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Кафедра истории древнего мира и средних веков**

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Национальной Академии Наук Украины**

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Редакционная коллегия:

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Рецензенты:

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Сорочан С.Б. – д.и.н., зав. кафедрой истории древнего мира и средних веков Харьковского национального университета имени В.Н. Каразина.

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V.A. Maravela (*Galats, Romania*)

THE ORIENTAL INFLUENCE UPON THE LIFE OF THE MUNTENIAN BOYARS DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The Muntenian boyars of the seventeenth century were both involved in the administrative and legal management of the country, and in commercial activities. Their number decreased in exchange for the increasing of their landed properties, to the detriment of small and medium nobility. The great nobles and high officials in the same time, they gradually regrouped and distanced themselves from the boyars without dignities, as seen in Radu Șerban's account of his arrival on the throne of Wallachia, where he recognized that he had been helped by *"the dignitaries and the boyars of his rule"*¹.

Bunea Grădișteanu or Tudoran from Aninoasa, Neagoe Săcuianu, Ianache Văcărescu or Cornea Brăiloiu, not to mention the Băleni, Brâncoveni, Bălăceni and the Cantacuzini, there are as many examples that come to prove the unprecedented and defining expansion of the great property, for this century, one of which being the strengthening by Șerban-Vodă Cantacuzino of Constantin Brâncoveanu's estates:

*„Eke to belong to the noble of My Rule, Constandin Brâncoveanu Vel Spătariu the village Obileștii, on the water of Mostiștea, south of Elhov, the whole village, with the whole boundary from the land, and from the Mostiștea water, and from the location of the village, from the whole area, with all the income, from border to border...”*²

The development and the transformation of the noble estates into goods' producing enterprises, thus meeting the needs coming from Transylvania, the Habsburg Empire and the Ottoman Empire, led to the increasing of the estates and the subdued villages. Along with the widening of the areas, the high boyars took over the monopoly of mills, lakes, ponds, and also the sale of wine. The big cattle, so much needed for transports, took the path of trade towards Transylvania, but also to the Ottoman Empire and Central Europe, the main providers being the great boyars, led by the above mentioned Preda Brâncoveanu, who had become famous for his large herds of horses, flocks of sheep, cattle and pigs etc.:

*“This boyar is very rich and matchless both in this (country) and in any other country. It is said that he has twelve thousand breeding mares on his estates and there is a stud farm in each of the two hundred villages he owns (...). He has four thousand heads of cattle, one thousand buffaloes, four thousand pigs and three hundred rows of beehives, with swarms (of bees), each bringing more than one hogshead of wax and about a hundred pails of honey; each pail worth a piaster and this (wax) is bought and transported by merchants to the country of Turk³. Each year this boyar sends a thousand heads of cattle to Istanbul with the help of his servants, to be sold with ten thousand piasters.”*⁴

However, in the second half of the seventeenth century, the number of animals brought to market was much smaller than before, that also because the number of animals collected and sent to Constantinople for the Ottoman's needs had grown. The commercial activity within and outside Wallachia was hindered by the existence of the Ottoman domination. Most products took the path of Constantinople paid in kind and only a small part appears in the market as a commodity.

*“The horses around here..., looked after not only by the officers from Transylvania, but likewise by the Polish merchants”*⁵, were famous too. Also in this case, the impressive Ottoman horse requests, thus explainable at that time of war through the alleged number, they made these animals not to be sufficient for a considerable commerce.

The soil's fertility and the richness in agricultural products of Wallachia were unanimously praised by those who passed by here during the 17th c. *“The whole country is of an inexhaustible wealth, it has abundant forests and grassland, but is rather sparsely populated and with people living in huts and cottages than houses. The main income is drawn from wax, honey, hides, horses, mines and the customs in some settlements near the Danube. Thanks to them it is able to brilliantly maintain the prince and the boyars, in addition to the payment of an annual tribute to the Sultan, settled in 320 bags, which are about 32000 pounds, besides to squeezing more than threefold the amount above the determined conditions. The lands of the country are entirely in the hands of the lord and the boyars: the rest of the inhabitants are peasants, being either serfs or servants who are completely, with all their service, at the behest of various boyars they depend upon.”*⁶

The main routes of Wallachia were attended on the direction of the national, European exchange, converging towards the towns of Sibiu, Braşov, to the fords of the Danube and to the Black Sea, and further to the Ottoman Empire and beyond.

The nobiliary residence itself, the court chapel, as well as its utilitarian-household enlargements helped configuring the specific attitudes of the seventeenth century. The constructive programme of the local nobiliary residence had to meet a function of representation, besides the fundamental goal of residential style. The nobiliary residence, always placed with the main façade towards a river or lake, it was surrounded by a garden, and in the great park – as-Persian and Turkish Oriental palaces – they were isolated pavilions – “pavilions” or “kiosks” – and the bath⁷.

The phenomenon of the ensemble made up of a manor and a court chapel met a variety of forms which were no alien to the aulic model or the innovation introduced in the houses built by Constantin Cantacuzino the seneschal in Bucharest, Filipeştii de Târg or Târgovişte. Among the first beneficiaries of this model would be the children of Şerban the seneschal, the future ruler, at Drăgăneşti, Drăghici at Măgureni, Matei at Filipeştii de Pădure, and later,

Constantin the seneschal at Afumați. The “brâncovenești” palaces had their source here.

The age widely used the concept of “palace” – a term previously used by the foreign travelers to describe the princely buildings in Bucharest and Târgoviște, which would now be renewed. The one from Filipeștii de Târg was now added, being endowed with a series of arrangements that remind Paul of Aleppo the elegant buildings of Stamboul. His narrative placed the residence in the middle of a natural landscape – the wide opening towards the river – as well as in a planned and built one: vegetable gardens and orchards, ingenious technical installations, a certain Turkish bath⁸: *“after a stay of one hour, we had left for the village of the so-called chamberlain, named Filipești, large, populated, with abundant water and gardens...From the church, we had gone to the chamberlain’s palace: it is composed of princely walls, that amazed you, more beautiful than those from the capital. He has a charming marble warm bath, where the water is brought on a wheel from the river that also irrigates the orchards and the gardens through numerous canals. There are many houses built like the ones in Istanbul, because all the boyars from Wallachia have wonderful buildings in their villages”*⁹.

Another oriental influence was found in the case of “the stone houses” of boyars Udriște and Cazan Năsturel, the brothers of Princess Elina, from Herești (jud. Călărași, about 1640). The double residence has partial basements, the ground and the first floor, the entire exterior and interior face being made of sleek stone. Baroque carriages decorated the two entries, while the actual voids of windows and doors were built in an Ottoman manner, all offering an original synthesis of different stylistic trends¹⁰.

*„The next morning we had left and, by crossing the River (Argeș) in a boat, we arrived before noon at a village called Fierăști¹¹ where we found the mansions and palaces of the brothers of Matei voivode’s lady¹². When they started the building, it was said that there is no palace like this in the world, except perhaps only the ones in the country of the Franks, for (the Năsturel brothers) brought Hungarian architects and Turkish stone and they began to lay the sleek stone both indoors, and outdoors.”*¹³

Praiseworthy were also the beautiful landscaped gardens which, in the second half of the seventeenth century, they included a new decorative element – the kiosk. Taken from the banks of the Bosphorus, created specifically for “pastime” and “privée”, it would widespread especially towards the end of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the following, being also a defining type for a mentality impregnated by several stambuliote elements. The “large” garden from Dobrenii of Constantin Șerban was in 1657, *“divided into layers, as the Franko-Italian gardens, with troughs on the tiles. In the western part, there is a large pool of water with a bridge over it from end to end. In the midst of the garden there is a beautiful kiosk”*¹⁴.

Entering the house, the textiles and the furniture often had an oriental origin. The furniture was simple, consisting of a table that usually sat in a corner of

the room. The benches placed around the rooms were used instead of chairs. Del Chiaro, describing the interior of the royal houses, wrote: *“The bed is not moving as ours, but the head and its side are fixed in a wall. It is open only at night when going to bed. The mattresses (having unspun cotton on the interior) and the blankets are collected and gracefully placed at head, forming a square and high pile, covered with a clean and very thin cloth, with various silk flowers. On top of this big and soft package, the pillows are wrapped in the same canvas. Therefore, during daytime, the surface of the divan seems to be covered to the ground by a large rug, having a cotton mattress above which is thickened with damask, velvet, or other expensive, Indian or Turkish lining.”*

In the seventeenth century, the coffee and, as a new pleasure, the smoking became more and more preferable for some of the boyars. The tobacco pipe and the coffee ended every princely or nobiliary meal, these being introduced to us from the Ottoman Empire¹⁵.

The luxury, the wealth and the materials' brilliancy, the beauty and the value of the accessories of the noble and princely costumes were topics of astonishment for the foreigners who passed by the courts of the Romanian princes between 1600–1700. The clothes granted them prestige and placed them, even illusory, in a certain hierarchy that depended on the visual field.

The pronounced orientalization noted in the Romanian society during the seventeenth century, found its explanation in the relevant observations coming from the characters of those times. The Italian Anton Maria Del Chiaro, Constantin Brâncoveanu's private secretary, a subtle connoisseur of the people among whom he lived a long period of time, he also recorded: *“It is good for the foreigner to walk dressed up according to the country's custom, for not to be seen by the Turks that arrive daily in Wallachia and do not look too happy about the clothing, even the habits differing from their own. However, four or five of us, the foreigners who had an office at the court of the prince, although we dressed according to the Wallachian fashion, we still wore a wig and a hat, a tie and a bamboo stick”*¹⁶.

From the psychological point of view, the strongest pressure was not encountered by the free peasant, who could lose the land or freedom at the most, but by the great boyars and the lord. The greatest stress focused here, because the stake of the political game, a game held only at the court, it was often the life itself¹⁷. A more complicated political scene sprang up since the emergence of the third partner, the Porte, which would increasingly play the role of protagonist. The end of the seventeenth century brought new and great anxieties, the boyars testimonies being eloquent: *“we are deadly frightened”, “and I fear that the great ones are very unsteady; and all the nobles would perish”, “now the disturbances are trembling”*¹⁸, *“behold, the times, and the people now flew off the handle”*¹⁹, and the bright and short life *“is subject to dangers and changes forever”*²⁰.

The explosion of luxury²¹, richness to ostentation, recorded during this century was compensatory, longing to be an expression of power and of an effective constancy, which actually did not exist. The psychological and even the

most powerful physical impact took place between the Romanian boyars and the Turkish aggressor. An attenuation and a neutralization of the stress factor was tried through imitation. It was therefore a self-defense response the Romanian collective unconscious would use frequently throughout history.

Opposed to anxiety, the suites, the drives at the estates, formed the most regular entertainment for lords and nobles. The young boyars competed in the games with spear and sword, bow and rifle shootings etc.²² As adults, when they did not hold any office in the princely council, they dealt with trade, crop monitoring, they witnessed the harvest, the vintage, moving from one estate to another, they attended at the elucidation of various disputes as witnesses, and they went abroad, sometimes, to sell their goods and to shop in the markets of Istanbul or as messengers' companions outside the country. They spent the winter with the other boyars at banquets.

The sons of the lords or of the high officials would learn within the princely or the nobiliary courts having famous teachers brought in from the cultural centers of the Orthodox world or formed at some old European universities. Taking into account the traditional role in helping the Orthodoxy and their close relations with Eastern Christianity, the higher educational development in Romanian Principalities, it was also useful to the disciples from the Balkans and the Middle East, who were learned in the schools between Danube and the Carpathians.

In the seventeenth century, under the impetus of the educational and printing development, the libraries emerged at princely and nobiliary courts, who felt the need to acquire and preserve books. The desire of having famous and rare writings led Istratie Leurdeanu, the second treasurer (1644–1646), to ask Ianache the scholar from Egypt, passing through our country, to execute a copy of a Turkish version of the Confession of the Patriarch Ghenadie II Scholarios, proving how the court's library funds were made up of using various ways²³.

¹ In 1604 the ruler said that „*by this all the boyars and the whole country, great and small from the country of my reign, they rose and gathered within a council*”, and further below, he continued saying “*I decided along with all my dignitaries and all the boyars of my reign*” then “*my kingship and all my dignitaries of my reign and all the boyars of my reign*”. (DIR, B, XVII, I, P. 134).

² Iorga N. Studii și documente cu privire la istoria românilor. – Vol. XIV, Hârtii din arhiva Mănăstirii Hurezului precum și din a Protopopiei Argeșului, din a boierilor Brâncoveni și altor neamuri, găsite în casele proprietății din Brâncoveni și publicate cu o introducere, note și indice. – București, 1907. – P. 330.

³ Ila Bilad al-Turk. These informations about the wealth of a high noble from the XVII-th century, unique of its kind, have been used in many writings.

⁴ Călători, VI. – 1976. – P. 216.

⁵ Anton Maria Del Chiaro Fiorentino. *Revoluțiile Valahiei*. – Iași: Ed. Tehnopress, 2005. – P. 5.

⁶ Călători, VII. – 1980. – P. 200.

⁷ Corina Nicolescu, Case, conace și palate vechi românești. – P. 43.

⁸ Tereza Sinigalia, Arhitectura civilă de zid din Țara Românească în secolele XIV-XVIII. – P. 283.

⁹ Călători, VI. – 1976. – P. 150.

¹⁰ Istoria românilor, vol. V. – P. 971.

¹¹ Fiareșiti = Herăști, jud. Ilfov.

¹² It is about Șerban, Cazan and Udriște Năsturel, the brothers of Pincess Elina, all sons of the great Chancellor Radu Năsturel of Fierăști (Stoicescu N. Dicționar al marilor dregători din Țara Românească și Moldova. Secolele XIV–XVII. – București, 1971. – P. 214-215).

¹³ Călători, VI. – 1976. – P. 233.

¹⁴ Călători, VI. – 1976. – P. 229-230.

¹⁵ Iolanda Țighiliiu. Societate și mentalitate în Țara Românească și Moldova. Secolele XV-XVII. – P. 85.

¹⁶ Del Chiaro. Op. cit. – P. 38.

¹⁷ Iolanda Țighiliiu. Op. cit. – P. 107.

¹⁸ Iorga N. Scrisori de boieri. – Vălenii-de-Munte, 1912. – P. 97. (The letter of Mihai Băjescu the seneschal, the son of the great ban Mareș Băjescu, to the father Macarie – 1690, Febr. 8).

¹⁹ Ibidem. – P. 104. (The letter from 1696 sent by C. Cantacuzino to the great judge of Brașov, Ioanes Mancoș).

²⁰ Costin M. *Opere*. – Vol. II / ed. critică P.P. Panaitescu. – București, 1965. – P. 113.

²¹ See also Andrei Pipiidi, Tradiția politică bizantină în țările române în secolele XVI-XVIII. – București, 1982. – P. 467.

²² Călători, V. – 1973. – P. 67, 77; VII. – 1980. – P. 156, 265.

²³ Istoria românilor, vol. V. – P. 889.

H. Матеевич (Кишинэу, Молдова),

Т.Л. Самойлова (Одесса, Украина)

**КРИТСКОЕ КЛЕЙМО ИЗ КОЛЛЕКЦИИ
АМФОРНЫХ КЛЕЙМ ТИРЫ (РАСКОПКИ 1998–2008 гг.)**

Торговля вином одна из важных отраслей обменных операций в античном мире. Несмотря на собственное производство вина в Северном и Северо-Западном Причерноморье, различные сорта вина, изготавливавшиеся в различных регионах античного мира Средиземноморья и Южного Понта, в больших количествах поступали к эллинам, проживавших на северных берегах Черного моря. Важным источником, который позволяет установить основные направления виноторговли, как известно, являются амфорные клейма.

Одним из центров, поставлявших вино в античные центры Серного моря, был остров Крит. Это подтверждается письменными источниками. Критский поэт Гибриас, упоминая о своем богатстве, среди прочих