

TOWNS IN THE ROMANIAN PRINCIPALITIES. ETHNO-CULTURAL ASPECTS, 1774-1822

ILEANA CĂZAN

The Romanian town in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century had the motley appearance of an eastern market town, in which urbanism concern was rather mediocre, despite an active economic life, defined most of all by commercial exchanges. The image of the Moldavian society painted in 1785 by Count Alexandre d'Hauterive¹ (1754-1830), a diplomat whose career had a sinuous course, also encompasses the urban world at the turn between the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries: the boyars, haughty towards the commoners, well-mannered at Court, affable towards the foreigners, and polite to each other; the courtiers or the second rank boyars; the sly and soft-spoken Greek merchants who "turn to good advantage the stupidity of the common people and the needs of the foreigners, and skin them alive in the most polite manner"; the Moldavian tradesmen selling nails, boards, buckets, cheese, caviar, whose countenance and manners, in the traveler's opinion, "are in good keeping with their trade"; the Germans, believed to be diligent workers who could all get rich, if it hadn't been for their "extreme stupidity, drunkenness, impertinence, and excessively steep prices"; the Jews, of a particular look not to be found in any other part of the world, and who were tailors, watchmakers, and carpenters; and the populace "thronging the streets" of the market towns.

Trade was thus the most important source of income for the Romanian town, and on the backdrop of trading relations one may assess a most varied ethnical composition, with the Levantine merchants being the wealthiest. The Romanian majority of the population were the people "thronging the streets", as noted by d'Hauterive, and the small traders of commodities of daily use. Foreign merchants held an exclusive monopoly on imports and exports.

Animal exports to the Ottoman Empire were an important source of revenue, especially after the lifting of the Ottoman commercial monopoly as a result of the peace of Kuciuk-Kainargi (1774). This trade was being carried out by merchants holding *firmans* issued in Constantinople, buying especially sheep, cheating in the most outrageous manner, and offering excessively low prices. These merchants would travel to the Principalities in spring, where they would buy, according to some sources, "several million sheep,"² and according to other sources, between 300,000³ and 500,000–600,000 heads, "for which they pay whatever they wish,

¹Alexandre d'Hauterive, *Călătoria prin Țara Românească și Moldova*, in *Călători străini despre țările române*, vol. X, part I, Bucharest, 2000, p. 691.

²*Ibidem*, p. 247.

³*Ibidem*, p. 696.

humiliating and abusing the shepherds at will, without the princes or higher officials ever daring to object to such a behavior, for these merchants, once back to Constantinople, may very well go to the market place and shout out loud that the prince of Wallachia or Moldavia is a traitor, plotting with the Russians or the Germans, and not allowing them to buy sheep, so that people of Mohammed should starve.”⁴

The same merchants also purchased at excessively low prices the grain crops, which for the most of them were taken to Istanbul.

The first consul of Austria to the Principalities, Igantius Raichevich, painted a suggestive picture of the power and influence of Levantine merchants in the external exchanges of the Danubian Principalities. ”The most expensive skins of marten, sable, fox, and lynx are brought over from Russia in every spring. The Greeks import from Constantinople fabrics and muslins from India and Alep, and gold fabrics from Chios, in addition to knick-knack from Constantinople. Other Greeks travel twice a year to the fairs of Lipsca and Vienna, from where they bring on land large amounts of fine fabrics, wool fabric, velvet, satins and other silks, prints, braids, and embroidery from Vienna, ironware from Stiria, paper from Venice, spices, refined sugar from Fiume, coffee from America, lead, tin, etc., knick-knack from Nürnberg, Vienna, France and England, large amounts of jewelry, pearls, watches, and other items worked in gold and in silver. In one word, the all raw materials exported from the two provinces into Christian countries are traded for the aforementioned manufactured goods.”⁵

Owing to the contribution of the Levantine merchants, the Romanian market town began to thrive and, at the turn between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the emergence of an incipient bourgeoisie of commercial and pre-industrial nature occurred in the Romanian Principalities.⁶ The most prominent merchants belonged without many exceptions to the minorities, whereas the owners of workshops and the small merchants were Romanian.

The foreign travelers pointed out to the differences between the foreign and the native merchants trading in Moldavia and Wallachia.⁷ Therefore, according to Bauer, “The merchants are either native or foreign ... Trade with other peoples, in the neighboring countries or in countries lying far away, is almost entirely assumed by foreign merchants, while the native merchants are mainly involved in the internal trade. However, they are all under the authority of the grand *cămăraș*”⁸.

Raicevich noted in 1780 the arrogance and self-confidence of the Levantines acting in the Principalities: “these merchants, albeit Greek, humiliating the princes and placing themselves high above them, ” are backed up by the janissaries, the

⁴ Stephan Ignat Raicevich, *Observații istorice*, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, part I, p. 499.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 502.

⁶ Paul Cernovodeanu, *Elemente incipiente ale burgheziei în societatea românească sub fanarioți*, in “*Revista de Istorie*”, t. 40, 1987, no 5, p. 481.

⁷ Raluca Tomi, *Structuri sociale din spațiul românesc*, in *Orașul românesc și lumea rurală. Realități locale și percepții europene la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea și începutul celui de al XIX-lea*, Brăila, 2004, pp. 80-81.

⁸ Friedrich Wilhelm von Bauer, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, I, p. 161.

important office bearers, and even by the Sultan himself. The same group included “the merchants called *kapanlıi*... a mixture between Greeks and Turks, who ... come over armed with letters from the Grand Vezir, and buy cheese, butter, honey, suet, wax, pastrami, at a price of their own choice.”⁹

The accounts given by foreign travelers to the Romanian Principalities also place the merchants in the capitals, as well as in the most important towns: Bucharest, Jassy, the Danubian ports. In 1785, D’Hauterive made a whimsical description of the merchants of Jassy, who included “Greek merchants, with a delicate face, sly and soft-spoken, traits giving a fair measure of the moral qualities of this respectable species of corsairs, who turn to good advantage the stupidity of the common people and the needs of the foreigners, and skin them alive in the most polite manner,” and “the Moldavian merchants who sell nails, turning to good advantage the stupidity of the common people and the needs of the foreigners, and skinning them alive in the most polite manner, buckets, cheese, caviar, whose countenance and manners are in good keeping with their trade.”¹⁰ Several years later, in 1790-1792, Iona Ghedevanişvili was impressed by the prosperity of the merchants in the capital of Moldavia: “The town of Jassy, as I have already said, is very big. Greeks, rich merchants, live here ... European merchants, Armenian, Jewish, as well as local Moldavian merchants, who are very rich Christians, also live here.”¹¹ The presence of the foreign merchants in Bucharest is also noted by the travelers. Robert Stockdale, mentioned in 1794 “the shop counters which stretch for long distances in many streets ... The people sit on their counter with crossed legs, and they are Greek, Jewish and German.”¹²

In the Romanian town, the office-bearing boyars and the court officials formed a privileged category, and their presence, even if not in large number, only deepened the travelers’ impression of an eastern market town. The Levantine element had also made its way into the boyar class, owing to numerous Greek boyars included the retinues of the Phanariot princes. The same Ignatius Raicevich noted that, “each prince brings along a large number of Greeks, to whom he gives the most profitable offices. The Wallachians and the Moldavians had voiced their protests against this practice after the peace of 1774 signed between the Porte and Russia, and had approached in this respect Colonel Peterson, the Russian minister, who showed his willingness to intercede. However, the Greeks made so many approaches to the Porte that the project fell through.”¹³ The same situation is pointed out by Count Káracsay, who notes that in Moldavia the class of the grand boyars included Greeks from the Phanar, and some autochthonous families, “few in

⁹Stephan Ignaz Raicevich, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, I, p. 499.

¹⁰ Al. d’Hauterive, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, I, p. 691.

¹¹ Iona Ghedevanişvili, *op. cit.*, in *Călători...*, II, p.987.

¹² Robert Stockdale, *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, p. 1247.

¹³ Stephan Ignaz Raicevich, in *Călători străini*, vol.X, I, p. 505.

number”: the Pașcanu, Rosnovan, Balș, Răducan, Bogdan, Cazimir, and Conachi families.¹⁴ However, the appointments to higher offices were still being made from among the native boyars.¹⁵

The image of the Romanian elite, as painted by the foreign travelers, is that of multi-ethnic society, suffused with eastern exoticism. Therefore, Count Ludovic Victor de Rochechouart, who traveled to Moldavia in 1806-1807, noted that, “the image of the society in Jassy, like the one in Bucharest, was quite curious: men wearing long gowns, long beards, and caps called *calpac* ... clad in the most expensive fabrics, wearing Turkish slippers, of a completely eastern appearance, were very distinguished owing to their education and European manners, most of them spoke French perfectly, and in the most elegant way.”¹⁶ In his turn, Langeron added about the same Moldavian boyars that “their clothing is very close to the eastern fashion ... almost all of these boyars show the delightful refinement of the ancient Greeks, and a careful observer will soon see among the thorns of their slavery the roses of their forefathers’ spirit. They are exactly how the old Athenians used to be: lively, light-hearted, changeable, ironical, restless, seditious, and enthusiastic. Many of them speak French, and they all know Italian well.”¹⁷

The scarce information on the direct producers, the owners of workshops, makes it difficult to assess the ethnical composition of this category. Nonetheless, it seems to have included Romanians and foreigners alike.¹⁸ In 1786, Jeremy Bentham visited a tanning house in Bucharest and was impressed by the particular use of a leather pigment,¹⁹ while Jenne-Lebprecht mentioned in the same year the existence of a park of coaches in the capital of Wallachia, owned by a young Hungarian, Count Festetics, who “in this way made the interest in coaches popular in the country, and now, not only almost every boyar buys such coaches and carriages, but there is even some noticeable competition among them.”²⁰

In addition to the large number of Greeks who had been coming to the Principalities since the fall of Constantinople and until the nineteenth century, there were also other foreigners, whose number was more or less important, according to location and historical circumstances. D’Hauterive even believed that nowhere in the world could such a great number of languages be found together, within such a small population. He mentioned 21 such languages²¹: Greek, Turkish, Romanian, Armenian, Arab, Persian, Russian, Polish, Saxon, Hungarian, Albanese, Bohemian, Moravian, German, Danish, Spanish, Tatar, English, French, and Hebrew, to which

²⁷ Raluca Tomi, *op. cit.*, p. 72

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 72-73

¹⁶ See Louis Alexandre Andrault de Langeron in Gh.Bezviconi, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-163.

¹⁷ *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, p. 938.

¹⁸ Raluca Tomi, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁹ Jeremy Bentham, *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, pp. 707-708.

²⁰ Jenne-Lebprecht, *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, p. 744.

²¹ Alexandre d’Hauterive, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, I, p. 693.

he added literary Greek, and the Gypsy jargon. He also mentioned the 2,000 Bulgarians, Turks, Armenians, and Christians living in the town of Silistra whose enthusiastic welcoming of the princely procession helped cheer up the gloomy atmosphere created by the plague epidemic.

In relation to the minorities living in the Romanian towns, Baltazar Hacquet mentions on the imperial estate St. Onofrei of the town of Siret, the existence, beside the Szekler colony, of two other colonies, one Russian and the other one Lippovan, the name of the Lippovans coming from the Slav word “lippetva” or lime, given the fact that the furniture in their houses and the household wares were made of this white wood.²²

Once in Bucovina, Baltazar Hacquet made a description of the Armenians as compared to the Jews. He noted that the Armenian had more needs than the Jew and, therefore, sought to earn more. He purchased from the Russians and the Poles lambs, calves or skins of lambs not yet delivered. The hay and grain were often his, even before the harvest. The Armenian took on lease everything he could lay his hands on, so it was difficult to find a monopoly greater than that the one held by the Armenians, although the number of pure blood Armenians was on the decrease, owing to mixed marriages.

In the market towns and especially on the outskirts of towns, the foreign travelers found a large number of nomad Gypsies, who unlike the Gypsy slaves bound to the estate and to their master (and employed by the boyars as farm hands, cooks, musicians, maid servants, wet nurses), were wandering about and causing much disturbance wherever they chose to settle down for a while.

Baltazar Hacquet speaks of their back hair, large black eyes, and their piercing and often wild look. They wished to live free of any constraint, and had only “some superstitious and improper notions” about religion, which in fact was not one of their major concerns. Whenever they did any work, it was for lack of any other choice, and usually worked the brass, the iron and the precious metals, very often inside their tents, while their wives and children were setting in motion the bellows. The poorest among them made wooden spoons or baskets, out of tree bark, which they peddled from house to house, on which occasion they were also begging.²³

According to the same author, the language of the Gypsies was a mixture of Romanian, Hungarian, with an addition of Copt, Tatar, Turkish and Arab words.

A classification of the Gypsies living in Moldavia is also given by Baron Leyon Pierce Baltasar von Campenhausen²⁴, who believed that in no other country of Europe could one find so many Gypsies. According to him, they fell into the following categories: the *lingurari* (spoon-makers), who for the most of them lived in villages, some tilling the land (they did not make the most numerous category

²²Baltazar Hacquet, *op. cit.*, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, p. 826 et sqq.

²³Irina Gavrilă, *Aspecte demografice în însemnările călătorilor străini despre țările române, la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea*, in vol. *Orașul românesc și lumea rurală*, p. 97.

²⁴Leyon von Campenhausen, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, p. 883.

though); the *ursari* (bear-tamers), whom the author mistakes for the *lăutari* (musicians), also calling them music-lovers who lived on their "talents"; the *lăieși*, who only lived in tents, and who paid the Prince a small capitation called the *țigănărit* (this caste was numerous, and their members were mostly fortune-tellers and blacksmiths); the *burcași*, whom von Campenhausen considered to be the most pitiful caste, since in summer they lived in forests and in winter on the garbage piles of various settlements, who paid the Prince a small tax and numbered 600 families, and who often stole young children and horses, skillfully changing their color.

Count Alexandre de Langeron also mentions the existence of Gypsies in Moldavia and Wallachia, in numbers greater than in any other European country. Many of them were the slaves of the boyars, the others being *lăutari*, *geambași* (horse dealers), and even peddlers, and who thronged the streets of the market towns²⁵.

The Jews were another minority with an ever more important contribution to Romanian trade to begin with the eighteenth century. William Hunter traveled to the Romanian Principalities in 1792 and mentioned the existence of a Jewish population in the town of Galați, engaged at that date in some modest trading activities, and asking as a rule a price double of what they actually intended to get for their merchandise. He was surprised to see in their shops some fine fabric employed in the lining of women clothes, brought over from Constantinople.²⁶

William Hunter also mentioned a number of Saxons, Armenians and Jews established in various parts of Wallachia, who, being more skillful and more perseverant than the locals, were keeping alive the commercial activities in a country ravaged by the numerous Russian-Austrian-Turkish wars.

In a society so heterogeneous ethnically speaking, it is only natural that one should have found a great variety of denominations. Owing to the fact that at the turn between the eighteenth and nineteenth century the Romanians were far from making the majority in the Romanian towns, a phenomenon occurred and was noted by all the foreign travelers, namely the great religious tolerance, born from the hospitality spirit and the natural solicitude showed by the Romanians to the foreigners.

Many missionaries traveled to the Romanian Principalities and set about organizing, as institutions, the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic and United (Greek Catholic) Churches, and the Protestant cults. A special interest was devoted to smaller communities, such as the Armenians and the Jews.

The Polish diplomat Kajetan Chrzanowski²⁷ wrote in 1780: "... both in Moldavia and in Wallachia, there are several thousands of inhabitants of Roman Catholic denomination, who have a bishop of their own, appointed by the Pope at

²⁵Langeron, in *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, p. 941.

²⁶William Hunter, *Travels in the Year 1792 Through France, Turkey and Hungary to Vienna*, London, MDCCXCVI, translated in *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, p.1094.

²⁷For further information, see *Călători străini*, X, I, p. 446.

the recommendation and under the protection of the King of Poland.”²⁸ The Conventual Franciscan monk Francescantonio Manzi²⁹ noted that in 1743 there were around 1,270 Catholic families in Moldavia,³⁰ that is about ”6,350 individuals.”³¹ A. d’Hauterive advanced a more important figure: ”in Moldavia there are 15 to 16,000 Catholics under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Bacău.”³² In his account of around 1790-1791, von Campenhausen estimated the number of Catholics living in Moldavia to ”around 12,000, of whom 30 families live in Jassy.”³³ Extremely valuable information on the Catholic Church in Moldavia was provided³⁴ by the Conventual Minorite Giovanni Maria Ausilia³⁵, Giovanni Hrisostomo dei Giovanni³⁶, Giovanni Bartholomeo Frontali³⁷, Giovanni Battista Vannucci³⁸, an Anonymous Catholic of around 1776³⁹.

According to estimations made at that time, Moldavia counted 15-16,000 Catholics⁴⁰, under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Bacău. They were under the pastoral care of Italian priests, who would spent there some 9 years on a mission. Most of the Catholics were Hungarians, who had fled to Moldavia some two centuries before, and had preserved their customs which were different from those of the local population.

A report drawn up for the Papal See in the second half of the eighteenth century, gives detailed information on the main Catholic centers in Moldavia, on the villages belonging to these centers, and even the distances among them. The statistic data point out to the existence of 12,000 Catholics, all Hungarian and Romanian speakers. Armenian merchants are mentioned in Cucuteni. The report may have been written in 1776, such as indicated by G. Călinescu, who published this information in an appendage to his book *Altre notizie sui missionari cattolici nei Paesi Romani*, in *Diplomatariu Italicu*, Roma II (1930), pp. 505-507. Given the impersonal style of the report, one may assume that this summary of data was made in Rome based on information provided by missionaries.⁴¹ There were Catholics in the settlements of Grozești, Hârja, Creslav, Tg Trotuș, Octara, Moinești, Faraoni, Capșa, Valea Mare, Valea dragă, Nisipeni, Gioseni, Valea

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 450.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, vol. IX, pp. 296-297.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 298.

³¹ P. Cernovodeanu, *Toleranța religioasă sub fanarioți*, in vol. *Contribuții de istorie românească universală*, Aarlborg, 2002, p. 198.

³² *Călători străini*, X, I, p. 693.

³³ *Ibidem*, X, II, p. 877.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, IX, pp. 312-323.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 312.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, vol. IX, pp. 440-451. For further information see, pp. 437-439.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 349 et sqq.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 359-360.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, X, II, pp. 1344-1348.

⁴⁰ Sever Mircea Catalan, *Credință, mituri, superstiții, în societatea românească a secolului al XVIII-lea* in vol. *Orașul românesc*, p. 177.

⁴¹ Anonymous Catholic in *Călători străini*, vol. X, II, pp. 1344-1347.

Seacă, Suchila, Pisiota, Latechioi, Luizi Călugăra, Sărata, Dealu Nou, Bacău, Barați, Mărgineni, Poloboc, Tazlău, Săbăuani, Tețcani, Izvoarele, Talpa, Bârgăuani, Luncași, Răchitani, Iacobeni, Tămășești, Cucuteni, Popești, Cotnari, Jassy, Huși, Bârlad, Suceava, and Cernăuți. The number of Catholics living in these settlements ranged from 10-20 individuals to several hundreds, such as at Huși.

One should note that the Catholics living in the Principalities were not always looked upon with sympathy. An extremely interesting case is related by Blasius Kleiner⁴², a Franciscan missionary of the Catholic diocese of Bulgaria: "In 1730, in the time of Constantin III, the son of Prince <Nicolae> Mavrocordat, the Catholics <of Bucharest – note by I.C.> requested permission to build a church, and the Prince acquiesced, on condition that they should build it in such a way that none should notice it was a church. And thus, in 1730, they set about having that church erected under the pretext of building a refectory, and they made much haste about it, and when the work was completed, they laid the crosses upon it at night. On seeing this, the Romanians went to the Prince and to the Metropolitan, who, together with a large number of boyars complained to the Prince, but they were disconcerted by his answer, the Prince telling them that if they wished to see the destruction of their fatherland, they should go and pull down <the church>, and upon hearing this answer, they all beat a retreat, and the church was left as it was."⁴³

The Protestant cult was also admitted in the Principalities, in which case "the same spirit of tolerance from the Phanariot princes" could be noticed.⁴⁴ A source of 1786 indicates that in Bucharest "various craftsmen, like watchmakers, jewelers, etc., and a pharmacist are Saxons from Transylvania, of Evangelic faith, and they hold religious service under the protection of the Swedish consul,"⁴⁵ in fact, "the Swedish resident at the Porte." The old Armenian community enjoyed the same tolerance.⁴⁶ Valuable information on the Armenians living in the Romanian Principalities is especially offered by the scholarly Armenian priest Hugas Iugigan, before 1785, Archbishop Horsep Argutian,⁴⁷ in 1787-1792, and the priest Minas Băjăschiian, around 1808.⁴⁸

Information on the Catholic Armenians living in Transylvania, supplying with emigrants the colonies in Wallachia and Moldavia,⁴⁹ is also given by Abbot of Feller.⁵⁰

⁴² *Ibidem*, IX, pp. 431-432.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 436. For further data on the favorable attitude of the Phanariot princes to the Roman Catholics, see P. Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-205. However, there were "very few" Catholics in Bucharest (as well as in the entire Principality of Wallachia) (*Călători străini*, X, I, p. 743).

⁴⁴ P. Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 205

⁴⁵ *Călători străini*, X, I, p. 643.

⁴⁶ P. Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-210.

⁴⁷ *Călători străini*, X₂, pp. 960-967. For further information, see p. 959.

⁴⁸ P. Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ *Călători străini*, IX, pp. 558, 562, 570-571.

A community against which the most "unjust prejudice" was maintained "for a long time" was the Jewish community, much more numerous in Moldavia than in Wallachia.⁵¹ In the eighteenth century, the European image of the *Jew* was still marked, at least partially, by the medieval intolerance. Quite surprising is the fact that the Jews living in the Principalities were occasionally believed to have moral qualities superior to those of their co-religionaires living in elsewhere. Therefore, A. d'Hauterive, still a prisoner of bigotry, noted: "The Jews living in this country <Moldavia – n. by I.C.> have specific morals that set them apart from all the other Jews living in Turkey or in any other part of the world. Their avidity is less odious, they are less thievish, less dirty, and *less hated* (underlined by I.C.) than in other parts."⁵² One should also mark that both in Moldavia and in Wallachia, "the persecution cases" against the Jews were "isolated" and "not tolerated".⁵³ This would explain for the massive Jewish emigration into the Romanian Principalities from Poland, Galitia, which had become part of Austria, Russia, including Ukraine, and even from Central Europe.⁵⁴

Only the Turks, by virtue of the traditions and statute of Moldavia and Wallachia in the relations with the Porte, were not allowed to practice their cult in the Principalities,⁵⁵ and, according to the Kuran and the Holy Law *Sharia*, they could not settle here permanently, as the Romanian space, being left out of the *House of Islam*, was an impure environment in which a Moslem could only spend a limited period of time. For this reason, the Turkish merchants, despite the commercial monopoly exerted by the Porte until 1774, would never settle in the Romanian Principalities.

In the conception of the Orthodox princes of Moldavia and Wallachia tolerance bred tolerance. The Polish messenger Rafael Leszczynski notes that in 1700, when requesting from the Moldavian prince Antioh Cantemir protection for the Catholic cult, the prince "... promised that he would do all that is due, also requesting me, on my return, that *the Greek rite of his faith* (underlined by I.C.) should also be respected in Poland."⁵⁶

⁵¹ P. Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-222.

⁵² *Călători străini*, X, I, p. 693.

⁵³ P. Cernovodeanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-216 and 218-221.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 216. The clergy of the Romanian Orthodox Church offered assistance to many Jews, in times of peril. Von Campenhausen gives the following account: "In 1786, when the Turks set afoot a terrible pogrom of the Jews, and murdered the inhabitants of several villages, the priest of the *Înălțarea Domnului* Orthodox Church <either of Galata, or of Golia, as both are dedicated to the Ascension> gave a commendable example of Christian life. He hid and fed three hundred of these wretched people, thus saving their lives," (*Călători străini*, X, II, p. 877).

⁵⁵ Jenne-Lebrecht noted: "... only that the Turks, who are the true rulers of the country, have no mosque and no public service is being held." Thus, it was mistakenly concluded that, "Their modesty in this respect is quite remarkable," (*Călători străini*, X, I, p. 743).

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, VIII, p. 177.

The Romanian town at the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century exhibited the features of a multi-ethnic community, with strong eastern accents. One could witness here the paradoxical situation in which the majority of the population, the Romanians, hardly played any economic part, while the minorities, gathered in an ethnical mosaic, held the major levers of commerce, and played the most prominent political role at the court of the Prince. In general, this relationship was placed under the auspices of religious and inter-ethnic tolerance, which was not always found to be beneficial to the development, modernization, and progress of the Romanian town.