of-wedlock pregnancy or an illegitimate child and "to conceal their debauchery."³⁶ This type of discourse proves that the authors considered sexuality acceptable only for married couples and morally condemned women's premarital sexual relationships.

Late marriages were a common fact in the Western provinces, and this influenced the number of out-of-wedlock births. It was only natural, given that it was very unlikely for women and men who postponed marriage for various reasons to remain abstinent after reaching maturity. Hence the use of abortive techniques and the greater number of illegitimate children.

In order to provide a comprehensive comparative framework, we shall analyse the situation of illegitimate children registered in Banat and Bukovina in 1934–1935, since the population of these two provinces was roughly equal. Thus, in 1934, the birth records in Banat show a ratio of 7,034 legitimate to 1,742 illegitimate male children and 6,389 legitimate to 1,614 illegitimate female children, respectively. In Bukovina, there was a ratio of 11,451 legitimate to 1,137 illegitimate male children and 10,926 legitimate to 1,040 illegitimate female children, respectively. In 1935, the registers in Banat present a ratio of 6,608 legitimate to 1,699 illegitimate male

³³ The demography statistics of this province were the following: 941,521 inhabitants for an area of 18,715 km²; for comparison, Bukovina had a population of 853,524, while its area was almost half the size (10,442 km²); see Ioan Scurtu, *Viața cotidiană a românilor în perioada interbelică*, Bucharest, 2001, p. 11. See also the comparative study concerning the birth rate differences between the rural and urban population in the regions integrated after 1918, and that of the Eastern plains, D.C. Georgescu, *La fertilité différentielle en Roumanie*, Bucharest, 1940, pp. 8–13.

³⁴ Sabin Mănuilă, *Știința de carte a populației României. Note preliminare după datele recensământului general al populației din 1930*, excerpt from "Arhiva pentru știința și reforma socială," XIV, 1936, pp. 9–12.

³⁵ He was close to the scientific circles in Cluj, which supported eugenics, a contributor to their publications, providing several materials and studies concerning the demography of Banat, and the future head of the Department of Hygiene of the Timișoara Faculty of Medicine, which he organized and directed between 1947 and 1951; see http://www.umft.ro/facultatea-de-medicina_2/disciplina-de-igiena_76, accessed 22 May 2020.

³⁶ Petru Râmneanțu, Gheorghe Oprea, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

children and 6,264 legitimate to 1,513 illegitimate female children, respectively. During the same year, Bukovina had a ratio of 11,242 legitimate to 1,084 illegitimate male children and 10,672 legitimate to 945 illegitimate female children, respectively.³⁷ The analysis of these statistics shows that the birth rate was considerably higher in Bukovina than in Banat; however, the percentage of illegitimate children was over 20% for the latter and under 10% for the former.

This is what concerned Romanian physicians and decision-makers in the case of Banat and what triggered their disapproval of the women's lifestyle and options in this province. Returning to the brochure of Râmneanțu and Oprea, the two were exasperated by the fact that married women were the ones who had more abortions, thus limiting the number of their children to one or two, so they could afford to raise them. In other words, couples in Banat already used a form of family planning by taking care of their children's future. Strangely enough, the whole blame for the couple's decision was laid on the woman. The authors were outraged particularly by the so-called desire for "luxury," manifested by women even in rural areas.³⁸ Their obsession with women's passion for "luxury" must be related to the latter's desire for a high standard of living, defined by fine clothing and an active lifestyle. In the end, it was all about the couples' desire for status and for ensuring the welfare of their children, which was stronger than any demographic considerations.³⁹

As in the case of other works, published by representatives of different professional categories, the arguments used by the authors were outside their area of expertise. As for the two physicians, the research for their brochure was based on questionnaires mailed to parish priests of Banat and filled in by those, but also on statistical summaries extracted from various censuses available at the time; they had not conducted an enquiry in maternity hospitals in order to understand women's reasons for having abortions. Therefore, the brochure abounds with clichés and commonplaces and reflects rather the current opinion about the provinces' realities than an objective research on the impact of abortions on the fertility rate. However, among their proposals for policies to increase the number of births, they had to

³⁷ *Anuarul statistic al României 1935 și 1936*, Bucharest, s.a, p. 69.

³⁸ According to them, these were the main causes for the Banat's declining birth rates: "1. The parents' growing concern for a peaceful and prosperous life, which prevents them from having children or, if they do, it's only one, who inherits all their wealth, since more children implies the risk of living in poverty. 2. Women are lacking in virtue, chasing comfort, luxury, parties, debauchery, physical beauty, etc." Petru Râmneanțu, Gheorghe Oprea, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

³⁹ The desire of educated couples with professional degrees for an active lifestyle is documented in memoirs written by personalities during the first half of the twentieth century; in their spare time, they organized informal gatherings where they played board games, visited concert halls and theatres or did a lot of travelling, and therefore preferred to have smaller families. See the testimony of Pia Pillat about her parents' two-month winter vacation abroad (Pia Pillat, *Sufletul nu cunoaște distanțele. Pagini de corespondență cu familia Pillat*, ed. by Monica Pillat, Bucharest, 2009, pp. 260–261), or that of Antoaneta Ralian, who remembered that her parents organized board games with a close circle of visiting friends several evenings a week (Antoaneta Ralian, *Nu cred în sfârșitul lumii. Articole, amintiri, interviuri*, coord. by Marius Chivu, Bucharest, 2016, pp. 47–49).

mention the necessity to establish antenatal care services⁴⁰ and to improve the mother-child protection measures. By this, the two actually admitted that the Romanian authorities demanded – through the voices of physicians and, as we shall see, legal advisers or even high clergymen – constant sacrifice on behalf of families in general and of women in particular, without providing the appropriate socio-economic conditions in return. In the end, it was mostly men who talked about women and their obligation to have children, although the state was far from being able to ensure the necessary assistance during their pregnancy and the extremely vulnerable period of the first year of a child's life.⁴¹

Therefore, in the mid-1930s, it was clear that couples from certain social categories and those from the Western region of the country had as many children as they could afford to raise; and there is no doubt that the number of births was limited by periodical abortions.

Consequently, the jurists made their voices heard in the public debate concerning abortion; they had one of the most balanced visions on the subject, although the unification of criminal law had turned from a legal matter into a problem that generated a great deal of public attention, due to its social consequences. The task assigned to them was to reveal the importance of a unified Penal Code and to analyse the provisions of abortion laws from both the Old Kingdom of Romania and Transylvania. Unsurprisingly, the contribution of the specialists in law from Transylvania and Banat was of paramount importance, such as that of jurisconsult Vasile M. Dimitriu, a counsellor of the Appellate Court in Timișoara. In a conference entitled *Abortion and the New Legislation*,⁴² held at the Banat-Crișana Social Institute in Timișoara on 31 March 1933, he also addressed the issue of clandestine abortions. As a cofounder of the “Ardealul juridic” journal for the unification of the law, edited in Cluj, the jurisconsult was aware of the statistical data on persons accused and condemned by the courts for criminal abortion. As we have already seen, based on the data collected by the clerks of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, belonging to the Ministry of Justice, the conviction rate was appallingly low, first because such procedures were difficult to track and secondly due to the legislative provisions that were in force in the Old Kingdom of Romania, where the presence of trial juries moulded the verdicts in abortion cases and usually the defendants were acquitted; meanwhile, the situation in Transylvania was entirely different: court sentences were far more severe, since the trials were presided by judges, who decided on the appropriate sentences.

⁴⁰ *Istoria românilor*, vol. VIII, *România întregită (1918–1940)*, ed. by Ioan Scurtu (coord.), Petre Otu, Bucharest, 2003, p. 157; a statistic from 1935 shows that less than 1% of women living in rural areas were giving birth at the hospital.

⁴¹ France provided a potential model of maternity care and especially of institutional care for infants; Yvonne Knibiehler, Catherine Fouquet, *L'Histoire des mères du Moyen Âge à nos jours*, Paris, 1980; Yvonne Knibiehler, *Histoire des mères et de la maternité en Occident*, Paris, 2003, pp. 86–87.

⁴² Vasile M. Dumitriu, *Avortul și noua legiuire penală română*, Timișoara, 1935, pp. 5–30.

Dimitriu had a genuine sense of realism when he attempted to identify the causes of abortions, mentioning women's financial difficulties and employment in the industry, as well as stigmatization, public shaming and verbal abuse experienced by young unmarried mothers, particularly in rural areas. Moreover, he took into consideration low-paid employment in certain domains, which forced families to limit the number of their children, a factor that was exacerbated by the effects of the financial crisis, as well as by the decline of agriculture and the lower levels of religious observance. This last factor can be correlated with the research conducted in Russia by David L. Ransel, who revealed the fact that women born in rural areas around 1912 had not experienced abortion; due to their religious feeling, they considered this a great sin and therefore they had as many children as they conceived.⁴³ We consider that his observations are relevant for Romanian villages as well. However, we cannot agree with Dimitriu's conclusions for the urban areas, where the precepts of the Church concerning private life did not enjoy such a strict observation.

As the new Penal Code became a legal matter, it caused serious divisions in the public opinion, due to the drafting of provisions concerning abortion. Among those who supported the right to have abortions were sociologists, several physicians, and the members of the "Romanian Society of Eugenics and Heredity,"⁴⁴ while most physicians and the clergy formed the anti-abortion movement. Apparently, the first version of the new Penal Code – including the provisions concerning abortion – was drafted by the Legislative Council, under the influence of those who supported the legalization of abortion. Thus, the Senate had to vote Article 482, which considered abortion legal under the following circumstances: when pregnancy was the result of rape or sexual assault, when it endangered the pregnant woman's life or health, when the pregnant woman was "mad or demented," when pregnancy was the result of deceit or breach of promise of marriage, when it was the result of a sexual intercourse with a warden or clerk who supervised the woman under arrest, or when the woman got pregnant while being sexually exploited in a house of ill repute.

By looking at these situations, we can easily understand why this initial formula was the cause of such virulent opposition. While four of the hypothetical circumstances described above were clearly defined, the other two could be misinterpreted. It was not difficult to imagine that a woman who wished to terminate her pregnancy could have stated that this was the result of a breach of promise of marriage, or that she could win a physician's favour and thus obtain a medical certificate attesting that her life was endangered by the pregnancy.

⁴³ David L. Ransel, *Mame de la sate. Trei generații în schimbare în Rusia și Tartaria*, trans. by Elena Bărbulescu, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, pp. 118–124.

⁴⁴ For a better understanding of the popularity of this society's program, see *Proiectul statutelor societății de ereditate și eugenie. Măsurile propuse*, in "Universul," 52, 14 January 1935, no. 13, p. 13. See also *Crearea unei societăți românești de ereditate și eugenie*, in "Universul," 52, 19 January 1935, no. 18, p. 2 and *Biologia poporului român. Conferința d-lui dr. G. Banu*, in "Universul," 52, 25 January 1935, no. 24, p. 14.

Therefore, the strongest opposition against the new legal cases of abortion came from the Romanian Orthodox Church⁴⁵ and the Romanian Greek Catholic Church, whose hierarchs joined the public debate, supporting the maintenance of the old legislative provisions and the preservation of their Napoleonic inheritance. The discourse held by the Greek Catholic bishop of Lugoj, Alexandru Nicolescu,⁴⁶ during the Senate session on 7 February 1935, entitled *Chestiunea avortului* (*The Abortion Issue*), was a turning point in the evolution of the public debate. In his speech, the hierarch mentioned the new Penal Code and interpreted articles 480, 481, 482 and 483 from a religious point of view, by comparing them with the sixth commandment ("Thou shalt not kill."). The general line of his argument was traditional, following the caesaropapism of Eusebius of Caesarea; the bishop underlined the inability of the state to legalize abortion, since it did God's work through its institutions, and the only authority it had on the life of the citizens was "to fight crime and defend the homeland." From his point of view, the legislators who tried to regulate this matter had exceeded their authority, since this was the exclusive domain of the Church, according to Eastern canon law.

However, his arguments were not only religious; he also quoted the opinion of several physicians who were against abortion and insisted upon the possible complications of this procedure. Certainly, such a conclusion was proportionate, given that the archives of the Ministry of Health kept records of deaths from legal abortions, performed by trained health care professionals; but these were accidents, or rather exceptions.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Prea Sfințitul Episcop D.D. Vartolomeiu al Râmnicului Noului Severin, *Urmările avortului legalizat*, Râmnicu Vâlcea, 1935.

⁴⁶ Alexandru Nicolescu, *Chestiunea avortului. Discurs rostit în ședința Senatului de la 7 februarie 1935*, Bucharest, 1935, pp. 3–19.

⁴⁷ The bishop's discourse was interrupted by the intervention of doctor Lucian Skupiewski, one of the physicians who supported the legalization of abortion; prior to Romania's entry into the First World War, Skupiewski was assistant physician for the mayor of Bucharest and a member of the commission for the reorganization of orphanages – see the notes of doctor V. Drăgoșescu, in *Reorganizarea serviciului asistenței copiilor găsiți, orfani și săraci din București*, Bucharest, 1916, p. 6. Arguing against the bishop's speech, the physician presented the situation of France, where birth rates were also declining, although abortion was illegal and those who distributed contraceptive means were punishable. Meanwhile, the population of the Soviet Union had increased from 120 to 165 million, although abortion had been legalised since 1920. The high fertility rate of the Soviet Union could only be explained by the fact that it was a predominantly rural country, where families traditionally had many children, and the mentality was influenced by the Church. However, when the effects of industrialization and collectivization were felt, things changed dramatically, due to the disappearance of patriarchal values in the family and to the migration of villagers to the cities. For more information concerning the situation of France during the interwar period, see Corina Doboș (coord.), Luciana M. Jinga, Florin Soare, *Politica pronatalistă a regimului Ceaușescu*, vol. I, *O perspectivă comparativă*, Iași, 2010, pp. 173–178. Concerning the situation in Russia, when David L. Ransel interviewed women born between 1914 and 1928, he found out that they, unlike those of previous generations, had had abortions, although these were forbidden in the meantime; forced collectivization had completely changed the conditions for pregnancy and raising children, and therefore women wanted fewer children. David L. Ransel, *op. cit.*, pp. 124–132.

More relevant was the way he referred to women who underwent such procedures, which he bluntly called “pretentious matrons,” obviously targeting those from the upper classes. Such invectives reflected the outright disapproval of physicians and clergymen towards wealthy couples, who were able to sustain large families, but decided to reduce the number of children they were willing to procreate.⁴⁸ They refused to acknowledge the fact that a whole social class was changing its mentality and no longer considered wealth as the sole criteria for expanding their families.

Speaking out about his main concern, the bishop of Lugoj deplored the fact that, in certain parts of the country, mothers were choosing not to have children: “Nowadays many mothers only want to be chirping skylarks, like Nora in Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, who wished to have no part in the tasks and obligations of married life.” He was obviously referring to Banat, where he estimated that 30% of women no longer wanted to have children, and feared that the legalization of abortion, in accordance with the principles of ethics, medicine or eugenics, would only worsen the situation. Looking beyond his subtle manipulation of facts, the bishop’s masterwork was to dramatize a situation which was significantly different from the scenes presented by the Norwegian author. His mention of the play and its main female character had the sole purpose of impressing the senators in the audience, who were undoubtedly moved by such a tragic outcome.

The bishop ended his discourse with several other religious arguments, such as the individual right to life, without discrimination. The speech reflected his patriarchal ideology, and he also stressed the fact that abortion was intolerable even if the woman’s life was promiscuous – a clear reference to prostitutes – because, according to him, it was possible for the infant to become “a genius” or to be “talented.” It is hard to imagine someone being more unrealistic in their reasoning, and this proves that the purpose of his entire argument was not to contribute to a better understanding of a contemporary social phenomenon, but to provoke an emotional outburst and thereby to impose his own vision on the matter. In analysing the possibility for the decriminalization of abortion, he refused to consider factors such as low-paid employment, limited access to antenatal and postnatal care services – due to the poor public healthcare system⁴⁹ –, the lack of state funds for child allowances or child care wage enhancements or the very high infant mortality rate.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ V. Trifu, *Avortul e o crimă monstruoasă*, in “Universul,” 21 September 1933.

⁴⁹ The first volume of the *Enciclopedia României* also listed maternity hospitals and childcare facilities from the great cities, such as Bucharest, Iași, Cernăuți, Chișinău, Oradea, Arad, Timișoara and Sibiu, as well as antenatal care services, but without mentioning their number. These institutions were certainly insufficient for a mostly rural population of 18 million. *Enciclopedia României*, vol. I, *Statul*, ed. by Dimitrie Gusti, Constantin Orghidan, Mircea Vulcănescu, Bucharest, 1938, pp. 527–529.

⁵⁰ The legislative provisions that were in force at the time provided for the granting of allowances to civil servants; *Decret-lege pentru Codul funcționarilor publici “Regele Carol al II-lea”* ratified by the Royal Decree No. 1904/7 June 1940 and published in “Monitorul oficial,” 8 June 1940, no. 131, part I, pp. 10–17. The same provisions can be found in *Codul funcționarilor publici “Regele Mihai I” din iunie 1940, cu rectificările din 15 iunie 1940, 25 iulie 1940 și modificările ulterioare*, 2nd edition, Bucharest, s.a. The wage enhancements of the private sector employees, who worked in industry or commerce, were decided only by their employer; see Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, Bucharest, Fond Uniunea Camerelor de Comerț și Industrie, file no. 35/1919, fols. 13–15, but also the

Unfortunately, the senators who attended the meeting also considered these arguments to be irrelevant and were seduced by the numerous medical observations and literary references used in the bishop's speech, since they rewarded him with "roaring applause" at the end. This reaction indicates a common vision on the social role of women, who were expected to identify primarily as mothers.

ABORTION IN THE UNIFIED PENAL CODE

The debates concerning the provisions on abortion ended only after the Senate amended the proposed law, thus bringing some substantial modifications. The cases exempted from criminal responsibility were reduced to two; abortion was allowed only if the mother's life was in danger (therapeutic abortion) or if the mother or both parents were diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder that could be inherited by the newborn (eugenic criterion). The new Penal Code imposed severe sanctions against clandestine abortion and those who performed this procedure, while an abortion performed without the woman's consent – however unlikely, but nevertheless possible, since it was taken into account – was punishable by correctional penalty ranging from two to five years' imprisonment. If the procedure had an impact on the woman's health or rendered her disabled, the punishment was increased from three to six years; if the woman lost her life, the sentence was between seven and ten years. Also, if the abortion was performed by the pregnant woman herself or with the help of someone else, it was punishable by correctional penalty ranging from three to six months; the punishment was increased from six months to one year in the case of married women. However, the lawmaker was more lenient with single women. The punishments were not limited to pregnant women, but also extended to those who performed abortions; they were sentenced to imprisonment from one to three years if the procedure had an impact on the woman's health or rendered her disabled, or from three to five years if she lost her life. The last article also stipulated that, when the persons performing abortions were physicians, health officers, druggists or midwives, aside from the correctional penalty, they were also forbidden to practise between one and three years; this measure was intended to discourage specialists from performing such procedures, since they risked not only losing their freedom, but also a job demotion.⁵¹

The new Penal Code entered into force on 1 January 1937, in the form established on 17 March 1936, supplemented by the Decree No. 471 and the Law No. 9/18 March 1936. However, aside from the harsher penalties it imposed, a significant provision of the new Penal Code was the removal of abortion trials from the jurisdiction of trial juries and their placement under the authority of criminal courts.

When the new Penal Code was published, the lawmakers had not forbidden the use of contraceptive means, thus leaving the possibility of their promotion open.

provisions on labour agreements, in Ilie Marinescu, *Politica socială interbelică în România. Relațiile dintre muncă și capital*, Bucharest, 1995, pp. 66–75.

⁵¹ *Codul penal*, in "Monitorul oficial," 18 March 1936, no. 65, pp. 2303–2304 (61–62).

Nevertheless, given the fact that most physicians were against this and disapproved of the married couples' desire to limit the number of their children, it was unclear who could educate the population and promote such knowledge. Finally, the matter would be settled by the Decision No. 3983/28 June 1938, by which the Ministry of Health ended any debate on the subject, since it prohibited the commercial distribution of all medications with antifertility properties.⁵² This decision reflects the attitude of the Romanian authorities towards the population's access to contraceptive means, adding that they revoked the wholesale distribution authorization of all medications used to treat reproductive disorders which were already on the market.⁵³

NEW BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF PENAL LAWS CONCERNING ABORTION

Although an evaluation of the impact produced by the new penal law concerning abortion represents a difficult task for both contemporaries and historians, we do believe that this was limited. However, small-scale enquiries conducted by physicians who worked in maternity hospitals show that there were some short-term changes. It is a self-evident fact that the criminalization of women who had abortions at home caused the recipients of these procedures, who suffered injuries or haemorrhages, to avoid medical care for fear of punishment. An article published during 1937 in the "Journal of Legal Medicine"⁵⁴ by two obstetricians presents an abortion statistic between 1936 and 1937. Although this is a small sample data analysis, revealing the situation within a single medical unit, the authors concluded that the number of abortions performed at home had increased by 102% over the previous year; also, they drew attention to the fact that, due to the legislative provisions that were in force, women only sought medical attention when their condition had worsened. Most cases were registered among women aged between 20 and 30 years, followed by those aged between 30 and 40 years. These were the categories of sexually active women, who had reached their peak fertility age, and of women who were married and already had children.

The physicians concluded that the number of abortions had increased after the enactment of the new legislation (100 abortions per 774 hospitalized pregnant women in 1936, compared to 202 abortions per 970 patients in 1937), and the conditions under which these procedures were performed had worsened significantly. Consequently, the two stressed the necessity of founding a well-equipped maternity hospital

⁵² Arhivele Ministerului Sănătății, Bucharest, file no. 765/1938–1941, unnumbered.

⁵³ This was the case of the pharmaceutical preparation Nafisal Ovule, distributed in Romania by Vereinigte Chinin Fabriken Zimmer & Co., Mannheim-Waldhof, presented as an antiseptic for the treatment of vulvovaginitis caused by streptococci and staphylococci (Arhivele Ministerului Sănătății, file no. 758/1939–1942, unnumbered) and of another product of the German pharmaceutical industry, Speton, also used as a vaginal antiseptic (*ibidem*, file no. 765/1939–1941, unnumbered).

⁵⁴ Grigore Lăzărescu, I. Săbăilă, *Considerațiuni asupra avortului sub regimul Codului penal sub regele Carol al II-lea*, Bucharest, 1937, pp. 3–11.

with qualified personnel, as well as “nurseries” in the rural areas and for the children of female workers, and underlined the fact that maternity would be an option for women only if these conditions were to be met.

If we look at their observations, it becomes evident that the two authors understood very well women’s reasons for having abortions, although they belonged to a professional category which traditionally promoted higher birth rates. Without a well-developed public healthcare system and a network of childcare facilities, the condemnation of such acts was unreasonable. Moreover, the increasing number of self-managed abortions revealed the fact that specialists no longer wanted to be involved in such procedures.

It is an indisputable fact that the perception on love and the body underwent significant transformations during the first half of the twentieth century and moral values changed rapidly after the end of the First World War⁵⁵; meanwhile, the parents’ behaviour towards their own children also changed. A survey on abortion conducted in the United Kingdom during 1937 by an interdepartmental committee, at the request of the Ministry of Health and due to pressures exerted by the Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA) concluded that the high number of abortions was not the result of an unorganized or promiscuous lifestyle, but the consequence of a nationwide change of mentality, which led to the appearance of a new type of parents, who decided if they wanted to have children or not. Although the conclusions of this survey – formulated two years later – recommended maintaining the classification of abortion as a crime, they also reflected a more responsible attitude of the adults towards their families and children, who were no longer seen as a future means of support, but as individuals who had to receive a head start in life.⁵⁶ Although no such survey was conducted in Romania, the various statistics and studies concerning the women’s main reasons to have an abortion – especially in urban areas – provide enough information to suggest a change in the same direction.

CONCLUSIONS

In the second half of the 1930s, the debate on the manner in which the termination of pregnancy was legislated, caused by the voting of the unified Penal Code, revealed how interwar society understood and defined the social role of women; although they had no political rights by the end of the war, the nationalist discourse presented them as “bearers of the collective” and expected them to identify primarily as mothers. As demographic considerations became stronger than individual options, illegitimate and legitimate couples had no more means to limit the number

⁵⁵ This phenomenon was noticed by contemporaries, in the press and literature, historians and sociologists. See the work of Georges Vigarello, *Histoire de la beauté. Le corps et l’art d’embellir de la Renaissance à nos jours*, Paris, 2004; Ioana Pârvulescu, *Întoarcere în Bucureștiul interbelic*, Bucharest, 2007, pp. 69–73.

⁵⁶ Stephen Brooke, *op. cit.*, pp. 451–455.

of their children. Obviously, the anti-abortion laws of a quasi-democratic state were unable to completely eradicate a phenomenon which manifested itself in peoples' private lives, and such cases were brought before the courts only when the woman lost her life or was seriously injured. However, we must note that the authorities made efforts to limit the women's right to decide if or when they wanted to have children, although the state was unable to provide the necessary antenatal and postnatal care services. Even though the state was incapable of capitalizing on available human resources, especially in rural areas, the authorities did not hesitate to criminalize all cases of abortion, with two minor exceptions.

“NOWADAYS MANY MOTHERS ONLY WANT TO BE CHIRPING
SKYLARKS, LIKE IBSEN’S NORA.” THE DEBATES CONCERNING
THE LEGALIZATION OF ABORTION IN INTERWAR ROMANIA

Abstract

Throughout the last century, the Romanian abortion law has varied significantly, according to the profile and goals of the ruling political force. Even though in this respect, Nicolae Ceaușescu's regime stands out as one of the most oppressive and intrusive, due to its desire to enhance the national body by incriminating abortion, in fact it was merely another form used by the modern Romanian state to subject and ultimately control its citizens.

During the interwar decades, women who wanted to give birth to fewer children had to resort to abortion, regardless of their social status, as it was the only option available at that time; it was a common procedure that remained undetected, as long as the personnel performing it did not inflict harm to the person undergoing the termination of pregnancy. All that changed during the 1930s, once the Criminal Code draft went into public hearing; one of the most controversial aspects of this fundamental law became the article regarding abortion, as it allowed women under certain circumstances to have the procedure without facing any criminal charges. The way that the new code was written generated a very heated public debate, involving prominent religious leaders, the medical community and legal specialists, but also members of the women's associations seeking political and social emancipation. In the end, as it was the case everywhere else in Europe, abortion remained a crime, and both the women undergoing the termination and the medical personnel performing this type of procedure faced criminal charges. From the authorities' point of view, there was simply too much at stake, both politically and socially, for the abortion topic to be taken lightly, especially after the low natality rate in Banat had been addressed publicly.

Keywords: abortion practices; contraception; child-rearing; parenthood; new Penal Code; interwar Romania

THE ITALIAN WELFARE SYSTEM AND IMMIGRATION: ACCESS TO MEASURES OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

LUCIANA DE PASCALE*

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE INVESTIGATION

The focus of the present paper is centred on the mechanisms of access to measures of social protection by immigrant citizens. The aim of this study is to carry out a critical analysis of the relationship between immigration and the Italian welfare system in the contemporary era, a crucial factor in the process of the immigrants' inclusion. Specifically, the subject of this study consists in the access to three forms of social protection: social security (pension system and disability, old age and unemployment services and benefits); social assistance (support for families and the weakest groups in society); and health protection (services for the prevention and treatment of diseases and for the rehabilitation of disability).

An analysis of the mechanisms governing the access of immigrants to the national welfare state system must take into account different factors and their reciprocal influence. Specifically the investigation is centred on 1) the juridical dimension – migration policies which establish the level of access to social rights of citizenship, and “civic stratification” or “stratification of rights”¹; 2) the policy dimension – crisis of the “Mediterranean or family welfare system”²; 3) the demographic dimension – changes taking place in migration movements, which have raised new questions and placed new demands on both the welfare state and the policies relating to the integration of immigrants. It's intended to discover how and in what terms immigrants access national employment and welfare benefits.

The theoretical analysis will be supported by a statistical framework. The INPS (Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale – Italian National Social Security Institute) data related to the access, both of Italians and immigrants, to social security “safety net,” social assistance and pensions will be analyzed comparatively.

2. THE ACCESS OF IMMIGRANTS TO THE SYSTEM OF SOCIAL PROTECTION: JURIDICAL DIMENSION

An analysis of the mechanisms governing the access of immigrants to the national welfare state system must take into account different factors and their reciprocal

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¹ Lydia Morris, *Le politiche migratorie in Europa: un campo di battaglia per i diritti*, in “La critica sociologica,” 143–144, 2002, pp. 81–87; Elena Spinelli, *Welfare e immigrazione: un rapporto complesso*, in “La Rivista delle Politiche Sociali,” 2015, nos. 2–3, pp. 113–126.

² Maurizio Ferrera, *Le trappole del Welfare*, Bologna, 1998.

influence. Martin Baldwin-Edwards identifies four fundamental mechanisms through which immigrants can be incorporated into a national welfare state system³:

1. that of “privileged foreigners”: citizens who come from countries benefiting from bilateral or multilateral agreements, such as the Schengen, Maastricht and Amsterdam Agreements;
2. that of fundamental human rights recognized to immigrants through the ratification of international conventions by the country of arrival;
3. that of the structural admission into welfare systems ensured by the gradual expansion and consolidation of the social status of European countries during the Fordist period;
4. that of “semi-citizenship” (*denizenship*), in which immigrant workers are guaranteed substantial social rights following a long period of residence, in any case related to their employment status.

According to this perspective, there are two critical points in connection with the relationship between immigration and the welfare state: the legal status of the immigrant and nationality.

Thus, the immigration policies – those aimed at the regulation of migration flows and border controls – and policies relating to immigrants and integration acquire a major importance in the regulation of the integration of immigrant citizens into welfare systems, in that they establish the possibilities and limitations to such access.

The literature on the subject has historically identified, albeit with different shades of opinion, three main models of the social inclusion of immigrant populations: temporary, assimilative and pluralistic or multicultural.⁴ Today, even if the definition of the models is being questioned in the scientific field, considered as “ideal types” with respect to effective policies, this grid continues to have a significant impact in political discussion. Scholarly debate has raised the difficulty of introducing the “Italian case” into one of the major models of immigrant inclusion. In fact, the “Italian model” has been defined as an “implicit model of the inclusion of immigrants,” long ignored by official policies or subject to partial and emergency measures.⁵

In this problematic context, since the 1990s, various immigration laws and measures have been passed that have made the conditions of entry and residence increasingly restrictive. Specifically, the issue of immigration in Italy is governed by the *Testo unico sull’immigrazione (Consolidated Act on Immigration)* no. 286/1998.

³ Martin Baldwin-Edwards, *Immigrants and the Welfare State in Europe*, in *International Migration. Prospect and Policies in a Global Market*, ed. by Douglas S. Massey, J. Edward Taylor, Oxford, 2004, pp. 318–335.

⁴ Stephen Castles, *How Nation-States Respond to Immigration and Ethnic Diversity*, in “New Community,” 21, 1995, no. 3, pp. 293–308; Umberto Melotti, *Migrazioni internazionali e integrazione sociale: il caso italiano e le esperienze europee*, in Istituto Regionale di Ricerca della Lombardia (IRER), *Analisi dei bisogni e offerta di servizi per gli stranieri extracomunitari nell’area milanese*, Milan, 1992, pp. 1–38; Gabriele Pollini, Giuseppe Scidà, *Sociologia delle migrazioni e della società multi-etnica*, Milan, 2002.

⁵ Maurizio Ambrosini, *Sociologia delle migrazioni*, Bologna, 2001.

The text regulates not only policies concerning the entry and residence of foreigners, but also those relating to integration. It considers all immigrants present in Italy who have a residence permit as beneficiaries of social policies. It recognizes that the rights to healthcare and education are fundamental human rights that must be safeguarded regardless of the legal status of the person. Therefore, emergency hospital and outpatient care is also guaranteed to foreigners without a residence permit, and the extension of compulsory education to all foreign minors is provided. In addition, holders of a residence permit are granted a number of rights, ranging from access to public structures to all care and welfare benefits. In the holder of the residence card, therefore, it is possible to identify the legal status of “semi-citizenship,” which is now the most widely used inclusion mechanism in Europe.

In Italy, consequently, the tightening of regulations has been rooted in the so-called “civic stratification” or “stratification of rights,”⁶ which subordinates access to welfare to a complex classification of legal status: legal immigrant with a residence permit, legal immigrant with a residence card, stabilized legal immigrant, asylum seeker, refugee, beneficiary of humanitarian protection, illegal immigrant, and clandestine immigrant. This ranking in respect of the enjoyment of the social rights of citizenship defines the limits within which migrants move in terms of the access to social services.

Accordingly, the tightening of regulations concerning the entry of immigrants, the renewal of the residence permit and the granting of a residence card, introduced by the Bossi-Fini law, no. 189/2002, adversely affects the living conditions of immigrants and the protection of their social rights. In addition, this law introduces the “residence contract,” linking the holding of a residence permit to the obtainment of a contract of employment. A worsening attitude towards foreigners, which has become more acute following the adoption of a series of measures under the so-called “security package” (in 2008), has been inspired by the desire to control immigration, considered as a potential threat to the security of Italian citizens, through the building of the distorted link between immigration and public order.

In this regard, it sanctions the introduction of an offence of illegal residence, an aggravating factor in relation to other offences committed by an illegal resident, and the extension to 18 months of the duration of confinement in temporary resident centres, redefined as Centres of Identification and Expulsion (Centri di identificazione ed espulsione – CIE).

Further and more recent tightening regulations against foreigners occurred following the adoption of the *Safety Decree* (2018), which effectively restricts the possibility of foreigners being welcome in Italy. The first article of the *Safety Decree* contains new provisions regarding the granting of asylum and actually stipulates a drastic reduction in the granting of humanitarian protection.

The following articles provide for the extension of detention in the Centres of Stay for Repatriation (Centri di Permanenza per il Rimpatrio – CPR), from 90 days

⁶ L. Morris, *op. cit.*; E. Spinelli, *op. cit.*

to 180 days; a clear increase in funds for returns and a decrease in funds for the management of immigration; the extension of the list of crimes involving the revocation of refugee status or subsidiary protection; restriction of the System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (Sistema di Protezione per Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati – SPRAR), managed by Italian municipalities, which will no longer be able to welcome asylum seekers but only unaccompanied minors and those who already have international protection; exclusion from the registry of asylum seekers, which no longer requires access to the residence; revocation of citizenship in the event that a person is considered a possible danger to the state.

In 2019 the *Safety Decree bis* was approved, reforming sea rescue and public order, which in fact, in the name of an alleged safety emergency, hinders and criminalizes rescue activities at sea by private ships (NGOs) at a time when European states have significantly withdrawn their support for relief operations in the central Mediterranean. It follows that citizenship, as a factor of progress, equality and inclusion, is being transformed into a privilege of status, a factor of exclusion and discrimination in relation to immigrants. The possibility for states to legislate in this area has, however, in recent years been undergoing certain limitations stemming from both international conventions, which should guarantee to immigrants the protection of fundamental human rights, and from the harmonization of the immigration rules imposed resulting from the construction of a common European space.

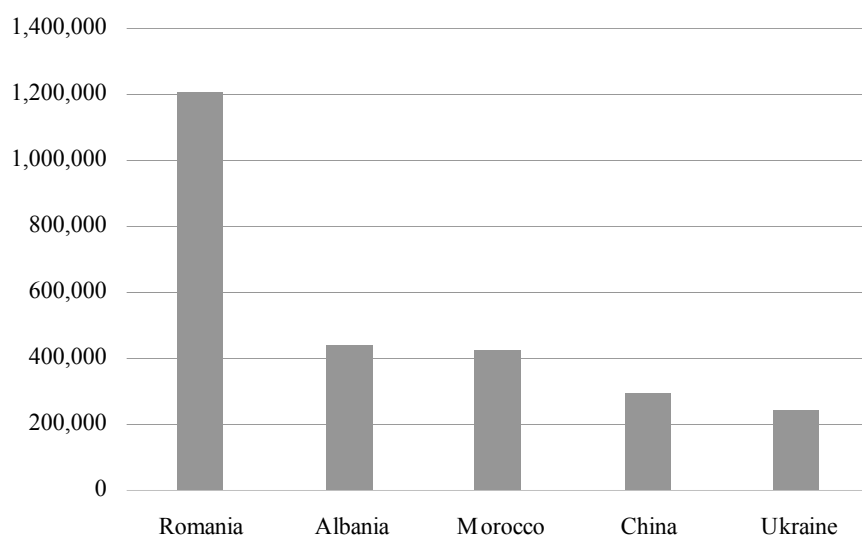
3. THE ACCESS OF IMMIGRANTS TO THE SYSTEM OF SOCIAL PROTECTION: DEMOGRAPHIC AND POLICY DIMENSIONS

Apart from the legal dimension, the process of the inclusion of immigrants in the Italian welfare system has been influenced by the socio-economic and demographic changes that, since the 1970s, have characterized Italy. The access to the welfare state system by immigrants in Italy has assumed a specific weight and a greater political value in accordance with two main factors: the changes taking place in migration movements, and the crisis of the “Mediterranean or family welfare system.”⁷

With reference to the demographic context, the data from ISTAT (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica – Italian National Institute for Statistics) on the resident population show that by 1 January 2020 there were almost 61 million people in Italy, of whom over 5 million are foreign citizens, 8.5% of the total population, an increase in incidence compared to previous years (+1,227.80 compared to 2011). Foreign women accounted for about 52% of this total. On 1 January 2019, 204 nationalities were present in Italy, over 50% (over 2.6 million individuals) of these being citizens of a European country. The largest groups were Romanians (23%), Albanians (8.4%), Moroccans (8%), Chinese (5.7%) and Ukrainian (4.6%) (Graph 1). Overall, these nationalities accounted for 40% of the total number of foreign residents.

⁷ M. Ferrera, *op. cit.*

Graph 1
Top Five Foreign Nationalities, Italy, 2019



Source: ISTAT, Istat.it Stranieri Database, 2019.

Changes in migration flows to European countries, and in particular to Italy, which have a significant impact on the access to and use of state subsidies and services, are represented mainly both by the increasing feminization of migration flows (over the last 20 years there has been an increase in the female component and an increase in the number of women who are first migrants), and a greater differentiation in the types of migration. Such a differentiation implies that, alongside migration for employment, the movements generated by the reunifications of families, by asylum seekers and by illegal immigrants are becoming increasingly significant. This has led, since the mid-1970s, to an increase in the different types of social status of immigrants. Alongside the figure of the young male homeless migrant, there are now a number of different conditions and profiles: young single working women; political asylum seekers; refugees; minors (both accompanied and unaccompanied); and immigrant families.

The increase and the change in migration flows have raised new questions and placed new demands on both the welfare state system and the policies relating to the integration of immigrants. Therefore, in recent years, the nature of the welfare benefits offered to immigrant citizens has undergone two opposing strains.

On the one hand, there has been a drive to extend such provisions to the new social figures of immigrants produced by the changes in the migration previously described. In the opposite direction, however, there has been a demand to reduce welfare provisions for both the immigrant and indigenous population, following the

processes of economic restructuring and the social welfare crisis in European countries, and in particular in Italy.

Consequently, an additional variable to consider in the analysis of access by the immigrant population to the social protection system consists in the characteristics of the Italian welfare system, called “family welfare,” and its shortcomings. From the 1990s, changes at all societal levels have undermined the definition of the “strong family” and the welfare “family model” on which it was based. Thus, there were demographic changes, such as the aging of the population, then socio-economic changes, particularly women’s entry into the labour market. We also have to take into account the gradual rising of the age of the transition into adulthood, into workforce, and marriage, together with the transformations at the core of the family, increasingly characterized by single-parent families, unipersonal, reconstructed, *de facto* couples, and the spread of the economic crisis and job insecurity.

This is the so-called “Southern European” welfare system,⁸ based mainly on transfer payment (far less generous than in other European countries) and on the persistent centrality of families as providers of services to people. This is a welfare regime strongly anchored on the existence of a traditional family in which men take on the role of breadwinner and women take care of the tasks relating to the home-care sphere which is able to offset the lack of public resources. However, it is now an inadequate welfare model, also found in other regions of Europe, which fails to respond to the new social needs and transformations.

This process has triggered, especially in the south of Italy, survival strategies that seek to overcome the welfare gap but which result in a family overload – the so-called “forced” or “coerced familism”⁹ purely female – determined by the need to provide for material survival and to cope with domestic workloads. This form of forced solidarity allows people to survive in difficult contexts, since it fights social isolation, but at the same time reproduces a traditional division of labour in the family and causes the inability of the weaker subjects to face the many social and economic risks.¹⁰

These transformations have therefore undermined the “familist welfare regime” that characterizes Italy, making it inadequate for the new social needs of Italian citizens and, consequently, even more inadequate for meeting the needs of the immigrant population and for protecting their rights.

4. MIGRATION AND WELFARE SYSTEM: ACCESS TO SAFETY NET, PENSION AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Briefly illustrating the socio-demography and political variables that can influence the effective access of migrants to measures of social protection, the aim

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Chiara Saraceno, *Social Assistance Dynamics in Europe: National and Local Poverty Regimes*, Bristol, 2002.

¹⁰ Dora Gambardella, Enrica Morlicchio, *Familismo forzato*, Rome, 2005.

is to identify the position of the migrant population within such provisions. It is, therefore, necessary to discover how and in what terms immigrants access national employment and welfare benefits. To achieve this objective, the INPS data for 2015 have been analyzed. It is important to note that the INPS – as all official national statistics on the access to welfare – identifies as foreigners only non-EU workers and holders of a resident permit. All the others, including Italians, are aggregated into the macro entry for the European Community, data from which they cannot be traced back to the country of citizenship.

Table 1
Access of Immigrants to Measures of Social Protection
(Beneficiaries, 2018), Italy

Types of support	Total	non-EU	women (%)	non-EU (%)	Change 2013/2015 (%)	Main countries of birth
Social safety net						
Agriculture unemployment benefits	544,834	85,835	19.0	15.8	+2.9	India, Morocco, Albania
Unemployment benefits (NASpl + ASpl)	2,658,977	360,020	53.6	14.1	+7.6	Ukraine, Albania, Morocco
Ordinary income support	399,067	47,593	4.0	11.9	+17.2	Albania, Morocco, Macedonia
Mobility allowances	58,040	1,696	15.2	2.9	-72.0	Morocco, Albania, Senegal
Extraordinary wage subsidies	203,678	4,096	22.0	2.0	-57.0	Morocco, Albania, Senegal
Social assistance						
Family allowances (employed)	2,836,868	352,590	18.5	12.4	+3.7	Albania, Morocco, India
Compulsory maternity allowance	321,157	28,414	100.0	8.8	-7.6	Albania, Morocco, Moldavia

Parental leave	344,529	23,445	62.7	6.8	+12.7	Morocco, Albania, Peru
Welfare pensions	3,959,858	93,397	52.3	2.4	+8.4	Albania, Morocco, Ukraine
Family allowances (retired)	1,023,524	6,596	35.7	0.6	+6.2	Morocco, Albania, Tunisia
Pensions						
Contributory pensions (invalidity, old age and survivors)	13,867,818	56,071	64.1	0.4	+13.1	Ukraine, Morocco, Albania

Source: IDOS Survey and Research Centre, 2019 (elaborated on INPS data).

As can be seen from Table 1, three areas of protection are analyzed: the social security “safety net” (unemployment wage subsidies or income supplements, mobility allowances and unemployment benefits); pensions (invalidity, old age and survivors’ pensions); and social assistance (welfare pensions and benefits for families such as compulsory maternity allowance, parental leave and family allowances). In the table, the types of support have been placed in descending order with respect to the incidence of the access of the foreign population compared to the total number of beneficiaries. In 2018, the highest incidence of immigrants, albeit small, is found in relation to the social security “safety net” (in particular agricultural and non unemployment benefits) and some forms of social assistance, however, this is no higher than 15% of the total number of recipients.

In relation to the social security “safety net” there were 360,000 foreign beneficiaries of non-agricultural unemployment (Nuova Assicurazione Sociale per l’Impiego – NASpl and Assicurazione Sociale per l’Impiego – ASpl), 14% of the total number of beneficiaries, a small increase from 2017 (+8%). About half of the foreign beneficiaries are women, the main countries of origin being Eastern European countries, Ukraine, Albania, followed by Morocco (Table 1).

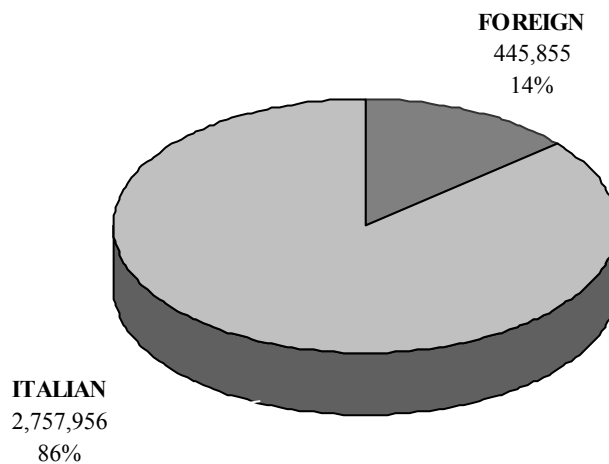
Additionally, the foreign beneficiaries of agricultural unemployment account for about 13% of the total number of beneficiaries, a small increase from 2017 (+3%). The incidence of women is lower (around 20%); the first country of origin is India, followed by Albania and Morocco. Therefore, as can be seen from Graph 2, the foreign beneficiaries of the total unemployment benefits (agricultural and non-agricultural) do not exceed 14% of the total users.

With regard to ordinary income support (which intervenes if the interruption or reduction of work is due to temporary events), immigrant beneficiaries accounted for 12% of the total, with a clear prevalence of males (96%), up from 2017 (+17%)

(Table 1, Graph 3). This incidence can be mainly explained in terms of the strong presence of immigrants in industry, one of the sectors that has been most seriously affected by the crises and therefore that has more significantly benefited from the employment subsidy fund. The largest number of foreign beneficiaries are Albanians (37%), followed by Moroccans and Macedonians, who in total represent almost 60% of the non-EU beneficiaries.

Graph 2

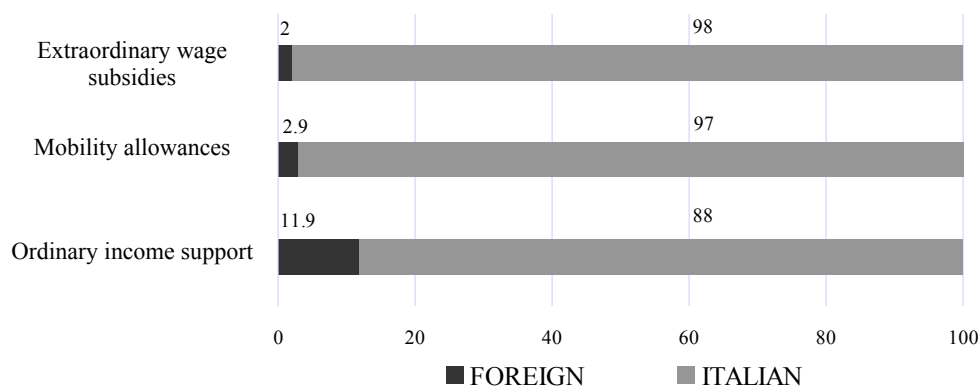
Total Unemployment Benefits, Beneficiaries, Italy, 2018



Source: elaborated on INPS data, 2019.

Graph 3

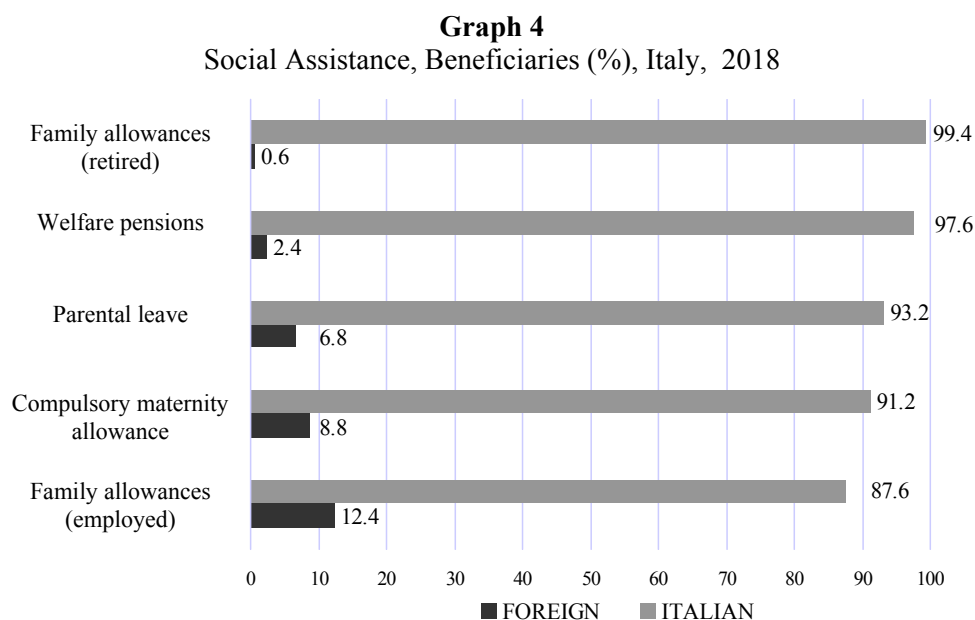
Social Safety Net, Beneficiaries (%), Italy, 2018



Source: elaborated on INPS data, 2019.

On the other hand, the beneficiaries of extraordinary wage subsidies (granted in the event of a sectoral economic crisis, restructuring, reorganization or business conversion) and mobility allowances have decreased compared to previous years, respectively -57% and -72%. The non-EU beneficiaries represent only 2% of the total beneficiaries; the main countries of origin are Morocco, Albania and Senegal (Table 1, Graph 3).

With reference to social assistance (Graph 4), we find the highest incidence of foreign beneficiaries with regard to family allowances (private sector employees), accounting for about 12% of the total number of beneficiaries. Foreign beneficiaries of family allowances account for only 0.6% of the total number of beneficiaries. The years of crisis have indeed aggravated the working and economic conditions of immigrant households, in many cases widening still further the gap between their income and social conditions and those of Italian families.



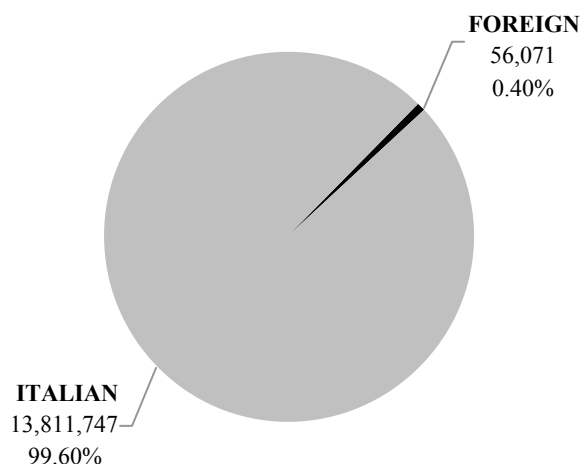
Source: elaborated on INPS data, 2019.

We find the most interesting data regarding pension benefits, both in terms of contributory and welfare pensions (Graphs 4 and 5). Foreign beneficiaries of contributory pensions account for only 0.4% of the total number of beneficiaries, most of them being women (about 65%). A higher incidence of women is also reported in relation to welfare pensions. The main countries of origin are Ukraine, Morocco and Albania.

The number of foreigners who receive a retirement pension in Italy is therefore derisory with respect to the contributions that they have already made for many years

to the national funds. The lower access to pension benefits is linked to the age factor, given that this is a predominantly young population. Immigrants constitute for Italians a demographic benefit, which also has repercussions on pension levels. Their average age is 30 years compared with the 45 years of the resident population (ISTAT Census 2011). Among non-EU immigrants, those over 65 years old account for just 3%, a figure six times lower than the corresponding figure for Italians. The immigrants who come to Italy for family reunifications or for employment are also young, while births from parents who are both foreign (about 100,000 per year) are, in proportion, much more numerous than births from Italian parents.

Graph 5
Contributory Pensions (Invalidity, Old Age and Survivors),
Beneficiaries, Italy, 2018



Source: elaborated on INPS data, 2019.

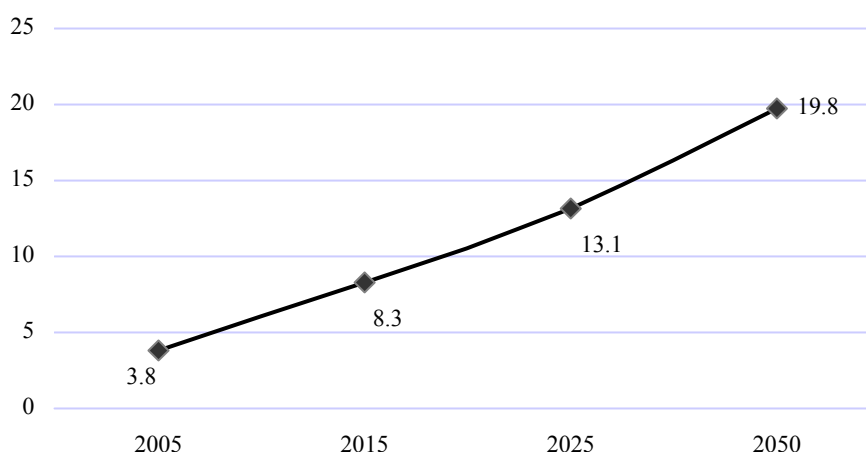
However, it should be highlighted that in recent years there has been an increase in the access of foreigners to pension and welfare care, especially when compared to the national average. The number of non-EU foreign nationals benefiting from contributory pensions rose by 13% compared to 2017, in contrast with a decrease in the total number of beneficiaries over the same three-year period (-1.2%).

Additionally, the total number of non-EU citizens who received assistance benefits in 2018 was very low (2% of the total) (Graph 4), but also in this case there was a small increase compared to 2017 (+8%), due to their incomes being lower than the national average.

The annual flows of retirement among immigrants will continue to be low for a considerable number of years, but it is evident from predictive surveys promoted by

national research institutes (IDOS 2019¹¹, ISTAT 2019, and the Ermanno Gorrieri Foundation 2013¹²) that there will be a significant increase in the foreign population, which is believed to reach almost 20% of the total resident population in 2050 (Graph 6) and that the demographic structure of the population will change significantly.

Graph 6
Growth of the Foreign Population *, Italy



* in % of the total population.

Source: IDOS Survey and Research Centre, 2019.

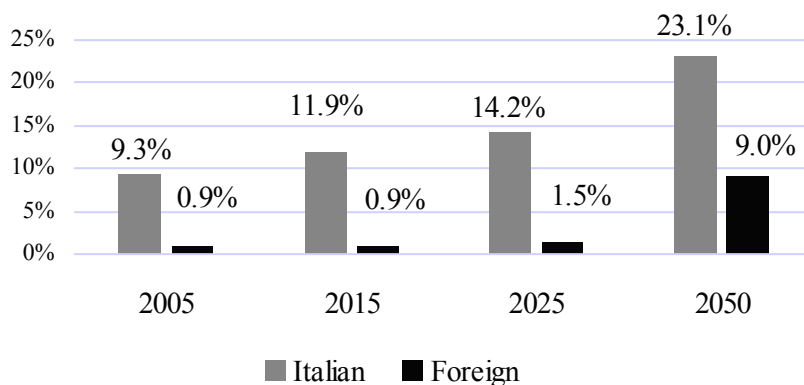
In particular, from the IDOS Survey and Research Centre (Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS) forecasts (2019), summarized in Graph 7, it seems that, taking into account the legislation that has raised the retirement age and the contribution requirement, the incidence of the foreign population among beneficiaries will rise from 1% to 9% by 2025, and that the number of immigrant pensioners will increase from 1 every 46 to 1 every 19. It is therefore evident that the pension differential between Italians and foreigners will decrease. But the average annual amount paid to non-EU pensioners to date is € 7,044, almost half of that received by all beneficiaries (€ 13,058), since the contributions paid by immigrants are calculated on an average wage of 25% lower than the national average. This figure obviously disregards earnings from the informal or illegal labour market (EMN 2018¹³). It follows that retired immigrants are thus destined to increase the ranks of the poor and this will constitute a very serious problem that the Italian state will have to face in time.

¹¹ Centro Studi e Ricerche IDOS, *Dossier statistico immigrazione 2019*, Rome, 2019.

¹² Fondazione Ermanno Gorrieri, *Stranieri e disuguali. Le disuguaglianze nei diritti e nelle condizioni di vita degli immigrati*, ed. by C. Saraceno, N. Sartor, G. Sciortino, Bologna, 2013.

¹³ European Migration Network (EMN), *Annual Report on Migration and Asylum 2017*, 2018.

Graph 7
Growth of the Elderly Foreign Population*, Italy



* % of the population aged 75 or over.
Source: IDOS Survey and Research Centre, 2019.

5. SOCIAL PROTECTION EXPENDITURE: ITALY AND EUROPE

These assertions are rendered even more evident if we look at data on per capita expenditure for social protection in Italy. Table 2 shows the data from the ESSPROS (European System of Integrated Statistics on Social Security) database of Eurostat (2017). ESSPROS is a statistical data collection tool that makes it possible to compare national data on social protection, in terms of the same purchasing power, for the individual member states of the EU. Eurostat does not disaggregate the data by type of inhabitant (Italian and foreign), the data presented reflecting the overall social protection expenditure for all inhabitants present in the Italian state.

The expenditure is disaggregated for the following sectors of social protection: 1) family/young children; 2) unemployment; 3) social exclusion; 4) illness/health and disability; 5) the elderly and survivors. From Table 2 we can observe that in Italy expenditure for social protection (in line with the European average figure) represents almost 30% of GDP. The largest expenditure items for social security per inhabitant are retirement and survivor pensions (about 60%) and illness and health (about 30%). These two sectors alone account for more than 90% of the entire Italian budget devoted to social protection.

This evidence clearly reflects the ageing of the Italian population, a phenomenon widely acknowledged by demographic experts. As previously mentioned, only 3% of the immigrant population falls within the age group of over 65 years (ISTAT 2018). It is therefore reasonable to deduce that, despite their contribution to the social security system, the immigrant population, being young, benefits to a lesser extent from retirement and health-related welfare provisions.

Table 2
Italy/EU 28. Social Protection Expenditure (2017)

Social protection sector	Expenditure per capita (at purchasing power parity)			
	Italy		EU 28	
	% of GDP: 29.1		% of GDP: 27.9	
	<i>v.a. in euros</i>	<i>in % of total social benefits</i>	<i>v.a. in euros</i>	<i>in % of total social benefits</i>
Family/minor children	328	6.3	552	8.7
Unemployment	212	5.8	411	4.4
Social exclusion	18	1.2	105	4.0
Illness/health and disability	2,259	28.8	2,546	37.1
Old-age and survivors	4,365	57.8	3,109	45.8
Total	7,182	100	6,723	100

Source: Eurostat NewsRelease, *Social Protection in 2017*.

Compared to the European average and in terms of the same purchasing power, Italy spends significantly more on old age and survivors' pensions (60% in Italy versus 45% in the EU 28). Spending on unemployment benefits is rather similar, 5.8% of total expenditure against 4.4% spent on average in Europe. In all other social security sectors taken into account by ESSPROS, Italy spends less than the EU average.

The scarcity of resources is particularly pronounced in the areas of social exclusion (equal to 1% of total per capita spending in Italy, compared with the EU 28 average of 4%). In terms of the total amount of welfare provision, immigrants are therefore affected by the fact that, compared to other member states, they have a lower financial support because pension expenditure is the only item for which Italy is placed at the EU top in terms of significant spending.

In line with these results, the ISTAT census survey (2015) shows a sharp drop in per capita spending for immigrants with respect to the increase in the immigrant population.

6. CONCLUSIONS

It is true, on the one hand, that the Italian social security legislation is universal and includes foreign workers on an equal basis. However, when we pass from social security provision to welfare benefits, or anyway benefits of a non-contributory character, we find a trend in Italy that has often led the national legislators and local administrators to deny such provisions.

If, as it is often stated, equal opportunities constitute the basis for policies of integration, there is still considerable uncertainty in Italy in the case of real applications

arising from access to welfare in a member state, like Italy, by now characterized by a large number of immigrants.

The state of affairs revealed in the present analysis is therefore very different from the perception that the public opinion has of the migratory phenomenon. Taking only into consideration the impact of immigration on public expenditure, we can say that the costs of services aimed at immigrant users (health, pensions, school, justice, etc.) are largely covered by taxes and social security contributions paid by foreign taxpayers.

As noted, immigrants in Italy are mainly of working age (the average age is 33.6 years for immigrants, against 45.4 for Italians, ISTAT 2019), with a low impact on the main expenditure items of the Italian budget, health and pensions.

In particular, in the “pay-as-you-go” pension system, in which current pensions are paid by contributions for the same period, there is an imbalance concerning the benefits: immigrant workers pay almost 12 billion in contributions, while the outputs for pensions and social assistance slightly exceed 3 billion (Leone Moressa Foundation Report 2018¹⁴).

In conclusion, the assessment of the process of the integration of immigrants into the welfare system must begin, on the one hand, with the identification of the actual possibilities offered by the welfare services – in the Italian case we refer to a welfare regime in crisis – and, on the other, with the limitations imposed by migration policies on the access to and usability of these services by the immigrant population.

THE ITALIAN WELFARE SYSTEM AND IMMIGRATION: ACCESS TO MEASURES OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

Abstract

The focus of the present paper is centred on the mechanisms of access to measures of social protection by immigrant citizens. Specifically, the subject of study consists in the access to three forms of social protection: social security (pension system and disability, old age and unemployment services and benefits); social assistance (support for families and the weakest groups in society); and health protection (services for the prevention and treatment of diseases and for the rehabilitation of disability).

An investigation into the mechanisms governing the access of immigrants to the national welfare state system must take into account different factors and their reciprocal influence. Specifically the analysis is centred on the juridical dimension – migration policies and “civic stratification” or “stratification of rights”; the policy dimension – crisis of the “Mediterranean or family welfare system”; the demographic dimension – changes taking place in migration movements.

¹⁴ Fondazione Leone Moressa, *Rapporto annuale sull'economia dell'immigrazione*, Bologna, 2018.

The theoretical analysis is supported by a statistical framework. The author analyzes comparatively the INPS data related to the access, both of Italians and immigrants, to the social security “safety net,” social assistance and pensions.

Keywords: immigration; welfare system; social protection; inclusion; Italy

NOTE ȘI RECENZII

* *Dragă domnule și prietene. Scrisori către Arsène Henry, ministru al Franței la București (1897–1904), de la Sabina Cantacuzino, Clara Haskil, Maria Pillat, Anna Kretzulescu-Lahovary, Maria Cantacuzino și Olga Cantacuzino-Miclescu, ed. și trad. FLORIN ȚURCANU, Humanitas, București, 2018, 207 p.*

Legăturile dintre spațiul francez și spațiul românesc nu s-au bucurat până în prezent de o evaluare sintetică și critică, absolut necesară pentru a depăși limita consacrată încă din 1898 de către Pompiliu Eliade într-o celebră teză de doctorat¹, în care autorul definea influența totală a primului asupra celui de al doilea. Această limită a făcut școală, una care părea a renaște postmodern după 1990.

Într-o oarecare măsură, această evoluție post-decembristă este logică, cel puțin din două puncte de vedere. Pe de o parte, societatea românească, în căutare de repere după deschiderea provocată de Revoluție, își redescoperea trăsăturile francofile și simpatia pentru o Franță care și-a deschis cu entuziasm porțile către tinerii plecați la studii cu mult doritele burse. Pe de alta, lipsa unor surse primare, publicate în ediții critice, lăsa loc unor discursuri entuziaste în absența unor nuanțe inspiratoare de prudență.

Treptat, sursele au început a fi publicate. Mai întâi, documentele diplomatice franceze, apoi o literatură memorialistică vie și astăzi prin puterea ei de evocare.

În fond, care a fost dimensiunea atașamentului societății românești față de cultura franceză?

Volumul de corespondență publicat de Florin Țurcanu ne oferă un răspuns care merită cercetat cu atenție în paginile ediției critice despre care discutăm. Îngrijitorul lucrării de care ne ocupăm aici, istoric și profesor la Facultatea de Științe Politice a Universității din București, este bine cunoscut mai ales datorită strălucitei biografii pe care i-a dedicat-o lui Mircea Eliade² și care, în Franța cel puțin, din păcate nu și în România, a declanșat o veritabilă dezbatere.

Arsène Henry, ministrul plenipotențiar al Franței la București între 1897 și 1904, a urmat o carieră tipică evoluției sociale de după prăbușirea celui de al Doilea Imperiu și apariția celei de a Treia Republici. Funcționar superior în administrația noului regim republican, viitorul diplomat provenea dintr-o familie a burgheziei mijlocii, care a beneficiat de noile condiții create de un stat care dorea să deplaseze centrul de greutate al deciziei publice din sfera controlată până atunci de aristocrație către grupul burgheziei, care a știut să utilizeze în propriul interes situația.

Spre deosebire, de exemplu, de România, unde lumea diplomatică era în continuare controlată de vechile familii aristocratice, în Franța de după 1870 au pătruns masiv în structurile Ministerului Afacerilor Externe oameni noi, promovați de regim din rândul funcționarilor superiori care își dovediseră fidelitatea. Era și cazul lui Arsène Henry, care debuta în noua sa carieră la București, în ultimii ani ai secolului al XIX-lea.

Proaspătul diplomat găsea la gurile Dunării, pe de o parte, un stat stabil și funcțional din punct de vedere al sistemului instituțional garantat de Constituția de la 1866 și de

¹ Pompiliu Eliade, *De l'influence française sur l'esprit public en Roumanie*, Paris, 1898.

² Florin Țurcanu, *Mircea Eliade. Le prisonnier de l'histoire*, Paris, 2003; ediția în limba română: *Mircea Eliade. Prizonierul istoriei*, București, 2005.

rigurozitatea adesea rigidă a suveranului, regele Carol I. Pe de altă parte, el pătrundea într-o societate structurată pe o puternică cezură între o elită educată în spirit occidental, racordată vizibil la un model cultural de tip modern, și o masă țărănească trăitoare într-o lume rurală aflată la periferia operei de modernizare. Mandatul său oficial s-a încheiat înaintea producerii a două momente care au scos la lumină toată această discrepantă, Expoziția jubiliară din 1906 de la București și răscoala țărănească din 1907.

Chiar dacă nu a fost martorul acestor două evenimente majore, el a cunoscut îndeaproape societatea românească, mai ales în dimensiunea ei urbană, de cultură și civilitate occidentală.

Prezența sa era cultivată și privită cu simpatie, sentiment reciproc, mai ales de către familiile francofile ale protipendadei. Desele întâlniri, indiferent de spațiul care le găzduia, provocau nu doar momente de amicală comuniune, ci și împărtășirea afinității față de valori politice și ideologice. Anna Kretzulescu-Lahovary, de altfel una dintre corespondentele care se regăsesc în acest volum, ne spune la un moment dat în amintirile sale: „Arsène Henry, ministrul Franței, mi-a oferit brațul la momentul cotilionului și ne-am așezat împreună pe canapeaua din micul salon roz aflat la intrarea sălii de bal (balul de Anul Nou organizat la palatul regal de la București, n.n.). Stăteam chiar în fața marelui portret al regelui, pictat în picioare. Am avut o conversație agreabilă, în vreme ce dansatorii se mișcau în jur. Mi-a vorbit interesant despre ceea ce el numește influența germană în România, în care eu nu cred”³, iar conversația a continuat pe această temă.

Correspondența publicată acum, alcătuită din 62 de epistole, care acoperă intervalul 1902–1930, reprezintă doar o parte a celei păstrate în fondul Arsène Henry conservat la Arhivele Naționale ale Franței.

Scrisorile sunt demne de atenție din mai multe perspective. Ele ne oferă o cantitate de informație indispensabilă înțelegerii acelor epoci.

De multe ori, indiferent de semnatar sau mai bine spus semnatară, deoarece toți corespondenții incluși sunt de genul feminin, universul vieții cotidiene este reconstruit prin detaliile referitoare la preferințele artistice, vestimentare sau culinare, prin amănuntele biografice din jurul momentelor fericire sau al tragediilor familiale, prin informații legate de alianțe matrimoniale, unele nu doar totalmente românești.

Lumea vieții politice – nici nu se putea altfel – este bine reprezentată, iar corespondența editată aici poate fi considerată un veritabil buletin de știri, diferit de cel oficial, dar poate mai relevant prin nuanțele care transpar la tot pasul.

Nu toate scrisorile sunt la fel de consistente, uneori există chiar diferențe notabile între ele, dar credem că cele mai puțin bogate în informații sunt la fel de importante pentru că ele demonstrează dorința de a menține vie o legătură periclitată de obstacolul distanței. Acești oameni doreau în continuare să comunice, să se afle alături, să împărtășească stări sufletești, să discute unii cu alții pentru că francezul și doamnele românce se regăseau în mod natural în aceeași lume, fără bariere.

De asemenea, tonul folosit de unii și alții este la fel de relevant precum conținutul propriu-zis. Retorica ne vorbește la rândul ei și, ceea ce poate fi periculos pentru un istoric, ne farmecă. „Dragă prietene” este cea mai des utilizată formulă de adresare, iar când situația cerea respectarea statutului de ministru la București, tonul oficial era atenuat de mai calda formulă „Dragă domnule ministru”.

³ Anna Kretzulescu-Lahovary, *Nebiruita flacăra a vieții. Amintiri 1867–1952*, ed. și trad. Alina Pavelescu, București, 2018, p. 191.

O alegere strict personală așază pe primul loc al vizibilității epistolare grupajul dedicat scrisului Sabinei Cantacuzino, fiica cea mai mare a omului politic liberal Ion C. Brătianu, căsătorită cu medicul Constantin Cantacuzino. Cea care și-ar fi dorit să lase „fusul și acul” și să se apuce de politică⁴ îi trimitea prietenului francez scrisori din care reiese simțul critic asupra realităților politice ale epocii și o judecată realistă asupra unor personalități pe care le cunoscuse în trecut, cum ar fi portretul făcut lui Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter, diplomat german, omologul lui Arsène Henry la București: „figura reiese (dintr-o lucrare publicată la Berlin, n.n.) așa cum l-am cunoscut: vulgar, grosolan, inteligent și puțin scrupulos, plănuiind deja în rapoartele sale oficiale angajamente care nu vor fi respectate” (p. 123).

Sabinei Cantacuzino i se alătură în volum Anna Kretzulescu-Lahovary, și ea o personalitate feminină de excepție a societății românești, Clara Haskil, Maria Pillat, soră mai mică a Sabinei, Olga Cantacuzino-Miclescu și Maria Cantacuzino.

Sursele documentare sunt însoțite de un studiu introductiv marcat de acribie, de o notă asupra ediției și de un aparat critic necesar pentru a pune în context scrisorile. Lectura lor ne ajută să înțelegem mai bine o lume scoasă și prin aceasta din uitare.

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ZOLTÁN PÉTER BAGI, *Stories of the Long Turkish War*, GlobeEdit, Beau Bassin, 2018, 152 p.

„Războiul cel Lung” sau „Războiul de 15 ani”, desfășurat în perioada 1591–1606, reprezintă un conflict militar de importanță majoră pentru istoria modernă timpurie a Europei Centrale și de Sud-Est. Este un război care a cuprins și spațiul românesc, constituind contextul unor evenimente și evoluții de o semnificație fundamentală pentru istoria românilor. Lucrarea lui Zoltán Péter Bagi are însă în vedere câteva aspecte particulare, care țin de istoria militară a epocii moderne timpurii și se limitează, din punct de vedere al spațiului, la frontiera turco-habsburgică din Ungaria.

Stories of the Long Turkish War se numără printre puținele monografii dedicate acestui război în istoriografia maghiară mai recentă. Scopul declarat al cărții este de a crește interesul publicului străin pentru acest subiect.

În ultimele două decenii, autorul a întreprins cercetări temeinice, în special în arhivele vieneze, în încercarea de a reconstitui aspecte mai puțin cunoscute ale conflictului turco-habsburgic de la sfârșitul secolului al XVI-lea și începutul secolului al XVII-lea.

Dacă desfășurarea evenimentelor (bătăliile, asediile și campaniile militare) este destul de bine cunoscută, mecanismele sociale, economice și instituționale care stau în spatele acestora au rămas încă prea puțin cercetate. În acest sens, cartea lui Zoltán Péter Bagi aduce câteva contribuții semnificative.

Primul capitol are în vedere organizarea armatelor creștine care au participat la acest conflict, mai exact a regimentelor de cavalerie și infanterie recrutate din teritoriile Casei de Habsburg. Analiza autorului se concentrează asupra unor documente oficiale (*Bestallungsbriefe*),

⁴ Din corespondența familiei Ion C. Brătianu 1890–1891, vol. IV, 1888–1889, f.l., 1935, p. 98.

emise de Consiliul Aulic de Război (*Hofkriegsrat*), care ilustrează mecanismele de recrutare a mercenarilor din armatele habsburgice. Aceste contracte militare pun în lumină alcătuirea complexă a corpului de ofițeri, precum și prezența unui personal auxiliar divers (notar, judecător, medic, translator, temnicer, capelan, toboșar etc.), care încerca să acopere toate necesitățile unui regiment aflat în campanie. Un aspect interesant adus în discuție de autor îl reprezintă regulamentele militare interne (*Artikelbrief*), al căror scop era impunerea unui standard de disciplină în rândul soldaților. În finalul capitolului, autorul remarcă un efort de omogenizare a organizării militare, care este mai evident în cazul regimentelor de infanterie (germane, valone și franceze), în timp ce unitățile de cavalerie păstrează un caracter distinct, în funcție de origine, dar și de tipul de armament utilizat.

Subcapitolul dedicat carierei lui Adolf von Schwarzenberg se constituie ca un studiu de caz care exemplifică întregul proces de organizare a unui regiment, de la obținerea unui contract de recrutare până la mobilizarea propriu-zisă a soldaților și deplasarea lor spre teatrul de război la Esztergom. Sunt evidențiate dificultățile acestui proces, timpul îndelungat de mobilizare, jafurile comise de soldați, dar și plata întârziată a soldelor, care contribuia la excesele ostașilor aflați în campanie.

Autoritățile habsburgice erau conștiente de întreaga pleiadă de probleme cauzate de soldați și au încercat să ia măsuri pentru a diminua impactul negativ al prezenței lor asupra societății și a activităților economice. Aceste măsuri nu au fost implementate într-un mod foarte eficient, însă s-au făcut eforturi pentru a îmbunătăți situația combatanților, inclusiv prin organizarea unor spitale de campanie, precum cel proiectat de Pedro de Illanes.

Cel de-al doilea capitol se concentrează asupra diverselor aspecte din viața cotidiană a soldaților. Dificultățile vieții de zi cu zi, soldele și alte compensații destinate soldaților, dezertările, precum și alte forme de insubordonare reprezintă principalele subiecte abordate în această parte a cărții. O observație interesantă a autorului are în vedere calitatea soldaților creștini care au luptat la frontiera turco-habsburgică. Sursele analizate indică faptul că armatele trimise de Consiliul de Război pe teatrul de război din Ungaria aveau o compoziție mixtă, atât tineri recruți care proveneau din grupuri sociale marginale, cât și soldați cu experiență (desemnați adesea ca *Doppelsöldner*), care participaseră la mai multe campanii militare în diverse părți ale Europei.

Prezența femeilor în armatele epocii moderne timpurii constituie un subiect prea puțin abordat în istoriografia referitoare la spațiul central și sud-est european. Și în această privință, autorul cărții discutate aici aduce câteva contribuții importante. Colectând date referitoare la acest subiect din documente oficiale, dar și din surse narative, Zoltán Bagi reușește să deschidă o nouă direcție de cercetare, care poate contribui la o mai bună înțelegere a relațiilor de gen în epoca modernă timpurie. Armatele acestei perioade sunt, de asemenea, văzute dintr-o nouă perspectivă, dominată de un raport numeric de egalitate între combatanți și non-combanți.

Desfășurarea Războiului de 15 Ani a fost puternic influențată de schimbările climatice specifice așa-numitei „mici epoci glaciare”. Pornind de la această premisă, autorul evidențiază importanța factorului climatic în planificarea, precum și în succesul acțiunilor militare.

Ultimele subcapitole abordează problema daunelor materiale produse de soldații imperiali în teritoriile aflate sub controlul Casei de Habsburg. Este un aspect interesant, care întregeste imaginea costurilor materiale implicate de războaiele epocii moderne timpurii.

Cartea lui Zoltán Bagi aduce câteva contribuții foarte importante atât la istoria Ungariei și a teritoriilor învecinate, cât și la istoria militară a epocii moderne timpurii. Accesibilă unui public foarte larg, această lucrare pune în discuție noi argumente și dovezi utile în dezbateră generată de evoluția organizării militare în epoca modernă timpurie. Utilizarea unui mare număr de surse inedite (în special documente oficiale din arhivele vieneze) adaugă la valoarea acestei cărți, care ne ajută să înțelegem mai bine realitățile militare și sociale ale Europei în secolele XVI–XVII.

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STEFANO BOTTONI, *Stalin's Legacy in Romania. The Hungarian Autonomous Region, 1952–1960*, Lexington Books, Lanham, Boulder, New York, London, 2018, 398 p.

Cercetătorii din România și, în general, publicul autohton îl cunosc pe istoricul italian Stefano Bottoni mai ales prin intermediul volumului *Transilvania roșie. Comunismul românesc și problema națională, 1944–1965*, apărut și în română în 2010, lucrare lansată și dezbătută inclusiv la Institutul de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului și Memoria Exilului Românesc. Cartea a avut din păcate o circulație restrânsă, dar numele lui Stefano Bottoni s-a impus, mai ales în mediile specialiștilor, care au avut ocazia de a-l întâlni la diverse manifestări academice din țară și străinătate. Stefano Bottoni – care posedă din 2005 un doctorat în istorie la Universitatea din Bologna – a militat împreună cu alți istorici străini, în solidar cu cercetătorii români, pentru deschiderea și declasificarea documentelor și fondurilor esențiale ale comunismului românesc păstrate la Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, dar nu numai. În anul 2006 a fost expert al Comisiei Prezidențiale pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România într-o echipă coordonată de politologul român de origine maghiară Levente Salat. Acest subgrup – care i-a cuprins și pe alți istorici româno-maghiari (Zoltán Csaba Novák, Zoltán Mihály Nagy, Ágoston Olti ș.a.) – a redactat capitolul dedicat minorității maghiare din România, parte a *Raportului final* al Comisiei Tismăneanu. Stefano Bottoni a lucrat ca cercetător principal la Centrul de Cercetare în Științe Umaniste al Academiei Ungare de Științe din Budapesta.

Trebuie spus că, începând din anul 2006, în contextul unei adevărate revoluții arhivistice prin care a trecut România, Stefano Bottoni a continuat studierea atentă a documentației istorice privind istoria recentă a Transilvaniei, concentrându-se îndeosebi asupra problematicei Regiunii Autonome Maghiare, parte integrantă a chestiunii naționale în România postbelică. Este important ca istoricii să studieze și să valorifice cât mai multe documente de arhivă, dar este esențial să știe cum să le folosească și să le interpreteze fără derive partizane. Iar Stefano Bottoni a reușit să evite în multe situații naționalismul istoriografic atât de caracteristic până nu demult celor două istoriografii (română și maghiară) preocupate de trecutul recent al Transilvaniei și în particular al fostei Regiuni Autonome Maghiare (RAM). Din această muncă a sa desfășurată în ultimul deceniu a rezultat o scriere istorică

echilibrată, o monografie a unei importante regiuni a României, locuită de maghiari/secui, o lucrare care ar merita tradusă și în română.

Crearea Regiunii Autonome Maghiare nu a fost o idee asumată de la început de către comuniștii de la București. Dacă în 1952 – în contextul reorganizării teritoriale din Republica Populară Română – I.V. Stalin nu ar fi „sugerat” liderilor comuniști români înființarea acestei unități administrative, RAM nu ar fi existat, iar demonstrația din carte este foarte convingătoare (cap. 2 – *Stalin's Gift: The Creation of the Hungarian Autonomous Region*, p. 51–94). Inițial, lucrarea ar fi trebuit să conțină în titlu referirea la un experiment de *seră* al „ecosistemului stalinist” (aluzie la RAM), însă editorul de la Lexington Books a fost de părere că titlul ar putea deruta cititorul, fiind vorba în fond despre o carte de istorie, nu de biologie. Totuși, în volum, Stefano Bottoni a păstrat acest concept de *seră* stalinistă (cap. 4 – *The Stalinist Greenhouse. Everyday Life in a "Little Hungary" / Sera stalinistă. Viața cotidiană într-o „Mică Ungarie”* – p. 143–214). Primele capitole din lucrare examinează mai ales relațiile dintre reprezentanții locali ai RAM și organele centrale ale puterii de stat, precum și funcționarea de zi cu zi a regiunii. Stefano Bottoni analizează atât așa-numita autonomie neinstituționalizată a regiunii, cât și bilingvismul care a existat, fără să negligeze sistemul de putere local, elita de partid maghiară/secuiască. Autorul se concentrează asupra identității acestei elite, parte a unui ecosistem cultural stalinist (p. 153), după o formulă împrumutată de la David L. Hoffmann. Pentru Bottoni, conducerea politică a RAM – în frunte cu prim-secretarul Lajos (Ludovic) Csupor – a jucat un rol tipic de „nouă nomenclatură” (p. 154). Duritatea și radicalitatea impunerii colectivizării, cumva similare cu ceea ce s-a întâmplat în alte regiuni ale țării, își au explicația în faptul că elita comunistă locală (de naționalitate maghiară) dorea să își dovedească loialitatea față de București.

Întreaga carte este captivantă, dar poate cea mai importantă și interesantă secțiune este cea în care autorul se concentrează asupra impactului avut de revoluția maghiară din 1956 în spațiul românesc, cu implicații și asupra destinului Regiunii Autonome (cap. 5 – *The Impact of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution in Romania*, p. 215–282). Revoluția din Ungaria a determinat un moment de cotitură în politica națională a conducerii Partidului Muncitoresc Român. În opinia autorului, revoluția maghiară reprezintă un punct de inflexiune crucial, deoarece, imediat după acest moment, conducerea de partid de la București nu va mai considera problema minorității maghiare din Transilvania drept o simplă chestiune națională și culturală, ci o problemă de securitate statală, de siguranță națională. Pentru liderii PMR, elita politică și intelectuală maghiară din România devenise nesigură. Ar fi fost – în opinia lui Stefano Bottoni – un pas decisiv către legitimarea introducerii „comunismului național” în țară. Poate merita discutat în acest context cât de adecvați mai sunt termenii de „comunism național” sau de „național comunism”, într-un moment în care conceptul de *național stalinism* – folosit și sub forma de *stalinism național* – câștigă din ce în ce mai mult teren. Revenind la impactul revoluției din 1956, trebuie spus că nu doar Universitatea maghiară „János Bolyai” de la Cluj a fost o victimă a acestei reorientări (prin comasarea ei în 1959 cu Universitatea românească „Victor Babeș”), ci și Regiunea Autonomă Maghiară, care, din 1960, își pierde configurația inițială și, potrivit autorului, inclusiv autonomia etnică. Cumva schimbările în ceea ce privește dimensiunea de politică națională și minoritară semnalate de Bottoni se leagă de evoluțiile în plan cultural și istoriografic (unde se observă lipsa de entuziasm a conducerii PMR, îndeosebi după 1958, în a mai evoca în cheie pozitivă istoria republicii sfaturilor a lui Béla Kun, entitate imitând modelul sovietic de la 1917).

În final ne permitem să facem câteva observații critice. Anumite afirmații din cartea semnată de istoricul italo-maghiar pot fi nuanțate sau contrazise – de pildă cele privind compoziția socială a rezistenței armate anticomuniste din România, subiect abordat de autor în contextul discutării cazului Ferenc Puszta, un rebel secu având la activ uciderea mai multor lideri comuniști locali, lichidat de Securitate la începutul anilor 1950 – vezi p. 128. La fel, s-ar fi convenit probabil și o discuție mai detaliată pe marginea informațiilor privind cazurile de discriminare a unor etnici români din RAM. Dar, dincolo de aceste observații, calitatea academică a lucrării datorate lui Stefano Bottoni nu poate fi contestată. Prin urmare, credem că intrarea acestei lucrări în circuitul istoriografic autohton – eventual printr-o traducere în limba română – ar fi bine-venită.

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OANA MIHAELA TĂMAȘ, *Între uz și abuz de alcool în România. Sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului al XX-lea*, Edit. Academiei Române, Centrul de Studii Transilvane, Cluj-Napoca, 2015, 307 p.

Cunoscută publicului cititor datorită studiilor și articolelor publicate¹ și volumelor scrise sau coordonate², cercetătoarea Oana Mihaela Tămaș de la Centrul de Studiere a Populației din cadrul Universității „Babeș-Bolyai” din Cluj-Napoca, a oferit, în anul 2015, o contribuție valoroasă și notabilă istoriografiei, prin publicarea tezei de doctorat dedicate uzului și abuzului de alcool în spațiul românesc la finele secolului al XIX-lea și la începutul celui următor.

Despre acest subiect s-a mai vorbit sporadic în lucrări care investighează cu precădere discursul medical din spațiul românesc în diferite secole³, însă o sinteză care să ofere o

¹ Oana Mihaela-Tămaș, *The Financial Guard and the State Monopoly over Alcohol in Romania in the 1930s*, în „Romanian Journal of Population Studies”, V, 2011, supl. nr. 1, p. 173–189; eadem, *Alcoholism and Prohibition. Mobilisation and Civic Action in the Interwar Romania*, în „Transylvanian Review”, XX, 2011, supl. nr. 2, p. 631–642; eadem, *Începuturile turismului în Carpați. Elemente ale modernizării societății ardelenice la sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea*, în *De la lume adunate ... Lucrările Conferinței Naționale „Viață cotidiană, familie, alimentație și populație în secolele XVIII–XXI”*, ed. Crucița-Loredana Baci, Anamaria Macavei, Roxana Dorina Pop, Cluj-Napoca, 2011, p. 80–96; eadem, *Alcoholism and Ethnic Stereotypes in Modern Age Transylvania*, în „Romanian Journal of Population Studies”, III, 2009, nr. 2, p. 111–123.

² A se vedea: *Rapoarte sanitare în România modernă (1864–1906)*, ed. Cristina Gudin, Oana Mihaela Tămaș, Mihaela Mehedint, Alin Ciupală, Constantin Bărbulescu, Vlad Popovici, Cluj-Napoca; *Legislația sanitară în România modernă (1874–1910)*, ed. Constantin Bărbulescu, Alin Ciupală, Vlad Popovici, Ioana Șuta, Oana Mihaela Tămaș, Cluj-Napoca, 2009; *Sub semnul istoriei. De la debut spre consacrare. Lucrările sesiunii naționale de comunicări științifice studențești „Anul 2008 la o triplă aniversare. 160 de ani de la Revoluția Pașoptistă, 130 de ani de la câștigarea Independenței, 90 de ani de la Marea Unire*, coord. Nicolae Emilian Bolea, Oana Mihaela Tămaș, Cluj-Napoca, 2009.

³ A se vedea, de exemplu: Constantin Bărbulescu, *România medicilor. Medici, țărani și igienă rurală în România de la 1860 la 1910*, București, 2015. Vezi și Iuliu-Marius Morariu, *Problema alcoolismului și consecințele ei reflectată în paginile Buletinului eugenic și biopolitic din anul 1927*, în „Pisanii sângerzane”, IV, 2015, nr. 6 (34), p. 54.

imagine de ansamblu asupra alcoolismului și multiplelor lui implicații, accentuând cu precădere aspectele de istorie economică și socială de la sfârșitul epocii moderne⁴, s-a lăsat parcă așteptată. Segmentată în patru capitole și precedată de o prefață (p. 7–8), care poartă semnătura profesorului Ioan Bolovan, lucrarea conține o parte introductivă (p. 9–18), un capitol în care problema investigată este plasată în contextul mai larg al spațiului european (p. 19–54), unul dedicat efectiv alcoolismului și elementelor lui definitorii în spațiul românesc, dar și politici de stat cu privire la acesta (p. 55–182), și unul care investighează modul în care mișcarea de temperanță a influențat consumul de alcool în perioada avută în vedere (p. 183–254). Ele sunt urmate de concluziile întregului demers (p. 225–260), un rezumat (p. 261–293) și o listă bibliografică (p. 295–307), necesare unei lucrări științifice întocmite după toate rigorile metodologice în vigoare.

După ce, în partea introductivă, înfățișează câteva aspecte generale privitoare la problematica investigată și stadiul actual al cercetării, trecând totodată în revistă literatura de specialitate existentă, pe care o evaluează critic, Oana Mihaela Tămaș realizează, în cadrul primului capitol, o prezentare a modului în care consumul de alcool se regăsește în contextul european, oferind câteva repere cronologice, vorbind despre fațetele consumului de alcool în țările europene, dar și despre mișcările de temperanță cu caracter transnațional și rolul lor. Demersul ei are la bază înțelegerea modului în care evoluția generală a situației alcoolismului în spațiul european a contribuit la modificarea situației din spațiul românesc. Astfel, după cum ține să arate cercetătoarea: „Trecerea în revistă a specificului țărilor europene privind consumul de băuturi alcoolice înlesnește înțelegerea evoluțiilor în timp și spațiu, înregistrate și la noi. Creșterea, după 1880–1890, a popularității berii în zona central-europeană și în câteva țări nordice (Anglia, Danemarca) s-a reflectat și în spațiul românesc prin mărirea producției interne, apariția de fabrici noi și un consum mai ridicat. Acest fenomen a fost mai exprimat în Ardeal și în orașele din Vechiul Regat. Băuturile care sunt astăzi populare în România, precum whisky-ul sau ginul, au fost o raritate la începutul secolului al XX-lea. Motivele au fost culturale, economice (prețul le făcea inaccesibile multora, pe o piață dominată de produsele locale) și comerciale (importatorii nu erau în măsură să concureze băuturile falsificate de pe piață)” (p. 52).

Urmează apoi prezentarea contextului local. Cercetătoarea descrie situația băuturilor alcoolice în spațiul românesc în perioada investigată (p. 55–56), corelând-o cu principalele aspecte istorice locale ale problematicii (p. 57–61), după care analizează producția și comercializarea băuturilor alcoolice, împărțindu-și însă subiectul în două categorii, respectiv: băuturi fermentate și distilate (p. 61–116). Implicarea statului în combaterea abuzurilor și crearea unei politici privitoare la un subiect care putea degenera este și ea analizată în paginile unui subcapitol amplu și bine documentat (p. 117–182). Oana Tămaș discută atât despre normele de igienă sanitară, cât și despre problema falsurilor și consecințele ei, propunerile legislative care vizau introducerea monopolului, legea monopolului cârciumilor, substratul electoral, dar și despre interesele politico-economice sau chestiuni precum problema antisemită și relația ei cu uzul și consumul de alcool.

⁴ După cum remarcă profesorul Ioan Bolovan în prefața lucrării: „Cartea dr. Oana Mihaela Tămaș se încadrează într-o abordare complexă de istorie economică și socială a sfârșitului epocii moderne din România, perioadă ce a consemnat, atât în plan european, cât și în teritoriile românești, alături de activități, fenomene și procese modernizatoare, care au contribuit la progresul societății umane, și aspecte negative, cu efecte dintre cele mai nefaste asupra oamenilor.” Ioan Bolovan, *Prefață*, în Oana Mihaela Tămaș, *Între uz și abuz de alcool în România*, p. 7.

Ultimul capitol este dedicat mișcării de temperanță, particularităților ei (p. 194–198, 224–254) și consumului în diferite zone românești, precum și politicilor publice privitoare la consumul de alcool și aspectele degenerative (p. 199–223). Toate elementele, atât generale, cât și particulare, sunt apoi recapitulate în paginile concluziilor (p. 255–260), în cadrul cărora Oana Tămaș oferă deopotrivă un tablou al modului în care consumul de alcool a devenit parte a vieții culturale, sociale, politice și economice din spațiul românesc în perioada investigată, cât și o analiză care aduce în atenție principalele motive ale acestui fapt și consecințele sale, dar și ecourile pe care le-a avut în spațiul medical⁵.

Scrisă într-un mod plăcut, bine documentată, bogată în informații și oferind cititorului o panoramă a unui fenomen cu multiple implicații sociale care nu a fost investigat până acum, lucrarea *Între uz și abuz de alcool în România. Sfârșitul secolului al XIX-lea și începutul secolului al XX-lea* a Oanei Mihaela Tămaș se constituie așadar, după cum am încercat să arătăm și noi, într-o contribuție științifică valoroasă, care nu trebuie să lipsească din biblioteca unui cercetător preocupat de istoria modernă a spațiului românesc.

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⁵ După cum arată cercetătoarea: „Pusă în fața fenomenului extins al alcoolismului, societatea românească a reacționat inițial printr-o parte a elitei medicale, politice și gazetărești. Mișcarea de temperanță rezultată a avut în România un caracter eminentemente laic, o implicare a Bisericii fiind mai evidentă după răscoalele țărănești din 1907.

O serie de apariții publicistice și câteva inițiative legislative au prefațat înființarea în 1897 la Iași a primei structuri naționale de temperanță, Liga Națională Antialcoolică, avându-și în politicianul A.C. Cuza principalul promotor.” *Ibidem*, p. 258.

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