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Anexa nr.6

REZUMATUL TEZEI DE ABILITARE

TITLE: Territory and urban population in Moldova at the Early Modern Times

The field of habilitation: **HISTORY.**

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Abstract

In the research I undertook in the years following the public dissertation in 2010, and subsequently after its publication in 2015, the topics generally remained in the area of urban history, except that the focus was mainly on the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries. I have drawn together here and focused on the status of the urban territory, tracing the process by which the manor relinquished its role as landlord of the city territory, including the border and the glasshouses, in favour of lay private individuals and ecclesiastical foundations. In order to grasp the consequences of this phenomenon, we have gone back in time to the regulatory period, after 1832, when several catagraphs of taxable units in the country were compiled, including for towns and fairs, and from when other systematic records of the inhabitants and even of the lots they owned and for which they paid rentals date. Throughout our investigations we have sought to identify the times when changes in urban land ownership have occurred.

Since the time of my doctoral studies I have identified such a moment at the end of the 17th century, when political and military unrest accompanied by a change in the economic situation caused an urban decline, as a result of which especially the cities in the northern part of the country, but, as I was able to prove, also the others, which were apparently less affected by the armed incursions, experienced a process of economic and demographic stagnation¹. Another decisive moment for the changes in the domain of urban territory was in the 18th century, when some Fanarioti rulers, among whom the most determined was Constantin Racoviță, gave important portions of the city territory to private landowners. In Tecuci, for example, as a case study on which we have been able to expand our observations, during the

¹ Bogdan Murgescu. *Impactul conjuncturii europene asupra comerțului românesc în a doua jumătate a secolului al XVII-lea* [in *The impact of the European conjuncture on Romanian trade in the second half of the 17th century*]. „Revista de istorie”, 41, 1988, nr. 5. p. 514–524 și nr. 6. p. 587–596.



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second reign of Constantin Racoviță, everything that had not been given away before was transferred to the landed property of the Prorocul Samoil monastery in Focșani. A similar situation was to occur at the beginning of the 19th century in the case of another town of the second rank in the Moldovan urban hierarchy, namely Targu Frumos.

We mention that the temporary upper limit of the investigation has gone up towards the end of the period of application of the Organic Regulation, when, on the background of essentially modernising legislation, cities will move into a new phase, including in the area of ownership, which tends to turn into property. The better organisation of the townspeople and the new economic framework favourable to the intensification of urban economic activity will eventually lead to the fulfilment of the long-standing desire of the town community to redeem the town territory from private lords, in most cases church foundations, but also from large noble families close or related to the rulers of the Principality of Moldavia.

In previous historiographical contributions on the evolution of urban territory ownership, the focus has been on the role of the lordship in this process and on the private individuals, both lay and clerical, who, by the will of the lords, extended their domination to the towns in the 18th century. For this reason we have sought to pay more attention to how the townsman manifests himself in relation to the lordship and other landowners in the urban territory, with the focus falling more on the townsman. We have analysed the divergences that have emerged between the owners of the urban territory and the inhabitants by looking at three aspects that we considered important to clarify. We have insisted on the confrontations for the mastery of the urban territory between the townspeople and the new lay and clerical masters, differences mediated by the Moldavian rulers, and two case studies have brought additional light in the sense of knowledge of the researched subject. On the basis of the examination of the sources, we sought to obtain a clearer picture of how the townspeople as a whole, and then their various categories, related to the changes in the regime of the lordship in and around the towns. These documents are the result of the will of the lords and, later, when the resistance of the townspeople became visible and consistent, they are also the result of negotiations between the disputing sides. Through a series of documents, which we have identified in publications and archival collections and then analysed their contents, we can state that the rights and obligations of the landowners and the townspeople were established in the form of a contract. Being important, these founding documents were investigated in detail. They are contracts whose provisions have often been reworded following frequent complaints and lawsuits.

In this paper, starting from a few case studies, we have followed the course of some of these lawsuits, with the intention of seeing how they justified the defence or circumvention of contractual provisions and, ultimately, how the disputing parties defended their right of possession over the territory of the city. In this way we sought to see who most often invoked the past and the return to medieval privileges and who argued their right to benefit from urban revenues to support renewal and modernisation actions such as salubrity, health or education.

By analysing the same testimonies we tried to understand the differences in status between the old and the new townspeople. Speaking about the territory, inevitably the people who inhabited it, diverse in terms of social, religious and ethnic affiliation, stood out. It is precisely these particularities that we found in the new towns. Two ethnic and equally confessional communities have come to our attention during our research in recent years, the Armenian and the Lipovian. The studies on these two communities have made us notice their solidarities and differences, how the Armenians, who have a long tradition of living in the urban area east of the Carpathians, and the Lipovians, a more recently established confessional group that arrived in Modova in the 18th century, how they relate to the whole community of the city's inhabitants and what place they have occupied.

The paper is structured in three parts. The first, Scientific and Professional Achievements, is



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the most extensive and comprises, in addition to the Introduction, three chapters entitled: The Evolution of Urban Land Tenure on the Threshold of Modernity, Urban Territory in Moldova. Urban Territory in Moldova a Field of Legal Disputes, Urban Population: Structure, Adaptations, Transformations, in which we have included studies on the status and evolution of the urban territory, the divergences that have arisen around it and the structure of the urban population with specific reference to the two confessional and ethnic communities mentioned, followed by a final segment of conclusions and one of professional and academic achievements, other than those presented in detail in the preamble of the paper.

The introduction contains the obligatory methodological framing of the path of the research, especially that concerning the mastery of the urban territory, offering critical assessments of previous contributions on this topic and arguments as to whether we are approaching one hypothesis or another. Necessary in the first part of the paper was also the evaluation of the documentary and historiographical base dedicated to the urban territory and population of the time period under research. However, all these methodological, documentary and bibliographical references have been validated by research applied to the cases of two cities in the old urban network of Moldavia, which, however, are not among the first rank urban centers, in terms of population numbers and the functions they performed, but are of second rank, namely Tecuci and Targu Frumos. Opting for these two cases meant an increase in difficulty, due to the reduced number of sources we initially had at hand, but it did offer the satisfaction of increasing the degree of novelty by highlighting some unknown details about the past of the towns we focused on.

The second part of the paper is a Career Plan and research directions that I intend to follow in the period after obtaining the habilitation degree, and to exemplify the main direction that the research will follow, I have attached at the end an unpublished study entitled Urban Evolution of a Capital City. The city of Iași (18th-19th centuries) is not definitively separated from the theme of urban territory, as it will focus on permanencies and reconfigurations in the old city centre and will also follow the ways in which the city expands, forming peripheries which in turn, depending on their layout on the map and the population structure, sum up certain characteristics. Such punctual approaches, which become historical investigations, based on archival sources, of places and buildings within the city of Iași, are necessary because they bring clarifications regarding the evolution of the urban structure in general of some parts of the city and at the same time have the role of highlighting vestiges of the past that remain in the shadows, less known and for this reason subject to the risk of being lost as a result of new construction actions.

The third part of the work, and the last in the final structure, is reserved for the selective bibliography, which includes essential historiographical contributions on the issue of territory and urban population that have been the basis for the studies and articles that have appeared since the PhD. In addition to published historical sources, we have also drawn on our experience as an editor of old documents, and on unpublished documentary sources preserved in the archives. Some of the unpublished sources I identified during the writing of my doctoral thesis, which had an upper temporal limit of the mid-18th century. The fact that this limit has been exceeded has encouraged us to continue the action of discovering, selecting and interpreting archival documents written in Romanian in Cyrillic characters, which are held at the National Archives of Bucharest and the Library of the Romanian Academy and in the repositories of the county branches of the National Archives and the National Archives of the Republic of Moldova.

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